

Defining the Problem: A Feminist Perspective

A Senior Project

presented to

the Faculty of the Liberal Arts and Engineering Studies Department

California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Environmental Management and Protection; Bachelor of Science

by

Gabrielle Watson

June, 2015

© 2015 Gabrielle Watson

Table of Contents

SPECIAL THANKS TO	3
ABSTRACT	4
KEY WORDS	5
RESEARCHER BACKGROUND	8
INTRODUCTION	13
BACKGROUND UNDERSTANDINGS	15
Introduction to Privilege	15
Place Naming	22
Safer History:	25
Pacific Railway History	28
Method History	30
FORMAL REPORT	33
Purpose	33
Hypothesis	33
Methods of Research	34
Data	36
Usage Data	36
Survey Data Introduced	37
Safety Ratings and Demographic Data	45
ALWAYS FEEL SAFE	45
FEEL SAFE MOST OF THE TIME	47
FELT SAFE SOME OF THE TIME	51
NEVER FEEL COMFORTABLE USING THE SPACE	54
ALWAYS AVOID	55
<i>Summary</i>	56
SELECT QUESTION COMMENTS AND CONCERNS	57
Conclusion	60
ALTERNATIVES	62
FOLLOW UP WORK	64
APPENDIX	65

SPECIAL THANKS TO

Jane Lehr who helped guide and strengthen this project as faculty advisor

Chris Clark who provided occasional input as secondary faculty advisor

Martha Graciela who contributed 2 hours to Usage Monitoring

Zulema Aleman who contributed to 1 hour of Usage Monitoring

The Safer program and staff who work to reduce and respond to sexual assaults on campus

Rise for providing me with 65 hours of training in domestic violence and sexual assault

The Cross Cultural centers for their work in empowering disempowered students.

My parents for providing me with a foundation to build all of my life's projects upon

And everyone else across the rainbow who supports this project in one way or another

ABSTRACT

This project defines “The Rape Tunnel” problem. Before beginning the research portion of this project, background information is provided to the intended audience so that anyone reading the document can get up to speed with understandings within social justice, stakeholder histories, Indigenous perspectives, and the history of getting the project approved. From there the paper moves into a lab report with findings that reveal a tunnel (designed as a storm drain for hundred year peak flows) is frequently being used by Cal Poly students as a walkway to campus. Also, students commonly refer to the space as “The Rape Tunnel.” Survey responses further indicate that feelings of safety while using the space are not uniform across responses. Rather, feelings of safety vary depending on demographic data. Women at the intersections of disempowered identities felt the least safe in the space. After comparing western and Indigenous perspectives, the responses show that people walking through the space feel unsafe due to aspects of their identity rather than consequences of taboo actions. With the findings in mind, alternatives and follow up work to “The Rape Tunnel” problem are offered at the end of the document.

KEY WORDS

Campus Community- includes all of the students, faculty, staff, and administration at California Polytechnic State University

Cisgender- person whose sex assigned at birth matches their gender identity

Domestic violence- refers to physical, verbal, spiritual or other types of abuse directed at an intimate partner

Feminism- advocacy relating to obtaining equity between all gender identities

Gender identity- refers to the gender a person feels they are, generally fits into female or male categories

Genderqueer- someone who identifies with neither, both, or a combination of male and female genders.

Gender non-conforming- someone who does not identify strictly as female or male and identifies their gender in ways not typically outlined by western society

Hundred year peak flow- used in watershed management to describe the maximum water passing through an inlet designed for a heavy storm only likely to occur every hundred years

Indigenous- refers to people connected to their landscapes with a history of colonial oppression, also called Native Americans in the USA

Interdisciplinary- combining multiple disciplines together in order to foster holistic approaches to understanding

Intersectionality- a new way of feminist thinking where power and privilege are observed at the intersection of identities, for example: understanding how a Hispanic Lesbian woman is disempowered by three identities coinciding rather than separately

Perpetrator- the person who commits an act of sexual assault or domestic violence

Pronouns- in this paper pronouns refer to what a person feels comfortable using when referring to themselves or other people referring to them based on gender identity, emphasized in the Queer community as gender identities can sometimes be different than what most folks grow up learning about

Queer- used as an umbrella term for everything under the LGBTQQIAA (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, Asexual, Agender, etc.) rainbow

People of Color- nonwhite or mixed racial identities

Rape- sexual assault that includes penetration

Sexual assault- any unwanted act of forced sexual contact onto the recipient

Social justice- seeks to create equity for everyone in social, economic, and political spheres

Stakeholder- someone with a vested interest in a matter

Their- gender neutral pronoun used to reference unknown individuals within groups of people, also used when referencing genderqueer or gender non-conforming individuals whose pronouns are not specified.

Title IX- federal civil right that prevents sex discrimination in education

Transgender- someone with a gender identity different than their physical sex assigned at birth

Survivor- the person who is sexually assaulted or abused, sometimes referred to as a victim

RESEARCHER BACKGROUND

“I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.” Maya Angelou.

Before research, approval processes, and advisor meetings this project began as a feeling—a feeling that students deserved more. Every student deserves to feel safe in their campus community. The space chosen for research in this project is frequently called “The Rape Tunnel” by the Cal Poly student community. After spending four years here, I’ve never met a student on campus who knew the name of the space as something else. Before beginning to describe background on the space, stakeholders of the problem, findings of research, and possible future alternatives, I decided to begin with my motivation for the project. The rest of the paper will follow in academic third person perspective.

Sexual assault impacts every college campus in the United States and entire communities as survivors of assaults piece their shattered realities back together. While attending California Polytechnic State University, I’ve known four close friends (women and men) who experienced sexual assaults during college. It destroyed me to see their senses of safety taken from them. My experiences here taught me that some people leave college with degrees while others leave with deep emotional trauma, isolation, and stigma. By winter quarter of my junior year, I found myself joining an intensive 62 hour sexual assault and domestic violence training (RISE training) on an unplanned impulse. Towards the end of the training, I came to realize I needed it in order to heal my own pain. Watching perpetrators of sexual assault shatter the lives of the people I love made me feel deeply powerless and heartbroken. When I came to live near the Stenner apartment

complex this year, students advised me to take “The Rape Tunnel” to campus because walking through the space saves 8-10 minutes of walking time. An image of the space is provided in Figure 1 on page 10. Since freshman year, I like many students heard of the space in passing. Living near the space provided me with a tangible reality of the stories. People I knew who experienced sexual assault, walked through the Rape Tunnel every day.

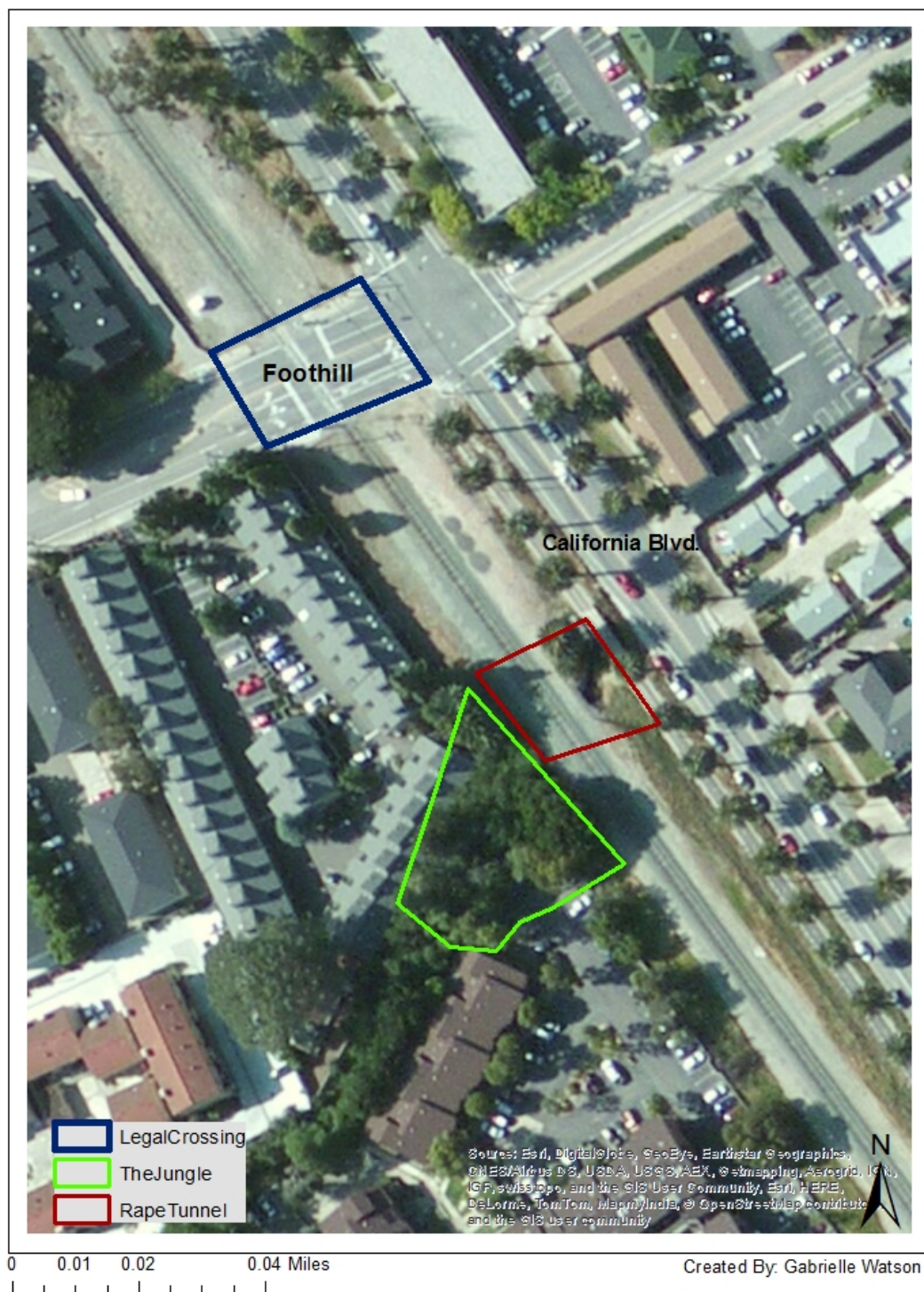


Figure 1 is a map of “The Rape Tunnel” and its surroundings. .

In addition to personal experience, higher education at Cal Poly also influenced my decision to conduct research of this space. My major in Environmental Management and Protection taught me real world skills pertinent to careers in Environmental Sciences. However, it did not provide the insight into human interaction I also desired to gain from university education. In order to balance out my major coursework, I took classes for two minors in social science fields. Major classes taught me to understand how human beings manage their environment, which allowed me to understand the physical construct of the space. The two minors I completed became my main references for understanding our campus community's social construct interacting with the physical space. Women's and Gender Studies, my first minor, focuses on achieving equity between genders, races, classes, sexual orientations, and abilities through dialogues across difference. Notions of empowerment and privilege became central to my thinking because of the minor. Indigenous Studies, my second minor, focuses on respecting Indigenous perspectives as valid ways of knowing and living within the world. I came away from Indigenous Studies realizing other cultures teach values through human connection to the landscape. When initially comparing Indigenous and Western cultures, I assumed our connection to landscape were largely absent. Living near the Rape Tunnel pushed me to realize Western connections are present in different ways.

The intersection of my knowledge from Environment Management & Protection, Women's & Gender Studies, Indigenous Studies, personal experiences, and RISE training pushed me to question what our campus community's connection to this place called "The Rape Tunnel" revealed about campus culture. I decided to measure this by correlating feelings of safety with demographic data in order to attempt to understand and gauge if power and privilege caused individuals to experience the space differently. The purpose of this project isn't to

challenge the property rights of Pacific Coast Railway, the company who owns the storm drain-known as “The Rape Tunnel”- that is utilized by students. Nor is the purpose of the study to achieve a specific outcome that I have predetermined. My experiences provide honest insight into my own drive to research the realities of the space. The ultimate goal through research is to question why our campus community thinks it’s acceptable to joke and make light of very real traumas students on campus experience. I want survivors of sexual assault who know of or use the space currently known as “The Rape Tunnel” to remember a project who made them feel like they have support on this campus because their feelings of safety matter to me.

