

Universitat de València
Facultat de Filologia, Traducció i Comunicació
Departament de Filologia Anglesa i Alemanya
Institut Interuniversitari de Llengües Modernes Aplicades
Doctorat en Llengües, Literatures i Cultures, i les seues Aplicacions



**Discourses of sexual violence:
A critical analysis of the
representation of victims and perpetrators
on Twitter**

PH.D. THESIS WITH INTERNATIONAL DISTINCTION

Submitted by:

Patricia Palomino Manjón

Supervised by:

Prof. Dr. Patricia Bou Franch

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To all women and victim-survivors of gender-based violence.

We will not be silenced.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AOIR	The Association of Internet Researchers
ASJ	Associate Justice
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
CDS	Critical Discourse Studies
CL	Corpus linguistics
CADS	Corpus-assisted discourse analysis
CMC	Computer-mediated communication
CMDA	Computer-mediated discourse analysis
DCOE	Discourse-centered online ethnography
DHA	Discourse-Historical Approach
DMC	Digitally-mediated communication
FCDA	Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis
GOP	Grand Old Party
IPV	Intimate partner violence
KWIC	Keyword in context
MI	Mutual Information
MRA	Men's Rights Activists
SCOTUS	Supreme Court of the United States
SFL	Systemic-Functional Linguistics
SM-CDS	Social Media Critical Discourse Studies
SNS	Social networking site

Introduction

INTRODUCTION

Violence against women has been defined by the United Nations as “any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women ... whether occurring in public or private life” (United Nations, n.d.). Therefore, violence against women is considered to be a violation of women’s human rights. One of the forms of gender-based violence, and also the object of this thesis, is sexual violence. Sexual violence reflects power imbalance and discrimination between men and women and is present in all societies and social classes (Dartnall & Jewkes, 2013; Tavara, 2006).

Sexual violence can take many forms and can occur in a variety of settings. Dartnall and Jewkes (2013) offer a list of sexual acts and circumstances which might encompass sexual aggression. Such list is reproduced in the quote below:

rape in marriage or dating relationships; rape of non-romantic acquaintances; sexual abuse by those in positions of trust, such as clergy, medical practitioners or teachers; rape by strangers; multiple perpetrator rape; sexual contact involving trickery, deception, blackmail or of persons who are incapacitated or are too drugged, drunk or intoxicated to consent; rape during armed conflict; sexual harassment, including demanding sex in return for work, school grades or favours; unwanted sexual touching; rape of men in prisons; unwanted exposure to pornography; sexual abuse of mentally or physically disabled people; sexual abuse of boys and girls; and violent acts against sexual integrity, including female genital mutilation, inspections for virginity, forced anal examination and forced trafficking of people for the purpose of sexual exploitation. (Dartnall & Jewkes, 2013, p.4)

Therefore, sexual violence occurs when consent is not given by the victim-survivor¹. Although a victim-survivor of sexual violence can be either a woman or a man, research states that perpetrators of sexual violence are commonly men, whereas most victim-survivors are women (Dartnall & Jewkes, 2013; Tavara, 2006). In fact, it seems that

¹ There is an ongoing debate among feminist scholars about the use of the terms *victim* and *survivor*. Although some feminist scholars prefer to use the noun *survivor* as a linguistic resource of empowerment, other “feminists have also cautioned against seeing these terms as binaries and so reinforcing the stigma of victimization” (Boyle, 2019, p. 15). In addition, previous research has shown that, sometimes, the difference among the two terms is tenuous (see Williamson & Serna, 2018; Palomino-Manjón, 2022a). Consequently, this thesis takes the merged term *victim-survivor*.

young women are more prone to suffer sexual violence when perpetrated by men close to them (Boyer & Fine, 1992; Powell & Henry, 2017; Távora, 2006). Moreover, scholars have pointed out that women experience greater uneasiness and distress in public spaces than men due to everyday sexism, harassment, and potential sexual assault (Powell & Henry, 2017).

Despite the fact that sexual violence is a societal issue common to many countries in the world, cases of sexual aggression are still underreported, thus rendering it invisible on most occasions. This is due to a social environment of accepted norms and attitudes that trivializes and disregards sexual violence while it victimizes, blames, and shames victim-survivors (Dartnall & Jewkes, 2013; Powell & Henry, 2017). This cultural setting is commonly known as *rape culture*. The existence of a rape culture that excuses perpetrators prevents victim-survivors from reporting the sexual crimes they have suffered (Powell & Henry, 2017). In addition, many victim-survivors have been questioned and have suffered from victim-blaming and slut-shaming attitudes not only from known relatives but also from authoritative figures (e.g., lawyers) after filing a report with the police (Loney-Howes, 2019), which, in turn, gives impunity to perpetrators.

Although violence against women was traditionally considered to belong to the private sphere (Bou-Franch, 2013), sexual violence simultaneously became a public and private issue shortly after the emergence of digital platforms. This situation has had both a negative and a positive impact on the lives of victim-survivors. Powell and Henry state that digital communication technologies “are all being used to facilitate sexual assaults (and violence) as well as to shame, humiliate and blackmail victim-survivors” (2017, p. 79). The authors differentiate four ways in which digital platforms contribute to the spread of rape culture and sexual violence: 1) the use of websites and platforms to perpetrate and target (potential) victims (e.g., online dating and grooming); 2) the use of these platforms to victimize and inflict verbal aggression and harassment on victim-survivors; 3) the simulation of sexual violence or *virtual rape* (e.g., online videogames and roleplaying fora); and 4) the creation of anti-feminist and pro-rape online communities which promote toxic masculinities and (online) misogyny (i.e., the manosphere). This thesis focuses on the second form of digital (sexual) violence.

Research on online aggression against women has discussed the use of different digital platforms to spread victim-blaming and slut-shaming discourses derived from rape

culture to deny the existence of such violence (see Bou-Franch, 2013; Bou-Franch & Garcés-Conejos Blitvich, 2014b). More specifically, the microblogging platform Twitter has been pointed out as the most sexist and (sexually) aggressive social networking site (Jane, 2017b; Mendes et al., 2018; Lewis et al., 2017). International literature has shown how Twitter is used to sexually threaten women (e.g., Frenda et al., 2019; Hardaker & McGlashan, 2016) as well as to further victimize victim-survivors of sexual violence (e.g., Idoiaga Mondragon et al., 2019; Stubbs-Richardson et al., 2018). In such Twitter interactions, victim-survivors are blamed for their experiences of sexual violence, and perpetrators are excused or even portrayed as the real victims. In fact, this form of online aggression is one of the main reasons why victim-survivors avoid sharing their experiences on digital platforms.

Notwithstanding this negative view of Twitter, the platform has also provided victim-survivors and feminists with a relatively safe space to engage in online networked feminism. The most popular Twitter affordance, namely the hashtag (#), is being used as a tool for socio-political organization and resistance and to form online communities, even though tweeters might never interact directly or know each other (Zappavigna, 2012; Papacharissi, 2014). Feminists and victim-survivors use hashtags to make (sexual) violence against women more visible and to denounce rape culture. This form of discursive protest is known as *hashtag feminism*. In hashtag feminism, tweeters offer peer support and give credibility to self-narratives of sexual violence, thus challenging traditional rape myths and scripts (Loney-Howes, 2019). In fact, scholars have pointed out that sharing personal narratives of sexual violence help victim-survivors go through a therapeutic process “beneficial for their recovery” (Masciantonio et al., 2021). Although this form of feminist activism appeared on Twitter in the early 2010s, it was not until the (re)emergence of the *#MeToo* movement in 2017 that it became popularized among Twitter users due to its significant impact on society. This form of networked feminism was key in the creation of the fourth wave of feminism (Blevins, 2018). It is, therefore, not surprising that the study of hashtag feminism is currently gaining momentum in the field of linguistics (see Barker-Plummer & Barker-Plummer, 2017; Bouvier, 2020; Jones et al., 2022; Morikawa, 2019a, 2019b; Palomino-Manjón, 2022a).

Although some research has examined online (sexual) violence against women and feminist resistance on Twitter separately, no studies have been found which compare the different discourses which surround online misogyny and feminism when coexisting

within the same digital platform (or even hashtag) from a linguistic perspective. This thesis investigates a case study surrounding the nomination of former Judge Brett Kavanaugh as Associate Justice to the Supreme Court of the United States of America. His nomination became a highly public concern when California professor Dr. Christine Blasey Ford accused him of attempting to rape her in 1983. The allegations of sexual assault against former Judge Brett Kavanaugh constituted a crisis regarding the future of female U.S. citizens, especially concerning their rights in issues such as abortion. Moreover, his presence in the Supreme Court would mean that two out of nine Justices would have been accused of sexual misconduct. Maas et al. argue that “powerful political leaders can be salient symbols of rape culture” (2018, p. 1). Therefore, his nomination by the then President of the United States of America Donald Trump, who has publicly confessed to perpetrating sexual violence numerous times, to the highest court in the federal judiciary of the United States of America acted as a form of symbolic violence to perpetuate rape culture and patriarchal oppression in U.S. society and institutions.

Cases of sexual violence involving public and political figures “create a visible and dramatic crisis which occurs on a national level through media exposure” (Maas et al., 2018, p. 3). Consequently, digital platforms provide regular citizens with the opportunity to voice their stances on such topics publicly and to express their (dis)affiliation with the social actors involved. During the confirmation process, Dr. Ford became the target of online aggression and threats by Internet users who supported Associate Justice (AsJ) Kavanaugh, especially on Twitter (Boyle, 2019). However, her case also prompted the (re)emergence of online networked feminism which used Twitter hashtags to support her testimony of sexual assault (Deal et al., 2020; Palomino-Manjón, 2022a).

Consequently, this case study seeks to examine the different linguistic patterns and discourses used by tweeters to (re)produce patriarchal oppression and to negotiate Dr. Ford’s and AsJ Kavanaugh’s identities as either victims or perpetrators of (sexual) violence. Therefore, this thesis has two primary objectives: 1) to examine Twitter users’ gender-based ideologies and discourses and how these relate to the construction of the identity of victims and perpetrators of sexual violence, and 2) to identify the evaluative language employed by tweeters to discuss and (re)produce (verbal) violence against women and to sustain, challenge and resist gendered ideologies and discourses. Consequently, two research questions were posed:

Research question 1:

RQ1.1. What ideologies and discourses did tweeters draw from in their discussion of gender-based violence during AsJ Kavanaugh's confirmation process?

RQ1.2. How do such gendered ideologies and discourses relate to the construction of the victim-perpetrator identities?

Research question 2:

RQ2. What evaluative resources did tweeters draw upon to signal different gender ideologies and discourses? Were these resources employed to sustain or challenge gender (in)equality and sexual violence?

This thesis has been divided into four main parts and nine chapters. The present introductory chapter has discussed the background and rationale for this research and has highlighted the importance of AsJ Kavanaugh's confirmation in American politics and the judicial system concerning sexual violence and gender inequality. Moreover, it has briefly presented the specific objectives and research questions.

The first part (Part I) of this dissertation offers a review of the previous literature and the underlying theoretical foundations on which this thesis is based. Chapter 1 begins by engaging in a diachronic overview of the emergence and evolution of digitally-mediated communication from a digital discourse analysis approach. Then, it goes on to describe key concepts for this research, such as online identity and digital communities and practices. This chapter also presents the microblogging platform Twitter as the object of research for this thesis. Specifically, it focuses on the relevance of Twitter hashtags to create discourse communities on the microblogging platform as well as to engage in socio-political practices and activism.

Chapter 2 provides an account of previous research on digitally-mediated communication from a gender perspective. Particularly, it discusses that, although originally considered to blur social inequalities, digital platforms are part of a male-centered culture that promotes (verbal) aggression against women and other minority groups. The chapter then turns to Twitter to review previous research on (linguistic) aggression against women on the microblogging platform, as it explains how patriarchal discourses and practices are spread across it. In addition, it also addresses newer developments in digital feminist activism which attempt to resist misogyny and rape culture both in online and offline contexts.

The second part (Part II) is concerned with the objectives, data collection, and the methodology and procedures used for this thesis. Chapter 3 provides a detailed account of the objectives and research questions of this Ph.D. dissertation. Then, Chapter 4 gives a diachronic description of the nomination and confirmation process of AsJ Brett Kavanaugh. This serves to justify the relevance and suitability of the confirmation process to address the objectives of the present thesis. Next, the chapter introduces the collection procedure and the characteristics of the two corpora of analysis. Such corpora are comprised of tweets that included the hashtags *#KavanaughConfirmation* and *#NoKavanaughConfirmation* and allow the examination of the different stances and discourses produced by tweeters during the confirmation process.

Chapter 5 explores the methodological and analytical tools employed for the analyses. It outlines the main tenets of Critical Discourse Studies, with a special focus on a feminist, critical approach to the study of discourse, namely Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (Lazar, 2005). After this, the chapter introduces Corpus-Assisted Discourse Studies (Partington et al., 2013) as the methodological approach adopted in the present study. It highlights, especially, the role of corpus linguistics tools in the analysis of evaluative language. Then, it describes Appraisal Theory (Martin & White, 2005) as the analytical framework. Lastly, the chapter presents and discusses the quantitative and qualitative procedures followed to examine the corpus of analysis.

The third part (Part III) presents the findings of the analyses and discusses the results in relation to the research questions. Chapters 6 and 7 adopt a corpus-assisted discourse analysis approach, thus combining quantitative and qualitative methods. Chapter 6 presents an analysis of wordlists and collocations which is used to examine the most frequent linguistic patterns in the corpora (RQ1). Then, Chapter 6 employs a keyword analysis to provide a quantitative account of the linguistic characteristics of each corpus, followed by a collocation analysis of a selection of keywords (RQ1). Lastly, Chapter 8 takes a qualitative approach to the analysis of tweeters' discourses and ideologies concerning (verbal) sexual violence and gender inequality by drawing on Appraisal Theory (RQ2). The results of these three chapters prove, in my view, the efficacy of the synergy between Corpus Linguistics, Appraisal Theory, and Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis.

Finally, the fourth part (Part IV) concludes this thesis. Chapter 9 summarizes and discusses the findings of the analyses in relation to the proposed objectives and research

questions and relates findings with previous research. Additionally, it discusses implications and contributions to knowledge. The limitations of the study and some future directions are also presented at the end of this chapter. The chapter is followed by the list of references that informed this research. Lastly, the Appendix is divided into five parts. Appendixes I and II contain the quantitative results of the frequency and collocation analyses carried out in Chapter 6, respectively. Appendixes III and IV show the quantitative results of the keyword and collocation analyses performed in Chapter 7, respectively. Ultimately, Appendix V provides a quantitative summary of the different evaluative resources identified in Chapter 8.

PART I
THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

CHAPTER 1
Digital discourse analysis

CHAPTER 1: DIGITAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

In recent years, the rising popularity of digital technologies has changed the way people communicate and relate to each other, which allows for new forms of social interaction and organization (Castells, 2000). Jones et al. (2015) define these new ways of communicating and socializing as “digital practices”. In addition, the emergence of the Internet and new digital platforms was initially said to contribute to the democratization of discourses and the eradication of social differences, such as gender, class, and age (Herring, 1996d; Tagg, 2015). However, scholars soon found that the evidence did not support this claim (see Bou-Franch, 2013; Choularaki, 2010; Herring, 1996d, 1999; Herring et al., 2015, among others; see Chapter 2). Therefore, one focus of interest for discourse analysts is to examine how people exploit these new technologies and perform digital practices in order to form social groups and enact social identities.

In this thesis, discourse analysis is conceived as the study of the social function of language (Garcés-Conejos Blitvich & Bou-Franch, 2019; Thurlow & Mroczek, 2011) and of how people use it to perform social identities (Jones et al, 2015). Therefore, the term *digital discourse analysis*, coined by Thurlow and Mroczek (2011), is used to refer to the study of the language and other semiotic modes found in digital technologies. Digital practices need to be seen as an extension of our offline life in which we “enact identities, activities, and ideologies in the digital world, as part of a larger social world” (Garcés-Conejos Blitvich & Bou-Franch, 2019, p. 4). However, these practices are challenging for scholars, who need to find new ways or adapt known methods and concepts to analyze the discourse produced on the Internet.

The main aim of digital discourse analysis is that of examining the social function and the significance and relevance of language and other non-linguistic resources in a wider socio-cultural context. According to Jones et al. (2015), digital discourse analysts must pay attention to four areas of online discourse:

- a) Texts, or “[h]ow different technologies of entextualisation allow us to combine semiotic elements to form socially recognisable texts that can be used to perform different kinds of socially recognised actions” (p. 4).
- b) Contexts, or “[t]he social and material situations in which texts are constructed, consumed, exchanged and appropriated” (p. 4).

- c) Actions or interactions to examine “[w]hat people do with texts, especially what they do with and to each other” (p. 4), i.e., digital practices.
- d) Power and ideology, to examine “[h]ow people use texts to dominate and control others and to create certain ‘versions of reality’” (p. 4).

By focusing on these four areas, researchers will be able to examine the relationship between the microlevel (i.e., textual practices), the meso level and the macrolevel (i.e., how these practices reflect larger systems of social values) of discourse (Bou-Franch, 2021b; Thurlow, 2018; Thurlow & Mroczek, 2011). Moreover, Thurlow (2018) also calls for the need to include multimodality in the study of digital discourse in order to examine the interplay between written language and other semiotic resources, such as images and sound.

In addition, there is a need for discourse analysts to adapt to the fast evolution of digital media and to reformulate the “rich store of theories and methods developed over the years for the analysis of ‘analogue’ discourse” (Jones et al, 2015, p. 1). Furthermore, there is a need to develop new ones in order to address and examine the affordances which help shape digital practices (Bou-Franch, 2021b; Tovares, 2022). Different approaches have been proposed for the study of digital discourse, such as Herring’s (1996a, 2004) *Computer-Mediated Discourse Analysis* (CMDA), which focuses on online language use, Androutsopoulos’ (2006, 2008) *Discourse-Centred Online Ethnography* (DCOE) approach and Yus’ (2001, 2011) *Cyberpragmatics*. These three approaches illustrate the attempt of language scholars to adapt previous and develop new methodologies to online media and digital communication.

After a brief introduction to digital discourse analysis, the present chapter is devoted to providing an account of the development of the field and the discourse practices which influence the data and analysis of this dissertation. This chapter is divided into three parts. Section 1.1. illustrates the aim and evolution of digitally-mediated communication. It begins by briefly introducing the concept with a focus on the issues which have concerned discourse analysts. Moreover, it also presents a concise description of the concepts of online identity and online community, which are considered to be central elements in the analysis of digital discourse. After presenting the notion of technology-mediated communication, this section expands the review of the literature on social media. Section 1.2 goes on to illustrate the development of these platforms and

how their different characteristics have an influence on digital communication. The different affordances and constraints offered by social media and social media profiles shape how Internet users enact online identities and engage in interaction with other participants. This helps to understand Section 1.3., which introduces the social media platform Twitter, where the data under scrutiny in this thesis was produced. This subsection outlines the relevance of this microblogging service to the study of online identities and communities by introducing key concepts which will be later used in the analysis. First, it describes the platform and its main characteristics. After that, it provides an overview of the literature on Twitter hashtags to explain how they are used to share bonds between Twitter users, and then it introduces political discourse on Twitter and hashtag activism in the last part of this section.

1.1. Digitally-mediated communication

Communication technologies have always helped shape how people relate to the world and each other (Tagg, 2015; Thurlow & Mroczek, 2011). Thurlow and Mroczek (2011) state that technologies can be defined as “prosthetic extensions of people’s abilities and lives” (p. xxxv). Consequently, digital technologies are considered to have an impact on our lives as they offer new ways and spaces of interaction. The British physicist Tim Berners-Lee invented the World Wide Web in 1989 with the sole purpose of creating a shared, open-access space in which people could freely share information (Tagg, 2015). Currently, the Internet is being constantly re-shaped by developers to expand possibilities and to adapt to users’ needs. Digital technologies have emerged as a tool to address our wants and, therefore, they “are seen as indispensable” (Tagg, 2015, p. 3).

The study of interactions between people which are mediated by technological devices such as computers, smartphones, and notebooks is often referred to as computer-mediated communication (CMC) (Herring, 2019; Herring, Johnson & DiBenedetto, 1995). Due to the fast emergence of new technologies, this term has received criticism from scholars who questioned its suitability and proposed new terms to refer to digital communication, such as Netspeak or Internet linguistics (Crystal, 2011) and keyboard-to-screen communication (Jucker & Dürscheid, 2012). Even so, Herring and Adroustopoulos (2015) point out that CMC broadly includes “any digital communication device” (p. 132). This thesis adopts a more accurate term, namely *digitally-mediated*

communication (henceforth, DMC), to refer to the communication produced via digital technologies.

DMC is considered to be “the greatest boon to the study of language since the invention of the portable tape recorder in the 1950s” (Herring, 1996a, p. 156). Whereas the tape recorder allowed researchers to record and transcribe speech, DMC was already pre-transcribed; participants had written their interactions themselves, which allowed researchers to collect larger amounts of naturally occurring data and “employ empirical, micro-level methods to shed light on macrolevel phenomena” (Herring, 2004, p. 338). (Herring, 1996a, 1996c). DMC was originally text-based and accessed through stand-alone clients (Herring, 2019; Herring & Androutsopoulos, 2015). DMC platforms included those practices which required messages to be typed on a keyboard to then be read as texts on a screen, such as emails, discussion forums, chat rooms, and blogs (Herring & Androutsopoulos, 2015). However, these spaces changed and developed through the years. Over the last 15 years, DMC has been applied to other platforms – which include social network sites (e.g., Facebook), microblogging (e.g., Twitter, Tumblr), photo and video-sharing sites (e.g., Instagram, YouTube), shopping websites (e.g., Amazon, eBay) and private platforms (e.g., LINE, WhatsApp) – and have been supplemented by with other semiotic systems, such as images, videos, and audios (Tagg, 2015).

DMC is not defined by technologies, but by our digital practices: how we choose to exploit the affordances and navigate the constraints offered by the different platforms and what we do with them (Tagg, 2015). Internet users might not only decide to use the web to access information, but also to participate and contribute to its content. As a result, the analysis of people’s online activities has become an increasing focus of attention for discourse analysts. The different developments in both discourse analysis and digital technologies have shifted the attention of scholars from formal approaches to online language in use to social and critical approaches to the analysis of digital practices (Bou-Franch, 2021b). Scholars identify three phases (Herring, 2019) or waves (Androutsopoulos, 2006; Bou-Franch, 2021b; Georgakopoulou & Spiliotti, 2016) in the evolution of the linguistic and discursive study of DMC. Androutsopoulos (2006) and Georgakopoulou and Spiliotti (2016) divide the field in three waves as studies on the different DMC platforms might overlap independently from the technologies currently available. The following paragraphs aim to describe such waves of linguistic research.

The first wave of DMC is known as “Internet linguistics” (Androutsopoulos, 2006; Bou-Franch, 2021b; Crystal, 2011). It mainly focused on formal approaches to understanding electronic language (Herring, 2019). The term DMC had been already coined in the 1980s when language scholars began to be interested in the use of computer technology for communication; the field of study was referred to as human-computer interaction (Thurlow et al., 2004). Very few language scholars were concerned with language use in DMC at that time, and their studies mostly focused on grammar, spelling, and dialog structure (Herring, 2019). However, it was not until the 1990s, after the public implementation of the World Wide Web, that linguists began to gain interest in the field since computers and the Internet became more accessible (Herring, 2019; Thurlow et al., 2004). Linguists tried to classify online discourse as either written or spoken as well to pinpoint the differences between synchronous and asynchronous modes (Androutsopoulos, 2006).

Questions regarding research ethics first appeared during the first wave since researchers from different fields brought to attention the privacy of Internet participants when citing digital data. Herring (1996c) suggested anonymizing participants’ personal information but identifying the name of the public discussion groups. She pointed out that public, open groups should be understood in terms of public broadcasts, as the message published by its participants might be read by a larger audience than the one intended (see subsection 1.2.3). However, private platforms should only be examined under the approval of their participants.

By the mid-1990s, new DMC platforms which included the first non-textual modes, such as virtual worlds and audio and video chat were introduced (Herring, 2019). Moreover, instant messaging and SMS stirred the interest of those DMC scholars who were concerned with the differences between synchronous and asynchronous communication. On the other hand, some scholars (e.g., Herring, 1996d, 1999) were interested in critical approaches to power dynamics in a space considered to be white male-dominated (see Chapter 2).

In 2004, the emergence of new digital modes characterized by user-generated content, collaborative media, and sociability marked a “new era of interaction” (Page et al., 2014, p. 8). These new systems allowed researchers to examine how people interact and (re)form online communities (Page et al., 2014). In addition, the emergence, or reconfiguration (Herring, 2013), of these (new) digital platforms coincided with the

interest of scholars in carrying out more discursive and socially-oriented research (Bou-Franch, 2021b). Androutsopoulos (2006) pushed for a focus on identity construction and community-building on digital platforms. Thus, his contribution marked the beginning of the second wave of DMC research.

The second wave of research moved from paying special attention to the medium to a focus on Internet users (Bou-Franch, 2021b). Androutsopoulos (2006) called for a shift of focus from the features of electronic language and its medium to the analysis of language patterns in relation to the different contexts and group practices, thus strongly denying technological determinism. Likewise, Georgakopoulou (2003, 2006) recommended studying the language by considering the connections between *online* and *offline* practices and the creation of (online) identities since “people’s embodied engagements with digital media and digital environments are interwoven into daily life (Georgakopoulou & Spilioti, 2016). Georgakopoulou (2006) and Georgakopoulou and Spilioti (2016) also called for a turn to a more socially-committed approach by focusing on core concepts such as identity, community, and globalization, thus “ensuring that the study of language is grounded in a concern for broader sociocultural practices and inequalities of communities” (Thurlow, 2018, p. 2). As a result, the notions of online identity and virtual community became crucial during the second wave (see subsections 1.2.1 and 1.2.2).

Another area of interest was the development of new approaches and the adaptation of old theories to the study of digital discourse (Tavares, 2022). Scholars such as Bou-Franch (2021b) and Garcés-Conejos Blitvich (2010) pointed out the need to create natively digital approaches which are exclusively designed to analyze digital interactions. Additionally, research ethics continued to be an important issue during the second wave as scholars tried to differentiate between private and public domains and platforms (Bou-Franch, 2021b; Page et al, 2014). Whereas the use of data from private facilities would require consent from users, scholars also needed to be cautious when analyzing public data. The Association of Internet Researchers (AoIR) recommends anonymizing names and usernames, images, localization, and any other type of information that would give hints about the participants’ identity (Bou-Franch, 2021b). However, later research points out that platforms like Twitter state in their privacy policies that any information shared within their platform is disseminated to third parties, and that anonymizing tweets “would contravene Twitter’s policies on displaying their data in static publications, which specify

that in static and offline publications, tweets should show the name, username, and unmodified text” (Hardaker & McGlashan, 2016, p. 86). Consequently, there is no consensus between scholars on how Twitter data should be handled.

The analysis of identity construction and online communities often illustrates the “conflictual nature of computer-mediated interaction” (Herring, 1996c, p. 161), in which individuals struggle for power and reflect social inequalities. Moreover, the nature of digital platforms allows users to communicate through a variety of semiotic devices. The new interest in discourse analysis in critical and multimodal approaches gave rise to the third wave. Digital discourse analysis is currently shifting its attention to a critical perspective, and researchers have attempted to develop critical approaches to the study of social media interactions. Although the Internet was initially thought to be a democratic space, third wave research has suggested that digital platforms reproduce social discrimination and inequalities which are already present in society (e.g., Bou-Franch & Garcés-Conejos Blitvich, 2014b; Kreis, 2017; see subsection 1.3.2 and Chapter 2). These findings have led scholars to carry out research on social media to question and to understand the “acclaimed democratization potential of the internet” (Bou-Franch, 2021b) and how social inequalities are portrayed on digital platforms (Bou-Franch, 2013; Tagg, 2015; Thurlow, 2018).

On the other hand, the new affordances and constraints of online platforms become central in more recent studies, and researchers embraced multimodal and multisemiotic analyses (Georgakopoulou & Spilioti, 2016). Scholarly work needs to take into account the affordances of social media, such as the “like” function on Facebook (Maíz-Arevalo, 2019) or “retweet” on Twitter (Zappavigna, 2013), the collaborative-authored nature of new platforms like Wikis (Page, 2012a), and the challenge of examining how people combine DMC with their daily activities moving towards a post-digital society (Androutsopoulos, 2021; Herring, 2019; Tagg & Lyons, 2021; Thurlow, 2018). In addition, the use of *graphicons*, such as emojis, emoticons, GIFs, memes (text-in-image), and video clips has come under the attention of digital discourse analysts (Herring, 2019; Sampietro, 2016, 2019; Yus, 2019).

A final area of interest to studies related to multimodality is the analysis of online and offline communication and how digital technologies are integrated into people’s daily activities (see Bou-Franch & Garcés-Conejos Blitvich, 2018; Herring, 2019, among others). This area is also attractive to those researchers involved in identity analysis as

some scholars point out that online and offline identities are interrelated (see Lee, 2014; Georgakopoulou & Spilioti, 2016). Scholars are currently moving towards the analysis of digitally-mediated communication considering a polymedia environment, which “focus[es] on user agency and affordances, and the moral implications of media choice for social relationships” (Tagg & Lyns, 2021, p. 727). Due to the increasing use of devices that allow continuous Internet connectivity and the use of several digital platforms simultaneously (e.g., smartphones), linguists are blurring the distinction between online and offline discourse and interaction. This approach offers a more fine-grained analysis of how the use of different platforms and the choice of using one channel and platform over another in interaction can shape people’s identities and interpersonal relationships (Androutsopoulos, 2021).

This section has provided an overview of the relevant existing literature on DMC in order to understand its development and the research trends throughout the years. It is important to highlight that the three waves of research and the interest of researchers are not exclusively dependent on the evolution of the Internet and technology, but that scholars need to adapt their methods to the fast-paced evolution of digital platforms. The next section focuses on social media and presents core concepts associated with the curation of online identities and the formation of online communities.

1.2. Social media and social network sites

Social media are described as Internet-based platforms which contribute to social interaction between a network of participants (Page et al., 2014; Tagg, 2015). As opposed to other forms of communication, such as the press and television, social media are characterized by a many-to-many form of communication (Paget et al., 2014). Furthermore, their content can be created, published, and shared by anyone. These characteristics make social media attractive to Internet users, who have integrated their use of different technologies into their daily lives (Tagg & Seargeant, 2016).

As Page et al. (2014) point out, the modifier “social” refers to the collaborative and dialogic characteristics of these platforms. The affordances of social media enable people to interact and create many-to-many interactions, as opposed to more traditional DMC modes and genres. On the other hand, “media” comprises different concepts (Page et al., 2014). First, it refers to the variety of semiotic modes which can be produced on

social media platforms, such as written words, images, and videos. Furthermore, it also involves the different tools and technologies used to communicate, as well as the features offered by the platform to allow communication. Lastly, it is related to the different DMC modes found on social media platforms, such as private and public messaging.

Users shape and restructure their digital practices depending on their aim, interests, and (intended) readers. It is up to them to decide how to use digital technologies and how to exploit their features, which are better known as *affordances* (boyd, 2010; Tagg, 2015). According to boyd, affordances are used for “amplifying, recording, and spreading information and social acts” (2010, p. 45). She distinguishes four key affordances to all social media platforms:

- a) *Persistence*. As mentioned in the previous section, online interactions are recorded and archived and, therefore, persistent. Moreover, this affordance allows users to access content created and published by other users anytime and to share and replicate it with ease.
- b) *Replicability*, as content can be easily modified by other users. Consequently, users are concerned about the kind of content they share as it can be misinterpreted when modified or “consumed outside of its original context” (boyd, 2010, p. 46).
- c) *Scalability*, as digital discourse has the potential to be visible and broadcast to larger publics than expected. However, boyd highlights that this affordance “is about the possibility of tremendous visibility, not the guarantee of it” (boyd, 2010, pp. 46-47).
- d) *Searchability*, which means that digital discourse and content can be accessed through search functions (e.g., hashtags on Twitter) or search engines. In fact, the act of “searching” is a central Internet activity (boyd, 2010).

Although affordances do not determine digital practices, they contribute to the social dynamics, as social media users exploit such affordances to interact and socialize with other people (Jones et al., 2015).

On the other hand, Page (2012a) proposed five characteristics that set social media apart from other Internet-based platforms. According to the author, social media are a) collaborative, b) dialogic, c) emergent, d) personalized, and constitute e) context-rich environments. First, social media are collaborative because they encourage social participation, interaction, and collaboration. Social interaction and collaboration are also

linked to dialogue, and the affordances and constraints offered by each platform allow participants to negotiate and reconfigure their relationships with other users. On the other hand, interactions which take place on a social media platform are emergent, which means that the content shared might be created and (a)synchronously received by participants. Individuals' participation and contributions allow social media services to display a more personalized version of the platform based on the information offered by the user. Moreover, social media are available through different technologies. These platforms allow people "increased flexibility over the times and places that become sites of engagement" (Page, 2012a, p. 8). As a result, all these characteristics cause social media to be context-rich environments.

