

An Opportunity to Consider

“‘Rolling Stone’ Account of Rape at UVa Continues to Crumble

[The Washington Post](#) on Wednesday published new details that cast additional doubts on Rolling Stone magazine’s graphic portrayal of an alleged gang rape at a University of Virginia fraternity house.

The newspaper interviewed three UVa students—identified in Rolling Stone’s article as friends of Jackie, the alleged victim—who expressed skepticism about the accuser’s account of the incident. The Post’s article said the three students had spoken out about ‘mounting inconsistencies with the original narrative in the magazine.’

UVa officials confirmed to the Post that no one by the name Jackie provided as that of her date on the night of the alleged incident had ever attended the university.

The magazine’s account of the allegations, published last month, rocked the university and became a rallying cry in the movement to curb sexual assault on college campuses. Afterward, UVa suspended its fraternities until early January, and campus leaders have vowed to improve their handling of sexual-assault cases.

This month, however, the story began to unravel, and the magazine’s editors apologized for [discrepancies in its account](#). Advocates for sexual-assault victims and others have raised concerns that the magazine’s backpedaling could [stunt recent efforts](#) to improve how colleges respond to sexual violence.

Teresa A. Sullivan, the university’s president, told the newspaper that UVa officials would continue to cooperate with a police investigation into the case. She also said she wanted UVa to remain focused on sexual-assault prevention.

A lawyer representing Jackie told the newspaper that the episode had been 'very stressful, overwhelming, and retraumatizing for Jackie and her family,' but did not elaborate."

My comment:

Faculty and administrators are not trained to assess accusations. And, if they are inclined to believe the accusations or have personal irrelevant reasons to believe the accusations, the accused will be punished without regard to facts. There are many examples in recent academic history, but there's nothing like personal experiences to understand just how incompetent university faculty and administrators are when they undertake to consider accusations. Here's mine: Then-President Martha Saunders at the University of Southern Mississippi (current provost at West Florida University) is an example of such irrational behavior. After accusers recanted their claims under oath, she continued with irrational actions against the accused without any reason at all. It's 21st Century Kafka. Her [sworn testimony](#) is bizarre to say the least.

University of Southern Mississippi failed to correct the injustice and paid the price.