INTRODUCTION

As described in the researcher background, this project takes an interdisciplinary approach to address “The Rape Tunnel” place name and lived experience by students who know and use it. Student Walkway Research was conducted in order to gain a better understanding of different student realities of the space, identify the place name, and track tunnel usage over a short period of time. Merging ideas of how people manage their physical environment with ideas of social construction is complicated and requires a lot of patient learning. The reality of the space is an intersection of private property rights and a campus community’s understanding of sexual assault on campus. In order to better understand the problem at hand, this paper begins with background understandings relevant to the project, moves into a formal report discussing data, and follows up with potential alternatives to address the findings from data collected.

Background understandings include: an introduction to understanding privilege, a discussion about place naming, history of Safer, history of Pacific Railway, and a method history. Privilege is introduced through a short comic directly comparing how it creates different lived experiences for different people. Discussing place naming practices by the Western Apache, creates a reference point to compare research findings to another culture’s approach to human and land connections. The two stakeholder histories provided relate to the main physical space (pertaining to Pacific Coast Railway), and the social construction of the place (pertaining to Safer). Understanding the history of the two entities allows for insight into how the university and corporation may come together in order to address this problem as major stakeholders. This is important because the major stakeholders will be the groups of people with the most power to

change “The Rape Tunnel.” Lastly a history of research method approval will allow for insight into the realities of social justice research.

The formal report follows background information. This report begins with purpose and hypothesis. Next methods approved by the Cal Poly Human Subjects Committee are detailed. Following methods, data consists of different ways of displaying the data collected from the survey responses and usage monitoring. This section is broken up into usage data, survey data introduced, safety ratings and demographics, and select questions/comments/concerns compared. The formal report section ends with a conclusion making sense of the intersections of different identities and how they create different student lived experiences of the place known as “The Rape Tunnel” through feelings of safety.

Suggested alternatives and follow up work comes after the formal report. Alternatives are suggestions for the major stakeholders to keep in mind when considering future actions. These alternatives include: blocking off the space to pedestrians, creating a new pedestrian tunnel, and creating a new legal crossing over the tracks. Choosing the proper alternative will ideally allow for balance in meeting all of the main stakeholders needs. In order to address the problem within the campus community, follow up work is suggested. Dialogues led by Safer and the WGS department are the main focus here. These two final pieces of the document divide responsibility for confronting the problem between corporate entities and the community interacting within the property.

BACKGROUND UNDERSTANDINGS

Introduction to Privilege

The following comic introduces two different lived experiences because of privilege.



RICHARD'S HOUSE IS WARM AND DRY.
HIS SHELVES ARE FULL OF BOOKS AND
HIS FRIDGE IS FULL OF FOOD.



PAULA'S HOUSE IS FULL OF PEOPLE AND
NOT MUCH ELSE. IT'S DAMP AND NOISY AND
SHE KEEPS GETTING SICK.



RICHARD'S PARENTS WILL DO
ANYTHING FOR THEIR BABY...



...AND SO WILL PAULA'S.
THAT'S WHY THEY'RE
WORKING TWO JOBS.



RICHARD GOES TO A GREAT SCHOOL.
WELL RESOURCED, GOOD KIDS.
HIS TEACHERS LOVE THEIR JOB.



AT PAULA'S SCHOOL, THE CLASS SIZES ARE
LARGE, THE SCHOOL IS UNDERFUNDED,
AND LOOKS IT. HER TEACHERS ARE TIRED,
STRETCHED THIN FROM THE STRESS.



SO MAYBE WE CAN SEE WHY THE
EXPECTATIONS SET FOR RICHARD...



... MIGHT BE SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT
TO THOSE SET FOR PAULA...



... AND OVER THE YEARS ALL THESE LITTLE DIFFERENCES...



(PARENTS PAYING FOR UNI)



(JUGGLING WORK AND POLYTECH, STILL GETTING IN DEBT)

... THEY START TO ADD UP. TO BUILD INTO SOMETHING BIGGER.



I have friends working there - I'll have a word, and get you an internship.

Thanks Dad.



You should be finishing your studies, not looking after me...

Dad, you're sick.





Figure 1 is a comic created by Toby Morris and is entitled The Pencilword: On A Plate.

Source: <http://thewireless.co.nz/articles/the-pencilword-on-a-plate>

Beginning with a basic understanding of privilege is key towards understanding the significance of this project. Merriam Webster describes it three different ways: as “a right or benefit that is given to some people and not to others”, as “a special opportunity to do something that makes you proud”, or as “the advantage that wealthy and powerful people have over other people in a society.” Within the cartoon, each of these definitions are played out. Richard was given rights and benefits denied to Paula throughout her life. A special job opportunity came to him through connections to other people similar to him within the field. Finally, the cartoon ends with Richard in a high class dinner party enjoying significantly more power over other people in society living lives similar to Paula.

Although Webster’s definition is relevant to the cartoon, it’s important to keep in mind how definitions of privilege vary across perspectives. People define privilege differently based on their experience with it. Peggy McIntosh, a white cisgender feminist, describes her white privilege as an invisible knapsack she carries around with her throughout her life in a piece entitled “White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack.” Some examples of what McIntosh recognizes as her white privileges include: being able to “speak in public to a powerful male group without putting [her] race on trial”, not having to “educate [her] children to be aware of systemic racism for their own daily physical protection,” and knowing that “if [she declares] there is a racial issue at hand, or there isn’t a racial issue at hand, [her] race will lend [her] more credibility for either position than a person of color” (McIntosh). From a different place on the privilege spectrum, Laverne Cox (a Black Transgender feminist) talks about privilege from the viewpoint of oppression. Privilege oppresses anyone who doesn’t have it, as seen in Paula’s experiences in the cartoon. In a BuzzFeed article, Laverne is quoted stating that “each and every one of us has the capacity to be an oppressor. I want to encourage each and every one of us to

interrogate how we might be an oppressor, and how we might be able to become liberators for ourselves and each other” (Karlan).

Laverne Cox’s perspective complicates the initial narrative introduced through the cartoon and leaves room for hopeful systematic change. The three perspectives considered here glimpse at different pieces of the larger picture. Cox’s approach to understanding social justice focuses on intersectionality as her identity comes together at the intersection of Black Transgender and female experiences. Although all three perspectives allow for important honest insight into a system of privilege and oppression, Laverne Cox’s approach to hopeful change through intersectional understandings will be the framework behind understanding the results gained through research of “The Rape Tunnel.” Other perspectives offered will serve as the foundation supporting this framework.

Place Naming

“The Rape Tunnel” place name is understood in part through its comparison to a non-western place naming practice used by the Western Apache Indigenous tribe. Indigenous peoples are rooted in their landscapes. This connection between tribes and their landscapes manifests itself in different ways. The Western Apache people use the names of places on their reservation in order to maintain cultural teachings within their community. Place names are serious and meaningful for this tribe of people. Tribal stories teach the ties between people and the land from a young age. Since the stories have been learned from youth, uttering the name reminds the person in conversation of the message tied to it. When using the story for cultural teachings, the name of the place where the story occurred gets spoken. For those who know the stories well,

only a name reference is necessary to remind the listener of a story's teachings. Once reminded, the Apache person reflects on the story and their own shame for invoking its teachings. The power of the story lies within the place and its name.

In the book Wisdom Sits in Places Landscape and Language Among the Western Apache, Keith H. Basso becomes introduced into Western Apache place naming. His book combines an understanding of his own western perspective of the tribe mixed with perspectives from people within the tribe. Nick Thompson, Basso's main teacher from the tribe introducing him into an Indigenous way of knowing, describes how the names of places on the reservation teach lessons to tribal members. Apache language poignantly directs meaning in a concise purposeful way. Single words can carry meanings requiring multiple understandings of backstory when translating the message to English speakers outside of the tribe. Frequently throughout the book, Basso spends considerable lengths of time deciphering teachings within a single story given to him by Thompson. Within the stories mentioned in the text, one discusses a reaction to sexual assault. The story is provided in order to demonstrate another culture's reaction to sexual assault in their community.

The following story took place at Tséé Chiizh Dah Sidilé (Coarse- Textured Rocks Lie Above In A Compact Cluster). "Long ago a man became sexually attracted to his stepdaughter. He was living below Coarse-Textured Rocks Lie above in a Compact Cluster with his stepdaughter and her mother. Waiting until no one else was present, and sitting alone with her, he started to molest her. The girl's maternal uncle happened to come by and he killed the man with a rock. The man's skull was cracked open. It was raining. The girl's maternal uncle dragged the man's body up above to Coarse-Textured Rocks Lie Above In A Compact Cluster and placed it there in a storage pit. The girl's mother came home and was told by her daughter of all that had

happened. The people who owned the storage pit removed the man's body and put it somewhere else. The people never had a wake for the dead man's body" (Basso 53).

There are a couple of aspects within the tale worth clarifying in order to understand it from a cultural context. The man's relatives owned the pit because his camp was located near the pit. Also, Apache people have strong obligations to take care of kinspeople when they die. From this it becomes more apparent the man's family disowned him for molesting the child. Tribal rituals performed for the deceased in their family no longer applied to this man because he committed a deep cultural crime. His killing and shaming after death falls in line with the community values because of his actions. The tribe doesn't stand for the behavior that occurred at this place, and the story threatens anyone who would commit the crime.

As seen through the story, tribal values are taught through place naming and the stories behind them. After the story has been told to the recipient, the person is left to come to terms with its meaning. When describing how stories impact the recipient, Thompson states they "go to work on your mind and make you think about your life" (Basso 58). Hearing the place name makes apparent that the tribe doesn't approve of the individual's behavior and discussed the person's actions beforehand. Anyone from the tribe can speak up to remind another member of the taboos related to how the member acted. This processes places group shame on the story recipient. For the rest of their lives they may regret the action and wish to forget the wrongdoing. Instead, the landscape remains in place reminding them of their shame every time they hear the place name or pass by the space.

Safer History:

Discussing the role of Safer on campus allows for an understanding of how the campus currently addresses and works with issues of sexual assault. Cal Poly as an entity actively works to address issues surrounding sexual assault on campus through the Safer office within the Dean of Students. Unless otherwise noted, the following information was provided by a presentation used by Safer to educate the Cal Poly campus community. The program offers crisis services for Cal Poly students, faculty, and staff. According to the dean of students website online, crisis services include: “confidential counseling Monday-Friday 9am- 5pm through appointment or walk in, confidential informational resource for [the people in the campus community] affected by gender violence, advocacy for [people in the campus community] affected by gender violence, information on reporting sexual assault, dating violence, stalking, and sexual harassment, and finally accompaniment with survivors to the Title IX Office, University Police Department, Counseling Services, Health Center, and more.” Crisis counselors are state certified rape crisis counselors, some of which became certified through RISE training. Education and outreach is another aspect of the services Safer offers. The staff and volunteers give presentations and workshops to the Cal Poly community addressing sexual assault, dating violence, stalking, and domestic violence. Safer Training is also offered on campus so that students can become Safer certified with an introductory understanding of sexual assault over a period of six weeks as it pertains to the campus community. Finally, Safer provides a six week men and masculinity program for those referred to it mainly as accused perpetrators of sexual assault.

Safer formed in reaction to a series of notable crime incidents. The following history was provided by the presentation used by Safer to educated students, as mentioned before. The first of the crimes began with Kristen Smart. She disappeared from her dorm room in Muir hall on May 25th in 1996. Smart disappeared after last being seen walking home from a party around 2am. At this time Cheryl Anderson and Tim Davis who were also students at the party walked her part of the way home. When they left the party to walk Smart home, Paul Flores joined their group. Paul continued walking with her after Cheryl Anderson and Tim Davis walked her a portion of the way. Details of the story between this point and her disappearance become less well known.

To this day her disappearance is unsolved. Police and Kristen Smart's parents suspect Paul Flores was involved. Flores dropped out of school immediately following Kristen Smart's disappearance. Flores refused to talk to investigators and has been arrested for DUIs three times since 1997. Denise and Stan Smart attempted to prosecute Flores for wrongful death of their child, but ended up dropping the case when he pleaded the 5th amendment. The amendment allowed him to decline to answer questions that could incriminate him. Legal justice came in another form with the passage of the Kristin Smart Campus Security act of 1998. The law requires publicly funded educational institutions to have agreements between their security services and local law enforcement when it comes to missing or violence against students. In the case of Kristen Smart, such an agreement may have altered the outcome of her disappearance.

The second crime incident involved Rachel Newhouse. She was abducted on November 18th in 1996. Rex Krebs stalked and abducted her from downtown San Luis Obispo. After the murder of her daughter, Rachel Newhouse's mother, Gail Eberhart, moved from Irvine California to Clovis Washington in order to escape her pain. She lives with her mother and rarely

spends time with friends anymore (Pemberton). Gail Eberhard describes her feelings relating to the death of her daughter “angry, bitter,[and] sad” (Pemberton). She cries “almost every day” and never [listens] to music any more unless someone else happens to have it on” (Pemberton).