As shortly mentioned above, the most relevant and significant platforms of social media are SNS platforms. Ellison and boyd define SNS as follows:

A social network site is a *networked communication platform* in which participants 1) have uniquely identifiable profiles that consist of user-supplied content, content provided by other users, and/or system-provided data; 2) can *publicly articulate connections* that can be viewed and traversed by others; and 3) can consume, produce, and/or interact with *streams of user-generated content* provided by their connections on the site. (2013, p. 157, emphasis in the original)

The main aim of social media is to communicate and share content, and SNSs allow people to create a social network (i.e., a list of contacts) in which they can socialize with other Internet users.

SNSs include three main features which allow participants to interact with other users: profiles, lists of contacts lists and messages. In order to participate in a SNS, users need to create a profile that identifies them. That is to say, they need to create an online persona with the characteristics they wish other people to see about them (boyd, 2007). Moreover, they can also create a social network of users and tag them as "Friends" or "Followers", which will be public to other Internet users. The existence of a list of contacts allows users to create their "imagined" audience (boyd, 2007; Marwick & boyd, 2011a), which will influence their choices regarding self-presentation and relations with others and how they interact with them (Androutopoulos, 2021) (see subsection 1.2.3 for further information).

The relevance of social media is a result of how people have adapted to these platforms and how they exploit their affordances in order to socialize and share content and information (Tagg & Lyons, 2021). Although these services are continuously evolving, their aim remains the same: to connect and facilitate interaction between people, “thus helping users cultivate socially relevant interactions” (Ellison & boyd, 2013, p. 159). However, social media participants face challenges when they have to digitally present themselves to people from their different social contexts. The following subsections present an overview of the terms online identity and online communities (see subsections 1.2.1 and 1.2.2). The concepts of identity and community are considered to contribute to the social dynamics of social media, and, therefore, are core concepts for the analysis of DMC and social media (Seargeant & Tagg, 2014; Tagg & Seargeant, 2016). Closely related to them is the concept of “networked publics”, or audience design (Bell, 1984; Tagg & Seargeant, 2015), which describes how social media users deal with the different recipients of their messages and how these have an influence on the enactment and negotiation of online identities and the formation of communities (see Section 1.2.3).

1.2.1. Online identity

The term *identity* refers to how participants co-construct and negotiate the representation of themselves and others through a variety of discursive means (e.g., syntax and lexis) in “specific sites of social activity and interaction” (Schiffrin, 2006, p. 127). De Fina et al. define identity from a social constructionist view, in which identity is “neither a given or a product”, but a process that:

- (1) takes place in concrete and specific occasions, (2) yields constellations of identities ... (3) does not simply emanate from the individual, but results from processes of negotiation, and entextualization (Bauman and Briggs 1990) that are eminently social, and (4) entails “discursive work”. (2006, p. 2)

This means that identity is fluid as it is enacted, embodied, and negotiated in interaction (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005; De Fina et al., 2006; Page, 2012a). In addition, Page (2012a) takes the three different identities distinguished by Zimmerman (1998) to explain how identity is enacted on digital platforms. Transportable identities refer to unintentional performances of the person’s attributes, such as gender, age, and race. In contrast, situated identities are fluid and enacted through discourse. Situated identities are constructed in

relation to a particular situation, for example, depending on the participants' role on a social media platform (e.g., friend, moderator, follower) (Page, 2012a). Similarly, discourse identities are enacted in users' roles in interaction, such as narrator and listener (Garcés-Conejos Blitvich et al., 2010; Page, 2012a) These identities are of special interest for digital discourse analysis as Internet users employ different discursive strategies to forge their different online identities and to make these relevant on the different digital platforms.

The role of anonymity *vis-à-vis* identity has received attention in digital discourse analysis research. During the early years of the Internet (the 1990s), there was an initial optimism regarding the cybersphere. Researchers believed that the mediated nature of DMC would allow users to become potentially anonymous. Therefore, anonymity would eradicate social differences such as those based on race, gender, social class, and so forth, which would in turn help users to freely express their ideas (Herring, 1996d; Herring, Johnson & DiBenedetto, 2015). However, early research on DMC already illustrated that men “dominated” these new domains (e.g., Hall, 1996; Herring, 1996d; Herring et al, 2015; see Chapter 2).

Language-based DMC research has also focused on how people negotiate and reconfigure identities and how traditional social differences are performed and negotiated in digital contexts (Tagg, 2015). The first studies on the relationship between online identities and language were published by Herring, who focused on the different linguistic strategies employed by men to silence women (e.g., Herring, 1996 and Herring et al, 2015). Current critical approaches have also focused on social inequalities, and report that the study of identities is crucial for ideological analyses (e.g., Bou-Franch, 2013; Bou-Franch & Garcés-Conejos Blitvich, 2014b; Garcés-Conejos Blitvich et al., 2013).

In addition, researchers link anonymity to antisocial online behaviors (Bou-Franch & Garcés-Conejos Blitvich, 2014a; Hardaker, 2015; Lange, 2007). The social identification/deindividuation (SIDE) model of DMC (Lea & Spears, 1991; Reicher et al., 1995) argues that anonymity might lead to a lack of inhibition, which would contribute to “polarization in group dynamics, a fact which lies at the heart of online conflict” (Bou-Franch & Garcés-Conejos Blitvich, 2014a, p. 21). Hardaker (2015) defines this as a modern *Gyges effect*, which refers to Plato's story about the Ring of Gyges. As Hardaker writes:

[anonymity] has been of interest to academics across many fields, including psychology, sociology and philosophy, back to the time of Plato and his story of the shepherd, Gyges. This shepherd, upon finding a ring that makes him invisible (i.e., unidentifiable and, therefore, anonymous), used the protection that the invisibility afforded him to infiltrate the royal household, seduce the queen, assassinate the king and take the kingdom. Plato then argues that this power presents such a corruptive force that even the most morally upstanding could not resist it. (2015, p. 204)

In sum, the fact that Internet users can play with their identities freely, together with online freedom of expression, might encourage a “loss of self-awareness, a sense of impunity, an increased likelihood of acting upon normally inhibited impulses, increased polarization, and decreased consideration and empathy for others” (Hardaker, 2015, p. 205). Consequently, the reduced social cues in online platforms foster a sense of security that shields users from the possible repercussions of adopting an aggressive behavior.

Aggressive (and mostly anonymous) behavior occurring on digital platforms is referred to as *flaming*. Flaming includes rude messages, attacks, and profanity among other types of obscene and inappropriate language to disrupt online spaces (Hardaker, 2015; Tagg, 2015). The content of such messages is usually deceptive and antagonistic to the online community which they are trying to upset. However, the identities of these aggressive individuals are co-constructed by the participants of the community (Bou-Franch & Garcés-Conejos Blitvich, 2014a; Hardaker, 2010; Tagg, 2015). Therefore, the importance of the relationship between online identities and conflict lies in “how people choose to take advantage of it [anonymity] and how these choices are received by others” (Tagg, 2015, p. 60).

It is also important to highlight that Internet users do not only construct their own identities during interaction, but also contribute to the portrayal of other people’s identities. For instance, Kreis (2017) examined how tweeters negotiated the identities of war refugees (see subsection 1.3.2). For his part, Sánchez-Moya (2017, 2018) analyzed how victim-survivors of intimate partner violence depict their ex-partners as perpetrators (see Chapter 2). Therefore, identity is negotiated not only by the authors themselves but also by other participants’ perceptions.

Nonetheless, anonymity does not only lead to aggression and conflict, but might also help oppressed participants to interact with other Internet users. Anonymity allows underprivileged groups of people to empower themselves and to build solidarity and a “safe space in which to self-disclose and share personal information they might be reluctant to share face-to-face” (Tagg, 2015, p. 87) (see Section 1.3 and Chapter 2). However, the study of online harassment and conflict in issues related to trolling (Hardaker, 2015), gender ideologies (Bou-Franch & Garcés-Conejos Blitvich, 2014a, 2014b), racism (Kreis, 2017) and online grooming (Chiang & Grant, 2018; Lorenzo-Dus & Kinzel, 2019), among other issues, refutes in a way the argument that digital platforms are safe spaces for people, thus remaining a highly relevant topic of research for discourse analysts.

Thus far, this chapter has discussed that digital discourse analysis allows researchers to examine the (non)linguistic strategies employed by people to negotiate their and other people’s (online) identities, and how attributions and performed identities can be verified by others—or not—in digital platforms. Moreover, language-based research can help recognize the different discursive strategies employed by online aggressors and how those who resist the aggression react and respond to them (Tagg, 2015, see chapter 2). The next subsections describe how people enact identities to align and create online communities.

1.2.2. Online communities

As briefly explained in the introduction to this chapter, digital technologies allow new forms of social organization and interaction (Castells, 2000). The interpersonal communication between users that takes place in social media results in the creation of online communities. The concept of *online community* is a contested term that has been widely discussed and criticized within DMC research (Herring, 2004; Androutsopoulos, 2006). Whereas some researchers suggest that online groups that constitute social identities with shared values can constitute communities of practice (e.g., Heritage & Koller, 2020; Herring, 2004; Tagg, 2015; Zappavigna, 2011), other scholars have contested this view by arguing that, due to the fact that these groups have unstable memberships and a lack of shared physical space, it is difficult to set the boundaries between groups and communities (Hardaker & McGlashan, 2016).

Online communities were firstly defined as “social aggregations that emerge from the Net when enough people carry on [...] public discussions long enough, with sufficient human feeling, to form webs of personal relationships in cyberspace” (Rheingold as cited in Androutsopoulos, 2006, p. 421). However, scholars like Liu (as cited in Herring, 2004) argue that most of the DMC research on online environments assumes that all groups constitute communities. Androutsopoulos (2006) also notes that online groups cannot be considered as communities from a sociological perspective since the latter are characterized by fluid memberships and long-term commitment. Despite this, Castells (2000) points out that online communities cannot be compared to physical communities as “they work in a different plane of reality [i.e., cybersphere]” (p. 389).

More recent approaches to the notion of online community include the existence of a shared space, regular interaction, common interests, agreed norms, and a sense of belonging (Androutsopoulos, 2006; Tagg, 2015). Online communities also help users create online group-specific identities and contribute to sociability (Androutsopoulos, 2021; Tagg & Lyons, 2021). In fact, previous research suggests that many users “‘feel passionately’ about the connections they form online, fueling the argument that in some cases the Internet may serve to upset the loneliness and isolation of contemporary urban life” (Tagg, 2015, p. 163).

In addition, Tagg (2015) states that communities of shared interests might develop into communities “in the more traditional sense” (p. 165), or might remain unstable and changeable. Social media platforms pose a challenge for researchers since some of them do not offer resources for community-building. However, participants might employ different linguistic and semiotic strategies to participate in “transitory communities” (Androutsopoulos, 2014; Tagg, 2015) and to create *ambient* affiliation, which refers to groups of shared feelings between people who do not necessarily interact directly, but “may engage in mass practices such as hashtagging in order to participate in particular kinds of ‘belonging’” (Zappavigna, 2017b, p. 216; see subsection 1.3.1). Taken together, these studies support the idea that the central feature of these communities is the fact that members select specific digital platforms and exploit their affordances to organize themselves and create groups of shared interests, values, goals, and experiences (Tagg & Lyons, 2021).

Notwithstanding that online communities are linked to solidarity among members, conflict can also arise due to different stances or unequal distribution of power within

them. The depersonalization of Internet users contributes to the formation of stronger in-groups that reject and polarize themselves from an out-group, sometimes leading to conflict between them (Bou-Franch & Garcés-Conejos Blitvitch, 2014a) or to the emergence of different social groups within the same community (Bou-Franch, 2022). Herring (1996c) claims that struggles for power in DMC are discursively constructed and that on most occasions they are a reflection of real-world issues (e.g., gender ideologies, see Chapter 2).

In summary, scholars have adopted a broader understanding of virtual communities, which moves away from the stable, well-established groups of the non-digital world to the transitory and polymedia connections of the digital world (Androutsopoulos, 2021; Tagg, 2015). Online communities are discursively constructed by Internet users depending on their needs and how they establish, act, and perceive the connections that they form online. Additionally, the choice of digital channels and platforms also influences how users perform identities and how they address a potential public to build and manage interpersonal relationships (Androutsopoulos, 2021; Tagg & Lyons, 2021). The next subsection discusses the communicative choices of users in digitally-mediated communication to manage the potential audience of their content.

1.2.3. Networked publics: audience, collapsed contexts and privacy

The interactive nature of social media is not exclusive to these platforms as it was also found in earlier DMC platforms. As previously mentioned, social media platforms offer users the possibility to connect with others, and how people decide to exploit such technologies shapes the outcome of their interactions. As a result, identity performance and community building are key in online communication. In addition, online identities are performed with a designed, or expected, audience in mind. In social media, the designed audience is discussed in terms of *networked publics* (boyd, 2007, 2010). boyd describes networked publics as both a space and an audience: “networked publics are ... 1) the space constructed through networked technologies and (2) the imagined collective that emerges as a result of the intersection of people, technology, and practice” (2010, p. 39). Networked publics bring participants together for social purposes, shared feelings, or collective interests. Consequently, the interaction with these publics contribute to the enactment of identities and therefore, also to the constitution of online communities.

Although the main aim of digital platforms was (and still is) to maintain preexisting relationships, users can also create new relationships with strangers who share similar interests or beliefs (boyd & Ellison, 2008) (see subsection 1.2.2). Most SNS profiles are public and can be accessed by anyone (boyd, 2010). Therefore, issues of privacy are increased on platforms where users find it difficult to find a balance between publicness and privacy and to determine what should be made public and what they should keep private. boyd (2010) identifies three dynamics brought by affordances: a) collapsed contexts, which means that the lack of boundaries between their contacts poses a problem for users as they need to adapt their discourse to their different social networks; b) invisible audiences, as users need to imagine the audience who will have access to their content; and c) publicness and privacy, since sometimes users do not have control over the content that is being shared about them or its replicability. Because of this, users have started to find new linguistic and semiotic resources to manage their online identities and digital practices (Androutsopoulos, 2013, 2015; Georgalou, 2015; Tagg, 2015).

Participants' digital practices are determined by their imagined audience: they publish and share content depending on the public they intend to reach (boyd, 2007). The imagined audience "exists only as it is written into the text, through stylistic and linguistic choices" (Marwick & boyd, 2011a, p. 116). By imagining the audience they want to reach, users can determine what will be "socially appropriate, interesting, or relevant" (boyd, 2010, p. 48) for those who are listening (or reading). Even so, they might face difficulties since the different groups of people could differ about what is appropriate and what to expect from the user. Therefore, talk is designed for an audience and, in so doing, users select the intended recipients from the potentially very large audience (Marwick & boyd, 2011a). Moreover, the challenge becomes even bigger when the content has the potential to escalate, become viral, and be read by unintended audiences.

All decisions taken by Internet users about social media affect how their networked publics perceive them. Digital practices are not shaped by affordances or networked publics, but they do influence them and how people decide to choose specific social media platforms for personal motivations (boyd, 2010; Tagg, 2015; Tagg & Lyon, 2021). However, the collapse of different social contexts makes it difficult for participants to maintain their desired identity and relations, which sometimes leads to conflict (Bou-Franch, 2021b; boyd, 2010). Therefore, users face the challenge of choosing which platform best adapts to their needs and goals and how to produce their messages (Tagg &

Lyons, 2021). Even though the main aim of social media, especially SNSs, is to create social (e.g., Facebook) or professional (e.g., LinkedIn) networks, some users might engage in commercial, academic, journalistic, and socio-political relations and movements, especially on platforms like Twitter (see 1.3). Moreover, it is becoming difficult to isolate different media: traditional media like the press and radio have now migrated to social media, and users have the power to potentially “shape the news agenda” (Tagg, 2015, p. 8) through social media conventions (e.g., hashtags). Consequently, the press and SNSs feed each other to raise awareness of social problems. Examples of this mutual feeding are the news stories about Twitter threads and comments on news on Twitter, see Barker-Plummer & Barker-Plummer, 2017).

1.3. Twitter

The emergence of social media constituted a shift in the consumption of Internet-based platforms. Internet users stopped being passive recipients of content and were allowed to contribute to the web and to interact with other people (Page, 2012b). As explained in the previous sections of this chapter, DMC research gradually shifted its attention to the study of the digital practices performed in social media. Although SNSs are the most popular services of social media (see 1.2), microblogging sites are gaining momentum and are increasingly being consumed by Internet users. Microblogging services are designed to share short messages “to particularly large audiences well beyond a user’s direct social network” (Murthy as cited in Zappavigna, 2017b, p. 201).

In 2006, Jack Dorsey founded the microblogging service Twitter, which was exclusively designed for sending character-constrained messages through mobile phones, although members could also access the platform through its website (Marwick & boyd, 2011a). Its popularity rose in 2009 and gradually became one of the most successful social media platforms due to its capacity to spread messages and information in fast and easy ways (Kreis, 2017; Page, 2012a). Twitter users, also known as tweeters (Page, 2012a), can communicate with other users through private messages, or through messages known as tweets, which can be public or limited to a group of users. The platform was designed to share its users’ activities. Figure 1 exemplifies the structure of a tweet. It is composed of a) metadata about the author, i.e. the profile image, name, and username of the member; b) a message; c) a timestamp indicating when the tweet was published; d) metadata about

the tweet, i.e., number of likes and retweets; f) a range of user functions to interact with the tweet that includes mentioning, retweeting and favoriting; and g) the source of publication, such as Twitter’s website, mobile devices applications, etc. Moreover, if the profile represents an organization, brand, or person of public interest, Twitter will add a blue badge next to the members’ display name to claim that the ID has been verified and is authentic². The combination of these elements helps Twitter users shape their online persona and relate to others, as tweets are associated with, and appear on, the tweeter’s profile. However, the most important feature which contributes to the enactment of online identities is the content of the message, as identities are always constructed and negotiated in discourse and interaction (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005; De Fina et al., 2006).



Figure 1: Basic structure of a tweet.

Until 2017, the message of a tweet was limited to 140 characters. These character-constrained messages contributed to the use of informal and conversational language since Twitter members had to develop new techniques to express interpersonal meanings in few words (Scott, 2015; Zappavigna, 2014a). As a result, members employed particular strategies of text messaging, such as spelling variation and abbreviations, (Tagg, 2012), and other Twitter conventions like the use of a hashtag (see subsection 1.3.1). Nevertheless, its limit was later increased to 280 characters so that Twitter users could share their opinions and information with lesser space constraints³. In addition, communication on this platform is “fast-paced and ephemeral” (Page, 2012a, p. 93) since tweets are expected to be posted as an activity or event takes place. Immediacy is possible due to the fact that the site can be accessed through the web, mobile applications, email,

² <https://help.twitter.com/en/managing-your-account/about-twitter-verified-accounts>.

³ https://blog.twitter.com/en_us/topics/product/2017/tweetingmadeeasier.html.

SMS, and third-party clients (e.g., Tweetdeck) (Zappavigna, 2013). Nevertheless, most of Twitter's interactions are asynchronous. As a result, Twitter has gradually included new features, such as the retweet and comment functions, that allow interaction between users however delayed the response.

Tweets tend to be public, unless tweeters change their profile settings and restrict their account only to those following them (boyd, Golder & Lotan, 2010; Page, 2012a). Public tweets can be read by an audience who follows a tweeter's profile through their own public timeline, or they can be accessed by any user through the archived Twitter feed by using the platform's search feature (Honeycutt & Herring, 2009; Marwick & boyd, 2011a; Zappavigna, 2011). Due to the great visibility and the number of tweets published, tweeters do not generally expect their messages to be responded to by anyone other than their followers or by anyone at all (Zappavigna, 2011). However, the potential scalability of a tweet could lead to the coordination of activities and the creation of communities of shared interests (see 1.3.1) or lead to a collapse of social contexts (Marwick & boyd, 2011a; see subsection 1.2.3). Since public tweets can be accessible to anyone outside the tweeter's list of followers, it is difficult for users to imagine their potential audience and to distinguish between them and their factual readers. This situation leads to the challenge of imagining and constructing potential audiences (see subsections 1.2.3 and 1.3.1).

The content of a tweet spans “most domains of social life from the personal and domestic, to the political and national, incorporating a range of linguistic functions, from ideational broadcasting of content to interpersonal sharing of feelings” (Zappavigna, 2017b, p. 202). Tweeters might include information about their feelings, banal activities, and daily routines (Zappavigna, 2014), or might decide to use the platform to share their opinions about socio-political issues (Kreis, 2017; Zappavigna, 2011). In addition, the platform is also being exploited by celebrities (Page, 2012b), politicians (Hoffman, 2018), companies (Page, 2012a), and mass media (Gallardo Paúls, 2016) in order to appeal to new audiences. As a result, Twitter is considered to blur the boundaries between the public and private realms.

Although initially designed as an information-sharing site (Page, 2012b), Twitter users also socialize and bond together with other members (Zappavigna, 2011). During the first years of its launch, tweeters began using different linguistic markers in order to refer to other users, tag topics, and propagate messages (boyd et al., 2010; Zappavigna,

2011). The use of these linguistic markers helps users to bring other people's presence and voices into their tweets, thus facilitating heteroglossia (Bahktin, 1981; Zappavigna, 2011). This is possible through the use of different conventions. The most relevant conventions are a) the "@" symbol to address another user (Honeycutt & Herring, 2009); b) the abbreviation "RT" to repost a message (boyd et al., 2010); and c) the hashtag (#) to label the topic or a significant aspect of a tweet (Page, 2012a; Zappavigna, 2012, 2018). These combined conventions help Twitter users create and shape their online identities and share bonds with other members (Zappavigna, 2013). Gradually, Twitter's developers have included these new features into the platform's structure depending on how its users shape interactions to cater to their communicative needs.

The hashtag (#) is a key aspect in this thesis. A hashtag is a user-generated semiotic resource that serves to indicate the topic of the tweet. Hashtags are of special interest to researchers since they not only act as a type of metadata, but also perform a varied range of communicative functions and contribute to the construction of online identities and communities (Zappavigna, 2012, 2018). So far, this chapter has briefly outlined the main features and conventions which characterize communication on Twitter. However, due to the aims of this thesis, it is necessary to expand the description of the hashtag in order to understand how this convention helps tweeters bond with other members. The subsection that follows discusses its role in interaction, looks at previous linguistic research on the function of hashtags, and elaborates on the concept of ambient affiliation.

1.3.1. Hashtags: social tagging and ambient affiliation

As previously explained, tweeters developed three user-generated resources to interact with other users. Among these, the hashtag is of special interest to researchers. Hashtags are a form of "clickable" metadata which enables tweeters to indicate the topic of the tweet and to create a search term (Blommaert, 2019; Page, 2012b; Zappavigna, 2015). The hashtag allows users to make their tweets more visible to a larger audience who may be interested in retrieving tweets about a specific topic, which "projects potential interaction with other members of the site" (Page, 2012b, p. 184). Popular hashtags are often featured as *trending topics* on Twitter's main page so that members can know the most prominent topics of conversation at a given time (Blommaert, 2019). Furthermore, they are also a key resource for enacting online identities and communities, as discussed in the following paragraphs.

The hashtag is a new form of metadata which serves different purposes depending on an Internet user's intentions or needs. Hashtags were initially conceived of as a classification resource and were often compared to previous forms of categorization made by librarians or web developers (Zappavigna, 2017b). This type of classification has been termed "folksonomy" – a compound noun formed from the words "folk" and "taxonomy" – since users do not rely on experts to annotate or classify the content they upload online (Lee, 2018; Zappavigna, 2011, 2018). Moreover, hashtags are "closely tied to enacting social relations, having extended its semiotic reach as an information-organizing tool to a social resource for building relationships and communities through the practice of social tagging" (Zappavigna, 2018, p. 3). Due to their increasing usage and importance in microblogging platforms, other social media platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook also incorporate this resource into their structure (Lee & Chau, 2018).

Hashtags are also different from previous types of metadata as they also act as 'inline' metadata and are visible to other users (Zappavigna, 2011). Although they are mostly used at the beginning or the end of a tweet (Zappavigna, 2018), a hashtag can be part of the linguistic structure of a tweet and perform a functional role without disrupting the message, thus functioning as a metacommentary (e.g., *#WhinyLittleBitch*, see Zappavigna, 2018), or even constitute the entire message of a tweet (e.g., *#justsaying*, see Blommaert, 2019). Moreover, hashtags are used for an ample variety of purposes, such as engaging in Internet memes, creating back channels, coordinating people, asking others for opinion, or for self-monitoring purposes (see Zappavigna, 2012 for a broader discussion on the collaborative uses of hashtags). These different uses help people affiliate with other Internet users and build online identities and communities. Consequently, hashtags are texts and meaning-making resources (Lee, 2018) which help better understand user-generated content posted on social media.

As previously mentioned, the main functions of hashtags are to serve as a metadata resource and to make tweets "searchable". This has led to categorize messages with hashtags as *searchable talk* (Zappavigna, 2012, 2015, 2017b). Searchable talk constitutes "a change in social relations whereby we mark our discourse so that it can be found by others, in effect so that we can bond around particular values" (Zappavigna, 2012, p. 1). That is to say, some users may search for a hashtag and then read the tweets related to it, becoming part of the networked public of a tweet (boyd, 2010). Therefore, hashtags also

possess a social function and act as a keyword directed toward a potential discourse community that may be interested in the topic and content of a tweet.

Because of the potential of hashtags to act both as metadata and interpersonal meaning-making resources, they have received broad attention from scholars from different research fields, including media studies (Sauter & Bruns, 2015), psychology (Idoiaga Mondragon et al., 2019) and sociology (Jelani, Rojas & David, 2017). Within linguistics, researchers have attempted to examine the categorizing, searching (Zappavigna, 2015), linguistic (Zappavigna, 2012, 2018) and pragmatic (De Cock & Pizarro Pedraza, 2018; Scott, 2015; Wikström, 2015) functions of hashtags. However, despite their categorizing function, most language-based research has focused on their interpersonal meaning.

The work carried out by Zappavigna (2015, 2018) is of special interest to understand their different functions. Drawing on Halliday's metafunctions of language (1978), Zappavigna suggests that hashtags possess three types of meanings: 1) *experiential/ideational* meaning, which labels the topic of a tweet and signals its status as metadata; 2) *interpersonal* meaning, which helps construe attitudes and create social affiliation with other users; and 3) *textual* meaning, when they are part of the linguistic structure and the content of a message. Similarly, Page (2012b) identifies two main functions of hashtags, which in turn could be closely related to Zappavigna's experiential and interpersonal meanings. Page states that hashtags are primarily *topic-based* in order to make updates more salient to other Twitter members. Moreover, they can also be *expressive* when it comes to the enactment of online identities or the appraisal of (inter)national events, thus functioning as ideological and affiliative resources. However, although experiential meaning seems to be the most predominant function, both Zappavigna (2015) and Page (2012b) conclude that all functions occur simultaneously, as they contribute to the establishment of social relations. Therefore, it is no wonder that most researchers are interested in examining the interpersonal meaning-making function of the hashtag.

The use of hashtags as meaning-making resources has been approached by scholars in pragmatics who attempted to study them as a strategy to dodge the length-constrained messages. Scott (2015) applies a cognitive linguistics approach to her study and argues that hashtags "function to guide readers' interpretations" (p. 8). By relying on Relevance Theory, she concludes that hashtags play a highlighting and stylistic role

which provides readers with the necessary context to interpret contextual assumptions. Similarly, Wikström (2014) bases his study on Speech Act Theory (Searle, 1969) and suggests that hashtags are used to replace features that are not included on Twitter, such as font style (bolding, italicizing or underlining) or to highlight a word or sentence within the tweet. These two studies support Zappavigna's (2015) and Barton's (2018) claims that hashtags need to be analyzed as part of a broader context, and not as isolated entities.

As explained in earlier sections, social media platforms were created to satisfy Internet members' needs, and a central human necessity and aspiration is that of affiliating with like-minded individuals (Zappavigna, 2013). Some scholars have categorized social tagging as "conversational" (Huang et al., 2010), meaning that hashtags can facilitate interactions among members of the same platform. Moreover, a hashtag's function as searchable talk contributes to "using search to meet social goals" (Zappavigna, 2018, p. 26). This new form of interpersonal search (Zappavigna, 2012) enables people to use Twitter to find members who share similar or clashing views on a topic or who wish to be informed about other people's opinions. By sharing a hashtag, Twitter members try to appeal to an 'ambient' audience who may align with their views. It is for this reason that social media services are often referred to as phatic media, a term that emphasizes that its members wish to meet and interact with (new) people (Zappavigna, 2012, 2014a).

The creation and organization of online communities have been the object of a heated debate among scholars since the beginning of the second wave of DMC research (see Section 1.1). When it comes to Twitter, researchers find it difficult to consider groups of people with similar beliefs and stances as members of the same community. For instance, Hardaker and McGlashan (2016) state that "terms like "community" or "group" seem far too strong for a collection of people who may have no further connection to each other than to have tweeted [about] the same target" (p. 92). On the other hand, Pihlaja and Musolff (2017) claim that Twitter members "react to something they have seen and then move on immediately to something else" (p. 392). However, these scholars agree that some Twitter users might show a common ideology and activity by using similar linguistic strategies. Consequently, much work on Twitter is devoted to examining the different patterns that allow people to (dis)affiliate with other users.

Most of the research carried out by Zappavigna (e.g., 2011, 2012, 2014a, 2017b) attempts to address this issue. She posed the term *ambient affiliation* to refer to the social bonds created among Twitter users who share the same values and negotiate meaning

through language. Zappavigna defines this type of affiliation as “ambient” since tweeters do not have to interact directly or know each other in order to form a “discourse community”. In turn, they may align around a common hashtag or issue of interest. Similarly, Zappavigna and Martin (2018) claim that hashtags are not only used for calling together communities of shared values but also to negotiate shared values and forge affiliation. Taken together, these studies point out that interpersonal meaning remains relevant to the study of affiliation on Twitter, and that this potential is maximized through the use of hashtags (Zappavigna, 2018).

These approaches to ambient affiliation can be related to the concept of *affective publics*, proposed by media scholar Papacharissi (2014, 2016). She argues that social media bonds are principally affective, which means that users create online identities and rally around shared topics “through expressions of sentiment” (Papacharissi, 2016, p. 311). Although Papacharissi does not draw on any linguistic theory, the use of emotions and sentiment is linked to theories such as Appraisal Theory (Martin & White, 2005), which considers emotions and feelings to be at the core of interpersonal meaning (see Chapter 5). Therefore, previous research illustrates the fact that affiliation (and also identities) on Twitter is negotiated through evaluation and emotions.

However, it is important to highlight the fact that Twitter affiliation is not static, and that “these communities shift as hashtags shift, and different couplings of ideational and interpersonal meaning are established depending on what people are talking about at a given time” (Zappavigna, 2011, p. 803), especially when it comes to hashtags related to social or political events. Although ambient affiliation is related to the negotiation of interpersonal meanings, Zappavigna discusses this concept as a way to overcome the problems presented by DMC scholars when trying to define online communities (e.g., Hardaker & McGlashan, 2016; Pihlaja & Musolff, 2017, subsection 1.2.2). In fact, the concept of ambient affiliation has been also adopted outside Twitter to explain relations in other platforms which were not initially created to support hashtags or interaction among users, such as TED.com (Drasovean & Tagg, 2015).

In all the studies reviewed here, the hashtag is recognized as a key affordance that helps users to align around a topic and to share and negotiate values. By acting as metadata, tweeters can search for specific topics of interest to interact with like-minded individuals who may be interested in discussing topics ranging from daily routines to more serious issues, such as illnesses or socio-political events. Therefore, hashtags also

offer scholars the opportunity to examine how people negotiate language and meaning to construct (ambient) communities. The study of tweets around a particular hashtag also sheds light on users' ideologies and beliefs. The following subsection focuses on hashtags as a useful tool to trace ideologies and identify ambient identities.

1.3.2. Political discourse and activism on Twitter

Social media are considered to have helped democratize discourses (but see Chouliaraki, 2010; Bou-Franch, 2013 among other critical views). Ordinary people are now able to publicly express their opinions and stances on issues which were previously limited to mass media. It is difficult to ignore the fact that, over the past few years, Twitter has been the epicenter of different socio-political events and conflicts. Twitter is not only used by citizens to voice their opinions on political topics, but also by political figures who take advantage of the microblogging service to promote their campaigns (Hoffman, 2018), make official announcements, or shape public opinion (Terkourafi et al., 2018). The importance of Twitter to track ideological discourses is evident in the increasing amount of research carried out by scholars from different areas of knowledge. Many language scholars have turned their attention to the study of digital socio-political movements and user-generated content to examine how people use Twitter to organize and mobilize (e.g., Chilwa & Ifukor, 2015; Papacharissi, 2016) and how identities are constructed and challenged through discourse (e.g., Barker-Plummer & Barker-Plummer, 2017; De Cock & Pizarro Pedraza, 2018; Potts et al., 2014). This digital practice has been termed as *citizen journalism* (Zappavigna, 2012; Bou-Franch, 2013 outside Twitter) since Twitter users might report or react to events which are of international interest or could be happening in their proximity.