Lastly, Aundria Crawford was abducted on March 12th 1999 by Rex Krebs. Krebs broke into her home after stalking her previously that night. Aundria Crawford invited her boyfriend over to watch South Park (Pemberton). He declined to spend time with her because he decided to work on homework that night (Pemberton). Krebs murdered Crawford. Her boyfriend regretted staying home to study for the rest of his life (Pemberton). Krebs went to jail after police found Aundria’s body “buried on the property of a sex offender” (Crawford). According to her grandmother Krebs was later “released early from a twenty year sentence” (Crawford).

After the three women disappeared in three years, the Sexual Assault, and Implementation Oversight Team began “implementing Strategic Initiatives” in order to address sexual assault. In the fall of 1996 following Kristen Smart’s disappearance, Cal Poly gained a \$60,000 grant from the department of education in order to launch a Violence Intervention Program. With the grant, S.A.F.E.R began work in the peer health education office in 1996. The name initially stood for Sexual Assault Free Environmental Resource. The program later moved into the Women’s Center in order to promote collaboration between services. The Women’s Center later became the Gender Equity Center when it started offering men and masculinity programs. Recently, Safer became a program on its own separate from the Gender Equity center. The name no longer stands for an acronym. It is just Safer. This emphasizes the work the program does in order to make a safer campus for students.

Statistics quantify the prevalence and realities of sexual assault addressed by Safer and other allies to survivors. According to the Center for Disease Control *Sexual Violence Facts at a*

Glance statistics from 2012, “1 in 5 (18.3%) women and 1 in 71 men (1.4%) reported experiencing rape at some time in their lives.” They also report that “in a nationally representative survey of adults, 37.4% of female rape victims were first raped between ages 18-24.” The CDC states that perpetrators of sexual assault against women “were reported to be intimate partners (51.1%), family members (12.5%), acquaintances (40.8%) and strangers (13.8%)”; the center also states that perpetrators of sexual assault against men “were reported to be acquaintances (52.4%) and strangers (15.1%).” As far as the Safer program goes, from 2011-2012, Safer counseled 52 students. In week three of fall 2012, Safer already counseled 9 students 3 weeks into the quarter.

Overall, Safer focuses on educating students on sexual assault, relationship violence, stalking, bystander intervention, safer sex, and healthy relationships. As mentioned before, the program currently offers short term crisis counseling, advocacy, and accompaniments. They emphasize “it is never the survivor’s fault, ever.” Lastly, Safer emphasizes becoming proactive not reactive in addressing issues of sexual assault.

Union Pacific Railway History

According to David McCulloch, Union Pacific is “the first transcontinental railroad; the greatest, most daring engineering effort the country had yet seen.” The railroad began in the 1800s with the first ten miles from Galena to Chicago completed in 1848. Abraham Lincoln signed the Pacific Railroad act of 1862 encouraging the Union Pacific and Central Pacific railroads to create a transcontinental railroad. After inaugurating the transcontinental railroad

with the “golden spike” into the Promontory Summit in Utah, miners began flocking to Colorado and moving across the continent as desired. By 1876 the initial railroad was purchased by the Missouri Pacific Rail company and became the Missouri Pacific. In 1880 Union Pacific purchased the Kansas Pacific and Denver Pacific railways. The railway continued acquiring land and expanding over time in a similar fashion to the events already described. Figure 3 illustrates the current railway property below. San Luis Obispo is obviously a small fraction of that land.

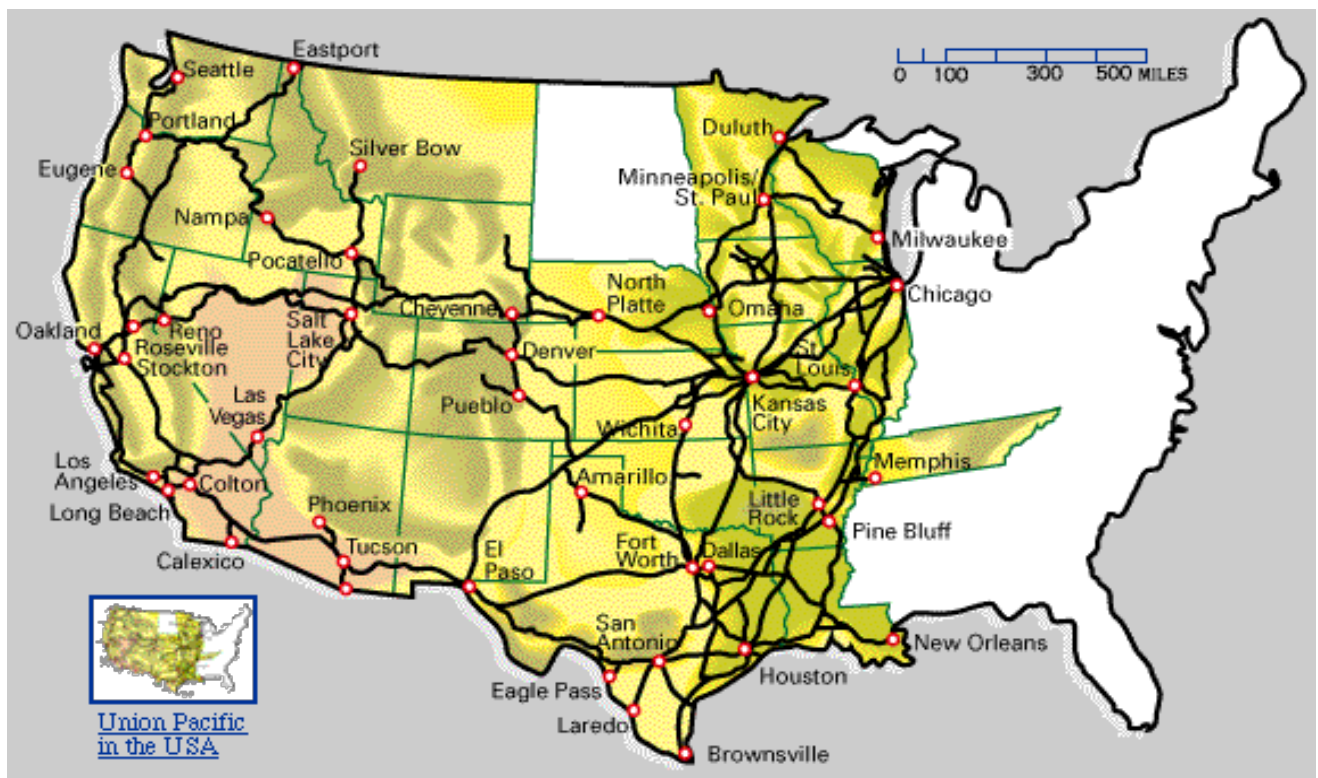


Figure 3 is a map of the Union Pacific property within the United States.

Source: <http://www.up.com/aboutup/usguide/>

On a smaller scale, there is some recent railroad history pertinent to the Rape Tunnel. There have not been any police reports of rape in the Rape Tunnel. The extent of harm done there occurred when a woman was physically assaulted walking through the space. Outside of

the tunnel, the railroad actually does coincide with the murders that began the Safer program. According to the LA Times, Krebs stalked Rachel Newhouse and “lie in wait for her atop a railroad bridge in downtown San Luis Obispo” (LA Times). After crossing the tracks, Rachel Newhouse was knocked unconscious and dragged into Krebs’s truck (LA Times). He later raped her in a rural area between Avila beach and San Luis Obispo. Newhouse died while struggling to get free after her attack according to Krebs’s defense (LA Times).

From the history of the railway two things become apparent. First, the corporation is incredibly large in scale. Second, student fears relating to the murders in the 1990s may have influenced place naming at other locations along the railroad property. It’s hard to believe campus community fear didn’t emanate out from the three murders committed in the nineties. Rape is tied to the history of the property even though it isn’t tied to the storm drain named the Rape Tunnel. Lastly, barriers to addressing the problem earlier become more apparent when the size and settlement history of the corporation are taken into account.

Method History

In the beginning, the project was more aimed towards feelings of safety in a space regularly used and known by students as “The Rape Tunnel.” It was assumed that the campus community knew of the place called “The Rape Tunnel” and its regular use. Data was intended to make better sense of the space for the entire community. It soon became apparent that although students generally referred to the space as “The Rape Tunnel”, faculty and staff were

less aware of this reality. The burden of proof regarding the name of the space and its regular usage fell onto the project because of this observed disconnect from students lived experiences.

With the burden of proof and goals of the project in mind an initial data collection proposal was made. Initially, three forms of data collection were proposed by the author of this senior project: an online survey, a count of people walking through the space during the week, and voluntary drawings depicting student feelings regarding the space. The survey and usage count sought to gather quantitative data on the space, while the drawings focused on qualitative aspects. The survey was designed to assess what respondents called the space, their demographic information, and safety ratings of the space. The drawings would have provided visual depictions of student feelings with demographic data in the corner so that differences in feelings could be assessed between them. In the proposal to the Cal Poly Human Subjects Committee, all research was titled “Student Walkway Research” as the name had not yet been proven by survey responses or the drawing exercises. In order to collect drawing data, students would have been asked to draw the space after being given the option to leave after their class ended early. Classes would have been chosen based on time made available for the project by interested professors. The survey would have been sent out through email in order to maximize efficiency by reaching the largest amount of people in shortest amount of time. Lastly, usage data would be collected for a seven day period from 8am to 6pm with additional party hours accounted for on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. The space is known to be used more frequently on the weekends to go to parties in Stenner or the surrounding area.

All three forms of data collection failed to be achieved as planned in their own unique ways. The first unexpected barrier arose when seeking out volunteers to monitor tunnel usage. Many students who would have usually committed to the time were busy with Sexual Assault

Awareness month, Pride month, or other commitments. April was a busy month for social justice related volunteer work. Hours of usage monitoring were vastly reduced to work with available volunteer's schedules.

The next series of difficulties arose in trying to gain approval from the Cal Poly Human Subjects Committee for the other two proposed data collection methods. Asking students to voluntarily draw the space at the end of class periods and circulation of the survey via email were not approved. From the perspective of the Human Subjects Committee, even though it wasn't probable students would increase using the space because of the suggested data collection methods, it was a possibility. The concern was that students who did not know about the tunnel would come to know it through the survey, and that this would increase usage. This is of concern to the university because use of the tunnel is illegal. The school did not want to be potentially seen as advocating for illegal tunnel usage by approving the research as originally designed.

Although this seemed more like a campus community issue than private property, the concerns were heard and research methods were altered. After several weeks of negotiating with the Human Subjects Committee, two forms of research were approved: an online survey in which participants were recruited near the tunnel space (and therefore already knew the tunnel existed) at the site and usage monitoring by a small team. It is likely that survey response was significantly decreased due to the limitations on participant recruitment required by the Human Subjects Committee. Individuals who responded to the survey were invited to submit a drawing of the space to the WGS office. No drawings were received.

FORMAL REPORT

Purpose

As seen in the cartoon earlier on page 15 privilege creates different lived experiences for people in western society. Understanding larger concepts of power and privilege dynamics can become easier when they are put into immediate perspective. As a university that actively educates on privilege through different courses and the Cross Cultural Centers on campus, current research can easily be used to strengthen dialogues across difference that foster positive social change. The main purpose of the Student Walkway Research survey is to measure how different types of people experience spaces in their environment differently because of varying levels of privilege. In order to assess how student's experiences vary within "The Rape Tunnel", the name and usage of the tunnel are discussed first. Understandings of safety corresponding with demographic data follow afterwards. Finally select questions, comments, and concerns are analyzed.

Hypothesis

The space will be frequently trafficked by students while observing usage. Survey respondents will name the storm drain "The Rape Tunnel." Disempowered identities (women, people of color, Queer people, and disabled people) will feel the least safe in the space. Physical disabilities will cause people to feel less safe in the space.

Methods of Research

There were two forms of data collection aimed at gathering quantitative data for “Student Walkway Research, a usage count and a student survey. No trespassing occurred on the private property owned by Union Pacific Railway while conducting this research. Two volunteers assisted the primary researcher in tallying usage of the space for the school week (Monday through Friday) from 12:30-1:30 pm. Researchers sat on a wall in front of an apartment complex across the street from the space commonly known as the “Rape Tunnel.” This location is specified in Figure 4 on page 35 as research area 1. From this perspective, the storm drain and the legal land crossing on foothill by California could be seen. A tally was made for each time a student: walked through the storm drain, walked over the legal crossing designed for pedestrians, or walked across the train tracks between the two locations.

For the survey research, in order to deter recruiting new usage of the tunnel, an informed consent form with a link to participate in the survey was handed out at the edge of the parking lot used for the Stenner apartment complex. This location is specified in Figure 4 on page 35 as research area 2. People walked through the lot in order to move from the student housing areas to California going to campus and could be intercepted before or after using the space at this location. The end of the consent form included a link to the online survey. Around 200 informed consent forms were handed out for a total of 5 hours over a period of four nonconsecutive school days scattered throughout three weeks. Between May 4th, 2015 and May 20th 2015 forty four survey responses were collected. The survey asked a total of thirteen questions regarding mainly demographic information and feelings of safety. At the end of the survey, respondents were invited to submit a drawing.



. Figure 4 is a map detailing the main areas pertinent to the Student Walkway Research.

Data

Since the purpose of this project centers around defining the problem, the data section is most heavily emphasized within the report. The data section moves first in the order it was collected from usage data to survey responses. From there, the five safety ratings are looked at more carefully as demographic data and safety ratings are paired together. Justifications for safety ratings appear under each of these tables for each safety category. A summary of safety ratings and demographic data is then provided. Finally, the data section ends comparing different questions comments and concerns offered by respondents with different safety ratings.

Usage Data

Table 1 summarizes tallies collected regarding usage of the storm drain on the Pacific Coast Railway property near the intersection of California and Foothill in San Luis Obispo California.

Day	Time	Number of Tunnel Uses	Number of Walks over Legal Crossing	Number of Walks over train track illegally
Monday 5-4	12:30-1:30	76	93	2
Tuesday 4-27	12:30-1:30	98	133	3
Wednesday 5-6	12:30-1:30	74	63	1
Thursday 4-29	12:30-1:30	62	108	2
Friday 4-30	12:30-1:30	71	82	6

From Table 1, usage of the space was confirmed to be at the very least 62 people from 12:30-1:30pm during the days specified between April 27th to May 6th. Similarly, walks over the legal crossing were noted as at least 63 people per the peak hour during the week. Finally, during the peak hour at least 1 person walked on the train tracks between the legal crossing and tunnel researched for this project. When looking at the illegal crossings, it's important to note that on Friday April 30th, 5 of the 6 crossings were actually students using the legal crossing when the safety bars were down and flashing. The five crossings were lumped in with illegal crossings, as it seemed like pertinent safety information to the landowners of the railroad. As noted earlier, finding volunteers to collect data was a struggle, so data collection took place over two weeks when volunteers were available to contribute to the project between classes and commitments.

[Survey Data Introduced](#)

This section seeks to introduce the online survey and all of its questions. Survey respondents were recruited at research area 2 in Figure 4 on page 35. At this site, potential participants were handed an informed consent form with the survey link available at the bottom of the form. There were thirteen questions total in the entire survey. Of the thirteen questions: one asked for the place name, five focused on demographic questions, three focused on logistics, one asked for a safety rating, and three allowed for respondents to provide comments on their previous answers. Logistics here includes reading through: the initial informed consent form, the opportunity to submit a drawing to the WGS front desk, and a final reminder that trespassing on the Union Pacific Railway private property is illegal. The following questions were asked in the online survey.

1. Informed consent to participate in research. This form can be found on page 82 of the appendix.

After reading the consent form, 42 of 44 respondents agreed to participate in the Student Walkway Research survey. The survey automatically ended for those who did not voluntarily agree.

2. Name of the space based on description and photos of the tunnel taken from angles off of the railroad property.

Table 2 displays the different names of the space provided by survey respondents in the Student Walkway Research.

	The Rape Tunnel	The Tunnel	Not Familiar	The Jungle	The Underground Blazeroad	Dickbutt
Number of Responses	29	2	3	1	1	1
Percent of Total	78	5	8	3	3	3

As seen in Table 2, 78% of students named the space “The Rape Tunnel”. The other names included: 5% of respondents naming the place “The Tunnel”, 8% claiming to be unfamiliar with it, 3% calling it The Jungle, and 3% calling it “The Underground Blazeroad.” From these results, it can be seen that the majority of respondents named the place “The Rape

Tunnel.” It appears that some of the place names are indicative of respondents not taking the survey seriously. Survey respondent 31 didn’t finish their survey after naming the tunnel “Dickbutt” and identifying as a community member. Similarly, respondent 10 named the space “no familiar”, identified as a student then ended the survey. The other two respondents who claimed to not be familiar with the space were still able to identify how safe they felt walking through it. Lastly, of the two respondents who called the space “The Tunnel”, survey respondent 27 later noted that when talking about the space, “people like to call it by a different name which I find offensive and trivializes sexual assault.”

3. Affiliation with Cal Poly

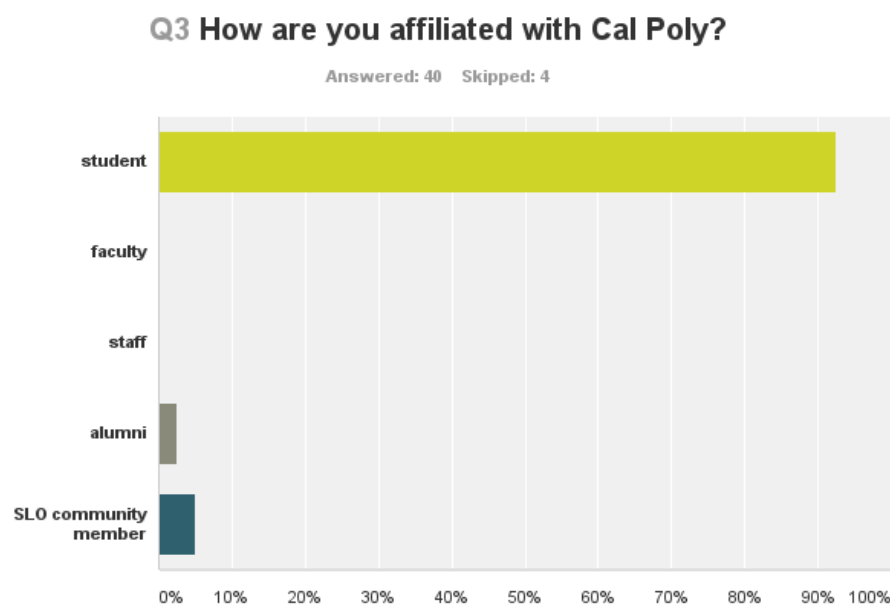


Figure 5 displays a graph detailing survey respondent affiliation with Cal Poly in San Luis Obispo CA.

Figure 5 shows that over 90% of the responses to the survey were from students. This result makes sense as the majority of people walking through the space while informed consent forms were being handed out in research site two were students going to or from class.

4. Racial Identity

Table 3 displays a summary of responses to question 4 in the survey.

	Yes	No
Racial Minority	43%	57%

Table 3 shows that survey responses were nearly split between people of color and white people. White students replied N/A for the question, while students of color replied with their own label for this aspect of their identity. Different responses within the group who identified as racial minorities included: Mexican American, Hispanic, Half White Half Asian, Chicano, Latin American, Black, Hispanic German American, Cambodian Mixed, and Latina.

5. Gender Identity

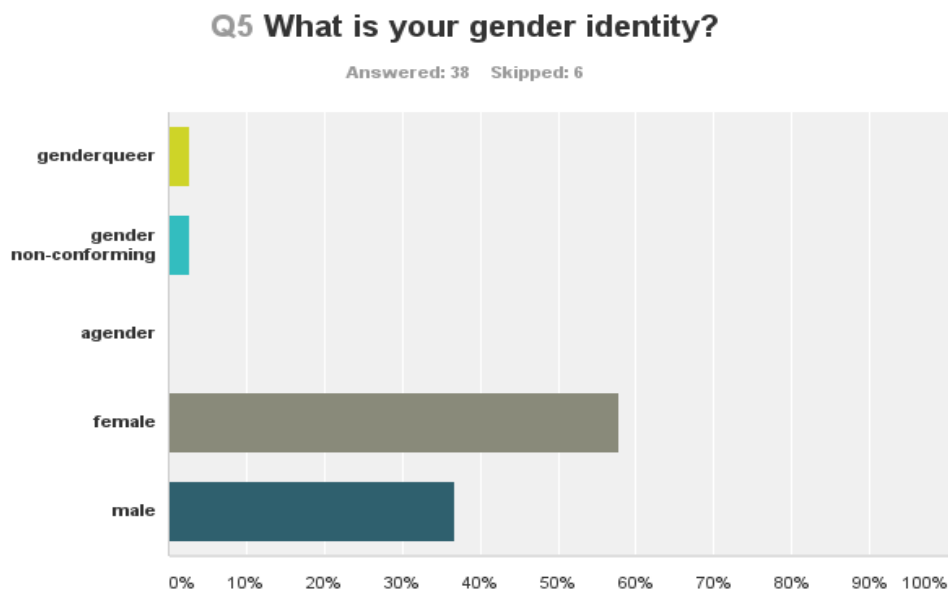


Figure 6 displays gender identities of survey respondents to the “Student Walkway Research” survey.

As seen in Figure 6, respondent’s gender identities were mainly female and male with some genderqueer and gender non-conforming individuals as well. The majority of responses overall self-identified as female.

6. Queer Identity

Table 5 displays data percentages pertaining to survey question 6

	Yes	No
Queer	31%	69%

Table 3 shows that the majority of respondents were non-queer individuals. Different responses within the group who self-identified as Queer individuals included: Lesbian, Transgender, Bisexual, Queer, Hell yeah! I'm Gay as Hell!, Transgender Bisexual, and Genderqueer/Questioning.

7. Disability

Table 6 displays percentages pertaining to question 7.

	Yes	No
Disability	8%	92%

As seen in table 6, the majority of respondents did not self-identify with a disability. Different responses within the group who self-identified included: ADHD inattentive type with Social Anxiety Disorder, Depression, and Social Anxiety. All respondents who self-identified with disabilities described mental health disabilities

8. Stories/ Knowledge regarding the space

Out of the 44 surveys collected, 35 included various knowledge and stories regarding the space. These comments are completely detailed in the appendix at the end of this document in Table 23 on page 69. Some trends in stories/ knowledge are used when discussing alternatives. Some of these trends include: accounts of people falling into the water while drunk, asserting

that no sexual assaults have taken place in “The Rape Tunnel”, and describing how unsafe or unappealing the space appears. For anyone unfamiliar with the space, the stories/knowledge provide multiple first-hand perspectives from people regularly using it.

9. Feelings of Safety in the Tunnel

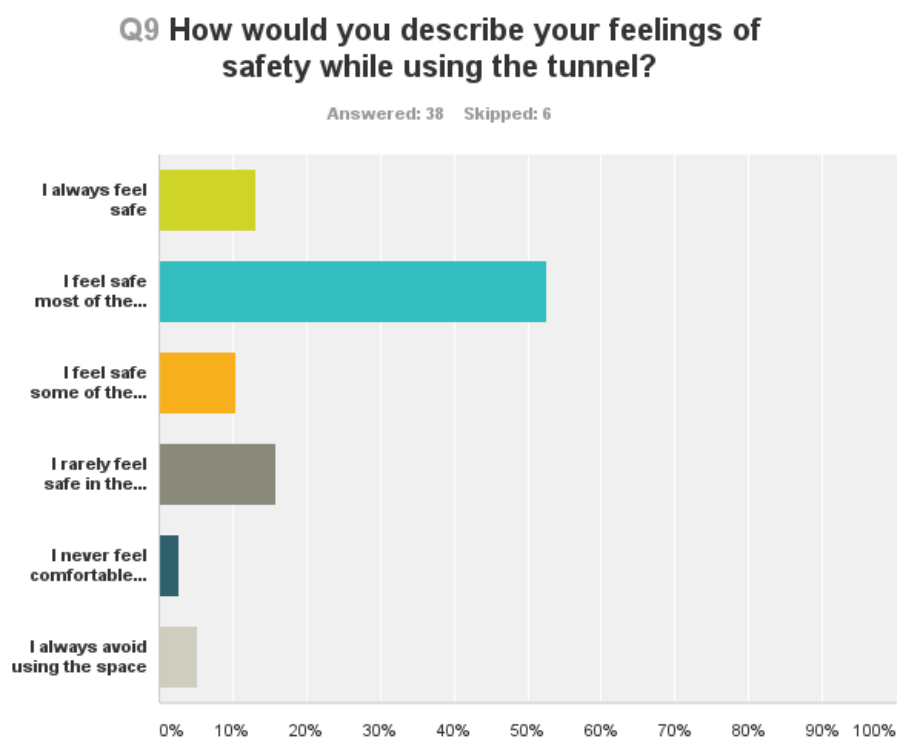


Figure 7 displays feelings of safety in the “Rape Tunnel” analyzed through the Student Walkway Research survey.