The hashtag has been increasingly employed by tweeters to rally around a socio-political issue and to increase its visibility. In fact, the notion of ambient affiliation began to spread by examining the hashtag *#Obama*, which contained tweets published during the 2008 United States presidential elections (Zappavigna, 2011, 2012). Its role as metadata “plays an important role in tracking international events and crisis” (Zappavigna, 2012, p. 174). The persistence and searchability of Twitter data provide researchers with ample opportunities to trace unelicited data containing ordinary citizens' reactions to different events which could not be gathered before (Zappavigna, 2012; Sifianou & Bella, 2019). Indeed, scholars consider hashtags as ideological resources “used to indicate identity, beliefs and group membership” (Kreis, 2017, p. 500). Although

there is no expectation of dialogical affiliation, the act of choosing a particular topic-based or evaluative hashtag is considered a process of ambient affiliation and ideological positioning.

Overall, research points to the importance and benefits of Twitter—and hashtags—to empower ordinary citizens and to draw attention to their opinions, raise awareness, and connect groups and facilitate mobilization. The use of hashtags by citizen journalists has been broadly defined as digital activism or, more appropriately, *hashtag activism*. Hashtag activism has received different names depending on its main goal, such as *hashtag feminism*, which concerns feminist movements and protests alongside gender ideologies (see 2.2.2). Moreover, hashtag activism helps participants create a collective identity and, for those who wish to remain anonymous, maintain a sense of privacy.

Potts et al. (2014) employ a corpus-based discourse studies approach (see Baker et al., 2008) to examine the identities and behaviors of digital activists. Their study suggests that networks of activists are created through the creation of in-groups, composed of activists, and out-groups, primarily composed of politicians, law enforcement, and institutions. Whereas the creation of an in-group of activists is reinforced through first-person plural pronouns to build solidarity, the out-group is constantly being negatively appraised (see Van Dijk, 1998 for a review of “us vs. them” group dynamics). Moreover, they also report on a survey, in which activists claim that Twitter helps them find out information about current political affairs and to promote and collect signatures for petitions. It is, therefore, not surprising that citizens should take advantage of the searchability and scalability affordances of Twitter to participate in digital communication to connect and affiliate with like-minded tweeters in order to engage in political actions.

The studies carried out by Zappavigna (2011) and Potts et. al (2014) point to the importance of political issues for Twitter members and, especially, digital activists. In fact, politics has become one of the most discussed issues on Twitter since 2015 (Kreis, 2017; Zappavigna, 2018). Political topics on Twitter might range from comments about televised political debates to political controversies and movements. Some studies illustrate that Twitter users tend to parody politicians to denounce their actions. According to Zappavigna (2018), gossiping and mocking is a key practice to build solidarity with other people. For instance, Zhu (2016) examines how Mitt Romney’s statement “binders full of women” was satirized by Twitter users as *#bindersfullofwomen*

and became an Internet meme event⁴, which, in turn, also reflected a dominant gender ideology in which women were considered as objects by tweeters. Similarly, Zappavigna (2018) investigates tweets with the hashtags *#FakeNews* or *#CrookedMedia*, among others, to examine how allegations made by Donald Trump were commonly reappropriated by tweeters to ridicule and condemn the politician's comments. Therefore, satirical political hashtags are not only useful to identify tweeters' ideologies, but also to examine how users bond with each other and create ambient affiliation.

On the other hand, hashtags can be employed to denounce terrorist acts and express solidarity with victims, as in the case of the shooting at the headquarters of the French satirical newspaper *Charlie Hebdo* in 2015. Since then, the hashtag *#JeSuisCharlie* has become one of the most tweeted hashtags. It has been translated into different languages and recycled as an Internet meme for Twitter users whenever a terrorist attack takes place in any part of the world by replacing "Charlie" with names of other cities (De Cock & Pizarro Pedraza, 2018; Giaxoglou, 2018). Giaxoglou (2018) studies the hashtags *#JeSuisCharlie* and *#CharlieHebdo* as narrative resources by taking into account tweets published by journalists and ordinary tweeters. Giaxoglou claims that, whereas *#CharlieHebdo* was mostly used by journalists as a newsmaker and metalinguistic marker, *#JeSuisCharlie* featured ordinary citizens' reactions and sentiments towards the attack. Likewise, De Cock and Pizarro Pedraza (2018) examine the different functionalities of the hashtag *#JeSuisCharlie* and its variants (e.g., *#JeSuisBruxelles*). However, their study shows that the hashtag was not only used to build solidarity among members but also to criticize those using the hashtag to condemn the attack in Paris but not those happening in developing or third-world countries. Their finding is similar to the results obtained by Bou-Franch (2021a). The author examined how Spanish tweeters used the same hashtag (*#A28*) during the 2019 General Elections to verbally attack the different political candidates. These findings suggest that tweeters who use the same hashtag do not always share the same perspective and/or ideologies and might enter into conflict with other users/activists.

Nevertheless, not all hashtags considered as forms of hashtag activism can be treated as tools to fight violence and inequality. For instance, the hashtag

⁴ According to Zappavigna, an Internet meme event "refers to online trends or fads, sometimes also described more generally as Internet phenomena ... deployed for social bonding rather than for sharing information" (2012, p. 101).

#refugeesnotwelcome examined by Kreis (2017) constructed victims of war as criminals and as part of an out-group by Europeans who support a nationalist-conservative ideology. Although Kreis did not analyze the tweeter's profiles, aggressive behaviors are often related to anonymity and conflict since users feel free to share opinions that they would not share in offline interactions (Hardaker & McGlashan, 2016; see subsection 1.2.1).

Taken together, these studies illustrate the use of hashtags as evaluative and ideological resources which allow scholars to trace (digital) identities, ideologies, and beliefs of a large part of our society. Hashtags are constantly defined and appropriated by tweeters who use them as storytelling devices and tools to voice opinions which otherwise would not be heard or taken into consideration (Papacharissi, 2016). It must be pointed out that hashtag activism has been harshly criticized by scholars who downplay its role and effectiveness (see, e.g., Lindgren, 2013; Hughes, 2015) and consider it a form of superficial, "narcissistic self-involvement" (Zappavigna, 2018) in relevant issues which has little real impact on the problem. In fact, contributing to socio-political issues helps users reinforce their digital identity as "someone who is aware and committed" (De Cock & Pizzarro Pedraza, 2018, p. 200). The failure of hashtags to have real impact on society has been termed *slacktivism* (Chiluwa & Ifukor, 2015). However, these pessimistic views are the result of the belief that all digital movements will have little impact and scalability if they are discussed on social media. In Papacharissi's words:

The speed, the spreadability of information frequently, wraps us up in expectations that just because a story about a movement unfolded and spread quickly through social media, it should be followed by immediate political, legislative, systemic change. When that does not occur, we blame social media and assert that they have no political impact, all the time failing to realize the fallacy in our reasoning. It is not social media that have misled us, it is our own expectations that have let us down. (2016, p. 321)

Hashtag activism has successfully accomplished its aim in cases such as *#BringBackOurGirls* (Chiluwa & Ifukor, 2015), which, in combination with street demonstrations and digital activism on other platforms, helped to liberate the Nigerian abducted girls; however, sometimes this type of activism has failed to have a social and political impact. Factors contributing to a successful moment or, otherwise, slacktivism are yet to be determined. Nevertheless, it is difficult to ignore the repercussion that

Patricia Palomino Manjón

hashtag activism has had in society, especially concerning feminist movements, as will be discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 2
**Gender ideologies in digital
platforms**

CHAPTER 2: GENDER IDEOLOGIES IN DIGITAL PLATFORMS

The previous chapter outlined some key terms to understand DMC and social media interaction, with a special focus on Twitter. This chapter aims to provide an overview of language-based research regarding gender (in)equality in online spaces. Section 2.1. discusses the existence of (verbal) gender-based violence since the early years of DMC until the emergence of Web 2.0 platforms. In addition, it illustrates how these platforms also provide users with the opportunity to challenge and sustain gender ideologies and to attempt to shape the political scene. Lastly, Section 2.2. pays attention to aggression against women and online misogyny on Twitter. Moreover, it also explains how the microblogging service can be used as a tool for women to claim their rights and oppose oppressive practices.

2.1. Gender (in)equality in online spaces

The emergence of new technologies was expected to contribute to the democratization of communication since social factors such as gender, race, and class would be invisible to other participants (see Section 1.1). However, research from a variety of fields, such as linguistics, media, sociology, and psychology, suggests that digital technologies are used to harass and intimidate women, thus highlighting the already existing gender differences of the offline world. Early scholarly work on DMC reports that (cyber)harassment is due to a shared ideology among Internet users which promotes freedom of speech and self-regulated behaviors (Herring, 1998). However, Herring points out that this ideology was built by the developers of DMC platforms, who fall within a socially privileged group: white educated men. Freedom of expression, among other factors, has led DMC to be prone to hostility and conflict, a fact that increases the incidences of “online hate or cyberhate ... expression and dissemination of a range of exclusionary, intolerant, and extremist discourses, practices and beliefs” (KhosraviNik & Esposito, 2018, p. 47). Moreover, this situation is sometimes aggravated by the (possible) lack of inhibition prompted by anonymity (see 1.2.1).

Since the early beginning of DMC research, gender scholars have claimed that women and other socially disadvantaged groups, such as LGTBQIA+ communities, are usually the target of (indirect) sexism and hate speech. This reflects a (heterosexual) male-dominated Internet culture (Herring et al., 1995; Jane, 2016, 2017a, 2017b). Nevertheless,

in cases of conflict, victims of this male-centered culture have adapted and developed new strategies to resist and negotiate gender-based aggression, especially with the emergence of social media platforms. As a result, linguistics and digital discourse analysis are central to unveiling gender ideologies which prevail in DMC, as well as to examine how language might also help victims of (cyber)abuse to resist and challenge digital practices and ideologies (Bou-Franch, 2016; Tagg, 2015). The following subsections present the relevant literature on gender and digital discourse with a special focus on aggression against women.

2.1.1. Early research on DMC

As previously mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, DMC was thought to be a technological development that would contribute to the democratization of social relations. In turn, these new spaces for communication would provide disadvantaged and underrepresented social groups, especially women, with the opportunity to freely interact and to voice their stances alongside those of other “powerful” groups (i.e., white middle-class men) (Herring, 1998; Herring & Stoerger, 2014). The decontextualization of the messages and the – usually optional – anonymity offered by DMC would “free [participants] from physical cues to the sender’s sex, age, race, able-bodiedness, attractiveness, and so forth” (Herring, 1996d, p. 116). However, in the 1990s, gender scholars observed that the Internet was controlled by a privileged group of people and was, therefore, in need of critical research.

Most of the early research carried out in the 1990s focused on how men exerted power and harassed women in online discussion groups, such as bulletin lists, which discouraged and prevented women from participating in online communication on most occasions. Not only were women met with coercing and patronizing behaviors, but also with sexism and verbal (sexual) violence. Scholars such as Herring (1996d, 1998, 1999) and Hall (1996) denounced that the cybersphere had become a place where intimidation and harassment were tolerated, thus debunking previous claims of DMC contributing to (gender) equality. In fact, their studies suggested that male online behavior was similar to the results obtained in previous research on non-mediated communication (Herring & Stoerger, 2014).

Herring et al. (1995) pioneered the study of gender inequality in digital discourse. The authors examined the responses to female-introduced topics in online mixed-sex public discussions. Their research unveiled linguistic patterns and silencing strategies

employed by male users in order to exert dominance over women. The most salient strategies used by male participants included: 1) avoidance to acknowledge the messages published by female users by not responding, diverting the topic, or disqualifying their contributions; 2) confrontation through accusations and aggressive language in order to discourage women from continuing the conversation; and 3) appropriation of women's ideas as their own, which was the most pervasive and indirect pattern. As a result, men regained control of the floor and women stopped contributing to the conversation. These silencing strategies are summarized in Table 1.

AVOIDANCE:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lack of response: avoidance to acknowledge and reply to the message posted by female users 2. Diversion <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Narrow or literal focus: focus on only one aspect of the message b. Intellectualization: use of theories with which women are not familiar or posting “incoherent bursts of intellectual-sounding noise” (Herring et al., 1995, p. 79) 3. Dismissal <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Patronizing: signaling women's contributions as uninteresting b. Humor: accusing women of not having sense of humor
CONFRONTATION:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Anger: intimidation strategies and aggressive language to prevent women from continuing the conversation 2. Accusations: blaming women for victimizing men
CO-OPTATION:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reformulation of ideas as one's own: attempt to regain control of the discussion by using and re-interpreting female participant's ideas and contributions (e.g., lecturing self-identified feminists about feminism)

Table 1: Silencing strategies employed by men to silence women in online discussion groups identified by Herring et al. (1995).

However, the study also revealed the mechanisms used by female participants to resist and challenge male dominance and to achieve a “temporary reversal of power relations” (Herring et al., 1995, p. 89). Women's empowering strategies consisted in maintaining the focus of their conversation by persisting and requiring men to recognize

their contributions. As a result, women built solidarity among themselves within the mixed-sex conversations. Female participants tried to support one another, helped maintain the topic of the discussion, and acknowledged the messages posted by other women.

Closely related is the study carried out by Herring (1996d) in which she argued that male and female participants exhibited different communicative styles (i.e., gendered discourses). Women tended to be more polite and made use of hedges to attenuate their contributions, whereas men used flaming strategies and were more aggressive and intimidating. These communicative patterns reproduced the offline gendered expectations in which women are expected to maintain harmonious social interactions, thus encouraging men to exhibit conflictual behaviors to subdue women and prevent them from participating in online spaces (Herring, 1996d; Herring et al., 1995). Consequently, these gendered styles resulted in the dominance of men and the silencing of women.

According to Herring (1996d), online aggressive behavior arises from an online ideology (i.e., *netiquette* norms) that supports “freedom [of expression], openness, and intellectual vigor” (p. 137). Therefore, it is not uncommon for aggressive male participants to appeal to these “libertarian principles of freedom” (Herring, 1999, p. 151) to justify their flaming and harassing behaviors. In her 1999 study, Herring pointed out that when women responded to online sexual aggression, male users accused them of attempting to censor men’s actions and blamed them for creating conflict among participants. This behavior is related to the strategies previously identified by Herring et al. (1995) and, therefore, resulted in preventing women from continuing the conversation and falling silent.

The visible inequality and the constant harassment and hostility led women to create safe spaces where they could interact freely and vindicate women’s rights. Hall (1996) termed these new online movements and female spaces as *Cyberfeminism*. However, the ideologies and discourses found in each of these spaces were different from one another and confrontational. Hall termed them as *Liberal Cyberfeminism* and *Radical Cyberfeminism*. Liberal Cyberfeminism conceived DMC as platforms which would erase gender differences and would help achieve equality between women and men. This movement promoted women’s sexual liberation and prompted Internet users to adopt a third sex or virtual sex identity, which would “liberate participants from the binary oppositions of female/male and homosexual/heterosexual” (Hall, 1996, p. 150), among

others. Liberal Cyberfeminists' digital practices consisted of verbal gender switching. Liberal Cyberfeminism was primarily exploited by pro-porn activists and, especially, the creators of the magazine *Future Sex*, which prompted women's sexual liberation. Participants appropriated gendered categories and discursive styles and played with their identities. In her study, Hall (1996) stated that one of the study's participants claimed that she not only changed her gender and sexual orientation but also her animacy (e.g., human to animal), although more recent studies, such as Herring and Stoerger (2014), point out that this practice was not particularly frequent.

On the other hand, Radical Cyberfeminism emerged as a response to gender-based verbal aggression and resulted in the creation of women-centered spaces (Hall, 1996; Herring et al., 2002). These female-only spaces allowed women to set their own discursive and community rules where flaming and hostility were not allowed. Hall (1996) examined the bulletin list SAPPHO, which was created only for lesbian and bisexual subscribers. New subscribers had to meet the community's expectations and standards, such as bearing a woman-sounding title and a pro-female signature, using a stereotypically feminine communicative style, and being polite. Therefore, SAPPHO's rules for newcomers set a specific discursive femininity, which, in turn, highlighted the differences between women/femininity and men/masculinity instead of neutralizing them. Nevertheless, women-centered groups were also subjected to language aggression, especially when trolls tried to disrupt their safe space. Herring et al. (2002) examined how a male troll joined a feminist discussion forum and manipulated participants by summoning the Netiquette norm of freedom of thought and expression. Yet, the presence of the troll also led to the setting of community norms and helped participants create solidarity among themselves.

Concurrent with the existence of women-only spaces, men also created online groups and spaces known as the *manosphere*. These digital spaces consisted of organized bulletin lists, blogs, and forums created by men's rights activists (MRA), who were usually white men (Lumsden, 2019; Marwick & Caplan, 2018). MRA are part of an anti-feminist movement which views feminism as a man-hating movement and, therefore, considers men as the victims of feminist ideologies (Lumsden, 2019). Current members of the *manosphere* include MRA, incels (involuntary celibates), pick-up artists (PUA), and Men Going Their Own Way (MGTOW), among others (see 2.1.2). Such communities exploit the affordances of DMC platforms to free themselves from social conventions and

to exhibit flaming and harassing behaviors. One of their most relevant premises to justify their actions is that women's online behavior provokes men to (sexually) harass them in digital spaces (Lumsden, 2019). Furthermore, they also organize in coordinated groups to "encourage, promote, or instigate systemic networked harassment against their targets" (Marwick & Caplan, 2018, p. 544), who are usually (feminist) women and queer people. Consequently, it has been argued that online misogyny and online anti-feminism are becoming synonyms since members of the manosphere show "extreme misogyny and proclivity towards personalized, and often sexualized, attacks on individual women" (Ging & Siapera, 2019, p. 23). Marwick and Caplan (2018) examined the term "misandry", which refers to the dislike of men. The term appeared online for the first time in Usenet discussions in which users tried to match it with its counterpart "misogyny" (i.e., the dislike of women). Misandry acts as a keyword in MRA's vocabulary to build an anti-feminist identity and to fight the alleged oppression of feminism against men.

Taken together, these studies illustrated the importance of examining the linguistic patterns used by online abusers and trolls to reproduce gender inequalities and harass female and queer communities. The research carried out during the early years of DMC already pointed to the fact that "the Internet is inevitably imbued with masculine codes and values and that it is, essentially, a patriarchal technology" (Han, 2018, p. 5), which still prevails in digital communication. Likewise, research on online gender relations also shed some light on the discursive strategies employed by victims to resist and challenge online aggression and hate speech. However, the work carried out by feminist language scholars on gender inequalities in online spaces was minimal as opposed to the great amount of research on general language in use (see Section 1.1), and frequently focused on a clear division between female and male users. A turn to a more constructivist perspective signaled the beginning of new approaches to gender studies in DMC.

2.1.2. Current trends in gender and digital discourse studies

The emergence of social media allowed a wider variety of people to join new digital spaces. In fact, female users are reported to be more active and to outnumber male participants (Herring & Stoerger, 2014). However, there still exists a bias against female-generated content. For instance, Herring and Stoerger (2014) point out that, even though most tweeters are (black) women, tweets posted by male users receive more attention in the form of reactions and retweets. In addition, the presence of empowered women on digital platforms triggers the appearance of unsupportive users who exploit the

affordances of digital platforms (e.g., anonymity) to perpetrate and encourage threats and verbal violence against those “who challenge the status quo” (Regehr & Ringrose, 2018, p. 354). This situation contributes to the maintenance of male-centered practices and “online toxicity towards non-dominant groups” (Madden et al., 2018, p. 72) (i.e., women and LGBTQIA+ communities).

Social media have provided researchers with the opportunity to examine the (gendered) ideologies of a larger part of society, as opposed to the research carried out before the emergence of DMC and during pre-Web and Web 1.0 eras (see 1.1). Linguists have shown their interest in studying different topics relating to gender and digital discourse from more constructivist perspectives, thus moving from the essentialist perspective which characterized early research on gender studies and DMC. Some of the most prominent areas of interest are gender performativity and discursive representations of gender roles in digital platforms (e.g., García-Gómez, 2020; Pérez-Sabater, 2019) and gender and sexuality, such as sexting (e.g., García-Gómez, 2019a, 2019b; Thurlow, 2017, 2020). Moreover, digital media have also helped examine topics related to private issues, such as family discussions about feminism (Fenández-Amaya, 2020) and women’s perception of marital infidelity (Perelmutter, 2015). Nevertheless, linguistic (sexual) aggression against women in digital platforms remains a major concern for scholars, and it is currently gaining momentum as a field of research.

Although formerly treated as a private problem of individual women, (sexual) violence against women is currently being treated as a public issue (Bou-Franch, 2013). These new digital spaces are used as a tool to inform and raise public awareness of this social malady. In recent years, most research on aggression against women has focused on the discourses and ideologies of intimate partner violence (IPV). Bou-Franch (2013) carried out the first study to analyze the discourses and ideologies of regular citizens regarding IPV. She examined a corpus of unsolicited comments published in the comment section of an online piece of news on IPV and health coverage. Drawing on critical and computer-mediated discourse analysis, her research identifies a series of minimizing and victim-blaming strategies which perpetuate and reinforce discourses of male violence. Nevertheless, some participants also challenged these strategies by expressing anger and by disagreeing with those comments including sexist and patriarchal discourses.

Similarly, Bou-Franch and Garcés-Conejos Blitvich (2014b) examined comments published on four public service advertisements against domestic violence on YouTube.

The authors identify three patriarchal strategies of abuse which consist of 1) minimizing the abuse, 2) denying its existence, and 3) blaming women for the abuse. In their corpus, the first strategy was the most frequent. Feminism was presented as a manipulative discourse perpetrated by mass media and institutions. On the other hand, women were blamed for their abuse, either for “tricking” men into violence or for not reporting the abuse. These arguments are closely related to the discourse and ideology of the manosphere as they construct (feminist) women as part of an out-group, whereas men are constructed as unprotected victims of the movement.

However, as mentioned in Chapter 1, social media are contributing to shaping the political landscape as people can publicly challenge or sustain gender ideologies, especially when it comes to women’s rights. For instance, Aloy Mayo and Taboada (2017) studied the online coverage of the 2014 US midterm elections by examining the comments published on the Facebook page of the traditionally women-oriented magazine *Cosmopolitan*. Their study concluded that participants not only debated other users’ political views and ideologies but also condemned the candidates’ political agenda when it affected women negatively. Moreover, LGBTQIA+ individuals have also found a place on digital platforms where they can freely express their emotions and desires. King (2011) studied a corpus of chat-room interactions and illustrated that gay men felt free to play with their identities “which are marginalized in our heteronormative society” (King, 2011, p. 1). On the other hand, Zottola and Fruttaldo (2019) examined how the Twitter account *Scholarly Queen* was used to give a voice to queer academics in a humorous tone.

Overall, these studies illustrate that social media provide users with the opportunity to voice their stances on gender issues in the (online) public sphere which was previously limited to the elite and mass media. Nevertheless, media and sociology research has shown that one of the main issues for female and feminist users in digital media is to denounce sexual violence (Blevins, 2018; Mendes et al., 2018; Regehr & Ringrose, 2018; to mention a few). Women employ these new digital spaces as a tool to voice their experiences and denounce (cyber)violence against women. Research has shown that online fora provide a great opportunity to examine the discourse of victim-survivors of (sexual) violence. For example, Vázquez Herмосilla and Zaragoza Ninet (2014) examined how victim-survivors of domestic violence seek and/or offer help to other victims on these platforms, thus building a safe community for participants based on solidarity and support. Likewise, Sánchez-Moya’s research (2017, 2018) offers

insights into the discourses of victim-survivors of IPV, which construct the perpetrator as a figure of authority and abusive relationships as a trap for victims.

In this sense, (micro)blogging platforms are currently used as spaces where victim-survivors can publicly share their personal experiences of sexual violence and challenge patriarchal ideologies and traditional rape myths, such as victim-blaming attitudes. Loney-Howes (2018) examined blog entries written by victim-survivors and underlined how digital narratives of sexual violence are used to challenge discourses of rape. She points out that offline self-narratives are usually shaped by legal and psychological discourses. For example, Henry (2010) argued that, in trials of rape, victims' testimonies are invalidated by experts when testimonials deviate from the expected rape script (see also Trinch, 2013). This means that victim-survivors of sexual violence are expected to construct "a clear, linear and concise account of their experience in order to be rendered credible" (Loney-Howes, 2018, p. 32), thus ignoring other variables such as potential post-traumatic stress disorder. Therefore, Loney-Howes' research highlights the importance of sharing self-narratives of rape on digital platforms in order to challenge hegemonic discourses that, in offline contexts, determine the validity of victim-survivors' experiences. In digital spaces, victim-survivors should be able to construct their own narratives for an audience that is expected not to judge individuals but to render their narratives credible (Loney-Howes, 2018). However, this is not always the case as this thesis will show.

Research has mainly focused on self-narratives written on social media platforms, especially microblogging services such as Tumblr and Twitter. The Tumblr campaign *Who Needs Feminism?* created by university students drew special attention as a new form of self-narrative (Mendes et al., 2019). Participants anonymously shared on the Tumblr page a photo of them holding their testimonial of sexism or sexual violence on a piece of paper in which they explained the different reasons why feminism is still necessary for today's society. On the other hand, Twitter is increasingly being used as a tool to denounce (sexual) aggression against women. This form of activism is commonly referred to as *hashtag feminism*, which is characterized by campaigns that feature rape self-narratives written by victim-survivors and messages of support from their allies. The importance of hashtag feminism has increased throughout the years, especially with campaigns such as *#YesAllWomen* and *#MeToo* (see subsection 2.2.2).

Although these platforms render women's narratives visible, they also expose victim-survivors and their allies to potential online aggression and harassment (Lewis et al., 2017). These new digital platforms and services have also prompted the creation of new forms of harassment and aggression towards non-dominant groups. Male-centered platforms such as 4Chan and Reddit promote discourses of sexism and, sometimes, misogyny among their users. For instance, 4Chan popularized the online expression "Tits or GTFO⁵", which is used to censor and minimize women's contributions by rendering them uninteresting if they do not include pictures of their breasts. Similarly, the MRA subreddit is used as a platform to denounce feminism and "an overreaching, *misandrist* culture to protect their [men's] very existence" (Marwick and Caplan, 2018, 546, emphasis in original). The research carried out by Jaki et al. (2019) points out that groups formed in the manosphere such as Incels.me, which was previously part of Reddit but was banned for its misogynistic content, employ discourses of anti-feminism, misogyny, and homophobia which target women and allies of feminism. In fact, current linguistic research has shown that antifeminist discourses which portray men as victims are commonly shared across the manosphere communities (e.g., Heritage & Koller, 2020; Kendrel, 2020; Kendrel et al., 2022). Furthermore, Jaki et al. (2019) call attention to the fact that these groups tend to resurface in one platform after being removed or banned from another. This suggests that core ideologies of the manosphere might be pervasive across the different Internet platforms.

The scalability of social media posts allows members of the manosphere to "collectivize and abuse women with so few consequences" (Jane, 2017b, p. 51). Regehr and Ringrose (2018) explained the verbal sexual abuse that they experienced on Twitter and Facebook for identifying themselves as feminists. Therefore, the very act of sharing self-narratives of sexual violence and fighting for gender equality is starting to be considered an act of political resistance. In fact, digital feminism is considered to be shaping a new wave of feminism (Blevins, 2018).

However, online feminist activism is not always considered to contribute to positive social change. Han (2018) analyzed the Chinese feminist group Gender Watch Women's Voice activities on the WeChat platform. Her study suggests that their online political agenda did not help bring social transformation, and contributed, instead, to "the

⁵ Get the Fuck Out.

spread of backlash against feminism and misogynist actions” (Han, 2018, p. 12). Yet, this new wave of feminism calls for a change of tactics in which feminists can share their individual experiences and connect with other users, and thus create consciousness-raising communities of shared experiences that denounce publicly the severity of sexual violence and gender inequality (Blevins, 2018).

2.2. Twitter and gender ideologies

Online intimidation and harassment against women have existed since the very emergence of the Internet (Herring, 2004). Jane (2016) points out that almost 75% of women, especially young women, have experienced online abuse and harassment, and that gender-related comments published in response to online news are more likely to receive negative comments and support (cyber)violence against women (see also Bou-Franch, 2013). However, it was not until the early 2010s that under-represented groups like women and LGBTQIA+ individuals started using platforms, especially Twitter, to publicly voice both their online and offline experiences of sexual harassment and violence (Jane, 2016). Indeed, research has shown that online communication reproduces patterns of dominance already present in the offline world, which make it possible for scholars to examine ideologies of gender (in)equality in society (Bou-Franch, 2016; Herring et al., 1995; Tagg, 2015).

In the previous section, it was argued that the Internet is controlled by a male-centered culture which leads to sexist and violent attitudes toward women. Women who participate on DMC are usually subjected to aggressive behaviors, especially when they engage in feminist practices (Lewis, Rowe & Wiper, 2017). Although it is true that both female and male Internet users experience some sort of online abuse, it is important to highlight that verbal attacks on female users tend to be sexual and sexist and reproduce gendered power inequalities (Ging & Siapera, 2019).

Online abuse has stabilized as a new form of violence against women (Powell & Henry, 2017). Lewis et al. (2017) state that Twitter is the most commonly used social media platform to engage in feminist politics and practices. However, their study also illustrates that it is also the most hostile SNS for women, as 80% of the women they interviewed claimed to have experienced some sort of online abuse after using Twitter. Therefore, Twitter is “worthy of further consideration” (Lewis et al., 2017, p. 1469).

Moreover, as previously mentioned, Twitter is increasingly being used as a tool for female empowerment. This section is divided into two parts. First, it provides an overview of (linguistic) aggression against women on Twitter. Lastly, it discusses how Twitter can also be used by women to empower themselves and notes how it can also be employed as a counter-productive measure.

2.2.1. Online misogyny and linguistic aggression against women

Cyberviolence and harassment against women have drawn the attention of scholars since the early years of DMC. However, this social issue has recently gained momentum due to the fact that SNS have prompted the appearance of, mostly anonymous, opinions which “express the type of racist, homophobic, or sexist speech that is no longer acceptable in public society, at work, or even at home” (Marwick as cited in Jane, 2017b, p. 51). These spaces usually host communities—sometimes formed in the manosphere—which encourage hostile and misogynistic attitudes and enforce a toxic form of masculinity (Jaki et al., 2019). As a consequence, these attitudes are considered strategies to silence women’s attempts and freedom to participate in online communication. This forces them to remain silent or even withdraw from social media (Jane, 2016, 2017b). Yet, cyberviolence against women is significantly underreported and usually trivialized and dismissed (Jane, 2017b). Due to the alleged freedom of expression and male-centered culture which governs the Internet, women are usually blamed for cyberviolence, whereas perpetrators are rarely punished (Jane, 2016).

As explored in Section 1.3, Twitter reflects how social media makes it relatively easier for researchers to examine the reactions of ordinary citizens to socio-political issues and conflicts. Regarding gender (in)equality, the presence of verbal violence against women on this service is of special interest to scholars from all fields of research. In fact, Twitter is considered to be a sexually abusive and sexist service (Jane, 2017b; Mendes et al., 2018). For instance, sociology scholars Stubbs-Richardson et al. (2018) examined how Twitter was used to aggravate rape culture and to spread victim-blaming and slut-shaming discourses. Interestingly enough, they also found that tweets including victim-blaming attitudes were more frequently retweeted, and hence more popular and affiliative, than those which supported victim-survivors. Likewise, Idoiaga Mondragon et al. (2019) examined the reaction to the court sentencing of the Spanish gang rape case “La Manada” from a psychological and sociological perspective. They identified anti-

feminist discourses which put the blame on the victim, whereas the perpetrators were represented as victims of feminism.

Linguistic research on online misogyny on Twitter, however, remains scarce. Anderson and Cermele (2014) examined sexist tweets sent to the Twitter user @femfreq after the owner, Anita Sarkseesian, denounced the lack of female main characters in video games. Their study revealed that the user mostly received tweets which contained covert sexist language and reproduced patriarchal ideologies. Sarkseesian was described as an unwelcome member in the gaming community for stating that women do not feel comfortable due to the judgment to which they are subjected. Furthermore, she was also accused of victimhood and described as weak for having men defending her instead of replying to unsupportive users herself. Nevertheless, the authors acknowledged that their findings could be limited to their case study. In fact, Hardaker and McGlashan (2016) obtained very different results. Their study was devoted to examining linguistic aggression against the journalist Carolina Criado-Perez with a special focus on rape threats. Drawing on corpus-based discourse analysis, their study showed that women were usually described as the targets of abusive comments and rape threats, which were used as a strategy to silence and control them. Additionally, it also suggested that perpetrators were considered as an out-group by those men who do not support these aggressive behaviors. Lastly, Frenda et al. (2019) explored misogynistic and sexist tweets from a computational-linguistic approach. Drawing from two corpora of sexist tweets and one corpus of misogynistic tweets, the authors concluded that their sample employed profanities and lexis related to sexuality and female body parts. Their study suggested that the three corpora shared similar linguistic patterns, making it difficult to differentiate between sexism and misogyny on Twitter.