Responses to question 9 showed that roughly half of respondents (53%) Feel Safe Most Of The Time walking through “The Rape Tunnel”. As seen in Figure 7, the next three highest ratings were broken up into Always Feel Safe, Feel Safe Some Of The Time, and Rarely Feel Safe. The two lowest responses fell into Never Feel Safe and Always Avoid The Space

categories. Overall, this initial look at the safety ratings shows that there isn't a uniform feeling of safety common to most students. Already data begins to showcase different experiences in "The Rape Tunnel." These differences will be expanded later as the demographic information of respondents in each safety category gets broken down.

10. Rationale behind safety rating in the space

Of the 44 surveys collected, 36 responded with rationale for their safety ratings displayed in the appendix in Table 24 on page 74. The rationale will be grouped by safety ratings and compared to demographic data of respondents rationalizing their safety ratings later in the document.

11. Further questions, comments, or concerns

Of the 44 surveys collected, 25 responded with questions comments or concerns displayed in the appendix in table 25 on page 78. Select questions, comments, and concerns are analyzed at the end of the data section.

12. Option for respondents to submit anonymous drawings of the space to the Women's and Gender Studies front office.

Most participants (95%) read the option (based on Survey Monkey data). However, no drawings were received at the front desk. One hypothesis is that respondents were less

enthusiastic about the form of subjective data than the primary researcher. A second hypothesis is that the limitation on how drawings could be solicited based on the approval of the Human Subjects Committee undermined this form of data collection. As a reminder, drawings were only approved to be solicited at the end of the online survey.

13. Reminded that using the tunnel is unlawful as it is private property

All participants read this statement.

Safety Ratings and Demographic Data

The data above summarized responses to each of the responses to questions provided in the online survey through survey monkey. Now that survey data has been introduced and summarized, this portion of the formal report will detail the demographic data of the different safety ratings. The five demographic questions (Cal Poly Affiliation, Racial Minority, Gender Identity, Queer Identity, and Disability) are provided for each survey response in order to begin observing similarities between respondents within each safety rating category. As a reminder, white students replied N/A to the racial minority question, abled students replied N/A to the disability question, and non-queer students replied N/A to the Queer identity question.

ALWAYS FEEL SAFE

Table 7 shows the demographic data of the survey respondents who Always Feel Safe in the Rape Tunnel.

Respondent #	Cal Poly Affiliation	Racial Minority	Gender Identity	Queer Identity	Disability
2	student	N/A	Gender non-conforming	Gender non-conforming	N/A
4	student	Hispanic	Male	N/A	social anxiety
17	student	N/A	Male	N/A	N/A
20	student	N/A	Male	N/A	N/A
21	student	N/A	Male	N/A	N/A

Table 8 shows the rationale for the Always Feel Safe safety rating.

Respondent #	Reason For Safety Rating
2	I recognize that the name itself might pose a considerable threat to women, but as a person born with a male body, I don't feel personally threatened by the prospect of assault.
4	I rarely pass through the tunnel without seeing another person and 99.99% of the time that person is another college student. Having a flashlight on my phone at night is also extremely helpful.
17	Never had any issues of any kind
20	there wasnt anything about it that i felt threatened by
21	I've never felt unsafe walking through the tunnel

Table 8 begins to show trends among respondents within the highest safety rating. All of the respondents identified as students. Of the five respondents, four identified as male. In Table 8, the one respondent who didn't identify as male believed their male body contributed to their feelings of safety in the space. Respondents 2 and 4 who identified as gender non-conforming and Hispanic respectively spent more time justifying their safety rating. Respondents 17, 20, and 21 who identified as white straight males didn't put as much time or thought into justifying their

safety ratings. Four of the five respondents in this safety rating didn't self-identify with having a disability.

FEEL SAFE MOST OF THE TIME

Table 9 shows the demographic data of the survey respondents who Feel Safe Most Of The Time in "The Rape Tunnel".

Respondent #	Cal Poly Affiliation	Racial Minority	Gender Identity	Queer Identity	Disability
3	student	N/A	Female	N/A	N/A
6	student	Cambodian Mixed	Female	N/A	N/A
8	student	Hispanic	Female	N/A	N/A
9	student	Hispanic German American	Male	N/A	N/A
14	student	N/A	Female	queer	N/A
15	student	Mexican American	Male	N/A	N/A
16	student	Latin American	Genderqueer	Genderqueer/ Questioning	ADHD inattentive type, Social Anxiety Disorder, no physical disability
19	student	N/A	Male	N/A	N/A
22	student	Chicano	Male	Hell ya! I'm gay as hell	N/A
23	student	N/A	Female	N/A	N/A

Table 10 is an extension of Table 9 because Microsoft Word limits table size.

Respondent #	Cal Poly Affiliation	Racial Minority	Gender Identity	Queer Identity	Disability
24	student	N/A	Male	N/A	N/A
25	student	Half White/Half Asian	Male	N/A	N/A
26	student	N/A	Male	N/A	N/A
27	student	N/A	Female	N/A	N/A
29	student	N/A	Female	N/A	N/A
30	student	N/A	Female	N/A	N/A
32	student	N/A	Female	Queer	N/A
37	student	N/A	Female	Lesbian	N/A
40	student	Yes	Male	N/A	N/A
42	student	N/A	Female	N/A	N/A

Table 11 shows the rationale for the students who Feel Safe Most Of The Time in “The Rape Tunnel.”

Respondent #	Reason For Safety Rating
3	usually pretty populated
6	I am from da hood, so not much bothers me. I am used to being in sketchier areas. But, I acknowledge that some folks might feel insecure about the darkness of the tunnel. Also, there is always the possibility you may slip and lose your grounding.
8	Nothing has happened to me walking through it
9	I am a healthy, agile and strong male. There is not a big threat of falling because I have traveled the path so much, I have great night vision and I am athletic. Also no sexual predator would threaten me so I feel safe in that aspect as well.
14	I generally tend to trust the community, but the name of the tunnel, combined with occasional stories of sexual assaults around SLO scare me when I walk through it alone. I am also afraid of a mountain lion or bear being at the creek..??

15	not lighting makes it slightly unsafe
16	I usually feel safe walking through there because I know that my physical safety probably isn't jeopardized. I do occasionally feel uncomfortable walking alone through there because I am often carrying a lot of stuff and there are sometimes some very insensitive frat bros walking through there. For example I recently heard some of them saying that it smelled like rape in there which made me incredibly uncomfortable because they were discussing such a heavy and relevant topic with such levity and they seemed entirely too comfortable with the term. This may just be my own bias because I work with people who have been assaulted but I don't like walking through there without noise canceling headphones nevertheless.
19	I have not heard of any instances when someone felt unsafe in the tunnel.
22	Since I identify as male I've been conditioned by our society to be less afraid. But once I heard rustling when I was walking through at 4 AM and I was scared shitless for 0.2 seconds
23	I usually go through the rape tunnel during the day when there is plenty of other students and it is light. There have been times when I have had to go through in the dark by myself and this is really scary.

Table 12 is an extension of Table 11 because Microsoft Word limits table size.

Respondent #	Reason For Safety Rating
24	Once a ran into a homeless person there in the dark at like 10 o'clock. Every other time I've felt safe.
25	Nothing dangerous happens; it's only dangerous when it rains.
26	not well kept, dark, wet and slippery
27	Nothing has ever happened to me when walking through the tunnel--sometimes it's just slippery when wet or hard to navigate when dark.
29	I truly feel its one of the most heavily trafficked walkways in the area surrounding Cal Poly
30	The amount of people there, I don't feel like I will be trapped and stuck there for a long period of time because so many people use it. And its short
32	I feel pretty safe because I typically only use the tunnel during the day and there are usual other students around. I feel less safe at night, especially if I'm walking alone.
37	It's normally light out

40	The walk ways is dark during the night and not many people use it. It's lonely. The jungle that surrenders it makes it even darker than what it could be.
42	I don't go through it if it's past 9pm when I'm alone, but other than that, I use it every day to get to school. Nothing sketchy is ever happening in there. It's kind of fun

Table 9 begins to show female respondents in a safety rating. A trend continues in Tables 11 and 12 where respondents feel more safe when surrounded by other people. Thus far respondents 4, 14, 16, 23, 29, 30, 32, 40, 42 described feelings of safety based on the amount of people near them while walking through. Their identities included: a Hispanic non-queer male with social anxiety, two white Queer abled females, a Latin American Genderqueer individual with mental disability, four white non-queer abled females, and an abled non-queer man of color. Respondent 6 in the survey is a Cambodian Mixed abled non-queer female and also had the most confident rationale given for her safety rating compared to the other women included in the study. Despite only recognizing how other people could feel unsafe in the area and assuring she grew up in “sketchier areas”, respondent 6 still doesn’t feel safe all of the time in “The Rape Tunnel.” Similar to respondent 2, respondent 9 rationalized his feeling safety based on his “healthy, agile, and strong male” body that “no sexual predator would threaten.” Respondent 19 who identifies as a non-queer white male has “not heard of any instance where someone felt unsafe in the tunnel.” Rather than assert nothing could ever happen to her, Hispanic non-queer abled respondent 8 simply states nothing happened to her while walking in the space. Her rationale is based in personal experience not assumption. The first respondent to have experience working with people who have been sexually assaulted (respondent 16) felt “incredibly uncomfortable” when two “frat bros” joked saying the tunnel “smelled like rape”. Instead of asserting the work with survivors of sexual assault as a reason to know the behavior is definitely

inappropriate, respondent 16 felt like this knowledge biased their perspective. Lighting affected respondents 4, 23, 27, 32, 37, 40, and 42 feelings of safety; their identities included: Hispanic non-queer male with social anxiety, three white non-queer abled females, two white Queer abled women, and one abled man of color. Rain wetting the hillslope affected the safety ratings of respondents 6, 25, 26, 27; their identities included: Cambodian mixed non-queer abled female, Half White Half Asian able bodied non-queer male, white able bodied non-queer female, and white able bodied non-queer male. Eleven of the twenty respondents in this category identify as female.

A quick summary of the above data allows for a more user friendly way to understand trends presented for the Feel Safe Most Of The Time safety rating category. All of the respondents who felt safer walking through the space when surrounded by people were not women of color. They were a combination of men of color, white women, white Queer women, a white man, and a genderqueer individual. The same types of people also felt lack of adequate lighting made them feel less safe. The most confident male from this safety rating category asserted that “no sexual predator” would threaten his “healthy, agile, and strong” male body. The most confident female in this safety rating asserted that her confidence came from living in “sketchier areas” where she felt more unsafe. Finally, the one respondent in this category with experience working with survivors of sexual assault felt their experience and knowledge of the issue biased their survey results.

FELT SAFE SOME OF THE TIME

Table 13 shows the demographic data of respondents who Feel Safe Some Of The Time in “The Rape Tunnel”

Respondent #	Cal Poly Affiliation	Racial Minority	Gender Identity	Queer Identity	Disability
5	student	Chicano	Male	Queer	N/A
34	student	N/A	Female	N/A	N/A
35	student	Hispanic	Female	N/A	N/A
43	student	N/A	Female	N/A	N/A

Table 14 shows the rationale for students who Feel Safe Some Of The Time in “The Rape Tunnel”.

Respondent #	Reason For Safety Rating
5	The time of day and the space itself
34	cops in SLO, near campus
35	
43	I usually feel safe going through the tunnel during the day, while it is well lit, or with a friend.

Two trends continue here as evidenced in Table 14. The first is that the space feels safer with a friend, as noted by white female abled non-queer respondent 43. The second is that lighting plays a factor, which respondents 5 and 43 described influenced their feelings of safety. Their identities included Chicano abled Queer male and white non-queer abled female. This is the first safety rating with an easily noticeable higher percentage of female respondents. Respondent 34 is a white non-queer abled female and the first person to mention the police when justifying their safety rating.