Online misogyny is considered a manifestation of a “power imbalance between men and women” (Ging & Siapera, 2019, p. 32). Gender-based cyberhate and online sexual violence are understood to be performed in order to hinder women’s attempts to participate in digital communication, as well as to degrade and dehumanize female bodies (Ging & Siapera, 2019; Jane, 2017b). Despite the presence of sexist and misogynistic practices on platforms like Twitter, this chapter has illustrated that very little is currently known about linguistic (sexual) aggression against women on this site. The next subsection focuses on the use of Twitter to challenge these practices and engage in feminist politics.

2.2.2. Twitter as a space for feminist politics and practices

Since the second wave of feminism, feminists have attempted to raise awareness of sexual violence against women and its physical and psychological effects (Jane, 2017b; Loney-Howes, 2018). Although the previous subsection mentioned that Twitter can be a toxic and hostile space for female users, research has also shown that it is “a relatively safer and easier space to engage in feminist discussions than in participants’ offline contexts” (Mendes et al., 2018, p. 243). This service allows women to connect with other users who share similar experiences.

Women make use of Twitter’s popularity to engage in online feminist politics and to raise awareness of gender-based verbal aggression. For example, Dynel and Poppi (2020) carried out a metapragmatic analysis of tweets written by pornographic entrepreneur Stormy Daniels in response to the hate speech that she received on Twitter. Stormy Daniels became globally popular when she publicly alleged that Donald Trump made her sign a confidential disclosure agreement about an affair they had in 2006. Their analysis suggested that Daniels made use of rhetorical strategies, such as creative and humorous self-deprecating comments, to strengthen her position as a porn star and to build her identity as a witty and smart woman. Moreover, Daniels also seemed to reply to these negative comments to claim her sexuality and to prompt other women to do so in order to challenge sexist ideologies.

Additionally, scholars have found in hashtag activism a useful tool to examine how individuals come out as survivors of gender-based violence and to explore how self-narratives are told on social media (Mendes et al., 2019; Regehr & Ringrose, 2018). As tackled in subsection 1.3.2, the use of Twitter hashtags has gradually become a strategic means to connect and mobilize people with similar goals and beliefs. Hashtag feminism allows victim-survivors and allies to raise awareness of gender inequality and to disrupt and challenge hegemonic discourses which validate (sexual) aggression against women.

Hashtag feminism is seen by gender scholars as the central activity shaping the fourth wave of feminism (Blevins, 2018; Clark-Parsons, 2019; Jane, 2016; Lawrence & Ringrose, 2018). As opposed to previous waves of feminism which relied on a variety of communication strategies, such as consciousness-raising groups, publications, and pamphlets, Twitter hashtags are used to spread counterhegemonic discourses to create a collective consciousness and share victim-survivors’ experiences with other women and men (Barker-Plummer & Barker-Plummer, 2017, Clark, 2016). Hashtag feminism is

“capable of triggering sociopolitical change with or without the help of collective action offline” (Clark, 2016, p. 791) since the very act of sharing self-narratives of rape is an act of resistance. In fact, very few online feminist campaigns have led to street demonstrations (Clark, 2016). Self-narratives allow victim-survivors to become active agents of their own experiences and to challenge the belief that sexual violence is a private issue.

Media and sociology scholars have found hashtag feminism to be an effective tool to create online communities of shared feelings, as well as a way for victim-survivors to go through a cathartic process. These scholars have carried out research on the use of different Twitter hashtags, such as *#WhyIStayed* (Clark, 2016) and *#BeenRapedNeverReported* (Keller et al., 2016). Ethnographic research suggests that participants find hashtag feminism as an enlightening phenomenon that allows them to read the experiences of women from all around the world and understand that sexual violence is part of a “broader structural social problem” (Mendes et al., 2018, p. 239). In this sense, the feminist hashtags which have caught the attention of most scholars are *#YesAllWomen* (Barker-Plummer & Barker-Plummer, 2017; Morikawa, 2019a, 2019b; Thrift, 2014) and *#MeToo* (Bouvier, 2020; Clark-Parsons, 2019; Fileborn & Loney-Howes, 2019; Mendes et al., 2018).

#YesAllWomen was created in response to the hashtag *#NotAllMen*, which argued that not all men have sexist and/or misogynistic behaviors. The hashtag attempted to show that most women are the objects of gender-based abuse and sexism. Moreover, it was the first feminist hashtag to be considered a real campaign which could have an impact outside of social media (Barker-Plummer & Barker-Plummer, 2017). On the other hand, *#MeToo* was popularized by the American actress Alysa Milano who encouraged victim-survivors of sexual violence to share their stories. This campaign also resulted in offline campaigns and was used in different demonstrations, such as Women’s March 2019 and *#MeToo*. Nevertheless, the *#MeToo* campaign received backlash for various reasons. (Clark-Parsons, 2019). Particularly, it was considered to appropriate Tarana Burke’s “Me Too Movement”, founded in 2006, which attempted to denounce sexual violence against young black women, while the more recent movement mostly focused on the experiences of white celebrities. Yet, the movement helped bring attention to women’s varied experiences of sexual violence and had important offline repercussions. Harvey Weinstein's affair is a case in point.

In a way, it is not surprising that language-based research has focused on the study of *#YesAllWomen*. Barker-Plummer and Barker-Plummer (2017) employed corpus linguistics tools (i.e., word frequencies) and Critical Discourse Studies (CDS) to identify participants' use of discursive strategies to create a collective consciousness. The most common discourses in their study were related to gender and violence. Using this hashtag, participants shared their experiences of gender-based violence and sexual assault. On the other hand, Morikawa's research (2019b) attempted to explore the linguistic patterns employed by participants to shape an online feminist identity. Her findings suggest that feminists who participated in this campaign used vulgar and offensive language while rarely employing politeness markers and hedges, thus rejecting the stereotypical features of women's language (Lakoff, 1975). In a second study carried out by Morikawa (2019a), she reports that the men who contributed to *#YesAllWomen* mirrored the linguistic features employed by women in the same context. Nevertheless, there are many hashtags, such as those mentioned above, and aspects of hashtag feminism which have not been analyzed from a linguistic and/or discursive approach.

Further linguistic research on hashtag feminism includes *#MeToo* (Bouvier, 2020), *#WhyIDidntReport* (Palomino-Manjón, 2022a), and *#NotAllMen* (Jones et al., 2022). Bouvier (2020) discussed the variety of discourses present in *#MeToo* in addition to its role in creating affective publics (Papacharissi, 2014, 2016) and, thus, a community of shared feelings among victim-survivors and women. Similarly, Palomino-Manjón (2022a) examined self-narratives of sexual violence under the hashtag *#WhyIDidntReport*. Her research shows the use of evaluative language to challenge traditional discourses of rape and hegemonic femininity (see Chapter 5) as well as to build solidarity and endorsement of victims of patriarchal discourses. On the other hand, Jones et al. (2022) identified a resistant discourse produced by women in *#NotAllMen* which helped them appropriate the hashtag to fight misogynistic discourses in relation to the murder of a young woman by a police officer and women's safety in the UK.

Hashtag feminism is, however, not without controversy. Scholars have found hashtag feminism to exclude the voices of socially marginalized groups, such as women of color and LGBTQIA+ women. This became apparent when the hashtag *#YesAllWhiteWomen* emerged to denounce that *#YesAllWomen* focused on the experiences of white women (Barker-Plummer & Barker-Plummer, 2017; Jackson & Banaszczyk, 2016). Moreover, Clark-Parsons (2019) found that the most retweeted

tweets containing *#MeToo* included the experiences of heterosexual women. As with *#YesAllWhiteWomen*, the LGBTQIA+ community reacted to the situation and created *#MeTooQueer* since they felt alienated from the movement (Ison, 2019). In sum, feminists are increasingly turning to Twitter to resist not only rape culture but also “hegemonic femininities” (Lawrence & Ringrose, 2018).

Twitter is increasingly becoming a tool to engage in networked feminism and is leading to the development of a “call-out culture” (Lawrence & Ringrose, 2018) in which sexism, misogyny, and rape culture can be identified and challenged online. However, this form of digital campaign is also found to bring attention to victim-survivors and to leave them “vulnerable to criticisms, threats, and harassment from trolls who are often participating for the sole purpose of antagonizing feminists” (Blevins, 2018, p. 94). In fact, most participants are found to experience hostility and harassment after sharing their experiences or supporting victim-survivors (Clark-Parsons, 2019; Jane, 2017b; Mendes et al., 2018). As a result, “some women are being silenced, while others are paying a dreadful price in order to continue speaking” (Jane, 2017b, p. 75). In fact, researchers have found oppressive gender ideologies in hashtags which seem to defend women, as in *#bindersfullofwomen* (see 1.3.2). Therefore, gendered cyberhate can be considered to prevent women from participating in digital spaces (Jane, 2017b), including movements that are specially designed for them to share their experiences of sexism and violence.

PART II
OBJECTIVES AND METHODS

CHAPTER 3

Objectives and research questions

CHAPTER 3: OBJECTIVES AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Part I offered a general overview of the applications of discourse analysis to the study of digital communication and gender. Research has gradually evolved from the study of online language towards a more critical perspective on the analysis of discursive practices carried out by Internet users. However, as explained in Chapter 2, a few early studies on DMC also explored how gendered social inequalities were reproduced in digital spaces from more essentialist perspectives. The interest in the representation of gender inequality and gender-based linguistic aggression has become greater with the emergence of digital technologies and new spaces for communication, especially with the appearance of new online platforms. Social media, and especially SNSs, provide researchers with the opportunity to trace the opinions and stances of a larger section of society. This pointed to an evolution from essentialist perspectives on gendered ideologies and what users identified as female and male identities to a constructionist perspective in which meanings are discursively negotiated, thus focusing on the co-construction of identities and gendered discourses and representations. As explained in Chapter 2, DMC platforms have prompted the emergence of digital activism, which allows women and men to challenge hegemonic discourses of sexism, misogyny, and rape, especially through hashtag feminism. However, studies also suggest that the Internet continues to be a space where gender-based violence and aggression are still permitted due to the libertarian principles which characterize it.

On the other hand, the great diversity of opinions in online platforms has given evaluation center stage in language and digital research, which has shown that the role of evaluative language has been key to understanding social media interactions (see Zappavigna, 2012, 2017a). Evaluation has been proven to be “an important resource for establishing and maintaining the alignments that are central to community membership” (Zappavigna, 2017a, p. 448). Several studies claim that social media users create (ambient) communities of shared feelings by assessing and negotiating values with other participants (see Chapter 1). Furthermore, evaluation is not only useful to examine interpersonal relationships, but also to identify discourses and ideologies (see Chapter 5). Therefore, there is a need to explore the role that evaluative language has in the (re)production and negotiation of gender ideologies, and how social media users align around these values where sexual violence is involved.

As a result of the abovementioned, the main aim of this dissertation is, on the one hand, to study the relationship between gender-based discourses and ideologies in the discursive construction of victim-survivors and perpetrators, and, on the other, the use of evaluative language to discuss (verbal) sexual violence on the microblogging platform Twitter. Consequently, this dissertation has two specific objectives:

Specific objective 1: To examine Twitter users' gender-based ideologies and discourses and how they relate to the construction of the identity of victims and perpetrators of sexual violence.

Specific objective 2: To identify the evaluative language employed by tweeters to represent (verbal) violence against women and sustain, challenge, and resist gender ideologies and discourses.

To do so, this dissertation takes Kavanaugh's nomination to the US Supreme Court as a case study. The nomination process was highly controversial as the nominee was accused of attempted rape. This event was heavily discussed on Twitter among tweeters who sided with either the accuser or the accused and constantly negotiated the identities of both parties (see Chapter 4). Therefore, this case study should be useful to examine how gender ideologies and discourses are (re)negotiated and how linguistic (sexual) aggression against women is performed and negotiated on Twitter. The research questions which guide this study are the following:

Research question 1:

RQ1.1. What ideologies and discourses did tweeters draw from in their discussion of gender-based violence during AsJ Kavanaugh's confirmation process?

RQ1.2. How do such gendered ideologies and discourses relate to the construction of the victim-perpetrator identities?

Hypothesis 1: Tweeters are expected to draw on different linguistic patterns and prosodies to construct gendered ideologies and discourses of sexual violence and to negotiate the roles of victims and perpetrators. In addition, these discourses will probably be used to highlight a lack of institutional support which helps maintain rape culture (RQ1.1). However, since sexual violence is closely related to politics in this case, gender-based violence will also be possibly constructed as a political tool, which in turn will render victims invisible and will undermine the importance

of sexual violence. Therefore, Twitter interactions are also expected to contain hegemonic discourses derived from rape culture. Consequently, the identities of victims and perpetrators will be constantly negotiated depending on tweeters' political stances. In addition to negotiating the identities of victim and perpetrator, the identities of those political figures and social actors involved in the process will also be discussed.

Research question 2:

RQ2. What evaluative resources did tweeters draw upon to signal different gender ideologies and discourses? Were these resources employed to sustain or challenge gender (in)equality and sexual violence?

Hypothesis 2: Taking into account previous research on gender and DMC, it was hypothesized that discourses of sexual violence will be constructed through negative evaluative prosodies. Drawing on Appraisal Theory (Martin & White, 2005; see Chapter 5) as the analytical framework, it is hypothesized that Twitter users will employ evaluative lexis related to morality and behavior to condemn perpetrators as well as to construct victim-blaming discourses. On the other hand, it is possible that some users will employ antifeminist discourses. These will include discourses of sexism, misogyny, and those derived from rape culture, such as victim-blaming. Although evaluation concerning aesthetics is usually related to objects, it is expected that victim-blaming discourses are created through the negative evaluation of victim-survivors' physical appearance and fashion. Lastly, emotion will be used as a resource to strengthen the beliefs of the different online subcommunities created in terms of (dis)affiliation with either the victim or the perpetrator. It is expected that this constellation of discourses and ideologies which coexists on Twitter will lead to conflict among Twitter users who either challenge or promote patriarchal discourses of violence against women.

In sum, this study attempts to provide new insights into how users contest or support discursive practices derived from a male-centered society on Twitter. In addition, the findings will make an important contribution to our understanding of the representation of gender-based violence therein.

CHAPTER 4
**Socio-political context and corpora
of analysis**

CHAPTER 4: SOCIO-POLITICAL CONTEXT AND CORPORA OF ANALYSIS

This chapter discusses the case study and the two corpora of analysis. Section 4.1. deals with the socio-political context in which this dissertation is framed. Then, it provides a brief overview of Trump's nomination of former Judge Brett Kavanaugh's to become Associate Justice in the US Supreme Court in 2018, and discusses the sexual allegations made against him by Dr. Christine Blasey Ford. Lastly, Section 4.2. presents the dataset and the two corpora analyzed for this dissertation and the procedures followed to collect it.

4.1. Kavanaugh's sexual allegations and nomination to US Supreme Court

After AsJ Anthony Kennedy announced his retirement on June 27, 2018, the then President of the United States, Donald Trump, announced the nomination of Brett Kavanaugh, who was serving as a judge on the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit at that time, as the new AsJ. A day later, on July 10, his nomination was submitted to the Senate⁶. This nomination sparked the response of Republicans and Democrats who voiced opposing views⁷. Whereas members of the Republican Party (or Grand Old Party, GOP henceforth) praised Kavanaugh for his intelligence and experience, Senate Democrats publicly opposed his nomination⁸. Furthermore, polling results showed that American voters had divided opinions⁹.

In the meantime, College professor Christine Blasey Ford contacted the US Representative from California, Anna Eshoo, to allege that she had been physically and sexually assaulted by Kavanaugh in 1982¹⁰. Shortly afterward, Eshoo convinced Dr. Ford to write a letter to Senator Dianne Feinstein, who was part of the Senate Judiciary Committee, and report the assault. On July 30, Feinstein received a letter in which Dr. Ford explained her experience and expressed her wish to remain anonymous – although

⁶ <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/one-nomination-sent-senate-today-7/>.

⁷ <https://www.foxnews.com/politics/kavanaugh-nomination-to-supreme-court-cheered-by-conservatives>.

⁸ <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/07/10/us/politics/democrats-brett-kavanaugh-supreme-court.html?searchResultPosition=2>.

⁹ <https://www.people-press.org/2018/07/17/americans-divided-on-kavanaughs-nomination-to-the-supreme-court/>.

¹⁰ https://www.washingtonpost.com/investigations/california-professor-writer-of-confidential-brett-kavanaugh-letter-speaks-out-about-her-allegation-of-sexual-assault/2018/09/16/46982194-b846-11e8-94eb-3bd52dfe917b_story.html.

the letter was later leaked by the press¹¹. Dr. Ford also contacted *The Washington Post*'s lawyer Debra Katz, who advised her to take a polygraph test so that she could not be accused of lying.

Kavanaugh's four confirmation hearings before the Senate Judiciary Committee took place from September 4 to September 7¹². The hearings were characterized by the opposition and interruption of Senate Democrats as well as the presence of protesters who delayed them. However, none of the hearings dealt with the sexual assault allegations and Senator Feinstein remained silent. However, on September 12, the online news portal *The Intercept* reported that Senator Feinstein was refusing to hand in important documents (i.e., the letter) to the Senate Judiciary Committee¹³. As a consequence of the leak, Senator Feinstein referred the letter to federal authorities and to the White House to include it in Kavanaugh's files.

Due to the fact that the press was trying to leak her identity, Dr. Ford went public in an interview with *The Washington Post* on September 16. She explained that, when she was fifteen years old, Kavanaugh and a friend attempted to rape her and pinned her down to a bed while forcefully trying to take her clothes off. Since the two men were very drunk, she managed to escape and locked herself in the bathroom. She also provided the newspaper with the results of the polygraph test she took in August as well as notes from her therapist from 2012. Thus, the Senate Judiciary Committee scheduled a fifth hearing session. Prior to this confirmation hearing, three more allegations of rape against Kavanaugh were issued. Deborah Ramirez accused him of sexual violence; Julie Swetnick claimed that she was gang raped by Kavanaugh and his friends at a high school party; and Judy Munro-Leighton also claimed rape. However, the third statement was found to be fabricated¹⁴.

Dr. Ford was constantly criticized by members of the GOP who described her as "a liar, mentally unstable, and/or a paid Democratic operative" (Franks, 2019, p. 93) and was mocked by the President himself during his political rallies. On September 21,

¹¹ <https://edition.cnn.com/2018/09/16/politics/blasey-ford-kavanaugh-letter-feinstein/index.html>.

¹² <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2018/sep/07/brett-kavanaugh-confirmation-hearings-key-moments>.

¹³ <https://theintercept.com/2018/09/12/brett-kavanaugh-confirmation-dianne-feinstein/>.

¹⁴ <https://www.businessinsider.es/brett-kavanaugh-sexual-assault-misconduct-allegations-2018-9?r=US&IR=T>.

President Trump published a series of tweets trying to undermine Dr. Ford's allegation and giving his support to Kavanaugh¹⁵. As a consequence, tweeters shared their personal experiences of sexual violence under the hashtag *#WhyIDidntReport* to express their support and solidarity with Dr. Ford (Palomino-Manjón, 2022a).

On September 27, Dr. Ford and Judge Kavanaugh were called to the hearing to testify as witnesses¹⁶. The lawyer Rachel Mitchell questioned them separately and the hearing was broadcast. Dr. Ford claimed that Kavanaugh's friend Mark Judge, who is an American writer, had attempted to rape her at a high school party when she was fifteen years old. She described the event as a haunting experience that she was not able to voice until she attended a couple counseling session in 2012. For his part, Judge Kavanaugh denied the allegations. The Republican Senator Lindsey Graham also drew the attention of viewers as he blamed the Democratic Party for ruining the nominee's reputation with fabricated allegations. At the end of the hearings, Mitchell stated that she would not press charges against Kavanaugh because he considered that Dr. Ford's testimony was inconsistent. Therefore, the Senate Judiciary Committee announced that the nomination would be discussed the following day.

On September 28, Republican Senators voted against interrogating Mark Judge and the nomination was finally sent to the full Senate with 11-10 votes. Cloture was voted on October 5 and Kavanaugh was finally confirmed as Associate Justice by the Senate with a vote of 50-48 on October 6¹⁷. During the vote, demonstrations were held in front of the US Capitol in Washington to oppose his confirmation. On October 8, Trump held a broadcast public swearing-in ceremony. The event was considered a strategy to publicly announce that AsJ Kavanaugh was found not guilty by the Senate as well as to blame the Democratic Party for conspiring against the nominee. In fact, during the ceremony, the President described Kavanaugh as the victim of a political campaign¹⁸.

During the process, Dr. Ford was constantly harassed and mocked both online and offline, and received a large number of rape threats for deciding to come forward against

¹⁵ <https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/1043126336473055235> ;
<https://twitter.com/realDonaldTrump/status/1043130170612244481>.

¹⁶ <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/27/us/politics/brett-kavanaugh-confirmation-hearings.html>.

¹⁷ <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-45774174>.

¹⁸ <https://apnews.com/c40afcf2258f4a3b96bad2b1fbb8c682/Trump-apologizes-to-Kavanaugh-during-swearing-in-ceremony>.

AsJ Kavanaugh (Franks, 2019). Her private information was also leaked on the Internet, and she was forced to move out of her family home several times. By November 8 of that same year, she had not been able not to resume her teaching at Palo Alto University¹⁹. In addition, Dr. Ford faced the U.S. government's nominee only to be later considered a part of a political strategy to bring down Kavanaugh's nomination and, in turn, Trump's administration. However, Dr. Ford also stated that she had no regrets over publicly denouncing AsJ Kavanaugh's actions, and that she expected her testimony to encourage other women who had been victims of sexual violence to challenge rape culture and the established patriarchal order.

It is against this background that the present dissertation examines the discourses and ideologies of gendered violence on Twitter, alongside the discursive construction of the identities of victim and perpetrator (RQ1), and the evaluative resources used to enact such discourses and ideologies (RQ2).

4.2. Corpora and data collection

In order to answer the research questions, a corpus of tweets used during Kavanaugh's confirmation process was compiled. All the tweets in the corpus contained specific hashtags related to the confirmation process. As previously explained in Chapter 1, hashtags are considered to be a unique tool that allows researchers to trace the opinions and ideologies of large sections of society (Zappavigna, 2018). The dataset for this research is made up of tweets with two hashtags related to the confirmation process: *#KavanaughConfirmation* and *#NoKavanaughConfirmation*. The first hashtag, *#KavanaughConfirmation*, was used both by the media and tweeters as a backchannel²⁰ (Zappavigna, 2018) to share information and/or to comment about the process. On the other hand, its counterpart *#NoKavanaughConfirmation* became popularized by

¹⁹ <https://www.vox.com/2018/11/8/18076154/christine-blasey-ford-threats-kavanaugh-gofundme>.

²⁰ A backchannel is the commentary which occurs when “[u]sers view some primary form of live media at the same time as engaging with social media on a secondary device” (Zappavigna, 2018, p.10). Therefore, hashtags can be considered as backchannels when they are used to share opinions about an ongoing event.

celebrities²¹ and its structure includes a negative attitude toward Kavanaugh²². Therefore, the *#KavanaughConfirmation* hashtag may have been used not only to share news but also to express support for the nominee.

Tweets published under the hashtag *#KavanaughConfirmation* were manually retrieved using Twitter's application TweetDeck, which has tools that enable a manual, advanced search using boolean terms and filtering by location, user(s), and date. On the other hand, tweets containing the hashtag *#NoKavanaughConfirmation* were collected through the Google Sheets' add-on *Twitter Archiver* (Agarwal, n.d.). *Twitter Archiver* retrieves metadata about the tweets, such as date, display name, tweet ID, location, number of favorites and retweets, followers, etc. Before the analysis, the metadata was stripped out from the files as they would blur the results for the quantitative analysis (see Chapter 5). Moreover, non-English language tweets and retweets were filtered out and excluded from the dataset. The complete dataset includes tweets published in a span of 23 days: from the moment that Dr. Ford went public (09/16/2018) until the day after Kavanaugh was publicly confirmed as an Associate Justice of the US Supreme Court (10/8/2018). The dataset comprised a total of 112,428 tweets (N = 2,924,498 words), which were later divided into several excel files depending on the hashtag and the day on which the tweets were published. For instance, the tweets including the hashtag *#KavanaughConfirmation* which were published on September 16 were included in a single file named "KavanaughConfirmation 160918". All the excel files were later transformed into text-only .txt files in order to process them.

Although retweets were filtered out during the collection process, Twitter users can also retweet a message manually by retyping the original tweet and adding the RT acronym before such tweet (see Chapter 1). Since these repeated tweets can skew the results of the analysis, the method proposed by Baker and McEnery (2015) was followed to clean the data. Using the N-gram tool in AntConc (see Chapter 5), the most frequent six-word clusters in the dataset were identified. Those tweets which were considered to be manual retweets and default messages when sharing a link (e.g., the title of a news article) were removed from the corpus. In addition, Twitter data contains variant spelling,

²¹<https://www.foxnews.com/entertainment/rosie-odonnell-calls-lindsey-graham-a-closeted-idiot-over-support-of-brett-kavanaugh> ; <https://deadline.com/2018/09/kerry-washington-brie-larson-will-grace-samantha-bee-times-up-walkout-social-media-1202470232/>.

²²<https://abcnews.go.com/amp/GMA/News/metoo-era-brett-kavanaughs-accuser-prompt-share-stories/story?id=57880962>.

which can also distort the results of the keyword and collocation analyses. Following McEnery et al. (2015), the computer software VariAnt (Anthony, 2017) was used to normalize spelling variations, especially in relation to AsJ Kavanaugh (e.g., Kavanaugh, Navanagh, Cavanagh) and Dr. Ford (e.g., Christina, Christin, Cristina). As a result, the final corpus included a total of 109,555 tweets (2,365,786 words), which was divided into two corpora depending on the hashtag used (see Table 2). Bearing in mind the methodological approach taken in this dissertation (i.e., corpus-assisted discourse analysis), it was necessary to further remove Twitter conventions which could distort the analysis based on frequencies (see Chapters 5 and 6). Therefore, hashtags (#) and mentions (@) were removed using the software *R*. The resulting corpora were made of 1,474,172 (#*KC*) and 417,639 words (#*NoKC*).

CORPUS	NUMBER OF TWEETS	NUMBER OF WORDS
# <i>KC</i>	88,643	1,753,370
# <i>NoKC</i>	20,912	612,416
Total:	109,555	2,365,786

Table 2: Number of tweets and number of words in the main corpus of analysis.

As discussed in Chapter 1, dealing with public/private data when analyzing DMC has been a major concern for scholars. Twitter’s Terms of Service state that data is publicly available to third parties (e.g., through its Application Programming Interface or API, which is used to retrieve tweets)²³. However, the platform also provides its users with the opportunity to privatize their profiles which, in turn, can only be accessed and read by a selection of followers of their choice. Therefore, manually collected tweets and those retrieved by the different software only include tweets published by public profiles. Nevertheless, it is possible that some accounts and/or tweets were either privatized, deleted, or suspended after the data collection was completed. In addition, the display names and usernames of participants are not included in the analysis or shown in the results section in order to protect privacy for ethical reasons (see Lutzky & Kehoe, 2022).

In this chapter, Kavanaugh’s nomination to the US Supreme Court was presented as a unique case study for the examination of gender-based violence on Twitter. Lastly, the hashtags which compose the corpus of analysis were presented. The next chapter

²³ <https://twitter.com/es/tos>.

focuses on the theoretical framework and methodological approaches adopted to carry out the analysis and answer the research questions.

CHAPTER 5
Methods and approaches

CHAPTER 5: METHODS AND APPROACHES

This chapter presents the methodological approaches and the analytical framework which inform this dissertation. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the specific objectives of this dissertation aim to explore tweeter's ideologies and discourses regarding gender-based (linguistic) aggression and its victims and perpetrators. The first section (5.1) introduces Critical Discourse Studies, with an emphasis on a feminist perspective, necessary to the critical analysis of gender-based digital aggression. Section 5.2. introduces Corpus Linguistics as a suitable method to examine a large corpus of digital language from a feminist, critical perspective. It also presents corpus-assisted discourse studies as the methodological approach taken for this dissertation, paying special attention to the use of corpus tools to identify evaluative prosodies. Then, Section 5.3. describes the analytical framework. As mentioned in Chapter 1, Appraisal Theory has been proven to be an effective framework for analyzing digital communication. This section discusses why the theory is also useful to the examination of sets of values and systems of beliefs. To conclude, Section 5.4 describes the procedure followed to carry out the analysis and answer the research questions.

5.1. Critical Discourse Studies

In Chapter 1, discourse analysis was defined as the study of language as “social practice” (Fairclough, 1992, p. 28) as people use it to build and enact their identities as members of specific social groups and communities. In addition, some scholars argue that discourses are used (and should be studied) as systems which constitute power and hierarchies between individuals (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997; Van Dijk, 1997). Approaches to discourse concerned with this “critical” aspect of language came to be known as Critical Discourse Studies (CDS).

CDS, also commonly referred to as Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), is defined as an interdisciplinary approach that is concerned with the study of the dialectical relationship between language, power, ideology, and society (Van Dijk, 1993; Blommaert, 2005; Flowerdew & Richardson, 2018). In turn, CDS is not considered to be an objective approach, but one that is “engaged and committed” (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997, p. 258) to the analysis and identification of social inequality and power imbalance. CDS considers discourse to be “socially constitutive as well as socially conditioned”

(Fairclough & Wodak, 1997, p. 258). Discourse is used to constitute the relationship between different individuals and social groups (Kress, 1989). Therefore, it reproduces and/or challenges power relations between these groups. It is for this reason that the analysis of ideology and power is a relevant aspect of CDS. Consequently, CDS is seen as “problem-driven” since it does not aim to contribute to any particular linguistic theory but to identify “hidden features of language use” (Flowerdew & Richardson, 2018, p. 1). However, scholars such as Blommaert (2005) and Jones et al. (2015) warn that CDA should not be considered the only approach to discourse that adopts a critical perspective to the study of language.

The critical approach to discourse evolved from critical linguistics (Fowler et al., 1979; Kress & Hodge, 1979), which developed in the 1970s at the University of Anglia to examine “the use of language in social institutions and relations between language, power, and ideology” and “proclaimed a critical (in the sense of left-wing) and emancipatory agenda for linguistic analysis” (Blommaert, 2005, p. 22). In turn, critical linguistics was based on Halliday’s (1978) systemic-functional linguistics (SFL). According to Chouliaraki and Fairclough:

[i]t is no accident that critical linguistics and social semiotics arose out of SFL that other work in CDA has drawn upon it -- SFL theorises language in a way which harmonises far more with the perspective of critical social science than other theories of language (1999, p. 139)

These three approaches share a common idea that speakers/writers shape reality through their language choices. From a critical perspective, language choice reflects (un)conscious views of the world and sets of values (i.e., ideologies).

CDS does not involve a specific theoretical framework, but it is conceived as a group of approaches and methods which range from linguistic theories (e.g., pragmatics, cognitive linguistics, SFL, etc.) to other social theories based on the work of, for example, Marx (1977), Gramsci (1971, 1992) or Foucault (e.g., 1975, 1982) (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999; Flowerdew & Richardson, 2018). In fact, Foucault’s notion of power and Gramsci’s theory of hegemony are considered to be highly influential in the development of CDS theories. CDS scholars claim that it is only through the combination of linguistic and social theories that it is possible to examine the interrelation between discourse and society (Weiss & Wodak, 2003).

Discourse helps construct ideologies, which are seen by CDS as “particular ways [of] representing and constructing society which reproduce unequal relations of power, relations of domination and exploitation” (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997, p. 275). The notion of ideology which emerged from the Marxist view and the School of Frankfurt’s theories argues that dominant ideologies of power are reproduced and sustained in culture, which is seen as “something solid and unchangeable” (Stoddart, 2007, p. 196). For CDS scholars, discourse reproduces the ideologies of a (dominant) group. Ideologies are represented in sets of values or an “*evaluative* belief system” (Van Dijk, 1997, p. 29, emphasis in original) which represents the interests of the group or community to which they belong (i.e., what is considered to be good and what is bad). Individuals project different discursive practices to build their identities as members of certain social groups, as well as to construct the identities of other individuals or groups who do not share the same system of values (Van Dijk, 2006).

Another important notion for CDS is discursive power. This concept follows Foucault (1982), who argues that the elite produces and regulates discourses to exercise its power over subordinate (social) groups. Van Dijk views the dominance of elites as *social* power, defined as “a specific relation between social groups or institutions” (1997, p. 17), which leads to social inequalities relating to, for instance, culture, race, class, or gender. According to van Dijk, social power is subtle and mental. If social power becomes legitimated and, therefore, natural for the dominated group, dominance becomes hegemonic. Hegemonic discourse is rooted in Gramsci’s (1992) definition of cultural hegemony and refers to the manipulation of ruling classes through ideology and culture (Stoddart, 2007; Flowerdew & Richardson, 2018). Hegemony is “inherited from the past and uncritically absorbed” (Gramsci, 1971, p. 333) by the dominated group. Hegemonic discourses are regulated and circulated by the ruling classes through (mostly) public discourses, such as the media, administrations, public institutions, and education (van Dijk, 1997). This is why CDS research takes “the perspective of those who suffer and critically analyses the language use of those in power; those who are responsible for the existence of inequalities and who also have the means and the opportunity to improve conditions” (Weiss & Wodak, 2003, p. 14). Consequently, power *per se* is not the focus of CDS, but rather hegemony and power abuse of the ruling classes (van Dijk, 1997). Nevertheless, with the advent of new technologies, it is now also possible to examine how

the dominated groups reproduce or challenge hegemonic discourses (Khosravinik & Unger, 2016; Khosravinik, 2018)

As briefly explained earlier in this section, CDS does not involve a single theory or methodology but comprises studies with “different theoretical backgrounds ... oriented towards very different data and methodologies” (Weiss & Wodak, 2003, p. 12). CDS emerged from a symposium in Amsterdam in January 1991, where the prominent CDS scholars Fairclough, Kress, Van Dijk, Van Leeuwen, and Wodak discussed different approaches to the critical analysis of discourse (Wodak & Meyer, 2001). All these scholars had different backgrounds. For example, Fairclough’s model of CDS is related to SFL, Van Dijk’s draws from text and cognitive linguistics, Wodak had a background in interactional studies, and Kress and Van Leeuwen in social semiotics (Bloommaert, 2005). In addition, they had different interests, as explained in the following paragraphs.

Fairclough is considered to be the founding figure of CDS based on his book *Language and Power* (1989), in which he highlighted the relationship between semiosis (especially language) and social practice. For Fairclough, social practices constitute social order and, in turn, dominance. Most of his research has focused on interactions between doctors and patients and university prospectuses. In addition, Fairclough has also presented different methodologies to CDS. In his pioneering work, Fairclough (1989) proposed a three-stage research methodology: description, interpretation, and explanation. Description is the analysis of formal, textual-linguistic features. Interpretation is concerned with how participants understand discourses based on cognitive, social, and ideological resources. Lastly, explanation requires the researcher to draw on social theories to perform a “critical” analysis of discourse. In addition, Fairclough (1992) proposed a second framework for the critical analysis of discourses, namely the three-dimensional framework. The three dimensions comprise 1) discourse-as-text, which involves linguistic features, such as word choice and syntax; 2) discourse-as-practice, which is concerned with how texts are produced, circulated, and distributed in society (e.g., coherence, intertextuality); and 3) discourse-as-social-practice, which refers to hegemonic power and ideology.

Another influential CDS model is that proposed by van Leeuwen (1996) concerning the (semantic) representation of social actors in discourse. van Leeuwen considers that social actors are the basis of any social practice and argues that participants play different roles in social practices. The role of participants and their social relation is

negotiated through different linguistic mechanisms and socio-semantic categories. These mechanisms include “a number of distinct lexicogrammatical and discourse-level linguistic systems, transitivity, reference, the nominal group, rhetorical figures, and so on” (van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 53). Van Leeuwen’s social actor network is summarized in Figure 2.

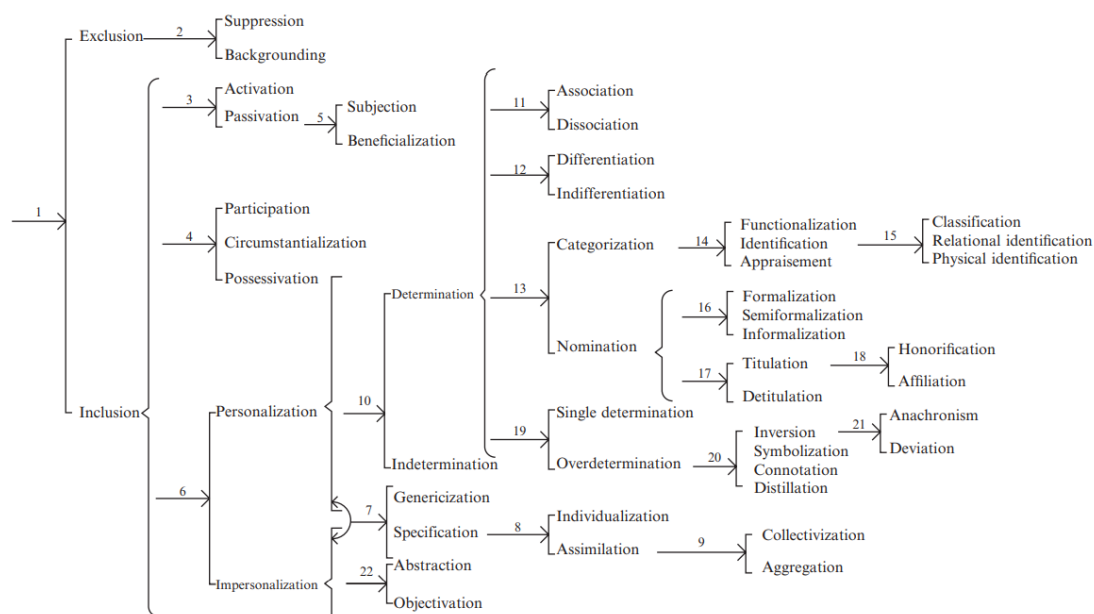


Figure 2: Social actors network (van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 52).

On the other hand, Van Dijk proposes a socio-cognitive method (2003, 2006) in which he draws attention to the importance of “the mental processes involved in how we relate to people in our social world ... mental models represent the mediating link between text and context, between text and social structure” (Flowerdew & Richardson, 2018, p. 6). Van Dijk argues that ideologies are shaped by social, cognitive, and discursive functions as ideologies work “... as the part of the socio-cognitive interface between social structures (conditions, etc.) of groups on the one hand, and their discourses and other social practices on the other hand” (Van Dijk, 2006, p. 117). His work has mainly focused on discourses of racism in the media and institutions (Van Dijk, 1987, 1991, 2006). In his work, he lists a series of linguistic patterns which create polarization between in-groups and out-groups. These strategies include negators when referring to the out-group introduced through the conjunction “but” (e.g., “I have nothing against them, but...”), pronouns (us vs. them, among others), and the use of negative evaluative lexis and metaphors towards the out-group.

The description of CDS models provided in this dissertation is by no means exhaustive. There are other CDS foundational approaches like Wodak's (1989, 2002) discourse-historical approach (DHA) or Kress and Van Leeuwen's (1996) visual semiotics, based on Halliday's (1978) macrofunctions of language. However, all these approaches were initially designed to examine the discourse of the *dominant* group instead of that of the dominated. Even so, this focus has not prevented social media scholars from applying those models to non-dominant digital discourses, such as the representation of in-groups and out-groups in Bou-Franch and Garcés-Conejos Blitvitch (2014b), social actor representation (Krendel, 2020; Sánchez-Moya, 2018) or the application of DHA in KhosraviNik (2018) and KhosraviNik and Sarkhoh (2017). In fact, this thesis highly relies on concepts included in Fairclough's, van Dijk's, and Van Leeuwen's models.

CDS has progressively evolved to introduce new methods and to be integrated into different contexts. For instance, Baker et al. (2008) proposed the combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis to approach CDS using corpus linguistics methods (see 5.2). In addition, as briefly explained in Chapter 1, KhosraviNik (2018) proposed SM-CDS as a subfield of CDS to examine social media interactions. However, although approaching the data from an SM-CDS perspective would also fit the research purposes, this thesis takes an explicit *feminist* stance.

During the early years of CDS, several studies demonstrated that the approach could be applied to the analysis of language and gender (Cameron, 1990, 1992; Clark, 1992; Walsh, 2001; Wodak, 1997; Kottoff & Wodak, 1997; also see subsection 2.1.1 for studies which take a critical perspective but are not explicitly linked to CDS). Scholars interested in approaching gender and language studies from a critical perspective claimed that language reflects and (re)constructs gender and power relations in society (West et al., 1997). Research on gender and language began in the 1970s during the peak of the second wave of feminism (Wodak, 2015). These examined the differences between men's and women's language and were later criticized by some feminist scholars because they did not consider social constructionism and only considered the sex of participants. Therefore, the approach was mainly essentialist and considered women as a homogeneous group (West et al., 1997; Wodak, 2015). Over time, different sub-fields of linguistics have adopted the adjective *feminist* to indicate their position towards gender, such as Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (FCDA), feminist pragmatics (Christie, 2000), feminist

conversation analysis (Kitzinger, 2000), feminist stylistics (Mills, 1995) or feminist linguistics (Hellinger, 2010). These approaches to language shared the idea that language reflects and (re)constructs patriarchal ideologies and gender inequalities, as pointed out by Postl, “due to their long history as public decision makers, men not only determine the economic, political and social orientation of social life but also influence the functioning and the semantic contents of each individual language” (as cited in Wodak, 2015, p. 700). Patriarchal discourses are reflected/recreated in word choice, morphology, and linguistic structures. For example, Cameron (1990) and Clark (1992) examined newspaper reports of sexual violence against women, in which the perpetrator’s blame was mitigated by employing passive sentences and, therefore, omitting the grammatical actor. Nevertheless, Lazar (2005) points out that feminist scholars seem to be more comfortable approaching the dialectical relationship between language and gender-based power from a CDS perspective as it takes an overt political stance on social inequalities. Therefore, towards the beginning of the 2000s, the term FCDA emerged as an attempt to bring CDS and feminist theory together and to group feminist contributions to CDS (Lazar, 2005).

FCDA takes a political perspective on gender, which had been largely neglected. It draws on feminist theory to examine ideology and gender-based power asymmetries, and how these are reproduced, negotiated, and/or challenged in discourse (Lazar, 2005, 2018). Lazar describes FCDA as the analysis of “how [relations of] power and dominance are discursively produced and/or resisted in a variety of ways through textual representations of gendered social practices, and through interactional strategies of talk” (2005, p. 10) For FCDA, gender ideology and power “often [do] not appear as domination at all; instead [they] seem largely consensual and acceptable to most in a community” (Lazar, 2005, p. 7). The acceptance of dominant gender ideologies is linked to a patriarchal ideology: a social system and an androcentric structure that privileges men in society to the detriment of women (Wodak, 2015). Therefore, FCDA supports the idea that patriarchal structures create gendered power inequalities which are reinforced and intersected with other ideologies in society, such as corporatism and consumerism (Lazar, 2005).

FCDA considers social practices to be gendered and aims to transform patriarchal social structures. The marriage between feminist theory and CDS was considered to be necessary in order to establish a “feminist politics of articulation” (Wetherell as cited in Lazar, 2005, p. 3) which could bring to the forefront power asymmetries and make visible

the reproduction and promotion of patriarchal discourses and practices. Additionally, CDS offers a theoretical background for FCDA researchers to examine patriarchal discourses and the practices employed by women to challenge such discourses (Lazar, 2014). These involve, for example, how women employ discursive strategies to construct their identities as qualified in traditionally male positions of power (e.g., Martín Rojo & Gómez Esteban, 2005; Wodak, 2005). Yet, it is also necessary to take into account that some women might “perpetuate sexist attitudes and practices against other women” (Lazar, 2014, p. 192). As a result, FCDA is conceived as a form of analytical activism and praxis-oriented research, which “entails mobilizing theory in order to create critical awareness and develop feminist strategies for resistance and change” (Lazar, 2005, p. 6). This requires, therefore, the analysis of individuals’ social practices and social identities.

However, gender asymmetry and oppression are also found in (sexual) violence against women. As explained in Chapter 2, women are now able to express their opinions publicly, which involves the challenging of patriarchal discourses in relation to gender inequality and rape culture. In addition, current research on gender and language shows that patriarchal discourses are ubiquitous in the media and that many female Internet users are exposed to (verbal) aggression in digital platforms (see Chapter 2). Although postfeminist thought states that gender equality has been achieved and feminism is not necessary anymore (Blevins, 2018), FCDA can still make important contributions to social change. Therefore, this dissertation aims to contribute to the growing research on gender and discourse by taking an FCDA approach to examine how gender ideologies are reflected, sustained, and challenged in digital communication.

5.2. Corpus linguistics and (critical) corpus-assisted discourse analysis

The field of corpus linguistics (CL) emerged as a result of the widespread use of personal computers towards the end of the 20th century. *Corpus*, which derives from the Latin word for “body”, refers to a “large collection of naturally occurring language, stored as computer files” (Baker, 2010, p. 6). It has long been debated whether CL should be considered as a methodology or a linguistic theory (Baker, 2010). Whereas some scholars agree that it was conceived for methodological purposes (e.g., Hoey, 2005; McEnery & Wilson, 1996; McEnery et al., 2006) other linguists claim that it should be seen as an independent branch of linguistic theory (e.g., Leech, 1992; Stubbs, 1993; Teubert, 2005).

Central to CL is the study of grammar and vocabulary (Partington et al., 2013). Most early research dealt with the study of linguistic patterns in interaction and the occurrence of linguistic phenomena. Most notably, the use of CL in the study of lexicography, phraseology, and cohesion carried out during the 1990s demonstrated how this methodology could help build grammar guides, language teaching material, and dictionaries (Sinclair, 1991). Additionally, some linguists also illustrated how corpus tools could be combined with (critical) discourse studies, especially focusing on linguistic phenomena in the media (e.g., Caldas-Coulthard, 1995; Hardt-Mautern, 1995). Since then, the combination of CL with CDS has gained momentum, and this will be the method used in this Ph.D. thesis. However, it is first necessary to introduce the different corpus methodologies and tools available to discourse analysts before introducing the approach adopted for the analysis in greater detail.

As explained above, CL has been described as a method, or a “collection of methods” (Baker, 2010, p. 19). Computer software offers different tools to examine and process the linguistic features of large datasets. The most common corpus tools are briefly described below:

- *Frequency*: Frequency refers to the number of instances a word or lexical bundle appears on a corpus. Word lists pose “a useful way of identifying the main focus of a corpus, suggesting areas that are worth examining more closely” (Baker, 2010, p. 127). This tool also helps identify marked linguistic features. Frequencies can include word lists (for single words) or N-gram analyses (for clusters).
- *Collocation*: Collocates refer to words that appear next to another word in a corpus and/or show a frequent or statistically significant relationship between them (Baker, 2006, 2010). Collocations can include fixed phrases, compounds, and lexical bundles. Collocations can be sorted according to frequency or statistical measure of significance. One way of analyzing the statistical significance is through the Mutual Information score (MI), which examines and compares the number of times two words co-occur and compares the result to the frequency with which each word occurs independently (Baker, 2010). On the other hand, the T-score statistically examines the frequency of co-occurrence of a collocation across the corpus. However, T-score “does not operate on a standardized scale and therefore cannot be used to directly compare collocations in different corpora” (Gablasova et al., 2017, p. 162). Some corpus processing software, such as

SketchEngine, measure collocational significance using logDice, which also examines the occurrence of a collocation but whose statistical significance can be compared between different corpora. Collocates are of special interest when carrying out a critical analysis of the corpus since they “can provide a helpful sketch of the meaning/function of the node within the particular discourse” (Baker et al., 2008, p. 278).

- *Concordance*: Concordances are a list of occurrences in which a search term occurs (Baker, 2006, 2010). The search term is usually referred to as *keyword in context* (KWIC) since concordance lines provide a few words on either side of the term. Concordance lines have been found to be “the single CL tool that discourse analysts seem to feel comfortable using” (Baker et al., 2008, p. 279) since they allow the researcher to perform qualitative analyses taking context into account. In addition, they are essential to examine prosodies (Baker, 2010; see 4.3.1)
- *Keyness*: Keywords²⁴ are a list of words that occur statistically more frequently in a corpus when compared to a second, reference corpus (Baker & McEnery, 2015). Keywords can help to uncover linguistic change or unconscious behavior when taking a critical stance. It is important to highlight that keyword lists vary depending on the reference corpus. Therefore, it is the researcher’s job to select the reference corpus that best adapts to the corpus under scrutiny.

Other corpus tools include dispersion, which allows the researcher to visually examine the distribution and consistency of a word throughout the corpus (Baker, 2010), or SketchEngine’s Thesaurus, which provides a list of synonyms and/or words belonging to the same semantic field.

Applying CL methods to discourse analysis also involves the triangulation of results and reduces the bias of the researcher (Baker, 2006; Baker & Levon, 2015). Because CL involves the analysis of large datasets using computer software, Subtirelu and Baker argue that:

[C]orpus approaches can provide more precise estimates of the frequency of textual features as well as a more transparent methodological description of how

²⁴ It is important not to confuse Keywords and KWIC.

such estimates are arrived at than would be the case for fully qualitative research relying on only a small number of texts. (2018, p. 109)

By examining the frequency of specific linguistic patterns, researchers avoid being accused of “cherry-picking” or selecting the data which fits their hypotheses (Baker & Levon, 2015). However, corpus-based approaches do not completely remove the researcher’s subjectivity. In the quantitative stage of the analysis, the researcher needs to decide “what the ‘cut-off’ points of statistical significance should be” (Baker et al., 2008, p. 277) (i.e., to decide statistical significance or the number of words which will be further scrutinized). Baker and McEnery (2015) warn that quantitative results must not be taken as completely objective as two researchers might obtain different results when analyzing the same corpus (e.g., by running keyword analyses using a different reference corpus). On the other hand, the qualitative reading of concordance lines requires the researcher to manually identify discourses or linguistic patterns drawing on existing (linguistic) theories (Baker et al., 2008). Either way, CL “aim[s] for wider transparency about methodological decisions and a more nuanced set of stated claims about the benefits of using computational methods” (Baker & McEnery, 2015, p. 9).

In the 2000s, two different schools aimed to show that (critical) discourse analysis could benefit from CL methods and proposed different approaches to corpus-based (critical) discourse studies. The studies carried out by a group of corpus linguists and critical discourse analysts at Lancaster University demonstrated the synergy between the two disciplines. The group aimed to provide a large-scale analysis into the discursive representation of refugees (Baker et al., 2008; Gabrielatos & Baker, 2008) and Muslims (Baker et al., 2013) in the British press drawing on corpus techniques and the Discourse Historical Approach to CDS (Wodak, 2000, 2001). On the other hand, Partington (2004) and his colleagues at the University of Bologna coined the term corpus-assisted discourse studies (CADS). As opposed to the approach proposed by Baker et al. (2008), which is tightly connected to some schools of critical discourse analysis (Baker & McEnery, 2015), CADS “is not tied to any particular school of discourse analysis, certainly not, for instance to critical discourse analysis ... it has no overarching political agenda and has very different attitudes to and traditions of how language data should be managed” (Partington et al., 2013, p. 10; see subsection 4.3.2). In contrast, Baker et al. also state that, in their approach, “neither CDA nor CL need be subservient to the other (as the word

‘assisted’ in CADS implies), but that each contributes equally and distinctly to a methodological synergy” (2008, p. 274).

CADS refers to “that set of studies into the form and/or function of language as *communicative discourse* which incorporate the use of computerised corpora in their analyses” (Partington et al., 2013, p. 10, emphasis in original). The main aim of this approach is to examine the non-obvious meaning of a corpus. As the “*corpus-assisted*” label indicates, CADS prompts the use of CL tools which best fit the research goals of the discourse analyst (Partington et al, 2013). Integrating these tools helps researchers acquaint themselves as much as possible with the discourse types of their corpus. As opposed to corpus-driven approaches in which researchers do not familiarize themselves with the corpus before the analysis, those who use a CADS approach need to combine quantitative and qualitative analyses to understand the discourse(s) present in the corpus. In addition, CADS also encourages researchers to compile *ad hoc* specialized corpora, since it is difficult that already available corpora (e.g., BNC, COCA) can fit the analyst’s research purposes (Partington, 2008; Partington et al., 2013). Although CADS does not have an explicit political agenda, it is shown to be an effective methodology when approached in combination with CDS (Knoblock, 2017; Palomino-Manjón, 2022a; Sánchez-Moya, 2017, 2018, to mention a few). Nevertheless, and as already mentioned in Section 5.1, it is not necessary to explicitly take a CDS approach to perform a critical analysis of discourse.

In this dissertation, a CADS approach is taken since its methodology allows to uncover evaluation, or more precisely, *evaluative prosodies* across the corpus. The term *prosody* was borrowed from phonology to “describe a language phenomenon expressed over more than a single linguistic unit” (Partington et al., 2013, p. 58). As explained in Section 5.3, evaluation expresses speakers/writers’ ideologies and sets of values established by their community. Partington et al. (2013) argue that evaluation can be conceptual, meaning that it can be implicitly conveyed through words which are not evaluative in nature. Therefore, CL tools help researchers identify evaluative attitudes and how they are conveyed throughout a text. Evaluative prosody is collocational (i.e., depends on the relationship between two or more words) and might vary depending on the corpus and/or discourse type under analysis.

Evaluative or semantic prosody is a term introduced by Louw (1993), although he states that it was first suggested by Sinclair in personal communication. In Louw’s terms,

semantic prosody refers to “[a] consistent aura of meaning with which a form is imbued by its collocates” (1993, p. 157). That is, semantic prosody is concerned with how meaning is transferred from collocates to their node. For example, Sinclair (1991) states that an apparently neutral word such as “happen” tends to collocate with words related to accidents. On the other hand, Morley and Partington define semantic prosody as evaluative and claim that collocations with similar evaluative meaning “can give the reader or listener an insight into the opinions and beliefs of the text producer ... it comes about through speakers choosing particular items from a set of other possibilities” (2009, p. 140). Therefore, it can be argued that semantic prosody refers to the pragmatic meaning of a word when examining its collocates²⁵.

In addition, semantic prosody can shed light on “the creation of clusters of meaning which coalesce into discourses and habitual ways of thinking and writing about areas of life” (Hunt, 2015, p. 270). For example, Motschenbacher (2009) examined the collocates of female and male body parts in a corpus of advertisements. Whereas female bodies tended to collocate with words that objectify their bodies, male bodies were surrounded by a positive semantic prosody that defines them as functional and pragmatic bodies. In a related study, Hunt (2015) carried out an analysis that illustrated that female body parts collocated with fewer verbs of motion than male’s in children’s literature, thus suggesting that male characters are more physically able to cope with dangerous situations. Consequently, when a particular semantic prosody is used repeatedly in different texts, it might “become fixed in the minds of speakers and therefore, more difficult to challenge” (Stubbs, 1996, p. 195).

Semantic prosody generally refers to words that co-occur. The term has been challenged by several authors who argue that prosody does not need to be “adjacent to the node” (Baker et al., 2008, p. 278) to convey evaluation. As a result, Stubbs proposed the term *discourse prosody*, which “extends over more than one unit in a linear string” (Stubbs, 2001, p. 65) and negotiates and maintains *evaluative harmony*, or coherence, within a discourse type. Therefore, discourse prosodies are not found in individual word choices but in stretches of text. Discourse prosodies are usually examined using concordance lines. Lexical items which construe a similar prosody are grouped together when analyzing their co-text and context (Hunt, 2015). For instance, Pottset al. (2015)

²⁵ In fact, Sinclair (2001) suggests using the term *pragmatic prosody* as it is concern with speakers/writers’ attitudes.

argue that the word “car” does not have the potential to construe a prosody, but a concordance analysis can shed light on the prosodies which are associated with it. Similarly, Baker (2006) examined the word “spinster”, which is usually surrounded by collocates conveying negative semantic prosodies, and found that these prosodies were employed to challenge the negative stereotype which is associated with these women. These two examples illustrate the importance of further adopting a qualitative approach when employing CL methodologies with discourse analysis.

5.3. Evaluation and discourse: Appraisal Theory

As discussed in Section 5.1, ideologies are expressed through sets of values with which a speaker wishes to affiliate or disaffiliate. Language-based research on speakers’ and writers’ opinions has been broadly termed as *evaluation*, which is described by Thompson and Hunston as follows:

[E]valuation is the broad cover term for the expression of the speaker’s or writer’s attitude or stance towards, viewpoint on, or feelings about the entities or propositions that he or she is talking about. That attitude may relate to certainty or obligation or desirability or any of a number of other sets of values. (2000, p. 5)

Therefore, evaluation is concerned with how speakers/writers employ language to express their opinions. Evaluative language has been studied and labeled in different ways by linguists, such as *attitude* (Halliday, 1994), *evaluation* (Bednarek, 2008; Thompson & Hunston, 2000), *appraisal* (Martin, 2000; Martin & White, 2005), and *stance* (Conrad & Biber, 2000). In addition, research carried out in the field of computational linguistics has termed the study of evaluation as *sentiment analysis* (e.g., Taboada, 2016). What these approaches have in common is the study of speakers’/writers’ opinions to reflect their community’s system of values and/or to build and maintain interpersonal relationships.

Moreover, evaluative language is also employed to construct relationships and solidarity with the speaker/writer’s (intended) audience (Alba-Juez & Thompson, 2014; Thompson & Hunston, 2000). This is notably useful when examining communication in social media as users share and negotiate values in order to build digital communities (Zappavigna, 2012; see subsections 1.2.2 and 1.3.1). In addition, evaluation can be employed to “manipulate the reader, to persuade him or her to see things in a particular way” (Thompson & Hunston, 2000, p. 8). This usage of evaluative language has been

particularly studied in journalism (see Bednarek, 2006, 2010; Bednarek & Caple, 2014, 2017).

This dissertation takes *Appraisal Theory* by Martin and White (2005) as the analytical framework (RQ2). Appraisal Theory was developed within the SFL paradigm, which is concerned with the relationship between language and social context. SFL distinguishes three metafunctions of language: 1) textual, to organize texts, 2) ideational, to construe experience, and 3) interpersonal, to negotiate relationships (Halliday, 1978). Appraisal Theory is related to the use of evaluative language and, therefore, placed within the interpersonal metafunction.

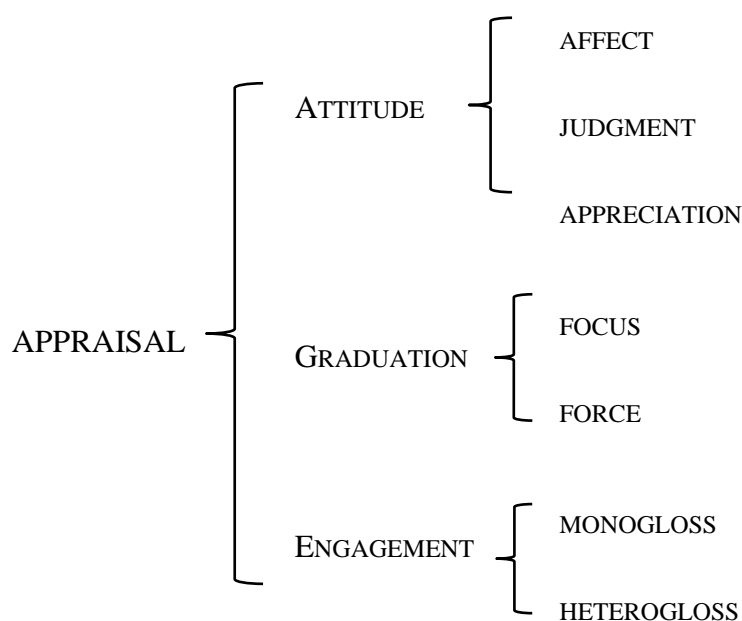


Figure 3: Systems of APPRAISAL (adapted from Martin & White, 2005).

Appraisal Theory is concerned with how writers/speakers employ linguistic resources to express and negotiate their stance and, in turn, their ideological positioning (Martin & Rose, 2007; Martin & White, 2005). Moreover, it also examines how these resources allow writers/speakers to build and/or (dis)affiliate with specific discourse communities, and how they position and persuade their (potential) audience to affiliate with their values (White, 2011). As explained above, Appraisal Theory provides “a comprehensive theoretical and descriptive systematisation of the linguistic resources that can be used to construe the value of social experience” (Oteíza, 2017, p. 458), as explained in the following subsections. Moreover, several authors have claimed that frameworks within the SFL paradigm should be crucial to CDS as they provide a

systematic classification of linguistic features (see Blommaert, 2005; Martin, 2000; Martin & Wodak, 2003). The classification of resources provided by Appraisal Theory “lends itself in particular to discourse analytical purposes” (Bednarek, 2008, p. 13) as it is concerned with the relationship between language and social context. This is achieved through the different systems and classifications which comprise the framework.

This framework is divided into three systems or domains of meaning: ATTITUDE, ENGAGEMENT, and GRADUATION²⁶ (see Figure 3). ATTITUDE is concerned with emotions and evaluations of things and people’s behavior. These evaluations can be amplified or weakened through GRADUATION. On the other hand, ENGAGEMENT helps writers/speakers to position themselves in relation to the evaluative resources in their texts. Therefore, ATTITUDE can be considered the central system of appraisal. This dissertation specifically focuses on ATTITUDE and GRADUATION. Although the source of these opinions is also relevant to the study of gender ideology, the sharing and negotiation of opinions and values are pivotal to this research, which can be identified through ATTITUDE and GRADUATION. These domains are further explained in the following subsections.

5.3.1 ATTITUDE

Attitude is concerned with the evaluative language used to signal emotional reactions, the judgment of behavior, and aesthetics or the worth of things. As a result, it is further divided into three sub-systems: AFFECT, JUDGMENT, and APPRECIATION, respectively. In addition, these subsystems have polarity, which is used to convey positive or negative evaluations.

5.3.1.1. AFFECT

Although all three subsystems convey feelings, AFFECT is considered as the basic attitudinal meaning, while JUDGMENT and APPRECIATION are viewed as an institutionalization of the former (Martin, 2003). AFFECT is used to describe “positive and negative feelings: do we feel happy or sad, confident or anxious, interested or bored?” (Martin and White, 2005, p. 42). It can reproduce the emotions of the writer/speaker or a third party (authorial vs. non-authorial). AFFECT can be implied or conveyed directly (Martin & Rose, 2007). Speakers/writers can reproduce explicit emotional states (e.g., worry, love, happy), or decide to explain the physical behavior of the emoter, i.e., the

²⁶ This dissertation follows Zappavigna (2012, 2017), who suggests writing the different (sub)systems of appraisal in SMALL CAPS in order to differentiate these from their regular use.

person who experiences the emotion (e.g., shaking uncontrollably, rushed breathing, pressing his face into one's hands). In addition, metaphor can also be used to express emotion (e.g., dull like the dead, cold as ice).

Martin and White (2005) offer a classification of AFFECT based on 5 factors: 1) semantic sets, 2) positive and negative emotions, 3) *realis* or *irrealis* triggers, 4) intensity, and 5) emotions directed towards a trigger or as a general feeling. This classification is summarized in Table 3 below:

AFFECT	Positive		Negative	
UN/HAPPINESS	cheer	affection	misery	antipathy
IN/SECURITY	confidence	trust	disquiet	surprise
DIS/SATISFACTION	interest	pleasure	ennui	displeasure
DIS/INCLINATION	desire		fear	

Table 3: Classification of AFFECT.

- *Un/happiness*: it is related to emotional dispositions, or “affairs of the heart – sadness, hate, happiness and love” (Martin & White, 2005, p. 49).

“I **hate** that a person who committed sexual assault could be a confirmation away from being part of the Supreme Court Justice” (*unhappiness; antipathy*)

- *In/security*: it is concerned with “ecosocial well-being – anxiety, fear, confidence and trust” (Martin & White, 2005, p. 49).

“The only men that should be **worried** are the ones that are guilty of sexual assault” (*insecurity; distrust*)

- *Dis/satisfaction*: it involves the speakers/writers’ feelings of achievement or “telos (the pursuit of goals) – ennui, displeasure, curiosity, respect” (Martin & White, 2005, p. 49).

“The 11 **angry** republicans” (*dissatisfaction; displeasure*)

- *Dis/inclination*: this group involves an *irrealis* trigger – fear or desire.

“He **refuses** to stand up for women across the country!” (*disinclination; non-desire*)

However, Martin and White warned that Appraisal Theory was at a hypothetical stage “about the organisation of the relevant meanings – offered as a challenge to those concerned with developing appropriate reasoning” (2005, p. 46). In fact, the system of

AFFECT has been challenged by several authors (e.g., Bednarek, 2009; Benítez-Castro & Hidalgo-Tenorio, 2019). This dissertation takes up Bednarek’s (2008) modification of AFFECT categories.