RARELY FEEL SAFE IN THE SPACE

Table 15 shows the demographic data of survey respondents who Rarely Feel Safe in “The Rape Tunnel”

Respondent #	Cal Poly Affiliation	Racial Minority	Gender Identity	Queer Identity	Disability
1	SLO Community Member	N/A	Female	Transgender Bisexual	N/A
18	student	Hispanic/Latino /Mexican	Female	N/A	N/A
28	student	N/A	Female	N/A	N/A
36	student	N/A	Male	Transgender	N/A
39	student	N/A	Female	N/A	N/A
41	Alumni	Mexican American	Female	N/A	N/A

Table 16 shows the rationale for survey respondents who Rarely Feel Safe in “The Rape Tunnel”

Respondent #	Reason For Safety Rating
1	It's a very dark walkway at night and the broken concrete bridge thing that you have to cross is pretty sketchy. Another thing that contributed to my feelings is how hidden it is.
18	Honestly, there's a lot of graffiti within the tunnel (though I've noticed some kind soul has done a good deed by trying to paint over it) and it makes me feel that if someone can easily get away with vandalism then surely anyone can get away with committing a criminal act like rape or another form of sexual assault at night. It scares me to think about it, really. So much that I have had to order a self defense weapon online. But I still use the tunnel negative it's the shortest distance from my house off campus to get to campus.
28	Dark. No light on the other side of it. Trees and places where people could hide. Narrow walkway. Gross water. No real walkway from the tunnel to the cedar side (except now there are cinder blocks).

36	The way that others had described it to me, especially referring to it as the "rape tunnel"
39	I feel like I'm going to be attacked when I walk through there at night
41	

When compared to earlier higher safety ratings, this rating begins to paint a clearer picture of how differently different people experience “The Rape Tunnel”. The first notable aspect of table 15 is that the only two Transgender respondents both fell into the Rarely Feel Safe in the space safety rating category. Noticeable differences weren’t seen between male and female Transgender respondents. While other male respondents were sure their male presentation protected them from sexual assault, the Transgender male respondent felt others commonly referring to the place as “The Rape Tunnel” impacted his safety rating. Also, Hispanic non-queer abled respondent 18 bought a self-defense weapon in order to protect herself while using the space. White non-queer abled female respondent 39 was direct in her fear of being attacked. People hiding around the tunnel were mentioned as a threat for the first time by white, non-queer, abled female respondent 28. Other respondents tended to lightly allude to feeling unsafe at night for unspecified reasons. Respondent 41 declined to justify her safety rating.

NEVER FEEL COMFORTABLE USING THE SPACE

Table 17 describes the demographic data of the survey respondent who Never Feel comfortable using the space.

Respondent #	Cal Poly Affiliation	Racial Minority	Gender Identity	Queer Identity	Disability
7	student	Latina	Female	N/A	N/A

Table 18 shows the rationale for the survey respondent who Never Feel Comfortable using the space.

Respondent #	Reason For Safety Rating
7	I dont feel safe, at all.

Rational in table 18 for non-queer Latina female respondent 7 is minimal. As safety responses become lower, tone of voice in safety ratings justification become more somber and focuses on the self.

ALWAYS AVOID

Table 19 describes the demographic data of the survey respondents who Always Avoid using “The Rape Tunnel”.

Respondent #	Cal Poly Affiliation	Racial Minority	Gender Identity	Queer Identity	Disability
13	student	Black	Female	Queer	Depression
33	student	N/A	Female	Bisexual	N/A

Table 20 shows the rationale for the survey respondents who Always Avoid using the “The Rape Tunnel”.

Respondent #	Reason For Safety Rating
13	Dark, unstable crossing, and steep hill climbs
33	Scary at night

Within Table 20 both respondents feel lighting effects their safety rating. Both respondents are female identified with intersecting disempowered identities. Respondent 13 identifies as a Black Queer woman with depression, and respondent 33 identifies as a Bisexual

white abled female. As mentioned before, the slope and crossings are a factor for feelings of safety. Similar to the Always Feel Safe safety rating justifications, both the Always Avoid and Never Feel Comfortable justification are short compared to responses outside of the extremes.

Summary

The data shows trends of higher safety ratings for respondents with more privilege and lower safety ratings for respondents with less privilege. The highest safety (Always Feel Safe) rating mainly includes non-queer men. Most of the respondents in the category are also white. The only respondent who didn't identify as male describes how their male body made them feel safe in the space. The next highest safety rating (Felt Safe Most Of The Time) includes two women of color out of twenty respondents. Although white non-queer abled men also selected this rating, their reasons for safety are based on seeing a homeless man in the space once and slipping on the hillside. One white male did respond similarly to a concern regarding lighting that mainly concerned men of color, white women, and queer white women. The next safety rating category (Felt Safe Some of the Time) included women of color, men of color, and white women. From this category down, white non queer men were no longer present. The rationale behind these ratings is shorter than those offered above and talked about lighting. The Rarely Feel safe category included women of color, white women, and two transgender individuals. Rather than labeling the transgender male and female as Queer here, their transgender identity is noted. The only two transgender respondents in the survey indicated the same safety rating. One respondent bought a weapon to defend herself because she feels "that if someone can easily get away with vandalism then surely anyone can get away with committing a criminal act like rape or another form of sexual assault at night" (Respondent 18). The three women who chose the

Never Feel Safe or Always Avoid options were women with intersecting disempowered identities. Two are women of color and one is bisexual. People with disabilities fell into high and low safety rating categories. The only trend regarding disability is that all respondents who listed mental disabilities were people of color and most of them were Queer.

SELECT QUESTION COMMENTS AND CONCERNS

This next section looks to see what questions, comments, and concerns people within similar communities provided. Select comments were taken from all of the questions comments and concerns in the survey. The Tables 21 and 22 below are divided so that comments from a respondent with high safety ratings is compared to one with low ratings. These tables will later be used when discussing follow up work to better assess how communities may come together when implementing solutions to work towards solving the problem defined here or related ones in the future on campus.

Table 21 pairs question, comments, and concerns offered by two students who identify within the Queer community.

Demographic Information for high rating	Question, Comment, Concern Provided	Demographic Information for Low Rating	Question, Comment, Concern Provided
Respondent 2 Gender non-conforming White individual	I would wholeheartedly support an effort to alter the publicly accepted name or beautification of the space in general	Respondent 1 Transgender Bisexual White Female	I have only ever used it going to Cal Poly with a group of people and there's no way I would go through it alone.

Responses within table 21 indicate two different perspectives based on identify as noted throughout the data. However, it's important to recognize through this comment comparison that people within the same community can support each other in making the space safer. Respondent 1 wouldn't walk through the space alone because it feels so unsafe to her, and respondent two supports improving the space so that everyone feels safe.

Table 22 pairs questions, comments and concerns offered by two students who identify as Hispanic people of color.

Demographic Information for high rating	Question, Comment, Concern Provided	Demographic Information for Low Rating	Question, Comment, Concern Provided
<p>Respondent 4</p> <p>Straight Hispanic Male</p>	<p>My only comment regarding the space is that although I believe it is safe, I also believe that something needs to be done in order to make everyone feel safe. This will not be achieved by changing the mindset of people, but rather by changing the infrastructure of the space. If the city were to fund a landscaping of the area to include a paved walkway throughout with some simple lighting it would make people feel a lot more safe.</p>	<p>Respondent 18</p> <p>Straight Hispanic/Latino/Mexican Female</p>	<p>I know that any parent would feel uncomfortable with their son/daughter running the risk of something happening to them while merely crossing this walkway to get themselves to campus faster. My mom knows about the tunnel and knows that I take it only because it's most convenient when I'm running late to get to class. She usually asks that I call her when crossing through it, no matter the time of day, because she once had a terrible nightmare something bad happened to me in it.. Her reaction made me cry thinking of the slight possibility something like that could actually happen</p>

			<p>to me.. Or any other student, for that matter. It doesn't even have to apply to any sexual assault acts. There are other flaws about the walkway that are of potential danger to students. It's not paved and there is always a lingering odor that is probably toxic. I've also seen people ride their bikes straight down the path and it both amazes and scares me because even if they're wearing helmets, if their tire loses traction, they could end up crashing into the side wall or falling on the rocks. It either needs to be remodeled or some new path needs to be made. Thank you for taking this project into your hands! I appreciate it! :)</p>
--	--	--	--

Similar to the last comment comparison, the respondent with a higher safety rating in table 23 talks about changing the space to make other people feel more comfortable. On the other side respondent 18 describes how she cried because her mother had a nightmare about her using the space. Again these comments show that there are respondents with higher safety ratings within the same community who do support making “The Rape Tunnel” feel safer even though they don’t have the perspective of respondents who feel more unsafe in the space.

Conclusion

From the data, it becomes apparent that “The Rape Tunnel” is frequently trafficked by Cal Poly students and that the students lived experiences within the space vary greatly. The amount of students utilizing the space within a single hour of a weekday was higher than anticipated. (62-98 uses). Privilege created different lived experiences of “The Rape Tunnel” as evidenced through demographic data comparison to feelings of safety. The respondents with the highest safety ratings were mainly men and lowest all women. Some men honestly stated they felt their male body protected them from attack. Some women honestly stated they bought weapons to defend themselves from attack. While some survey respondents “never heard of any instances when someone felt unsafe in the tunnel” (white male non-queer abled respondent 19), others cried after their parent had a nightmare of their child being attacked in the space (Hispanic non-queer abled respondent 18). Differences overall based on privilege became complicated and in the end people at the intersections of disempowered identities fell into the lowest safety rating categories (women of color, bisexual woman).

Background understandings also allow for further data interpretation. As seen in the cartoon earlier, respondents experienced “The Rape Tunnel” differently based on privilege. As seen through the Union Pacific Railway history and methods history, there are a lot of barriers in place to addressing community issues of sexual assault that manifest into place names of physical locations. The comment made by respondent 19 is similar to the comment made by Richard at his dinner party. The comment provided by respondent 18 is similar to Paula’s response in the same point of the cartoon. Where other cultures used place naming to burden taboo actions with the weight of a physical space, campus community culture places the weight

of a physical space on people based on the intersections of their identity. People never thought to question the space or bought defense weapons based on privilege. More importantly, the heaviest burden (as indicated through comments and feelings of safety) fell mainly onto women at the intersections of disempowerment with racial or queer identities.

Western culture connects to “The Rape Tunnel” through rape culture. The place name is not taken seriously by survey respondents, thought to not exist by faculty members, limited in ability to address the issue as described through methods history, and takes power from people who feel most likely to be attacked. Similar dynamics happen to survivors of sexual assault. Survivors are often not taken seriously when describing the assault to their support system, blamed for the assault by people who deny the problem exists, limited in finding support while in crisis, and have their power taken from them through the assault. The form of data most useful in understanding “The Rape Tunnel” would have been to see how survivors of sexual assault who live the reality of the problem felt within the space. This kind of information however felt too invasive and impersonal to collect through survey responses as sexual assault deeply traumatizes survivors. The data shows how rape is held in landscape and culture through western place naming practices.

ALTERNATIVES

Now that research has defined the problem, three alternatives are suggested as possible changes to “The Rape Tunnel.” First, the most cost effective response is to block the space off from pedestrian use. Second a walkway over the tracks connecting the Stenner apartment complex to California could redirect traffic to a legal crossing. As a third option, a city standards tunnel could be built replacing the storm drain known as “The Rape Tunnel.” It’s noted that the primary stakeholders may find another potential solution that better fits their collective needs best. However, these alternatives are suggested so that findings can be used to focus on solutions to the problem defined in this project. It’s important to weigh each option in terms of the understandings presented as background understandings or the formal report.

As previously stated, the first option is to block the space off. This option may lessen liability in the space for the Union Pacific Railway property owners. However, usage data in table 1 on page 36 showed that there are already illegal crossings over the tracks occurring, and that there is a need for a walkway between the Stenner apartment complex and California. Students may walk around to the legal crossing, but the potential for increasing traffic over the tracks by closing off the tunnel is a possibility worth accounting for.

The next option suggests creating another legal crossing over the railway connecting the Stenner apartment complexes and California. As noted in the usage data, the legal crossing is trafficked at least 63 times from 12:30-1:30 pm during the school week. As noted by survey respondents, “The Rape Tunnel” has an uneven walkway, steep slope, poor lighting, and inappropriate name that trivializes sexual assault. Also, only 5 of 44 respondents Always Feel Safe using the space. From the data, it’s safe to assume many students would be open to walking over the tracks as an alternative to move between California and Stenner. However, the data also

confirmed that at least one person enjoys walking through the space (Respondent 9) so this option may not totally eliminate usage of “The Rape Tunnel.”

Finally, a city standards tunnel could be built in order to replace the storm drain named “The Rape Tunnel.” The space would ideally have decent lighting as this was a major concern to many people using the space at night. A standard pedestrian tunnel would factor in making the slopes going in and out of the space less steep and more user friendly. The new tunnel would likely be less slippery than dirt paths and cinder blocks when it rains. People using the space would probably be less likely to fall into pooled water when they are drunk as well, which also came to be a theme in knowledge/stories about the space provided by survey respondents.

These alternatives are just a jumping off point for more detailed work that would allow “The Rape Tunnel” to feel like a safer physical space. It’s important to note that although Union Pacific is a large landowner and corporation, their website does advertise working with localities their train tracks run through. With this and the history of Safer in mind, it appears likely the two major stakeholders will come together on this project and move forward with a listed alternative or newly proposed one in order to address “The Rape Tunnel “ problem defined in this project.

FOLLOW UP WORK

Changing the physical space is a small part of the larger problem defined in this project. Follow up work should focus on addressing a campus community that found it appropriate to create a place name that trivializes sexual assault. Safer and the WGS department should lead this type of work. The first suggestion is to continue research so that more data can be gathered on how safe different types of students feel on or traveling to and from campus; rationale should again be paired with the ratings. Next, organizations across campus who already meet based on minority identities (cultural organizations) or Greek life should dialogue about how people within their group experience the threat and reality of sexual assault differently. These dialogues will help bridge the gap between people who are regularly forced to live under the threat and experience of assault and people who can't fathom anyone ever experiencing those realities. The comment comparisons provided in the Select Question Comments and Concerns section should be considered when thinking about these dialogues because the data showed that people across privileges are willing to support addressing "The Rape Tunnel." It's worth exploring what other types of advocacy against sexual assault people across privileges are willing to come together as a united community to address. Finally the most important thing to keep in mind when doing this work is to listen to Laverne Cox and "believe when we love someone, we respect them, and we listen to them; we feel that their voice matters, and we let them dictate the terms of who they are and what their story is" (Karlan).

APPENDIX

Works Cited

- 03, April. "Rapist Is Convicted in Deaths of 2 Students." *Los Angeles Times*. Los Angeles Times, 03 Apr. 2001. Web. 16 June 2015.
- Basso, Keith H. *Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscape and Language among the Western Apache*. Albuquerque: U of New Mexico, 1996. Print.
- Center For Disease Control. "Sexual Violence." *Sexual Violence Facts at a Glance* (2008): n. pag. Center For Disease Control, 2012. Web.
- Crawford, Jody. "Aundria Lynn Crawford by Her Grandmother, Jody Crawford." *Aundria Crawford*. Murder Victims, n.d. Web. 16 June 2015.
- Dean Of Studens. "About Safer." - *Dean of Students*. Cal Poly SLO, n.d. Web. 16 June 2015.
- Karlan, Sarah. "14 Times Laverne Cox Dropped Her Vast Wisdom On The World." *BuzzFeed*. BuzzFeed LGBT, 18 Sept. 2014. Web. 16 June 2015.
- McCulloch, David. "Historical Overview." *UP*:. Union Pacific Railway, n.d. Web. 16 June 2015.
- McIntosh, Peggy. "White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Backpack." (n.d.): n. pag. 1989. Web.
- Morris, Toby. "The Pencilsword: On a Plate." *The Wireless*. The Wireless, 22 May 2015. Web. 16 June 2015.
- Pemberton, Patrick S. "Latest Local News from San Luis Obispo, CA | The Tribune." *Latest Local News from San Luis Obispo, CA | The Tribune*. The Tribune, 10 Feb. 2010. Web. 16 June 2015.
- Union Pacific Railway. "Chronological History." *UP*:. Union Pacific Railway, n.d. Web. 16 June 2015.
- Webster. *Merriam-Webster*. Merriam-Webster, n.d. Web. 16 June 2015.

SURVEY DATA

Respondent #	Agree to survey	Tunnel Name	Affiliation with Cal Poly	Racial Minority	Gender Identity
1	yes	The Rape Tunnel	SLO community member	N/A	Female
2	yes	Rape Tunnel	student	N/A	gender non conforming
3	yes	The Rape Tunnel	student	N/A	Female
4	yes	The Rape Tunnel	student	hispanic	male
5	yes	not familiar	student	chicano	male
6	yes	The Rape Tunnel	student	cambodian,mixed	Female
7	yes	Rape Tunnel	student	Latina	Female
8	yes	The Rape Tunnel	student	Hispanic	Female
9	yes	Rape Tunnel	student	hispanic and german american	Male
10	yes	no familiar	student		
11	no				
12	yes				
13	yes	The Rape Tunnel	student	black	Female
14	yes	Rape Tunnel	student	N/A	Female
15	yes		student	mexican american	male
16	yes	Rape Tunnel	student	Latin American	genderqueer
17	yes	Rape Tunnel	student	N/A	male
18	yes	Rape Tunnel	student	Hispanic/Latino/Mexican	Female
19	yes	The Rape Tunnel	student	N/A	Male
Respondent #	Agree to survey	Tunnel Name	Affiliation with Cal Poly	Racial Minority	Gender Identity
21	yes	Rape Tunnel	student	N/A	male
22	yes	the tunnel	student	Chicano	male
23	yes	Rape Tunnel	student	N/A	Female
24	yes	The Rape Tunnel	student	N/A	male
25	yes	Underground Blazeroad	student	Half White/Half Asian	male
26	yes		student	N/A	male
27	yes	the tunnel	student	N/A	Female
28	yes	Rape Tunnel	student	N/A	Female
29	yes	The Rape Tunnel	student	N/A	Female
30	yes	Rape Tunnel	student	N/A	Female
31	yes	Dickbutt	SLO Community Member		
32	yes	The Tunnel/ The Rape Tunnel	student	N/A	Female
33	yes	The Rape Tunnel	student	N/A	Female
34	yes	Rape Tunnel	student	N/A	Female
35	yes	not familiar	student	hispanic	Female
36	yes	The Rape Tunnel	student	N/A	Male
37	yes	Rape Tunnel	student	N/A	Female
38	no				
39	yes	Rape Tunnel	student	N/A	female
40	yes		student	yes	male

Respondent #	Agree to survey	Tunnel Name	Affiliation with Cal Poly	Racial Minority	Gender Identity
41	yes	the jungle	alumni	Mexican-American	female
42	yes	Rape Tunnell	student	N/A	female
43	yes	Rape Tunnell	student	N/A	female
44	yes				

Respondent #	Queer Identity	Disability	stories or knowlege of the tunnel	Saftey Rating	reasons for safety rating	questions/comments
1	Transgender and Bisexual	N/A	yes	rarely	yes	yes
2	N/A	N/A	yes	always	yes	yes
3	N/A	N/A	yes	most of the time	yes	yes
4	N/A	social anxiety	yes	always	yes	yes
5	Queer	N/A	no	some of the time	yes	no
6	N/A	N/A	yes	most of the time	yes	yes
7	N/A	N/A	yes	never	yes	yes
8	N/A	N/A	no	most of the time	yes	no
9	N/A	N/A	yes	most of the time	yes	yes
10						
11						
12						
13	Queer	depression	yes	always avoid	yes	no
14	Queer	N/A	yes	most of the time	yes	yes
15	N/A	N/A	yes	most of the time	yes	no
16	genderqueer/questioning	ADHD, social anxiety	yes	most of the time	yes	yes
17	N/A	N/A	yes	always	yes	yes
18	N/A	N/A	yes	rarely	yes	yes
19	N/A	N/A	yes	most of the time	yes	yes
20	N/A	N/A	yes	always	yes	

Respondent #	Queer Identity	Disability	stories or knowlege of the tunnel	Saftey Rating	reasons for safety rating	questions/comments
21	N/A	N/A	yes	always	yes	no
22	Hell ya! I'm gay as hell!	N/A	yes	most of the time	yes	no
23	N/A	N/A	yes	most of the time	yes	yes
24	N/A	N/A	yes	most of the time	yes	no
25	N/A	N/A	yes	most of the time	yes	
26	N/A	N/A	yes	most of the time	yes	
27	N/A	N/A	yes	most of the time	yes	
28	N/A	N/A	yes	rarely	yes	yes
29	N/A	N/A	yes	most of the time	yes	
30	N/A	N/A	yes	most of the time	yes	yes
31						
32	Queer	N/A	yes	most of the time	yes	no
33	bisexual	N/A	yes	always avoid	yes	yes
34	N/A	N/A	yes	some of the time	yes	yes
35	yes	N/A		some of the time		
36	transgender	N/A	yes	rarely	yes	yes
37	Lesbian	N/A	yes	most of the time	yes	yes
38						
39	N/A	N/A	yes	rarely	yes	
40	N/A	N/A	yes	most of the time	yes	yes

Respondent #	Queer Identity	Disability	stories or knowlege of the tunnel	Saftey Rating	reasons for safety rating	questions/comments
39	N/A	N/A	yes	rarely	yes	
40	N/A	N/A	yes	most of the time	yes	yes
41	no	no		rarely		
42	N/A	N/A	yes	most of the time	yes	
43	N/A	N/A	yes	some of the time	yes	
44						

Table 23 displays responses to question 8 of the Student Walkway Research survey.

Respondent #	Knowledge/Story	Respondent #	Knowledge/Story
1	I don't have much first hand experience but I've only known it as "The Rape Tunnel" and it completely met my expectations using it for the first time and after hearing it called that so many times. The first time I used it was at night so I was using the light on my phone to look wear I was walking. I didn't notice any of the graffiti since I was looking down. It looks kind of intimidating at day or night.	23	I just know that it is commonly used way to get to and from Cal Poly during the night and during the day.
2	I understand that there's a pretty horrible name associated with it, but I don't see an easy way to remedy the situation. There's a decent amount of graffiti on the walls, but I like it, it adds character	24	No stories really, it is just a sketchy walkway so people call it the rape tunnel. Occasionally it will rain and flood and then people will have stories about falling in it.
3	i have friends who have tripped and fallen in the water	25	I saw some people blaze it up once.
4	In my three years at Cal Poly I have never heard one negative, scary, or otherwise troublesome story about this walkway. This walkway is frequently in use as a way to shave off about five minutes from the walk to campus for students. There have been many assaults around other parts of the campus and surrounding area, however, to my knowledge, I have not heard of one occurring in this specific area. I wholeheartedly believe that this walkway earned its name	26	Shitty walkway called rape tunnel even though it is not linked to any rapes

	<p>simply for being a dark, unpaved, sketchy walkway, not because of any particular incident.</p>		
6	<p>To the best of my knowledge, no one has gotten raped in that tunnel, it is just very sketch. I do not know where the origin of the name is derived from.</p> <p>Once, I saw some couches and chairs in the tunnel during the summer time. Recently, someone laid newer cement blocks that has made it a lot easier to cross over the stream. Graffiti is new as well.</p>	27	<p>People like to call it by a different name which I find offensive and trivializes sexual assault.</p>
7	<p>That it's terrifying to walk through the rape tunnel at night. That it's sketch to walk through the rape tunnel during the day and night time.</p>	28	<p>walking through it every day. It is super annoying when it gets flooded and we have to walk all the way around to get to california. It is super dark and scary at night. I have seen high schoolers making out in it thinking they were hiding from people. I know a ton of people who have fell in it when they were drunk. It is super dirty and gross. Sometimes there are clothes and things in there like someone lives near it. There has been a couch in there at some point. Now there are a couple cinder blocks there which makes the walk easier. My parents aren't a fan of it. There needs to be a light or security near it. It is very steep and slippery on the other side, especially if it is raining. but in the end it is super convenient i just think it needs to be safer or renovated considering EVERYONE uses it as a way of getting to school or to the other side.</p>