Bednarek (2008) proposes a modification of AFFECT types drawing on CL tools. This author modifies the categories of in/security and dis/inclination and proposes a fifth type: surprise. She modifies the categories in terms of polarity “rather than positive/negative cultural construal” (Bednarek, 2008, p. 166). Bednarek argues that, whereas the rest of the types’ positive/negative classifications mirror each other, in/security categorizes “trust” as the opposite of “surprise”, which she does not consider to possess a negative polarity, and “confidence” of “disquiet”. Therefore, her work proposes “distrust” as the opposition to “trust”, and “quiet” as the positive opposite of “disquiet”. This change involves an overlap between the new in/security categorization and that of dis/inclination. Therefore, she changes the opposites “desire” and “fear” to “desire” and “non-desire”. Bednarek’s (2008) modification of AFFECT is illustrated in Table 4 below.

AFFECT	Positive		Negative	
UN/HAPPINESS	cheer	affection	misery	antipathy
IN/SECURITY	<u>quiet</u>	trust	disquiet	<u>distrust</u>
DIS/SATISFACTION	interest	pleasure	ennui	displeasure
DIS/INCLINATION	desire		<u>non-desire</u>	
<u>SURPRISE</u>				

Table 4: Bednarek’s (2008) modified categories of AFFECT.

AFFECT has also been challenged by those scholars who have applied the framework to the study of digital communication. Language-based researchers such as Page (2012), Drasovean and Tagg (2015), and Zappavigna (2012, 2017) suggest that Internet users employ paralinguistic resources (emoticons, emojis, acronyms, etc.) as discourse means to “increase interpersonal closeness and solidarity” (Zappavigna, 2012, p. 77). More specifically, these discourse markers can also be used to amplify the emotions conveyed by the writer/speaker (see subsection 5.3.3).

5.3.1.2. JUDGMENT

JUDGMENT has to do with the evaluation of human actions and behavior. This subsystem involved not only evaluations of a person but also organizations and institutions, such as

governments, commissions, courts, companies, senates, etc. The framework differentiates between evaluations of social sanction, based on a set of rules or regulations (i.e., how legal or moral are someone's actions), and social esteem, to admire and criticize a person's actions without legal or moral implications (Martin & White, 2005; White 2011). As with AFFECT, social esteem and social sanction are further divided into different categories, which are summarized in Table 5.

On the one hand, values of social esteem are used to praise or condemn a target and have to do with:

SOCIAL ESTEEM	- Normality - Capacity - Tenacity
SOCIAL SANCTION	- Veracity - Propriety

Table 5: Classification of JUDGMENT.

- *Normality*: how usual, special, or customary someone's behavior is (e.g., lucky, normal, stable, predictable, celebrated...; unlucky, odd, eccentric, erratic, obscure...).

“Dr. Ford is **lucky** she survived”

- *Capacity*: how competent or capable a person is (e.g., powerful, vigorous, healthy, mature, insightful, sane, sensible, competent, successful...; weak, wimpy, sick, stupid, insane, naïve, ignorant, unsuccessful...).

“Only a **#Dotard** like @realDonaldTrump & @SenateGOP would continue the process for Kavanaugh with the accusation made”

- *Tenacity*: how resolute someone is (e.g., brave, heroic, patient, careful, meticulous, persevering, reliable, loyal...; timid, coward, impatient, reckless, distracted, unreliable, disloyal, stubborn...).

“The **Brave** woman who lying #SCOTUS nominee #BrettKavanaugh tried to rape”

On the other hand, social sanction includes judgments to do with:

- *Veracity*: how honest someone is (e.g., truthful, honest, candid, discrete...; dishonest, deceitful, manipulative, blunt...).

“She's getting **paid** to lie”

- *Propriety*: how ethical a person is (e.g., good, moral, ethical, fair, just, kind, polite, generous...; dishonest, immoral, evil, corrupt, unfair, insensitive, cruel, vain, rude, greedy...).

“He's as **corrupt** as Trump”

It is worth mentioning that JUDGMENT can be negotiated in context. Martin and Rose (2007) argue that judgmental legal lexis, such as *victim, crime, perpetrator, guilty* and *innocent*, cannot be separated from their evaluative role in specific contexts.

5.3.1.3. APPRECIATION

The subsystem of APPRECIATION deals with evaluations of aesthetics, products of human endeavor, states of affairs, and natural phenomena. Humans can also be evaluated through APPRECIATION if it is their appearance that is being appreciated. Appraisal Theory subdivides APPRECIATION into three different types of assessment, which are summarized in Table 6:

REACTION	- impact (did it grab me?) - quality (did I like it?)
COMPOSITION	- balance (did it hang together?) - complexity (was it hard to follow?)
VALUATION	(was it worthwhile?)

Table 6: Classification of APPRECIATION.

- *Reaction*: it is concerned with the speakers/writers' taste – impact and quality (Martin & White, 2005).

“**Powerful** cover by @TIME” (*reaction; impact*)

- *Composition*: it is used to evaluate the structure of the product being evaluated – balance and complexity.

“The FBI needs to do some **detailed**, forensic accounting” (*composition; complexity*)

- *Valuation*: it is related to innovation, authenticity, effectivity, relevance, health, significance, etc. (White, 2011).

“The truth was never the goal. A smear campaign against #KavanaughConfirmation was”

5.3.2. Inscribed evaluation

Attitudinal evaluations can be explicitly or implicitly conveyed. Explicit evaluation, or *attitudinal inscription*, refers to “[s]pecific words or fixed phrases which explicitly carry a negative or positive sense in that the positivity or negativity would still be conveyed even if the wordings were removed from their current context” (White, 2004, p. 231)²⁷. Attitudinal inscription is contrasted with *attitudinal tokens* or *attitudinal invocation* or *evocation*, which refers to “formulations where there is no single item which, of itself and independently of its current co-text, carries a specific positive or negative value” (White & Thomson, 2008, p. 11). This distinction between inscribed and invoked attitude has been related to the distinction between semantics and pragmatics (see White, 2008, 2011).

Evaluation can be invoked via factual statements or informational content or provoked via formulations that are in other ways evaluative (e.g., intensification, comparison, metaphors, expectation, etc.). Implicit positive/negative evaluation is activated by the listener/reader through socially and culturally conditioned inferences and expectations (White, 2008). Therefore, invoked attitude “can be highly revealing of the underlying ideology informing a text” (White, 2009, p. 36).

The distinction between attitudinal inscription and invocation becomes relevant in texts where the clear-cut distinction between attitude subsystems is hard to pin down. Martin and White (2005) argue that lexis which could construe AFFECT, JUDGMENT, or APPRECIATION values at the same time (e.g., disgust or revolt) are part of hybrid realizations which need context to be taken into account. Thompson introduces the concept of the *Russian doll*, which he describes as follows:

This relates to the way in which an expression of one category of attitude may function as a token (an indirect expression) of a different category; and that token may itself function as an indirect expression of yet another category, and so on. (2014, p. 49)

In such cases, AFFECT should be considered the inscribed attitudinal value due to the fact that it constitutes the basis of ATTITUDE (see 5.3.1.1), which invokes JUDGMENT

²⁷ The examples presented in the previous subsection convey explicit evaluative language.

or APPRECIATION evaluations. On the other hand, when the boundaries between JUDGMENT and APPRECIATION are blurred, it is necessary to take into account the target of the evaluation: who (a person) and what (a product or activity) is being evaluated.

5.3.3. GRADUATION: Amplifying attitudinal meaning

GRADUATION refers to the intensification or weakening of a speaker/writer's opinion. GRADUATION distinguishes between two subsystems: graduation of categories that are not scalable, and graduation according to different degrees of intensity and amount. These subsystems are known as FOCUS and FORCE, respectively.

5.3.3.1. FOCUS

FOCUS is used to make “something that is inherently non-gradable gradable” (Martin & Rose, 2007, p. 46). FOCUS can also be found next to an attitudinal resource. Evaluations can be *sharpened* or *softened* depending on the speaker/writer's investment in the value position (see Figure 4). Other scholars have referred to softening values as *hedges* and *downtoners* and sharpening values as *intensifiers* or *boosters* (see Martin & White, 2005 for further discussion). Focus can be used to enhance (*Sharpen*) or decrease (*Soften*) evaluative meaning:

- *Sharpen*: Sharpened values are used to indicate a strong authorial voice and to align the listener/reader with the values being shared.

“THIS is a **real** Republican.”

- *Soften*: softening values generally occur when the authorial positioning might be considered controversial or problematic to build solidarity between the speaker/writer and listener/reader.

“Ford trying to come across as **some sort of** cross between Betty Boop and a wounded Babi”

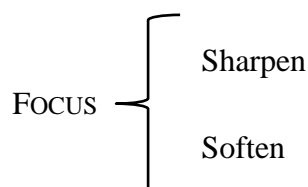


Figure 4: Categories of FOCUS.

5.3.3.2. FORCE

FORCE refers to resources that intensify meaning, such as qualifiers (e.g., very, extremely) and attitudinal lexis which includes degrees of intensity (e.g., happy/ecstatic) (Martin & Rose, 2007). FORCE is further divided into *intensification* and *quantification* (see Figure 5).

- *Intensification*: it refers to qualities, processes, and verbal modalities (Martin & White, 2005). Intensification might include grammatical items in combination with content words conveying ATTITUDE, metaphors, swearing, or repetition of attitudinal lexis.

“Evoked the **rage** I felt in 1991.” (*intensified attitudinal lexis*)

- *Quantification*: it concerns assessments of the amount (presence or mass) of entities Martin & White, 2005). As with intensification, quantification can be expressed through modifiers of attitudinal lexis, locutions, and metaphors.

“I have not felt this much fury in a **long time**” (*emphasized emotion through time*)

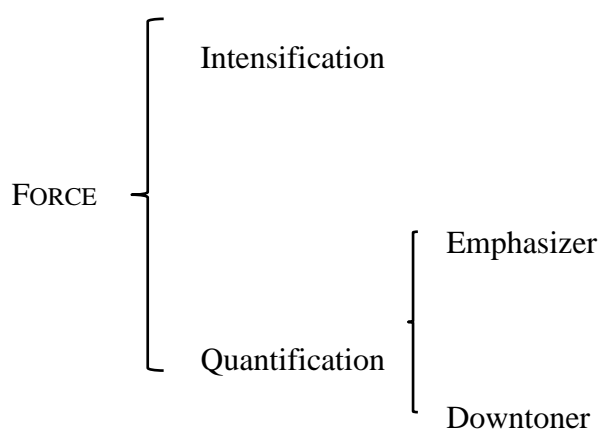


Figure 5: Categories of FORCE.

As with attitude, Page (2012a) and Zappavigna (2012) suggested that Internet users tend to upscale and emphasize attitudinal resources through “playful typography and punctuation ... for example, repetition of characters supporting lexical evaluation” (Zappavigna, 2012, p. 67). These resources include the use of capital letters, which is linked to shouting in DMC, repetition of exclamation marks, and the combination of attitudinal lexis and iconic communication, among others.

5.3.4. Appraisal Theory applied to social media and gender and sexuality

As explained in Chapter 1, Zappavigna developed the concept of *ambient affiliation* by applying Appraisal Theory, among other SFL frameworks, to the analysis of Twitter interactions. In addition to the studies by this author mentioned in that chapter (Zappavigna, 2011, 2015, 2018, for example), language-based research which has applied Appraisal Theory to the study of digital communication has found the framework to be an effective tool to examine how people bond and create digital communities through shared values.

Most research has dealt with Facebook interactions since this SNS is generally oriented toward building interpersonal relationships between users (see Chapter 1). Page (2012a) applied the framework to the analysis of Facebook status updates and argued that the use of evaluative language, especially AFFECT, helped participants build solidarity and construct the friendly atmosphere expected by Facebook users. For her part, Santamaría-García (2014) combined Appraisal Theory with Politeness (Brown & Levinson, 1987) to study Facebook interactions between university students. The results of this study suggest that students employed positive ATTITUDE to enhance positive face with their network.

Furthermore, Appraisal Theory has been applied to the analysis of ambient communities. Burns et al. (2013) examined the Facebook pages of Samsung and Apple. Their analysis showed different results, as Apple users preferred to (dis)affiliate with the company through AFFECT values, whereas Samsung users resorted to JUDGMENT and APPRECIATION. In Palomino-Manjón (2018), the author examined how customers expressed (dis)affiliation on Facebook using ATTITUDE resources. The use of positive and negative attitudinal values divided users into two groups: supportive and unsupportive customers. Although they did not interact directly in most instances, these subcommunities of shared feelings grouped together to defend or protest against a British multinational retail company. Similarly, Drasovean and Tagg (2015) examined how evaluative language was used as a solidarity-building resource on the platform TED.com. On this website, participants resorted to positive APPRECIATION to express admiration and respect for the content available on the website as well as for other users' ideas and contributions to the platform, thus building solidarity among them.

Additionally, the framework has been applied to the study of gender and sexuality. Palomino-Manjón (2022b) applied the framework to the analysis of the discursive portrayal of victim-survivors of sexual violence in a TV series. In this study, the author

argues that fictional characters employ negative ATTITUDE resources to vilify victim-survivors and female empowerment. In addition, Appraisal Theory has also been an effective tool to unveil gender ideologies in the press. For instance, Aloy Mayo (2018) argued that the magazine *Cosmopolitan* creates prototypical discourses of femininity by activating specific attitudinal prosodies relating to women's beauty and sexuality. Santaemilia and Maruenda (2014) combined Appraisal Theory and corpus-based techniques to analyze Spanish media discourse on IPV. These authors concluded that the press employs negative ATTITUDE values that victimize battered women, whereas perpetrators are rendered invisible.

Appraisal Theory has also been proven to be a useful framework for the analysis of online communities alongside gender and aggression. Aloy Mayo and Taboada (2017) examined women's ideology on gender inequality on *Cosmopolitan's* Facebook page. Their study suggested that women (dis)affiliated with political figures and other participants by negotiating attitudinal items in relation to women's rights (see Section 2.1 for further discussion). For her part, Palomino-Manjón (2022a) examined the evaluative resources which constructed discourses relating to sexual violence and victim-survivors in self-narratives of rape on Twitter. Her study showed that Appraisal resources constructed discourses of violence, crime, and emotional suffering to describe the incidents of sexual violence, as well as discourses of empowerment to support those who were willing to share their experiences. On the other hand, Krendel (2020) argued that the manosphere communities on Reddit use evaluative language to produce anti-feminist discourses and construct men as victims of women, thus negatively assessing female social actors. These results are similar to those obtained by Heritage and Koller (2020). The authors analyzed the role of APPRAISAL resources in Reddit's incel community to objectify women and to portray them as perpetrators of (social) violence against men, thus sustaining sexist and anti-feminist discourses.

5.4. Analytical procedures

In this section, the analytical procedures and steps followed to examine the corpus of analysis are presented. As explained in Chapter 5, this dissertation adopts a mixed methodology: it takes a CADS approach and combines CL tools, FCDA, and Appraisal Theory to examine (evaluative) discourses of sexual violence and the identity construction of victims and perpetrators. The two corpora were analyzed separately to

compare both hashtags and obtain a fine-grained picture of the different discourses found in each hashtag-specific data set. As previously explained in this chapter, CADS allows researchers to combine quantitative and qualitative analyses to examine large datasets, such as the one which comprises this dissertation. The corpus tools which assisted the analysis were wordlists, keywords, collocates, and concordances (see 5.3).

On the one hand, wordlists, keywords, collocations, and concordances were used to address RQ1, that is, to examine frequent and key discourses and ideologies concerning gender-based violence (RQ1.1) and their relation to the construction of the victim-perpetrator identities (RQ1.2). On the other hand, a selection of concordances was further qualitatively scrutinized to identify the evaluative resources used to enact discourses and ideologies concerning (verbal) sexual violence (RQ2). Since FCDA is not linked to a particular methodology, it draws from Appraisal Theory as the analytical framework. The next subsections describe the different steps followed in the different analyses performed. Section 5.4.1. describes the first analysis and the steps followed to create wordlists (RQ1). Moreover, it also describes the collocation analysis of such wordlists. Then, Section 5.4.2. presents the procedure followed for the keyword analysis and the subsequent collocation analysis (RQ1). Lastly, Section 5.4.3. describes the different steps followed to select and examine the use of evaluative resources in a set of tweets obtained from the corpora (RQ2).

5.4.1. Frequency and collocation analyses

Chapter 6 aimed to address RQ1 by performing a frequency analysis, followed by a collocation analysis. The first step of the analysis consisted in the creation of wordlists with the 100 most frequent words in each corpus. Wordlists were obtained with the corpus software AntConc 3.5.9 (Anthony, 2020). Determiners, conjunctions, and prepositions were excluded from the analysis since function words might distort the results of the analysis due to their high frequency of use, whereas grammatically open-class words offer an idea “about the *discourses* within the corpus” (Baker, 2006, p. 54). Then, the terms obtained from the frequency analysis were grouped together according to their semantic category to examine frequent linguistic patterns in both corpora. To classify such terms, they were scrutinized in context through concordance lines to examine their function and avoid the misclassification of homonyms.

Next, a collocation analysis of a selection of frequent words followed. Collocates were also calculated in AntConc 3.5.9 (2020) using a 5L/5R word span and T-score

statistics (see Section 5.2), setting the minimum frequency at 5. Collocations were examined considering context and co-text through a critical reading of their concordance lines and were later grouped into semantic categories. Three grammatical categories were selected for further scrutiny due to their relevance to the objectives of this study, namely gendered pronouns, social actors, and gender and violence. The results of the frequency and collocation analyses shed light on the (re)production of ideologies and discourses concerning sexual violence (RQ1.1), which were later related to the discursive portrayal of victim-perpetrator identities (RQ1.2).

5.4.2. Keyword and collocation analyses

The next step was to carry out keyword and collocation analyses (Chapter 7). As opposed to frequency lists, the analysis of keywords helps uncover key “topic[s] and the central elements” (Baker et al., 2008, p. 278) of a dataset, especially when examining and comparing different corpora. During the first part of the analysis, the corpus software used to process the data and generate keywords was Sketch Engine²⁸. Sketch Engine is an online program developed by Lexical Computing Limited in 2003. For the keyword analysis, each corpus was compared to the English Web corpus 2018 (enTenTen2018²⁹), a corpus made up of 36 billion words that can be accessed through Sketch Engine. It contains texts in English collected from different Internet platforms and it does not include spam or duplicated messages. Since the results of a keyword analysis vary depending on the reference corpus chosen by the researcher, a corpus made of texts from DMC platforms was deemed necessary, as opposed to corpora comprised of spoken or written texts (e.g., BCN, COCA, or MICASE). Although it does not include data mined exclusively from Twitter, EnTenTen2018 serves as a useful reference corpus when analyzing digital discourse data. As mentioned in Chapter 5 (Subsection 5.2), keyness is based on statistics that examine the word frequencies of the focus corpus against those of a reference corpus. In contrast, word lists rely on the frequencies of the focus corpus alone. Sketch Engine calculates the keyness score based on the formula below³⁰:

²⁸ <https://www.sketchengine.eu>.

²⁹ <https://www.sketchengine.eu/ententen-english-corpus>.

³⁰ According to Sketch Engine, “ fpm_{focus} is the normalized (per million) frequency of the word in the focus corpus, fpm_{ref} is the normalized (per million) frequency of the word in the reference corpus, n is the simple Maths (smoothing) parameter” (n.d., p. 3).

$$\frac{fpm_{focus} + n}{fpm_{ref} + n}$$

After comparing and discussing the keywords obtained in both corpora, a close examination of the most frequent collocations of selected keywords followed using AntConc 3.5.9 (Anthony, 2020). More precisely, collocates of keywords relating to social actors and gender and violence were further examined to identify their potential to convey discourses of sexual violence (RQ1.1) and their contribution to the negotiation of victim-perpetrator identities (RQ1.2). The parameters were set to retrieve the most frequent 5R and 5L collocates with a minimum frequency rate of 3. However, due to the low frequency in the corpus of most keywords, collocations were examined according to frequency and not considering their statistical measure in this analysis. The results obtained were later discussed in relation to RQ1.

5.4.3. APPRAISAL analysis

Chapter 7 aimed to address RQ2 to identify and compute the different APPRAISAL resources employed to construct discourses relating to (sexual) violence. To do so, a total of ten subcorpora were created around specific search words. The search words were *Kavanaugh*, *Ford*, *women*, *men*, and *sexual*, which were originally obtained during the Frequency analysis (see Chapter 6). Since examining concordance lines is arduous work, especially when dealing with large amounts of data, this dissertation follows Hunston (2002), who argues that examining 100 concordance lines is sufficient to identify linguistic patterns. In fact, Stubbs (1999) and Hunston (2002) agree that 30 concordance lines are enough to pinpoint specific linguistic patterns in discourse. Therefore, a technologically-randomized selection of 100 concordance lines of each search word in each corpus was obtained using SketchEngine's concordance tool³¹. Importantly, concordances only show a small number of words next to the KWIC so it is usually necessary to expand concordance lines to examine how meaning is negotiated in context (Baker & Levon, 2015). Since tweets are only composed of a maximum of 260 characters, the concordance tool was also employed to retrieve whole tweets (Jones et al., 2022). Consequently, the resulting subcorpora were composed of 100 tweets each (i.e., a total of 1000 tweets), as shown in Table 7 below:

³¹ Sketch Engine provides an option to randomize a number of concordance lines, which avoids cherry-picking (see 4.3).

Subcorpus	Number of tweets	Number of words
#NoKC-Kavanaugh	100	3,096
#NoKC-Ford	100	3,135
#NoKC-Men	100	3,309
#NoKC-Women	100	3,208
#NoKC-Sexual	100	3,383
#KC-Kavanaugh	100	3,102
#KC-Ford	100	3,078
#KC-Men	100	3,254
#KC-Women	100	3,423
#KC-Sexual	100	3,114
Total	1,000	32,102

Table 7: Information about the subcorpora employed in the APPRAISAL analysis.

The analysis of evaluative resources consisted of a qualitative reading of the resulting tweets. Appraisal Theory was employed to examine the number of instances that evaluation was employed to construct discourses concerning (verbal) sexual aggression and gender ideology. As mentioned in Chapter 5, this thesis focuses on ATTITUDE and GRADUATION. Since evaluation can be explicitly or implicitly conveyed (see 4.2.2), Thompson (2014) suggests examining the data twice: first, the researcher should examine explicit evaluative lexis and then, identify invoked evaluation. In this way, the researcher can identify hybrid realizations of ATTITUDE. Therefore, the analysis of evaluative language consisted of two steps. First, all the instances of inscribed ATTITUDE and GRADUATION were manually labeled in a first reading. Then, a second reading of the tweets was carried out to identify invoked ATTITUDE.

An analysis was performed one month later to test intra-coder reliability of the manual coding of the APPRAISAL resources, following the same steps as the first analysis. Page argues that intra-coder testing:

...allows the researcher to document and reflect on the extent of the consistency in their coding. It can help them identify errors and points of inconsistency and again reflect on whether this occurs because of ambiguity in the data, human error, or the need to refine one or more of the categories. (2022, p. 173)

Following the author, the intra-analysis was measured using the test-retest reliability correlation coefficient (Pearson Correlation). The results show that both analyses were highly correlated with a ≥ 0.9 correlation indicator (see Table 10)³². As Page (2022) states, the re-analysis of the APPRAISAL resources helped to identify coding errors as well as to re-code ambiguity in the resources. The subcorpus with bigger changes in the coding was the *#NoKC-Ford* subcorpus and all the changes were related to ambiguous cases of implicit positive *Veracity*.

Subcorpus	Total occurrences (1st analysis, March 2022)	Total occurrences (2nd analysis, May 2022)
#NoKC-Kavanaugh	273	273
#NoKC-Ford	235	268
#NoKC-Men	333	334
#NoKC-Women	212	215
#NoKC-Sexual	265	267
#KC-Kavanaugh	255	255
#KC-Ford	241	241
#KC-Men	221	221
#KC-Women	210	210
#KC-Sexual	143	143
Corr. Coef.	0.979964863	

Table 8: Test-retest reliability correlation coefficient.

The first step of the analysis offered the frequency of occurrences of the different APPRAISAL resources. Through the quantification of APPRAISAL values, it was possible to identify the most frequent APPRAISAL (sub)system (i.e., the type of evaluation) and the polarity of the resources employed by Twitter users to discuss topics relating to (sexual) violence against women. Next, during the quantitative analysis, the APPRAISAL resources obtained from the scrutiny of the subcorpora were later categorized according to their potential to convey specific discourses. Finally, the evaluative patterns and discourses identified in each subcorpora were later compared to obtain a fine-grained picture of the

³² Indicators higher than 0.9 reveal excellent reliability.

discursive construction of sexual violence and the (re)production and resistance of gender ideologies during the confirmation process.

PART III
ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

CHAPTER 6
**Discourses of sexual violence and
the negotiation of victim-
perpetrator identities**

CHAPTER 6: DISCOURSES OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND THE NEGOTIATION OF VICTIM-PERPETRATOR IDENTITIES

In order to begin to unveil the ideological positioning(s) of those who tweeted during Brett Kavanaugh's confirmation process and, thus, the kinds of discourses involved in talk about sexual assault on Twitter (RQ1), an analysis of the frequent words in each corpus was carried out. This would provide evidence of some frequent linguistic items employed to enact such discourses (RQ1.1) as well as to examine the identity construction of victim-perpetrator identities (RQ1.2). The first section of this paper (6.1) discusses the wordlist obtained by the corpus software. Then, Sections 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5. and 6.6. deal with lexis concerning sexual violence and sexual actors obtained during the frequency analysis, and then provide an analysis of their collocates. Lastly, Section 6.6. offers a discussion of the results in relation to RQ1.

6.1. Frequency analysis

An analysis of the 100 most frequent words in each corpus was carried out to examine frequent linguistic patterns in each corpus. As can be seen in Appendix I, closed-class words made up more than three-quarters of the total. Of these, the analysis of specific function words (e.g., personal pronouns) will help reveal the conversational focus and the (gendered) discourses in the corpus (Baker, 2010). As shown in Table 9, words were classified into the following categories:

Category	#NoKC	#KC
Pronouns	you, he, your, we, his, they, I, my, him, her, she, our, me, them, us, he's, I'm	you, I, he, they, your, his, her, she, their, my, him, me, our, I'm, the, us
Gender pronouns	he, his, she, him, her, he's	he, his, her, she, him
Social actors	Kavanaugh, women, Ford, FBI, Dr, Trump, men, GOP, people	Kavanaugh, women, he, Ford, people, judge, Brett, democrats, man, Dr, FBI, senate

Legal field	vote, court, investigation, supreme, SCOTUS, assault	Vote, court, judge, supreme, senate, investigation, justice
(Political) authorities	FBI, Trump, SCOTUS, GOP, supreme, court	FBI, court, supreme, judge, senate, democrats, Brett, supreme, court, senate
Gender and violence	sexual, assault	sexual
Miscellaneous	Thank, want, need	time, today, good, know, want

Table 9: Classification of the 100 most frequent grammatically open-class words and gendered pronouns in the dataset.

The qualitative reading of these words in context revealed that both the *#NoKC* and *#KC* corpora shared similar thematic categories. As can be seen in Table 9 above, these categories included (gender) pronouns, social actors, politicians and authorities, terms related to the legal field, lexis concerning gender and violence, and miscellaneous words. Some lexis overlapped in different categories, such as *Trump* as a social actor and authority, or *judge* as a title and an authority (e.g., “*Judge Kavanaugh*”), a verb relating to the legal field, or as a social actor (e.g., “*Mark Judge*”). The overlapping occurred between the categories of social actors and the (political) authorities, such as *FBI*, *Trump*, *GOP*, *judge*, *democrats*, and *Brett*, and lexis within the category of legal field and authorities (*supreme*, *SCOTUS*, *court*, and *senate*). However, the words which made up these categories slightly differed in the two datasets.

As can be seen in Table 9, the first and most common category was made up of pronouns. Of special interest is the use of first-person plural pronouns. The high presence of these pronouns points to the construction of in-groups and out-groups (us versus them, see Chapter 5). If normalized frequencies across both corpora are compared, the first-person pronoun *we* was more frequently used in *#NoKC* than in *#KC* (61.95 and 50.55 ptw respectively, see Table 10). This suggests that those Twitter users who participated in sharing the *#NoKC* hashtag expressed a collectivized identity more frequently than those using the opposite hashtag. However, the use of other first-person pronouns such as *our* and *us* did not show a significant difference in the corpora, even though *our* was slightly more common in *#NoKC* tweets (22.57 as opposed to 18.94 ptw).

	#NoKC		#KC
We	61.95	We	50.55
Our	22.57	Our	18.94
Us	17.14	Us	15.72

Table 10: Normalized frequencies (ptw) of first-person plural pronouns.

In addition, the presence of gendered pronouns reveals that male social actors were more frequently discussed than female individuals. The male pronouns *he*, *his*, and *him* and the pronoun plus verb *he's* appeared in both frequency wordlists. Male pronouns were more frequently used to refer to Kavanaugh, but Twitter users also employed them to refer to the male Senators who participated in the hearings and to then President Donald Trump (see 6.2). However, the qualitative analysis unveiled that the possessive *his* also referred to Dr. Ford as part of the n-gram *his accuser*, thus rendering her identity as related to Kavanaugh (van Leeuwen, 2008). This sequence of words is of special interest since the explicit references to Dr. Ford were scant in the 100 frequency wordlist. In fact, the female gender pronouns *her* and *she* were not only used to refer to Dr. Ford but also to other female Senators.

The frequency wordlists included a variety of male social actors, such as the generic identities *man* and *men*, and specific and individualized male actors, such as *Kavanaugh*, *Brett*, *Judge* (Dr. Ford's second perpetrator's surname, Mark Judge), and *Trump*. On the other hand, female social actors in the wordlist included *women* and the surname *Ford*, which highlights the scarce presence of explicit references to Dr. Ford. In fact, *women* referred to Dr. Ford, Ramirez, and Swetnick as a group of victims through a collectivized assimilation strategy (van Leeuwen, 2008), for example "*Trump insulted the women accusing Brett Kavanaugh*" and "*Both the women accusing Kavanaugh of teenage sexual misconduct are partisan Liberals*". In addition, it was also found to be part of the collectivized n-gram *we women*, which was thus used to create in-groups (e.g., "*we women are fed up with these male politicians*", "*I hope we women make a difference*"). The fact that the singular noun *man* appeared in the frequency list but the noun *woman* did not suggests that men were often individualized, as opposed to women (Pearce, 2008). In addition, formal naming patterns included Kavanaugh's previous title (*judge*) and Ford's academic title (*Dr*).

Social actors also included groups and organizations which overlapped with the category of politicians and authorities. These actors were assimilated and collectivized (van Leeuwen 2008), such as the FBI, the senate, the Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS), the GOP (Grand Old Party), and democrats. The most interesting aspect of this last group of social actors is that GOP was more frequent in *#NoKC*, whereas democrats only appeared in *#KC*. These results might point to the ideological and political positioning of tweeters in each hashtag-specific dataset.

Both frequency wordlists were also comprised of words within the categories of the legal field and political authorities, thus signaling the legal nature of the sexual assault hearing and the confirmation process. Another shared category between both wordlists is that of lexis related to gender and violence. However, whereas *#NoKC* featured the words *assault* and *sexual*, *#KC* only included the adjective *sexual*. Lastly, other lexis included miscellaneous words such as *thank*, *time*, *today*, and *good*.

Bearing in mind the aim of this study and the research question which guides this chapter, the sections below are devoted to the examination of collocates of terms classified in the categories of gender pronouns (Section 6.2), social actors (Sections 6.3. and 6.4.), and sexual violence (Section 6.5.) to unveil linguistic patterns and identify discourses surrounding (verbal) sexual violence (RQ1.1) and victims and perpetrators (RQ1.2). For the sake of clarity, the results of the analysis are divided as follows: first, the sections present the categorization of the lexical words and gendered pronouns obtained from the list of collocations provided by the corpus software; then, an analysis of the functions of the node and its collocations in context is provided with examples.

6.2. Gendered pronouns

The second stage of the analysis examined statistically significant collocates of the gendered pronouns identified in the previous analysis (see Appendix II). As can be seen in Tables 11 and 12, collocations of male pronouns identified during the previous analysis included more grammatically open-class words and a greater diversity of semantic categories than those of female pronouns. Male and female pronouns shared categories concerning social actors, veracity and evaluative lexis, the legal field, (political) authorities and gender and violence. However, the content of such categories differed

among them. The category of words relating to the legal field was more densely populated when collocating with male pronouns. Words included in this category were mainly related to the confirmation process. However, collocates of female pronouns referred to the act of accusing and testifying in the hearings. Furthermore, male pronouns collocated with more evaluative lexis than female pronouns. Evaluative lexis was divided into the three categories of demeanor, competence and veracity when collocating with male pronouns, whereas female pronouns only collocated with one word dealing with positive veracity. In addition, lexis around alcohol were exclusive collocations of male pronouns. On the other hand, female pronouns collocated with body parts, although this category was only identified in the *#NoKC* corpus.

Semantic categories	#NoKC	#KC
Gendered pronouns	He, him, himself, her, she	He, his, him, she, her
Social actors	Kavanaugh, women, Trump, man, wife, Brett, someone, people, judge, anyone	Kavanaugh, man, FBI, women, Trump, family, man, wife, Brett, people, someone, judge, democrats
Alcohol	Drunk, drinking	Beer, drunk, drinking
Legal field	Vote, court, SCOTUS, innocent, judge, oath, supreme, confirmed, guilty, hearing, nomination, testimony, court, confirmation, questions, confirm, allegations, interview, withdraw	Confirmed, judge, vote, court, guilty, innocent, investigation, supreme, nomination, testimony, statement, hearing, allegations
(Political) authorities	Kavanaugh, Trump, judge, SCOTUS, supreme, court	Kavanaugh, Trump, judge, SCOTUS, supreme, court, FBI
Competence	Unfit, fit, disqualify, partisan	Disqualify, partisan
Demeanor	Behavior, temperament, character, anger	Angry, character, behavior, good, temperament
Veracity	Lied, oath, lying, right, lies, liar	Lied, right

Gender and violence	Sexual, rape, assault	Sexual
Support	Support, believe	Support, believes
Reporting	Said, tell	Tell
Miscellaneous	Name, life, past, job, time, calendar, call, make, please, stop, makes, know, want, need, see, ask	Name, life, time, reputation, school, calendar, past, face, high, today, God, know, knows, wants, think, see, give, look, call, said, says, ask

Table 11: Categorization of gender pronouns and lexical words collocating with male pronouns.

Collocations of male pronouns were similar in both corpora (see Appendix II). Social actors featured Kavanaugh’s name and surname as well as his title, (political) authorities and generalized indeterminate social actors, and the relational identifiers *family* and *wife*. However, *FBI* and *family* only appeared in the *#KC* corpus, whereas the only relational identification in the *#NoKC* corpus was *wife*. The n-grams *his family* and *his wife* were used in both corpora to describe his wife and his two daughters as collateral victims of the sexual assault allegations by both supporters of Kavanaugh and Dr. Ford (e.g., *destroy a man and his family*; *how this impacts his family*). However, the n-gram *his wife* also described Kavanaugh’s wife as a potential victim of domestic violence in the *#NoKC* corpus (e.g., “*the look on his wife’s face tells very different stories*”, or “*Is Kavanaugh DRAGGING his wife?*”).

On the other hand, lexis relating to the legal field and (political) authorities was closely related to the confirmation process and the confirmation hearings. In addition, collocates included evaluative lexis closely dealing with the hearings, the confirmation process and his nomination to the Supreme Court. However, the *#NoKC* corpus featured more lexis concerning competence than *#KC* to evaluate his nomination and to refer to his testimony. Competence was closely related to the semantic categories of demeanor and veracity. Both corpora featured lexis related to anger and short temper which negatively evaluated Kavanaugh’s behavior during the hearings. The words grouped under the veracity semantic category also conveyed negative semantic evaluations of Kavanaugh. Among these, the most statistically significant collocations included lexis

concerning lies and truth. The semantic category of lexis concerned with alcohol appeared in #NoKC. These words are associated with his opening statement in which he stated that he liked drinking beer when he was in high school³³ but not in the present. This statement was used as an argument to either discuss whether Kavanaugh was lying about his drinking habits or to support his innocence, which also prompted the creation of the hashtag #BeersForKavanaugh (Boyle, 2019).

Lastly, a significant difference between the two corpora is the lack of (sexually) aggressive acts in the #KC corpus, where only the adjective *sexual* appeared as a collocate of *he*. On the other hand, the #NoKC corpus featured explicit references to sexual violence. This suggests that sexual violence was not frequently discussed in the #KC corpus when referring to male social actors. Nonetheless, these collocates constructed Kavanaugh's identity as a perpetrator in both corpora. In the #KC corpus, *he* most frequently collocated with *sexual* to describe Kavanaugh as a perpetrator of sexual violence with the n-gram *sexual predator* (e.g., "*he's a sexual predator*" and "*he makes a perfect sexual predator*"). Moreover, *sexual* was also used to discuss his sexual assault accusations (e.g., "*he admitted sexual abuse*", "*he committed sexual assault*"). Likewise, (sexually) violent acts in #NoKC also constructed Kavanaugh as a sexual criminal with the n-grams *sexual predator* and *sexual abuser* (e.g., "*he is a proven sexual abuser*", "*he's a sexual predator and a sexual abuser*") as well as references to the sexual assault allegations (e.g., "*his sexual assault allegations*" and "*his multiple sexual assault claims*").

Collocations of female pronouns were grouped into similar categories. These categories included gendered pronouns, social actors, legal field, (political) authorities, gender and violence, body parts, competence and veracity, and miscellaneous words, as illustrated in Table 12 (see Appendix II). The words which made up these categories were also similar in both corpora. Social actors included Ford's surname and academic title, her perpetrator's surname (*Kavanaugh*), generalized indeterminate social actors, and the *FBI* as an authority. The main difference was that *family* appeared as a form of relational identifier in #NoKC, whereas #KC included the relational social actor *friend*. The n-gram *her family* was employed to discuss the consequences of the trial and to describe them as collateral victims in the same way that Kavanaugh's family was constructed (e.g.,

³³ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2018/09/28/brett-kavanaugh-likes-beer-but-not-questions-about-his-drinking-habits/>

“*fearing for her family’s safety* or “*threatened her family*”). However, the n-gram *her friend* was found in tweets to delegitimize Ford’s allegations after it was alleged that a friend of hers had denied the assault and the existence of the high school party (e.g., “*her friend is denying being at the party*” and “*her best friend says she’s lying*”).

Semantic categories	#NoKC	#KC
Gendered pronouns	She, her, he, him, his	She, her, he, him, his
Social actors	Ford, Kavanaugh, Dr, FBI, woman, family, women, accuser	Ford, Kavanaugh, Dr, woman, friend, witness
Legal field	Vote, testify, votes, investigation, accuser, testimony, threats	Testify, vote, testimony, allegations, witnesses, sorty
(Political) authorities	Kavanaugh, FBI	Kavanaugh
Body parts	Mouth, hand	–
Competence	–	–
Veracity	–	Credible
Gender and violence	Rape, assault, assaulted	Assault, assaulted, raped, sexual
Support	Support, believe	Believe
Reporting	Said, says, say, tell	Said, says, say, saying, told, tell
Miscellaneous	Life, story, name, death, please, today, threats, knows, know, needs, wants, hear, scream, covered, make, tried	Years, show, life, name, letter, time, voice, party, remember, know, think, knows, needs, won, made

Table 12: Categorization of lexical words collocating with female pronouns.

Words relating to the legal field closely concerned the hearings, including *testify*, *testimony*, *investigation*, *accuser*, *witness*, and *allegations*. However, female pronouns in #NoKC collocated with *accuser*, whereas those in #KC did so with *witness*. The semantic categories of competence, veracity, and body parts were linked to those collocations

associated with the hearings. The *#KC* corpus included the positive evaluative word *credible* to refer to Ford's testimony. On the other hand, *#NoKC* featured body parts, which were used in Ford's testimony to describe the assault, as well as the material processes in the miscellaneous category *scream*, *tried*, and *covered* (e.g., "*covered her mouth so she can't scream*", "*he put his hand over her mouth*").

Lastly, both corpora included words within the category of gender and violence. This finding contrasts with the results obtained in the analysis of male pronouns, where collocates of male pronouns in *#KC* did not include any explicit references to sexual violence apart from the adjective *sexual*. This suggests that tweeters using *#KC* did discuss the sexual allegations against Kavanaugh, but mainly when referring to the victim, Dr. Ford, and not to the perpetrator. The dataset *#NoKC* included the nouns *rape*, *assault* *assaulted* and whereas *#KC* included the past tenses *raped* and *assaulted* as well as the noun *assault* and the adjective *sexual*. The two hashtags built Ford's identity as the object of sexual assault (e.g., *she was sexually assaulted*; *she was being assaulted*). Moreover, the reading of concordance lines revealed that Kavanaugh was sometimes the grammatical actor and, therefore, was constructed as the perpetrator of sexual assault (e.g., "*her assault by Kavanaugh*", "*she was GANG RAPED by Kavanaugh*") and attempted rape (e.g., "*tried to rape her*", "*attempted to rape her*"). On the other hand, the noun *assault* was used to construct Ford's identity as a survivor (e.g., "*she's a sexual assault survivor*", "*she's an assault survivor*") and to refer to her testimony during the hearing (e.g., "*her experience of sexual assault*", "*her sexual assault testimony*"). Nonetheless, some users also employed these terms in *#KC* to question her testimony and to deny the assault, as in for instance "*so she was NOT assaulted*".

6.3. Social actors

6.3.1. Kavanaugh

Statistically significant collocates of *Kavanaugh* were grouped into the categories already identified in the previous subsection (6.2). As can be seen in Table 13 (see also Appendix II), *Kavanaugh* collocated with gendered pronouns. However, the *#KC* corpus only included the male pronouns *he* and *his* and the female pronoun *she*, in contrast to the *#NoKC* corpus that also featured *him* and *her*. Regarding social actors, both datasets collocated with the nominations of Kavanaugh's identity. Nevertheless, the *#KC* corpus

also included his newer title *Justice*, which suggests that some tweeters took his innocence and successful nomination for granted. Other social actors in both corpora included (political) authorities such as *FBI*, *SCOTUS*, and *Trump*; the *GOP* only appeared in the *#NoKC* corpus while *democrats* only occurred in *#KC*. Lastly, social actors also included references to Dr. Ford as nominations (*Dr* and *Ford*) and as a relational identifier (“*Kavanaugh’s accuser*”).

Semantic categories	#NoKC	#KC
Gendered pronouns	He, his, she	He, his, him, her, she
Social actors	Brett, judge, Kavanaugh, Trump, Ford, FBI, women, SCOTUS, Senate, GOP, Dr, accuser	Brett, Judge, Justice, Ford, Kavanaugh, accuser, Trump, FBI, women, Dr, democrats, SCOTUS, Senate
Legal field	Vote, court, investigation, confirm, supreme, confirmed, confirmation, hearing, allegations, oath, judge, Senate, SCOTUS, accuser	Vote, confirmed, supreme, confirmation, court, confirm, Senate, hearing, investigation, nomination, allegations, right, SCOTUS, accuser, judge, justice
(Political) authorities	Brett, judge, Kavanaugh, Trump, FBI, SCOTUS, Senate, GOP, supreme, court	Brett, judge, justice, Trump, FBI, democrats, SCOTUS, Senate, supreme, court
Alcohol	–	Beer
Competence	Unfit	–
Demeanor	Temperament	
Veracity	Lied, oath, lying, lies	Right
Gender and violence	Sexual, assault	Sexual
Support	Support	Believe, support
Miscellaneous	Please, say, says	Congratulations, today, want

Table 13: List of collocates of *Kavanaugh*.

The collocation analysis revealed that, whereas *#KC* focused on the confirmation process and the hearings in general, users who tweeted under *#NoKavanaughConfirmation* debated the hearings in relation to the sexual assault allegations and Kavanaugh's testimony. This is further shown in the gender and violence, competence, and veracity categories which included a greater variety of words in the *#NoKC* dataset. Similar to those of male pronouns, collocates of *Kavanaugh* in *#NoKC* included both *sexual* and *assault*. However, *#KC* only collocated with *sexual*. This is due to the fact that *sexual* was part of the n-gram *sexual allegations*, which does not specify the type of sexually violent act that Kavanaugh was accused of committing. On the other hand, the category of veracity included very different lexis in both corpora. The collocates identified in *#NoKC* belonging to these categories create a negative semantic prosody surrounding Kavanaugh since they construct his identity as a liar as well as an unreliable individual and legal figure. This is aggravated by the noun *oath*, which implies that Kavanaugh committed perjury. In addition, collocates of *Kavanaugh* in *#KC* only included *right*, which suggests that some of the tweets which included this hashtag defended his testimony. However, *right* was not only used as a veracity term but also as a legal entitlement.

Lastly, only *#KC* included the noun *beer*, which was used both to mock and criticize Kavanaugh for his drinking habits and to support Kavanaugh as a symbolic toast to celebrate his confirmation. Of note is the presence of the interjection *congratulations* in *#KC*, which signals the presence of a group of supportive users who celebrated and congratulated Kavanaugh after he was confirmed as Associate Justice.

6.3.2. Ford

The analysis of the collocates of *Ford* revealed diverging positionings not only between both corpora but also within them. The categories identified during the analysis were similar to those identified in the previous subsections (see Table 14 and Appendix II). Nevertheless, some of the words which made up these categories differed from those examined during the collocation analysis of female gendered pronouns. Some shared pronouns included *she* and *he*. However, the *#NoKC* corpus featured the male possessive pronoun *his*. On the other hand, both data sets shared some social actors such as *Dr*, *Blasey*, *Christine*, *Kavanaugh*, *FBI*, *Ford*, and *Brett*. Moreover, collocations of *Ford* also included the title *Professor*, which did not collocate with female pronouns. Among the words which did not collocate with *Ford* in both datasets, the gendered social actors

woman and *women* as well as the surname of Kavanaugh’s second accuser *Ramirez* are of special interest. The collocations concerning female social actors point to the existence of a debate of women’s experiences and stances towards sexual violence as well as to the creation of in-groups and out-groups of women who (did not) supported Dr. Ford’s testimony. Lastly, both datasets shared some social actors and political authorities already examined as collocates of *Kavanaugh* (*democrats* and *Trump*). However, the *#NoKC* corpus included the word *Republicans*, in contrast with *Kavanaugh* that collocated with the party’s official name *GOP*.

Semantic categories	#NoKC	#KC
Gendered pronouns	Her, she, he, his	Her, she, he
Social actors	Dr, Blasey, Christine, Kavanaugh, professor, FBI, women, Ford, Brett, republicans, woman, Trump, Ramirez	Dr, Blasey, Christine, Kavanaugh, Ford, judge, FBI, Brett, accuser, professor, democrats
Legal field	Testimony, investigation, question, testify	Testimony, allegations, hearing, testify, investigation, evidence, question
(Political) authorities	Republicans, Trump	Kavanaugh, judge, FBI, Brett, democrats
Gender and violence	–	Assault, sexual, assaulted
Support	Believe, believes, heard	Believe, think
Veracity	Credible, truth, right	Credible, liar
Reporting	Tell, telling, said	Say, said
Miscellaneous	Thank, heard	Letter, story, thanks

Table 14: List of collocates of *Ford*.

The social actor and legal field categories included lexis related to the hearing and the act of testifying, as opposed to collocations of *Kavanaugh* which also included words relating to legal authorities and the confirmation process (see 6.3.1). Another difference between the collocations of *Kavanaugh* and those of *Ford* is that the veracity category

included words concerned with truth. Nevertheless, #KC also included the collocate *liar*, which reflects the opposing views among those users who shared the same hashtag. Moreover, the verbs denoting support *believe(s)* and *heard* indicate that Twitter users built Dr. Ford's identity as an honest and reliable witness and her testimony as credible. Therefore, these collocates of positive veracity create a positive semantic prosody surrounding Ford.

On the other hand, the category concerning reporting included terms related to verbal processes such as the lemmas *tell* (*tell*, *telling*) and *say* (*said*) in #NoKC and the lemma *say* in #KC (*say*, *said*). A qualitative reading of these collocations revealed that *say* and *said* were frequently used to indicate direct or reported speech. However, *tell* and *telling* more frequently occurred as part of n-grams concerning the reporting of stories of sexual violence (e.g., "*telling stories*", "*tell her story*") and the veracity of Ford's testimony (e.g., "*tell the truth*", "*telling the truth*").

Contrary to expectations, Ford did not show any statistically significant collocation with any word about gender and violence in the #NoKC corpus. On the other hand, #KC included the collocates *assault*, *sexual* and *assaulted* to construct her as the accuser and the victim-survivor of sexual assault (e.g., "*Ford's sexual assault allegation*", "*Kavanaugh sexually assaulted Ford*") and verbal violence (e.g., "*Trump mocked Christine Blasey Ford's sexual assault testimony*", "*Trump mocking sexual assault survivor Ford*"). In contrast, some users also assessed Dr. Ford's allegations as false (e.g., "*Ford is not a sexual assault survivor*"). These results match those observed in the previous subsections, wherein only female pronouns collocated with several words explicitly related to sexual violence, and male pronouns and *Kavanaugh* only collocated with *sexual*.

6.4. Gendered social actors

6.4.1. Man and men

The frequency analysis revealed that only the plural noun *men* was included in #NoKC, whereas #KC also contained the singular form *man*. As shown in Table 15, the analysis of collocates for *men* and *man* in #NoKC and #KC, respectively, shows some similarities as well as the emergence of a new category of social identities (see also Appendix II). Additionally, only #KC included male third-person singular pronouns. That the #KC

corpus more frequently referred to a specific man (usually Kavanaugh) as opposed to the #NoKC corpus, where *men* was used as a generalization, can explain this finding. Social actors contained *Kavanaugh* as well as his former title and gendered social actors. Lexis within the category of words related to the legal field included the legalese verbs *guilty* and *vote* in the #KC corpus, while #NKC only contained the verb *vote*. (Political) authorities such as *republican*, *GOP*, and *committee* also appeared as collocates of #NoKC, whereas #KC included *democrats*, *Supreme*, and *Court*. Both corpora shared the adjective *angry*, although other negative evaluative adjectives such as *afraid* and *sick* were identified in #NoKC. In contrast, #KC featured the positive term *good*. A major difference was the presence of positive lexis related to veracity and competence in the #KC dataset which created a positive evaluative prosody.

Semantic category	#NoKC <i>Men</i>	#KC <i>Man</i>
Gendered pronouns	–	He, his, him
Social actors	Women, men, Kavanaugh, republican, GOP, committee, boys	Kavanaugh, family, woman, Judge, man, women, America, Supreme, Court, democrats, Brett
Social identity	White, old, young, rich	White, old, young
Legal field	Vote	Innocent, accused, Court, confirm, guilty, right, vote
(Political) authorities	Kavanaugh, republican, GOP. committee	Kavanaugh, Judge, Supreme, Court, democrats
Gender and violence	Assault, sexual, rape, assaulted, sexually, raped	Sexual, assault, rape
Demeanor	Afraid, angry, sick	Angry, good
Competence	–	Honorable, reputation, decent
Veracity	–	Right
Support	Believe, stand	–

Miscellaneous	Power, country, time, good, real, think, need, know, want, say, make	Life, great, God, destroy, want
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Table 15: List of collocates of generic male social actors.

The noun *women* in #NoKC constructed women as victims of men (e.g., “*men overpowering young women*”, “*men using women as playthings*”), although on some occasions it formed the clusters *men and women* and *women and men* to create an in-group in opposition to politicians or other men (e.g., “*women and men who want to see justice*”). Similarly, the #KC corpus discussed the terms *woman* and *women* to denounce social inequalities and to defend women’s rights. These tweets referred to women as victims of a patriarchal system (e.g., “*a man’s reputation outweighs a woman’s trauma*”). However, *woman* was also employed to refer to Ford as the real perpetrator of an attack on Kavanaugh (e.g., “*a woman can just smear a man’s rep*”). Similarly, *women* was found in antifeminist discourses, such as “*Obnoxious radical women that no man wants*” or “*Liberal women are man hating creatures*”. Some users in the #KC corpus expressed their affiliation with the nominee by building Kavanaugh’s identity as a victim of Ford’s allegations.

The social actor *family* described Kavanaugh as a family man which, in turn, constructed his identity and his family’s as victims of the allegations. The social actor *boy* appeared as part of the saying “boys will be boys” either to condone Kavanaugh’s sexual allegations as a young man or to denounce the justification of rape culture. The legal terms *guilty* and *innocent* were also employed to build his identity as either a victim or a perpetrator in relation to the sexual assault allegations. Users who expressed their affiliation with Kavanaugh used *innocent* together with the collocations relating to competence to discuss his innocence and his victimization (e.g., “*innocent man brutally attacked by Democrats*”). These were usually presented with his identity as a family man (e.g., “*reprehensible actions against an innocent man and his family*”) and the verb *destroy* (e.g., “*destroy an innocent man’s reputation*”). On the other hand, *guilty man* was found in tweets that expressed disaffiliation from Kavanaugh, for example “*stamping his foot like the guilty man he is*”. However, *guilty* was frequently employed to affiliate with Kavanaugh (e.g., “*to make an innocent man guilty*”).

Collocates regarding social identities were similar in both corpora, except *young* which only appeared in the *#NoKC corpus*. The adjectives *old*, *white* and *rich* referred to a specific group of men who are in power, especially to the Senators who were present during the last hearing with Dr. Ford. This shows that Twitter users denounced the presence of traditionally powerful men who supported Kavanaugh (e.g., “*old, angry, white men behind Kavanaugh*”, “*white men attacking an assault survivor*”) as well as the perpetuation of rape culture in American society and institutions (e.g., “*white men can rape women*”, “*angry old White men fearful of losing their privilege*”). The collocation *young* occurred as a direct collocate of *man* to negatively construct Kavanaugh’s identity as a perpetrator (e.g., “*not only was Kavanaugh a bad *young man*, he’s a bad man now*”).

Lastly, lexis related to gender and violence differed in both corpora. *#NoKC* included past tense verbs to refer to past experiences or actions, which defined *men* as the grammatical actors and, therefore, perpetrators of sexual assault and rape (e.g., “*the men who sexually assaulted me*”, “*men who assault*”). However, there were a few instances in which *men* was also found to be the object of sexual, violent acts, especially in relation to the Catholic church (e.g., “*young men that were abused by Catholic priests*”). On the other hand, gender and violence were discussed in the *#KC corpus* to express disaffiliation from Kavanaugh, to condemn his past actions (e.g., “*a man accused of assault*”, “*man accused of attempted rape*”), and to denounce the spread and perpetuation of rape culture (e.g., “*any man who claims rape is irrelevant is promoting violence against women*”). A conservative and antifeminist discourse was also identified in tweets supporting Kavanaugh, for instance “*any woman can accuse of sexual assault to any man*” and “*accuse a righteous man of sexual assault so that they can murder babies*”. These examples illustrate the multifunctionality of the hashtag *#KC* since it was employed to comment on the event and to express (dis)affiliation with the nominee.

On the other hand, an analysis of the nouns *man* and *men* in the *#NoKC* and the *#KC* datasets, respectively, was also carried out in order to examine differences therein, even though the terms did not appear in the frequency wordlist. The comparison between the corpora showed that *man* shared similar lexis concerning demeanor, as can be seen in Table 16. However, there were some slight differences. The *#NoKC corpus* included the social actors and (political) authorities *Trump* and *FBI*, and gendered pronouns included two male forms. The adjective *innocent* occurred as a collocate of *man*, which highlights

the absence of its counterpart *guilty*. Lexis relating to competence and veracity also differed from those in #NoKC since the category of competence included opposing adjectives employed to discuss his nomination to the Supreme Court and the category of terms concerning veracity featured terms related to falsehood. In addition, *sexual* was the only sexual term identified in the collocation list.

Semantic category	#NoKC	#KC
	<i>Man</i>	<i>Men</i>
Gendered pronouns	He, his	Her
Social actors	Kavanaugh, women, man, woman, Court, Trump, Supreme, FBI, men	Women, men, woman, America, Kavanaugh, republican, committee, Senate
Social identity	Old, white	White, old, young, rich, privileged
Legal field	Vote, innocent, investigation, right	Senate, committee
(Political) authorities	Kavanaugh, Court, Trump, Supreme	Kavanaugh, republican, committee, Senate
Gender and violence	Sexual	Sexual, assault
Demeanor	Angry, fine	Good, angry
Competence	Unfit, fit	–
Veracity	Right, liar, lied	–
Support	Believe	Believe
Miscellaneous	Today, face, thing, time, needs, say	Time, like shut, need, think, know

Table 16: List of collocates of *man* in #NoKC and *men* in #KC.

Regarding *men*, categories concerning social actors, social identities, and (political) authorities shared similar collocates. The female pronoun *her* only appeared as a collocate in #KC and was used to refer to Kavanaugh as Ford’s accuser or assaulter (*her attacker*) or to construct Ford as a victim of accusations by Republican Senators (e.g., *Republican men would be calling her “hysterical”*). In contrast with the range of collocations related to gender and violence identified in #NoKC, #KC only included the

terms *sexual* and *assault*. Lastly, #KC also contained a positive demeanor, whereas all collocations in #NoKC were behaviors that conveyed negative evaluation.

The analysis of the nouns *woman* and *women* revealed two different stances in each corpus. Similar to the analysis above for *man/men*, #NoKC and #KC included the terms as part of n-grams to create an in-group with those men who respect women and support their rights (e.g., *all good women and men*). On the other hand, #KC frequently discussed women's identity as victims of sexual violence (e.g., "*some men want to or disrespect women*") and rape culture (e.g., "*telling American women that men can assault them*"). The collocate *women* was also employed to create an in-group of men who respect women in opposition to the Senators, Kavanaugh, and Trump, for example "*men who actually treat women with respect*". However, the presence of antifeminist discourses also constructed women as perpetrators, whereas men were built as victims of false accusations of sexual violence, such as "*ugly lying women who hate men*" or "*some women (and men too) lie about accusations*". On the other hand, *woman* in #KC was frequently found to discuss Kavanaugh's life during his high school days. Tweets included the cluster "*1 women [sic] and 2 men*" which was taken from Urban Dictionary's definition of Devil Triangle³⁴, a sexual game included in Kavanaugh's yearbook entry, and which was employed to discuss Kavanaugh's reputation in relation to his sexual activities during high school.

American rape culture and patriarchal ideology were discussed with the collocation *America* in the #KC corpus. The confirmation outcome led Twitter users to voice their opposition to the dismissal of Ford's allegations in utterances such as "*America accepts men's predations*" or "*America chooses white men over human rights*". Collocations of *America* revealed that Twitter users also denounced the perpetuation of a minority rule (e.g., *white men*) in America's democracy as well as the impunity of men in power (e.g., "*America needs more drunk white men in power*"). The presence of powerful men was further discussed with the collocations *Senate* and *Committee* as well as those dealing with social identities. Users in the #KC corpus discussed the high participation of male Republican Senators in the hearings and how their behavior was detrimental to Ford and to the hearing's outcome, as in "*Republican men on that Committee made a mockery of serious sexual assault accusations*". Similarly, tweets in

³⁴ <https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=Devils%20Triangle>.

#NoKC included individual criticisms of those Senators (e.g., “*this entitled old man; another privileged white man*”), Kavanaugh (e.g., “*drunk white man*”), and POTUS Trump (e.g., “*similar sexist of white man in the White House*”). Lastly, lexis related to sexual violence acts was used to condemn the perpetuation of sexual violence and rape culture by men, especially by those in power. This discourse was frequently employed to describe the Senators’ dismissal of Ford’s allegations, such as “*men can assault them [women] and still sin on our nation’s highest court*”.

Overall, these results indicate that the terms *man* and *men* were constructed similarly in both corpora. The noun *man* was found to be used to denounce privileged men in power, as well as to express a strong opposition to Kavanaugh’s nomination and to build his identity as a perpetrator. Likewise, *men* was employed to build an in-group of male allies and to criticize the attitude of Republican Senators towards Dr. Ford. Moreover, Twitter users also constructed privileged men as the main perpetrators of sexual violence and as the perpetuators of rape culture in America. However, there were some discrepancies in the corpora. The analysis of *man* and *men* in the #KC corpus revealed the presence of antifeminist discourses which constructed women as perpetrators and men as victims of false allegations of sexual violence by women. These discourses were absent in the #NoKC corpus.

6.4.2. Women

Collocations of *women* revealed similar lexis in both corpora (see Table 17 and Appendix II). Lexis in the category of gendered pronouns only featured male pronouns, which were mainly employed to refer to Kavanaugh. Kavanaugh’s identity was constructed as that of a perpetrator of sexual violence, which rendered a specific set of women’s identities (i.e., his accusers) as victims of (sexual) assault and aggression (e.g., “*women he assaulted; women he attacked*”). Moreover, Kavanaugh was characterized as a misogynist for disrespecting women (e.g., “*his disdain for women; he does not respect women*”) and beliefs regarding women’s rights (e.g., “*he disregards women’s health*”), as further explained below. In addition, the collocate *Kavanaugh* in the #KC corpus further constructed him as a male chauvinist (e.g., “*Kavanaugh despises women*”) and a perpetrator of sexual violence (e.g., “*Kavanaugh is a danger to women*”).

Semantic category	#NoKC	#KC
Gendered pronouns	He, his	He, his, him
Social actors	Men, women, Kavanaugh, America, American, GOP, people, girls	Men, women, Kavanaugh, America, American, people, Trump
Social identity	White	White
Legal field	Vote, rights, right	Rights, vote
(Political) authorities	Kavanaugh, GOP	Kavanaugh, Trump
Gender and violence	Sexual, assault, sexually, assaulted	Sexual, assault, assaulted, sexually
Support	Stand, believe, support, respect, care	Believe, support, care, stand, respect
Miscellaneous	Please, country, thing, need, come, watching, know, want, think, remember, stop	Country, today, time, come, know, know, make, think, need

Table 17: List of collocates of *women*.

The collocate *Kavanaugh* also shed light on the conflicting views between the two corpora. On the one hand, the corpora formed an out-group of women who supported Kavanaugh (e.g., “*Kavanaugh women supporters*”). However, the #NoKC corpus more frequently constructed the latter out-group by referring to their political identity (e.g., “*Republican women defend Kavanaugh*”), whereas users in the #KC corpus referred to the race of Kavanaugh’s female supporters (e.g., “*white women supporting Kavanaugh*”). This out-group was further discussed with the collocate *white* (e.g., “*white women are insane; white women who haven’t been sexually assaulted*”) and sometimes they were excluded from the feminism movement (e.g., “*white women who still claim to be feminist*”). On the other hand, the #NoKC corpus also used *Kavanaugh* to refer to Dr. Ford and the other women who accused him of sexual violence (e.g., “*women who have accused Kavanaugh*”). However, the #KC corpus sustained an antifeminist discourse and continued constructing this group of women as the real perpetrators for falsely accusing Kavanaugh (e.g., “*women to attack Kavanaugh’s reputation*”).

America and *American* explicitly referred to women in American society and the future consequences of the outcome of the confirmation process (e.g., “*sad day for American women; betrayed women of America*”). Such description of American women as victims of Kavanaugh’s confirmation was frequently linked to Kavanaugh’s conservative beliefs and views on abortion³⁵ through the collocates *rights* and *right* (e.g., “*wants to take away women’s rights*”), although abortion was only discussed explicitly in #KC (e.g., “*wave goodbye to women’s reproductive rights*”).

The biggest difference in both corpora concerned the collocations *girls* and *GOP* in #NoKC and *Trump* in #KC. Both *girls* and *GOP* were used to characterize women as victims of violence. *Girls* frequently formed an in-group with women to raise awareness of sexual violence against them (e.g., “*repeated violence against women/girls*”), whereas *GOP* was employed to discuss their behavior towards women (e.g., “*GOP war on women*”), especially female members of the Republican Party (e.g., “*GOP women attacking women*”) (see subsection 6.5.1). Additionally, the occurrence of *Trump* in #KC built Trump’s identity as a perpetrator of physical violence (e.g., “*Trump assaulted women*”) and verbal violence (e.g., “*Trump insulted the women accusing Kavanaugh*”).

Lexis within the category of gender and violence was shared in both datasets, through the words *sexual*, *assault*, *sexually*, and *assaulted*. These terms were frequently employed to construct Kavanaugh as a perpetrator of attacks on several women (e.g., “*sexually assaulted multiple women*”, and “*Kavanaugh has sexually assaulted so many women*”). However, the #KC corpus included tweets that justified why women do not report sexual violence by comparing their experiences to Kavanaugh’s confirmation process and Dr. Ford’s mistreatment during the hearings, for example “*no wonder why women don’t report sexual assault*” and “*why women don’t report their assaults*”.

Finally, *women* included a category of verbs that were employed to express support, rejection, or (dis)affiliation with women, especially victim-survivors. These features were more frequently identified in #NoKC, where users expressed their affiliation with women (e.g., “*stand up for women; stand with women in support of survivors*”). Moreover, these verbs were also used to criticize Kavanaugh (e.g., “*he doesn’t support women’s rights*”) and those Senators who voted in favor of Kavanaugh (e.g., “*they don’t*

³⁵ <https://apnews.com/article/donald-trump-confirmation-hearings-ap-top-news-courts-supreme-courts-d6e32e9f83334baba9d96ee572185caa>.

support women; y'all don't care about women”). However, these terms were also employed to form out-groups of women who did not support Kavanaugh’s claims and nomination (e.g., “*women who support Kavanaugh stand for truth*”; “*women who support the Demo Rats*”).