8	No stories, to me its just a shortcut	29	Easy access to California Street, heavily trafficked
9	It is a significantly faster way to get to school or back to my house on Stenner st. Everyone calls it the rape tunnel. I remember freshman year (4 years ago and still today) it was used as a point of reference to locate parties or as direction where to go. It is a very popular path everyday and on the weekends.	30	No stories. I know its called the rape tunnel just implying that its a sketchy tunnel, however I walk through it multiple times a day and there are many students that use it so I don't feel like I am alone or in danger (unless at night, in which I will be scared no matter where I am walking). Plus its so short you're out as soon as you are in and close to people to hear you... so nothing bad except "omg I slipped in the rape tunnel last night and got my whole shoe wet it was so gross"
13	I know people who have fallen in the water while crossing. It's a shortcut many students use going to and from classes	32	I know a girl who fell in the water one time when she was drunk.
14	I know that lots of people use it and have used it for a long time. I learned about it as a shortcut to school when I moved into the neighborhood. My friend fell into the creek one night while walking home after drinking.	33	Scary at night
15	I just use it to get to campus	34	A lot of homeless people have been in there, graffiti, flooded
16	I know that it floods when it rains and that in all likelihood no one has actually been raped there (there's too much foot traffic and people are far more likely to be assaulted by people whom they know). I have heard that a lot of women feel really unsafe walking through there late at night but I personally have never felt this way despite the fact that I present as female. Most of the scandalous stories	36	To be really careful going through it at night because bad things can happen

	that I've heard about the tunnel have involved people tripping and falling. I also know that a lot of individuals have taken to calling it the "bunny tunnel" because they dislike the "rape tunnel" label.		
17	Scary name, but perfectly safe shortcut to cross the train tracks.	37	Everyone calls it the rape tunnel but never heard why
18	I have seen it in the worst condition yet, last quarter. It was absolutely trashed and had a giant dirty couch blocking half the pathway. I don't understand how people, Cal Poly Students and SLO Residents alike, can contribute to such filth and not care about the condition of the walkway. I don't know if anything terrible has happened to someone while crossing through the tunnel at night, but I wouldn't really doubt it if someone told me it had.	39	A lot of people have been attacked in there while walking through
19	I was running through the tunnel and tripped on a protruding rock.	40	I used the walkway as main road of transportation, during the morning and late at night, every day including Sundays. Don't use it when it rains because it is not safe. At night the walkway is dark and it can be unsafe.
20	its a shortcut to get to campus	42	It has a scary/weird name but nothing serious has ever happened there as far as I know. Just fun stuff of silly/drunk friends falling into the gross water. One time my roommate used the water as a sample in her micro lab and it was pretty gross

21	I walk to school everyday through the tunnel and nothing happens.	43	After returning from Christmas break, there was a homeless man living in the "rape tunnel."
22	This one time I heard about people toking it up down there.		

Table 24 describes the rationale behind survey respondent's feelings of safety within the Student

Walkway Research Survey

Respondent #	What Contributed To Feelings Of Safety	Respondent #	What Contributed To Feelings Of Safety?
1	It's a very dark walkway at night and the broken concrete bridge thing that you have to cross is pretty sketchy. Another thing that contributed to my feelings is how hidden it is.	22	Since I identify as male I've been conditioned by our society to be less afraid. But once I heard rustling when I was walking through at 4 AM and I was scared shitless for 0.2 seconds
2	I recognize that the name itself might pose a considerable threat to women, but as a person born with a male body, I don't feel personally threatened by the prospect of assault.	23	I usually go through the rape tunnel during the day when there is plenty of other students and it is light. There have been times when I have had to go through in the dark by myself and this is really scary.
3	usually pretty populated	24	Once a ran into a homeless person there in the dark at like 10 o'clock. Every other time I've felt safe.
4	I rarely pass through the tunnel without seeing another person and 99.99% of the time that person is another college student. Having a flashlight on my phone at night is also extremely helpful.	25	Nothing dangerous happens; it's only dangerous when it rains.
5	The time of day and the space itself	26	Shitty walkway called rape tunnel even though it is not linked to any rapes

6	<p>I am from da hood, so not much bothers me. I am used to being in sketchier areas.</p> <p>But, I acknowledge that some folks might feel insecure about the darkness of the tunnel. Also, there is always the possibility you may slip and lose your grounding.</p>	27	<p>Nothing has ever happened to me when walking through the tunnel--sometimes it's just slippery when wet or hard to navigate when dark.</p>
7	I dont feel safe, at all.	28	<p>Dark. No light on the other side of it. Trees and places where people could hide. Narrow walkway. Gross water. No real walkway from the tunnel to the cedar side (except now there are cinder blocks).</p>
8	Nothing has happened to me walking through it	29	I truly feel its one of the most heavily trafficked walkways in the area surrounding Cal Poly
9	<p>I am a healthy, agile and strong male. There is not a big threat of falling because I have traveled the path so much, I have great night vision and I am athletic. Also no sexual predator would threaten me so I feel safe in that aspect as well.</p>	30	<p>The amount of people there, I don't feel like I will be trapped and stuck there for a long period of time because so many people use it. And its short</p>
13	Dark, unstable crossing, and steep hill climbs	32	<p>I feel pretty safe because I typically only use the tunnel during the day and there are usual other students around. I feel less safe at night, especially if I'm walking alone.</p>

14	I generally tend to trust the community, but the name of the tunnel, combined with occasional stories of sexual assaults around SLO scare me when I walk through it alone. I am also afraid of a mountain lion or bear being at the creek..??	33	The name, other people's experiences
15	not lighting makes it slightly unsafe	34	cops in SLO, near campus
16	I usually feel safe walking through there because I know that my physical safety probably isn't jeopardized. I do occasionally feel uncomfortable walking alone through there because I am often carrying a lot of stuff and there are sometimes some very insensitive frat bros walking through there. For example I recently heard some of them saying that it smelled like rape in there which made me incredibly uncomfortable because they were discussing such a heavy and relevant topic with such levity and they seemed entirely too comfortable with the term. This may just be my own bias because I work with people who have been assaulted but I don't like walking through there without noise canceling headphones nevertheless.	36	The way that others had described it to me, especially referring to it as the "rape tunnel"

17	Never had any issues of any kind	37	It's normally light out
18	Honestly, there's a lot of graffiti within the tunnel (though I've noticed some kind soul has done a good deed by trying to paint over it) and it makes me feel that if someone can easily get away with vandalism then surely anyone can get away with committing a criminal act like rape or another form of sexual assault at night. It scares me to think about it, really. So much that I have had to order a self defense weapon online. But I still use the tunnel negative it's the shortest distance from my house off campus to get to campus.	39	I feel like I'm going to be attacked when I walk through there at night
19	I have not heard of any instances when someone felt unsafe in the tunnel.	40	The walk ways is dark during the night and not many people use it. It's lonely. The jungle that surrenders it makes it even darker than what it could be.
20	there wasnt anything about it that i felt threatened by	42	I don't go through it if it's past 9pm when I'm alone, but other than that, I use it every day to get to school. Nothing sketchy is ever happening in there. It's kind of fun
21	I've never felt unsafe walking through the tunnel	43	I usually feel safe going through the tunnel during the day, while it is well lit, or with a friend.

Table 25 summarizes questions, comments, and concerns from survey respondents from the Student Walkway Research.

Respondent #	Question/Comments/Concerns	Respondent #	Questions/Comments/Concerns
1	I have only ever used it going to Cal Poly with a group of people and there's no way I would go through it alone.	19	I feel that the space should be maintained much better since it is used by so many students every day.
2	I would wholeheartedly support an effort to alter the publicly accepted name or beautification of the space in general	21	no
3	it gets dark at night and the actual pathway is sketchy	23	I feel like it could be redone but I don't know how well they Cal Poly students and community would do at making sure it doesn't get spray painted again. It would help to have a more clear walkway and maybe some lighting.
4	My only comment regarding the space is that although I believe it is safe, I also believe that something needs to be done in order to make everyone feel safe. This will not be achieved by changing the mindset of people, but rather by changing the infrastructure of the space. If the city were to fund a landscaping of the area to include a paved walkway throughout with some simple lighting it would make people feel a lot more safe.	24	no
5	Nah	28	Why are there no lights, even after all of these years? and Why hasn't anyone thought of renovating it or making it a safe space for students to use considering everyone does use it?
6	It would be nice to have lighting in the tunnel. Many people use it	30	The popular name can make it seem misconstrued as a dangerous place to

	<p>because it is a lot more convenient. If you live on the other side of California across the railroad tracks, going down Foothill and Casa adds an extra 10 mins to your walking commute.</p> <p>Sometimes, I feel it's difficult for pedestrians to travel around SLO. This tunnel is just another way for us to make things work.</p>		<p>be, but the term "rape" is also used very loosely used and can be very offensive to those who have been through sexual violence or assault.</p>
7	<p>Is it possible to add some form of lighting when it's dark?</p> <p>Make it more accessible so the path is not just for one person?</p> <p>Are there any risks that the train will ever collapse under the tunnel?</p> <p>What is being done about the people that walk over the train tracks?</p> <p>Is there any way to do something about the homeless people that live under the bridge?</p>	32	no
9	<p>I feel that the path could be re done to decrease tripping and falling hazards. Although it would take away from the integrity of the path and its history of being sketchy and fun to travel when partying.</p>	33	<p>It would be nice to have a safe, well light walkway</p>
14	<p>I have noticed that some people have tried to make the path more accessible.. for a while, there was an old wooden board that fashioned as a makeshift bridge. Now there are cinder blocks that have replaced the wood.. but the dirt part of the path is slippery and I really have to pay attention to my footing.. but I would never walk all the way around the block to get to California Blvd instead of using the tunnel</p>	34	<p>The name of the tunnel is concerning because it contributes to this rape culture that has become an even bigger issue at cal poly</p>
15	no	36	<p>There should be more light in it and maybe to fix the uneven concrete</p>

16	I would say that the biggest problem with the space is how uneven the terrain is. I know that most boys wear sneakers or loafers when they're walking to class or to a meeting but women often wear heels or less stable shoes because social norms dictate that those are appropriate which means that they have less stability navigating through the same space.	37	It probably shouldn't be called rape tunnel if because that's offensive.
17	Could use some lighting for when it gets dark.	40	Solving the issue of safety could be costly or there might not be any solution for the walkway
18	I know that any parent would feel uncomfortable with their son/daughter running the risk of something happening to them while merely crossing this walkway to get themselves to campus faster. My mom knows about the tunnel and knows that I take it only because it's most convenient when I'm running late to get to class. She usually asks that I call her when crossing through it, no matter the time of day, because she once had a terrible nightmare something bad happened to me in it.. Her reaction made me cry thinking of the slight possibility something like that could actually happen to me.. Or any other student, for that matter. It doesn't even have to apply to any sexual assault acts. There are other flaws about the walkway that are of potential danger to students. It's not paved and there is always a lingering odor that is probably toxic. I've also seen people ride their bikes straight down the path and it both amazes and scares me because even if they're wearing helmets, if their tire loses traction, they could end up crashing into the side wall or		

	falling on the rocks. It either needs to be remodeled or some new path needs to be made. Thank you for taking this project into your hands! I appreciate it! :)		
--	---	--	--

Informed consent Form

INFORMED CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH PROJECT: "*Student Walkway Research*"

Senior project research is being conducted by Gabrielle Watson, a student in the Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences Department at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, under the supervision of Dr. Jane Lehr. This project focuses on student perceptions of a common walkway used to move to and from campus. The purpose of this study is to better understand feelings surrounding this space and to gather data about how it is perceived by students.

You are being asked to participate in this study by completing an anonymous online survey. The survey asks questions about your perspectives of the tunnel which connects California Blvd. to Stenner St. apartments, as well as demographic questions. Your participation will take approximately 20 to 30 minutes. Please be aware that you are not required to participate in this research and you may choose to stop participation at any point in time. You also do not have to answer to any questions that you would prefer not to answer.

Your participation in this research is anonymous; you will not be asked to list your name during the survey. There are minor psychological risks associated with participation in this survey if the questions evoke perceptions of threat to your personal safety. Please be aware that if you are a Cal Poly student you may contact or visit: the Cal Poly Counseling Center in the campus Health Center, 756-2511, PRISM via jenny1.prism@gmail.com, Safer, 756-2282, UU 217 or PULSE, 756-6181. Your participation in this research may enhance the understanding of perceptions regarding the tunnel as well as safety commuting to campus.

If you have questions about this study or would like to be informed about the results, please feel free to contact Gabrielle Watson at gjwatson@calpoly.edu or her faculty advisor, Dr. Jane Lehr, [jllehr@calpoly.edu](mailto:jlehr@calpoly.edu), (805)756-9247. If you have concerns regarding the manner in which the study is conducted, you may contact Dr. Steve Davis, Chair of the Cal Poly Human Subject Committee, at (805) 756-2754, sdavis@calpoly.edu, or Dean Wendt, Dean of Research, at (805)756-1508, dwendt@calpoly.edu

If you agree to voluntarily participate in this research project as described, please indicate your agreement by completing the survey at

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/JJ8ZN88>

Please keep this form for your future reference and thank you for your participation in this survey.