6.5. (Political) authorities and groups

As discussed at the beginning of this chapter, the frequency analysis revealed that #NoKC featured social actors relating to the Republican Party (i.e., *Trump* and *GOP*), whereas its counterpart #KC included the noun *Democrats* to refer to the Democratic Party. These results point to two different topics of discussion in the two hashtags since each of them seemed to focus on the opposite political party. In addition, both corpora included the social actor and authority *FBI*. The subsections that follow examine the collocates of the four nouns to examine how those (political) authorities relate to the construction of victim-perpetrator identities and sexual violence.

6.5.1. Trump and the Republican Party

The terms *Trump* and *GOP* were featured among the 100 most frequent words in #NoKC, which contrasts with the absence of any reference to the Democratic Party in the list. As can be seen in Table 18, collocates of *Trump* included the semantic categories already identified in the previous subsections. In addition, the collocates *GOP* and *America* pointed to the creation of out-groups to oppose Trump’s politics (e.g., “*Trump’s GOP*” or “*Trump’s America*”) (see Appendix II).

Semantic category	#NoKC
Gendered pronouns	He, his, him
Social actors	Kavanaugh, Donald, Trump, women, GOP, America, Brett, Ford, man, FBI
Social identity	White
Legal field	Investigation, vote, SCOTUS, court, supreme
Verbs	Wants, says, said, know, need, needs, pick, want, think, put

(Political) authorities	Kavanaugh, Donald, Trump, GOP, Brett, SCOTUS, court, supreme, FBI
Veracity	Lies
Gender and violence	Sexual, predator
Support	Protect, backed
Miscellaneous	Please, party

Table 18: List of collocates of *Trump*.

The collocates related to social actors and sexual violence shed light on how Kavanaugh’s identity was constructed vis-à-vis Donald Trump. The most frequent pattern was the comparison of both authorities in terms of their relationships with women and sexual violence allegations. Both were constructed as sexual predators, as in “*Brett Kavanaugh who like Trump is a sexual predator and sexual abuser*”, or implicitly, in tweets like “*Trump’s mini-me Kavanaugh*”. Trump’s identity as a predator was further discussed with the collocate *women* as well as the two collocates concerning gender and violence. Tweeters mentioned the numerous sexual assault allegations that the former President had received throughout the years (e.g., “*sexual predator Trump*” or “*Trump wants to violate women’s rights like he violates them sexually*”). Consequently, this depiction of Trump also constructed women as victims of sexual violence as well as victims of rape culture and patriarchal social structures.

Collocates relating to the Supreme Court built the relationship between the two men as mutually beneficial. The collocates related to SCOTUS highlighted Kavanaugh’s nomination by Trump in tweets such as “*Trump picks men for SCOTUS*” and “*Trump’s Supreme Court nominee*”. In addition, the verb *backed* also reflects Trump’s support of the judge, as in “*Trump backed Kavanaugh*”. However, Kavanaugh acts as the grammatical actor with the verb *protect*. Tweeters argued that Trump intended to secure a seat to a Justice who would protect him in the future as in “*Judge that will protect Trump*” or “*judge to protect the Mob Boss Trump*”.

Additionally, the collocate *Ford* built Dr. Ford’s identity not only as a victim of sexual assault but also of verbal violence. Such identity was found with the verbs *mock* and *attack*, as tweeters denounced that Trump used his rallies and his Twitter account to

verbally victimize and make fun of Dr. Ford’s testimony³⁶ (e.g., “*Trump mocking Dr. Ford*”, “*Trump mocked Dr Ford*” and “*Trump attacking Ford*”). This depiction was also found with the 3-gram *sexual assault survivor* (e.g., “*Trump mocked a sexual assault survivor*”).

On the other hand, collocates of *GOP* revealed similar terms as *Trump*, including gendered pronouns, social actors, social identities, lexis related to the legal field, (political) authorities, veracity and the miscellaneous noun *power* (see Table 19 and Appendix II). It must be noted that *GOP* did not collocate with any term relating to gender and violence.

Semantic category	#NoKC
Gendered pronouns	He, him, her, his, she
Social actors	Kavanaugh, women, senators, Trump, people, FBI, senate, committee, men, senator, Dr, Ford
Social identity	White, old
Legal field	Investigation, vote, senate, committee, judiciary, SCOTUS, right, process
Verbs	Want, wants, stop
(Political) authorities	Kavanaugh, Trump, FBI, White, senate, committee, senator, SCOTUS
Veracity	Corrupt, lying, hiding
Miscellaneous	Power

Table 19: List of collocates of *GOP*.

The most frequent pattern in the #NoKC was the construction of the GOP as a supporter of Kavanaugh and as the organization responsible for corrupting the confirmation process. Analysis of the male pronouns *he*, *his*, and *him* and the social actor *Kavanaugh* showed that tweeters claimed that the GOP was also backing Trump’s nominee (e.g., “*GOP keeps him in power*”) and rushing the confirmation process (e.g., “*GOP trying to push Brett Kavanaugh’s confirmation*”). The collocate *FBI* also appeared

³⁶ <https://deadline.com/2018/09/donald-trump-tweet-attacks-brett-kavanaugh-accuser-christine-ford-1202468887>.

to denounce the GOP's intention to avoid a police investigation (e.g., "*GOP and Kavanaugh won't let the FBI investigate*"). Furthermore, collocates relating to veracity (*corrupt*, *lying*, and *hiding*) further helped construct that depiction of the GOP. The term *corrupt* appeared as part of the n-gram *corrupt GOP* to evaluate the party's actions throughout the process together with the verbs *lying* and *hiding* as some users considered that Republicans knew the truth about the allegations (e.g., "*GOP knows he's lying*"; "*what is the GOP hiding*"). In addition, *white* was often also used to refer to the White House and to denounce presidential corruption (e.g., "*Corrupt White House and corrupt GOP*").

Further, the analysis revealed that members of the GOP were also constructed as perpetrators and perpetuators of rape culture in American society. The female pronouns *she* and *her* and the social actor collocates *Ford* and *women* constructed women as victims of the party's politics and ideology. Firstly, tweeters condemned the behavior of the GOP senators who gaslighted Dr. Ford's testimony (e.g., "*GOP speak for 'she is lying'*") as well as the verbal violence inflicted on her (e.g., "*GOP Senators are assaulting her*") during the hearing. Secondly, the Republican Party's ideology and attitude towards women and victim-survivors were expressed through war metaphors (e.g., "*GOP war on women*") as well as in more explicit references to testimonies of sexual violence (e.g., "*the GOP never believe the women*"). This prompted the creation of an in-group of women who, despite their previous support, seemed to be showing their backs to the party as a result of the sexual assault allegations and the confirmation process, as can be seen in examples such as "*GOP women to vote against the GOP*".

On the other hand, the social actors *men*, *senator*, *senators*, *Senate*, *Judiciary*, and *committee* together with the terms concerning social identity *white* and *old* were found to be used to negatively evaluate members of the Republican Party. Most frequently, the terms belonging to the social actors category were employed to narrow the focus of the criticism towards the members of the party and the Senate Judiciary Committee, as in "*GOP men*", "*GOP Senators*" and "*GOP Senate Judiciary Committee*". However, the terms *white* and *old* were used to express negative evaluations of the members (e.g., "*OLD WHITE BOYS CLUB GOP MEN*", "*rich white GOP guy*"), as was already examined in subsection 6.4.1. Additionally, *old* was sometimes used as a pun to rename the meaning of the GOP initials, for instance "*GOP actually means GREEDY OLD PERVERT*" and

“*GOP are the GRISLY OLD PREDATORS*” to denounce the number of members of the party who have been involved in sexual violence allegations³⁷.

Overall, the analysis of *Trump’s* and *GOP’s* collocates shows that tweeters in *#NoKC* expressed disaffiliation from the Republican party and denounced the Republican Senators and Trump’s behavior in relation to Dr. Ford and the nomination process. Moreover, Trump and the GOP were negatively evaluated by users in the *#NoKC* corpus for the different accusations of sexual violence within the party as well as for their contribution to sustaining and spreading American rape culture in political and judicial institutions.

6.5.2. Democratic Party

In contrast to *#NoKC*, the *#KC* corpus did not include any reference to the Republican Party in the 100 most frequent lexical words. Instead, it featured the noun *democrats* to refer to the members of the Democratic Party. As can be seen in Table 20, analysis of collocates of the term *Democrats* revealed the presence of pronouns and male pronouns, social actors, and the two miscellaneous words *time* and *new* (see also Appendix II). Moreover, there was a decrease in the number of collocates relating to the legal field and (political) authorities. In addition, the list also included two opposing evaluations around the semantic category of ethics.

Semantic category	#NoKC
Gendered pronouns	He, him, his, her
Social actors	Kavanaugh, republicans, Senate, FBI, Ford, judge, women, Dr, committee, media, people
Legal field	Vote, investigation, delay
(Political) authorities	Political, republicans, committee, left, judge
Support	Believe
Ethics	Evil, good

³⁷ <https://www.dailykos.com/stories/2021/2/17/2016695/-Republican-Sexual-Predators-Abusers-and-Enablers-Pt-23>.

Miscellaneous	Time, new, want, stop, trying, know, think, say, let
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Table 20: List of collocates of *Democrats*.

In contrast to the previous subsection, the male pronouns *he*, *his*, and *him* and the social actor *Kavanaugh* constructed Kavanaugh’s identity as a victim. The actions and attitude of the party during the confirmation process were negatively evaluated by some tweeters in the #KC corpus (e.g., “*the Democrats treatment of of [sic] K. was disgusting*”, “*Democrats using any tactic against Kavanaugh*”). In some instances, tweeters also denounced a smear campaign by drawing parallelism with the sexual assault claims, as in “*democrats rape his good name*”, and by using metaphors about murder to signal their attempt to end Judge Kavanaugh’s political career, as in “*Democrats continue to assassinate Judge Kavanaugh’s character*”. However, in fewer instances, his identity was also constructed as that of a survivor, as in “*Democrats shot their wad on Kavanaugh and lost badly*”.

Not only was Kavanaugh constructed as a victim of the Democratic Party, but also those women who accused him of sexual aggression, especially Dr. Ford. The analysis of the collocates, *her*, *Ford*, and *women* build women as political tools of the Democratic Party, which was accused of using fake sexual violence allegations (e.g., “*Democrats are paying all these women*”) and of using victims for their own political gain (e.g., “*Democrats taking advantage of women*”). In the #KC corpus, Dr. Ford was frequently described as a victim of the Democratic Party, and tweeters denounced she was being utilized as a part of a political campaign against the GOP (e.g., “*Democrats don’t care about Dr. Ford*” and “*Democrats used Ford for their political gain*”). However, some users also constructed her identity as a perpetrator together with the Democratic Party, and accused them of lying about the sexual assault claims, as in the examples “*Democrats & Dr. Ford are using an old tactic of accusation*” or “*Dr. Ford and the democrats are liars*”.

The construction of the sexual assault allegations as a political plot was further examined with the collocates *political*, *delay*, *investigation*, *vote*, *left*, *FBI*, *media*, and *stop*. The reading of these words in context revealed that tweeters disaffiliated from the party by accusing Democrats of trying to delay the confirmation process (e.g., *FBI* and *investigation*, “*Democrats whining about the FBI investigation*”; *stop* and *delay*

“*Democrats are trying to delay the vote*”, “*Democrats doing anything to stop*”) and criticizing an alleged smear campaign (e.g., *political*, “*a political play of the Democrats*”). In addition, the collocate *left* was used to create an out-group of people with a left-wing ideology, such as in the examples “*Democrats and the hysterical left*” and “*Democrats and left wing conspiracy*”. Furthermore, the collocate *media* condemned the use of news media by the Democratic Party (e.g., “*coordinated hit job between media and democrats*”). The 3-gram *Democrats and their* was also frequent in the corpus to define the media as one of the tools employed by politicians to amplify their campaign, for instance “*Democrats and their liberal media*” and “*Democrats and their media handmaids*”.

Lastly, the evaluations *good* and *evil* were employed to construct the Democrats as an out-group in opposition to Kavanaugh. Kavanaugh was built as a *good man* and a *good person* (e.g., “*Democrats destroyed a good man’s name*” or “*Democrats for making a good person go through hell*”, see also subsection 6.3.1), whereas the adjective *evil* was used to negatively evaluate the Democratic Party’s attitude (e.g., “*Democrats are the party of the evils*” or “*full of evil democrats*”), thus siding with Kavanaugh and disaffiliating from what these tweeters considered to be unethical.

On the other hand, the presence of the noun *democrats* was not frequently found to be used to disaffiliate from Kavanaugh. In fact, disaffiliation was mostly identified with male pronouns to comment on Kavanaugh’s stance towards the Democratic Party, for instance “*his disdain for Democrats*” and “*he threatened Democrats*”.

6.5.3. FBI

As shown in Table 21, collocates of *FBI* included the male pronouns *he*, *his*, and *him* and the female pronoun *she*. The semantic category of social actors was less populated than in previous subsections, which mainly included political groups and authorities, the affected individuals, and the plural noun *witnesses*. By contrast, the category of collocates relating to the legal field was the biggest category and included verbs related to the police investigation, people’s wish for the FBI to interfere, and other nouns and verbs associated with the nomination process. In addition, the adjective and noun *sham* was included in the Evaluation category (see Appendix II).

Semantic category	#NoKC	#KC
Gendered pronouns	He, his, she	He, his, she, him
Social actors	Kavanaugh, Ford, Dr, Trump, GOP, senators, witnesses	Kavanaugh, Ford, democrats, judge, Trump, Senate, FBI, Dr, Flake
Legal field	Investigation, investigate, report, vote, allegations, witnesses, investigates, hearing, interviewed, interview, reopen, question, investigated, ask, asking, demand	investigation, investigate, vote, report, judge, investigations, allegations, ask, asking, check, delay, clear
(Political) authorities	Kavanaugh, Ford, GOP, senators	Kavanaugh, Trump, judge, Trump, Senate, FBI, Flake
Evaluation	Sham	
Miscellaneous	Needs, clear, please, job, want, wants, call, know, check, hiding, say, allow	Week, background, want, call, need, wants, know

Table 21: List of collocates of *FBI*.

Male pronouns and the social actors *Kavanaugh* and *judge* were found to be used to denounce the lack of a thorough FBI investigation before the hearings and during the confirmation process. Tweeters mentioned that neither Trump nor Kavanaugh wanted an FBI investigation (e.g., “*he does not want an FBI investigation*” in #NoKC; “*He doesn’t want to talk to the FBI*” in #KC) and questioned the reasons for Kavanaugh’s opposition to letting the FBI investigate the sexual assault allegations (e.g., “*he should insist on an FBI Investigation*” or “*Kavanaugh is AFRAID of an FBI investigation*” in #NoKC; “*Why wouldn’t he want an FBI investigation?*” in #KC). These tweets implied Kavanaugh’s role in preventing an investigation as the main reason for his refusal to take a polygraph test. Moreover, collocates of these nouns and pronouns were also found to discuss the FBI as the trustable authority which should be carrying out an investigation (e.g., “*no Kavanaugh Confirmation without FBI investigation*” in #NoKC; “*Delay Kavanaugh until*”

FBI investigates” in #KC), or to accuse the agency and the investigation process of being corrupted (e.g., “*unhurried FBI investigation of Kavanaugh now*” in #NoKC; “*want the Corrupt FBI to clear Kavanaugh*” in #KC). In addition, the collocate *Judge* was also found to refer to Mark Judge and his noninvolvement during the process and the investigation in the #KC corpus (e.g., “*Let the FBI investigate, let Judge testify*”).

As opposed to those terms related to Kavanaugh, the female pronoun *she* and the social actors *Dr* and *Ford* revealed Dr. Ford’s willingness to cooperate and participate in an FBI investigation (e.g., “*she passed an FBI administered lie detector test*” or “*Dr. Blasey Ford wants the FBI involved*” in #NoKC; “*she wants the FBI to investigate*” or “*Ford wants the FBI to investigate*” in #KC). However, in the #KC corpus, a few Twitter users questioned the veracity of her claims, as in “*she wants the FBI to spend time and money*”, while in the #NoKC corpus, the accuracy of the FBI agents carrying out the investigations was called into question, as shown in “*Republicans hand-picked FBI agent meeting with Ford*”. Both corpora also condemned Trump and the GOP for interfering in the FBI investigation process to prevent a thorough investigation (e.g., “*GOP doesn’t want real FBI investigation*” in #NoKC; “*Trump is interfering FBI investigation*” in #KC). However, *democrats* in #KC mentioned the Democratic Party’s wishes to carry out an investigation by the FBI (e.g., “*Democrats want another FBI investigation*”).

The collocation analysis also revealed that a subset of tweeters in #NoKC called out the FBI corruption, sometimes by comparing the organization to the President, the GOP, and the Republican Senators (e.g., “*Coverup by FBI, SCOTUS, POTUS, and Senate*”) or by evaluating the investigations as a sham (e.g., *sham* “*sham FBI investigation*”; *witness* “*The FBI declines to interview primary witnesses*”). However, the corpus more frequently included tweets demanding the to FBI investigate the sexual assault allegations with the lexis relating to investigating (e.g., “*FBI MUST investigate*” or “*Should be investigated by the FBI*” in #NoKC; “*We need immediate FBI investigations*” or “*The FBI needs to investigate*” in #KC), interrogating (e.g., “*Refusing the FBI to ask*” in #NoKC; “*The accuser wants the FBI to investigate*” in #KC) and their wish for the FBI to do so (e.g., “*We need an FBI investigation*” in #NoKC; “*American Citizens want a FBI investigation*” in #KC).

6.6. Sexual violence

Frequency analysis revealed that the adjective *sexual* was one of the most frequent lexical words in the data. However, the 100 most frequent words in the #NoKC corpus only featured a violent act: the noun *assault*. The subsections that follow are devoted to examining the collocates of both *sexual* and *assault*. Although *assault* was not part of the top 100 word list, it is worth examining and comparing both corpora for more fine-grained analysis.

6.6.1. Sexual

Collocates of *sexual* regarding social actors, the legal field, (political) authorities, and gender and violence were similar in both corpora (see Table 22 and Appendix II). These categories included the affected individuals, gendered social actors, and (political) authorities. Gendered pronouns included male pronouns and the female pronoun *her* in both corpora. Collocates also featured lexis relating to perpetrators of gender-based violence, victim-survivors, and (sexually) violent acts. Regarding the legal field, lexis was related to the sexual assault allegations and the reporting of crimes, as well as social actors involved in legal processes and the act of lying under oath. However, only the #NoKC corpus included a lexical category concerned with support.

Semantic category	#NoKC	#KC
Gendered pronouns	He, his, him, she	He, his, her, him
Social actors	Kavanaugh, women, predators, victims, assaulter, supreme, court, survivors, Trump, woman, SCOTUS, abuser, victim, Brett	Women, victims, Kavanaugh, survivors, victim, woman, predator, predators, Brett, Ford, supreme, court, survivor, men, man, judge, someone
Legal field	accused, allegations, alleged, allegation, perjury, accusations, vote, attempted, victims, supreme, court, SCOTUS, victim	Allegations, accused, accusations, claims, court, alleged, allegation, report, investigation, multiple,

		victim, victims, supreme, judge
Gender and violence	Serial, assault, misconduct, predator, abuse, harassment, rape, assaults, sexual, violence, predators, victims, assaulter, survivors, abuser, victim	Assault, misconduct, predator, abuse, harassment, violence, predators, rape, assault, sexual, victims, survivors, victim survivor
Support	Support, believe	–

Table 22: List of collocates of *sexual*.

As already explained in subsection 6.3.1, the examination of male collocates revealed that tweeters constructed Kavanaugh’s identity as that of an alleged perpetrator of sexual violence in both corpora (e.g., “*accused him of sexual misconduct*” in #NoKC; “*he was accused of sexual assault*” in #KC). Less frequently, male pronouns were also employed to refer to Donald Trump and his previous sexual violence allegations (e.g., “*a president with his own sexual misconduct allegations*”). Additionally, *sexual* formed the n-gram *sexual predator(s)* to refer to Senators, Kavanaugh and Trump. The pronoun *he* was often found to explicitly describe Kavanaugh as a sexual predator and perpetrator in #NoKC (e.g., “*He’s a sexual predator*” and “*He’s a sexual abuser*”). Similarly, the social actor *Kavanaugh* further highlighted the depiction of the judge as a perpetrator and the grammatical object of the crime (e.g., “*sexual assault by Kavanaugh*” in #NoKC; “*Brett Kavanaugh sexual assault accusations*” in #KC). Moreover, Kavanaugh’s negative evaluation was further enforced by tweeters’ focus on his drinking habits and what they considered to be perjury, as can be seen in examples like “*his drinking, finances and sexual assault history*” in #NoKC and “*his debts, his lies, his sexual assaults*” in #KC.

On the other hand, the analysis of the female pronoun *her* and the social actor *Ford* and the singular noun *woman* revealed that Dr. Ford was frequently constructed as the victim of the sexual assault allegations in the corpus #KC, as previously seen in Section 6.3.2. It was also found that the #KC corpus included opposing views regarding the veracity of her allegations, as some users described her testimony as credible (e.g., *her*, “*her powerful story about sexual assault*”; *Ford*, “*Ford’s very credible social assault allegation*”; *woman*, “*a woman speaks out about sexual assault*”) and positively evaluated her decision to come forward (e.g., “*her bravery against sexual assault*”). In contrast, and

less frequently, others denied the claims and dismissed her testimony (*Ford*, “*Ford is not a sexual assault survivor*”; *woman*, “*a woman lying of sexual assault*”).

For its part, in the #NoKC corpus, the plural gendered noun *women* was employed to construct Kavanaugh as a perpetrator of sexual violence and the three accusers as victims (e.g., “*nominee accused of sexual assault by multiple women*”). However, the #KC corpus focused more frequently on Donald Trump’s different sexual violence allegations instead of Kavanaugh’s, as can be observed in “*19 women have accused Trump of sexual assault*”.

Social actors concerning judicial authorities were used to disaffiliate from Kavanaugh and to oppose his confirmation to SCOTUS. In most instances, tweeters expressed their discontentment and opposition to the confirmation of a man accused of committing a sexual assault, (e.g., “*serial sexual abuser to the highest court*” and “*unwanted sexual advances disqualify you for SCOTUS*” in #NoKC; “*alcoholic sexual predator to the highest court*” and “*sexual predator as a Supreme Court judge*” in #KC), thus implying that (alleged) sexual criminals should be disqualified from being nominated to SCOTUS. In addition, tweeters also mentioned the fact that Kavanaugh was not the first Justice to be confirmed to SCOTUS with sexual assault allegations³⁸ (e.g., “*another sexual harasser onto the court*” in #KC), and used the platform to denounce their opposition to both confirmations and to voice the need to stop putting in power authorities with previous allegations of sexual violence, as can be seen in tweets such as “*NO MORE SEXUAL PREDATORS in SCOTUS*” and “*No To Sexual Predators For POTUS or SCOTUS*” in #NoKC.

The collocates related to the legal field, namely *allegation*, *allegations*, *alleged*, *accused*, *accusation*, and *accusations*, were used to discuss Kavanaugh’s status as an alleged sexual assaulter (e.g., “*he is accused of sexual assault*” and “*sexual misconduct allegations*”) in both corpora. This depiction of Kavanaugh was often aggravated with the adjective *multiple* as it was employed to refer to the numerous accusations that the former judge (and also Trump) had received (e.g., “*multiple instances of sexual assault*” and “*accused of sexual assault by multiple women*”). Furthermore, these collocates were also frequently found in the struggle about the credibility of the accusations, such as

³⁸ Justice Clarence Thomas was accused of sexual harassment by Anita Hill during his confirmation process in 1991: <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/09/20/us/politics/anita-hill-testimony-clarence-thomas.html>.

“*credibly accused of sexual assault*” in opposition to “*false sexual assault allegations on men*”.

The description of Kavanaugh and other male and political social actors as perpetrators was further debated with the collocates *predator*, *predators*, *assaulter*, and *abuser*. In addition, the adjective *serial* was frequently found in #NoKC to form 3-grams with the aforementioned collocates, i.e., *sexual abuser* (5 instances), *serial sexual predator* (9 instances), *serial sexual harasser* (1 instance) and *serial sexual assaulter* (3 instances) to discuss the different accusations of sexual violence that some authorities, especially Kavanaugh and Trump, had received. The n-gram *sexual assaulter* was frequently employed to describe Kavanaugh with 31 instances in #NoKC and 49 instances in #KC (e.g., “*drunken sexual assaulter*” in #NoKC; “*elect a sexual assaulter to the highest court*” in #KC) with a few instances referring to Trump (e.g., “*self confessed assaulter for President*”). Similarly to the collocates relating to social actors, the plural form *predators* was used to refer to the members of the SCOTUS who had been confirmed as Associate Justices, such as “*no more sexual predators in halls of justice*” in #NoKC and “*gang rape club for sexual predators*” in #KC.

Then, the analysis of collocates of the lemmas concerning victim-survivors shed some light on the shared linguistic construction of the victim identity between both corpora. On the one hand, collocates *victim* and *victims* were always surrounded by a negative semantic and discourse prosodies as they were frequently found to discuss the psychological suffering of victim-survivors of sexual violence. Such construction of victim-survivors was realized by tweeters’ denunciations of public shaming and verbal violence against them (e.g., “*repeatedly attacking victim of sexual assault*” or “*publicly humiliate victims of sexual assault*” in #NoKC; “*flagrant disregard of victims of sexual assault*” or “*death threats to a sexual assault victim*” in #KC) and, more specifically, against Dr. Ford (e.g., “*attacking a sexual assault victim*” in #KC). Collocates revealed that tweeters also denounced institutional violence against them, although it was much less frequent in the corpus (e.g., “*our ‘justice system’ is failing victims of sexual assault*” in #NoKC; “*predator over sexual assault victims*” in #KC). However, the #KC corpus included some tweets which questioned the veracity of Dr. Ford’s allegations by placing themselves as victims of sexual violence (e.g., “*As a victim of a real sexual assault*”) and claiming that false allegations are detrimental to the *real* victims (e.g., “*real victims of*

true sexual assault” or “*hurting real victims of sexual assault*”). Therefore, this set of Twitter users disaffiliated from Dr. Ford and evaluated her narrative as false.

The collocates *survivor* and *survivors* were frequently surrounded by a positive discourse prosody in both corpora. Tweeters used positive evaluative adjectives (e.g., “*brave sexual assault survivors*”) as well as verbs denoting their support for them (e.g., “*support survivors of sexual assault*” and “*I believe survivors of sexual assault*”). Nevertheless, the terms *survivor* and *survivors* were also found to be objects of public shaming and verbal violence (e.g., “*mock survivors of sexual assault*” in #NoKC; “*calling sexual assault survivors a mob*” in #KC). Also, the collocate *women* was usually found to occur together with the collocation *survivors* (e.g., “*women and survivors of sexual assault*” in #NoKC) to describe them as the main objects of sexual violence. The collocate *report* was employed to list and denounce the reasons why women frequently do not report sexual assault (e.g., “*why women don't report sexual assault*” in #NoKC; “*women don't report sexual assault*” or “*women don't report rape or sexual assault*” in #KC). Interestingly, the analysis revealed the presence of victim-survivors in both corpora. Victim-survivors identified themselves as either victims (e.g., “*I was a victim of sexual assault*” or “*I am a victim of sexual abuse*”) or survivors (e.g., “*I'm a sexual assault survivor*”) as well as close relatives or friends of a victim-survivor (e.g., “*my wife is a sexual assault survivor*”).

Lastly, the importance of sexual violence and rape culture during the confirmation process was heavily denounced in the analysis of the collocates *support* in #NoKC and *violence* in #KC. The verb *support* denounced the lack of institutional support for victim-survivors (e.g., “*don't support victims of sexual assault*”) as well as the continuous support of the GOP to men accused of sexual violence (e.g., “*continued support of sexual predators*” and “*party that supports sexual assault*”). Similarly, the collocate *violence* was used to discuss how the results of the confirmation process favored the perpetuation of rape culture in U.S. society (e.g., “*legitimizing sexual violence*” or “*enables further sexual violence*”). However, some tweeters also downplayed the importance of sexual violence. The collocates *perjury* and *believe* in the #KC corpus were identified in tweets that minimized or took the focus away from the sexual assault allegations (e.g., “*No matter who you believe, sexual assault allegations aside*”).

6.6.2. Assault

Some collocates of *assault* were shared with *sexual* since the two words frequently formed the n-gram *sexual assault*. Among these collocates, the list included gendered pronouns, indefinite social actor, male social actors, female social actor, victim-survivors, lexis relating to the legal field, gender and violence, and some miscellaneous words (see Table 23 and Appendix II). Due to the fact that some of the collocates and concordance lines were already examined and discussed in subsection 6.6.1, this subsection will focus on exclusive collocates of *assault* as well as in those instances in which the term appeared in isolation from *sexual*.

Semantic category	#NoKC	#KC
Gendered pronouns	He, his, her, him, she	He, her, she, him, his
Social actors	Kavanaugh, women, survivors, victim, men, survivor, anyone, someone	Women, victims, Kavanaugh, survivors, victim, Ford, someone, woman, men, man, Brett, Dr, survivor, judge
Legal field	Allegations, accused, charges, perjury, attempted, alleged, allegation, accusations, hearing, charge	Allegations, accused, alleged, allegation, claims, report, accusations, investigation, victims, victim, judge, committed
Gender and violence	Sexual, rape, sexually, harassment, assault, survivors, victim, survivors	Sexual, rape, sexually, sex, assault, harassment, victim, survivors, victim, survivor, committed
Miscellaneous	Maryland, press, forget, open	

Table 23: List of collocates of *assault*.

Examination of collocates of *assault* strengthens the results obtained in the previous subsections on the discursive construction of victim and perpetrator identities. In #NoKC, the collocate *women* appeared 46 instances on the right and 23 instances on the left (see Appendix II). Similarly, *woman* retrieved 10 hits on the right and 15 hits on

the left. This points to female social actors as the object of sexual assault. In fact, the collocates *men* (18 hits on the left, 5 hits on the right) and *man* (15 hits on the left, 6 hits on the right) appeared more frequently as a left collocate, thus potentially acting as the agent of the violence. Similarly, the collocates *men* and *man* were more frequently found as right collocates of *assault* in #KC (*men*, 30 hits on the left, 16 hits on the right; *man*, 28 hits on the left, 17 hits on the right). Nevertheless, the difference between right and left collocates was not significant when examining *women* and *woman* (see Appendix II). In fact, the number of instances in which they appeared as left collocates was slightly higher than those of left collocates (*women*, 80 hits on the left, 79 hits on the right; *woman*, 25 hits on the left, 20 hits on the right). The qualitative reading of concordance lines revealed that these two generic gendered nouns occurred as left collocates together with verbs reporting crimes (e.g., “*women report sexual assault*” or “*women finally start reporting sexual assault*”) as well as with the collocate *survivor* and *victims* (e.g., “*women and victims of sexual assault*” or “*women and survivors of sexual assault*”).

Therefore, women were constructed as the main objects of sexual violence (see Subsection 6.4.2), whereas men were mainly defined as the perpetrators (see Subsection 6.4.1). In addition, the collocates *someone* and *anybody* also shed interesting results on the negotiation of such identities. By using generalized indeterminate pronouns instead of Dr. Ford’s name, users rendered the role of Kavanaugh’s victim, as well as that of the other women who accused him of sexual assault, invisible, thus focusing on Kavanaugh instead (e.g., “*I didn’t sexually assault anyone*”³⁹ or “*He thinks he didn’t sexually assault anyone*” in #NKC; “*potentially assault someone*” or “*attempted to assault someone*” in #KC).

Furthermore, tweeters in the #KC corpus also used metaphors of violence to compare the confirmation of Kavanaugh to an (sexual) assault to illustrate structural violence against women and the preservation of rape culture in American society and the judicial system. Metaphors were more frequently found in the #KC corpus with the collocates *women* (e.g., “*The confirmation of Kavanaugh is an assault on women*”), *survivors* (e.g., “*flying fuck about rape/assault/abuse survivors*”), and *rape* (e.g., “*this is an assault, attempted rape of our American constitution*”), thus portraying American women as victims of the confirmation process.

³⁹ This example is a quote of Kavanaugh’s testimony, which was reproduced in a tweet.

6.7. Discussion

This chapter set out to explore how gender-based ideologies and discourses related to the construction of the identity of victims and perpetrators of verbal and sexual violence in relation to Objective 1 and RQ1. It was hypothesized that both corpora would include negative semantic and discourse prosodies to condemn sexual violence in American society as well as to denounce the perpetuation of rape culture and patriarchal oppression by higher institutions (RQ1.1). The results presented in this chapter have shown that both corpora featured lexis which convey negative discourse prosodies concerning sexual violence and rape culture. In addition, victim and perpetrator identities were continuously negotiated by tweeters who expressed opposing views through a variety of discourses and depending on their political and ideological stances and the hashtag they used (RQ1.2).

The analysis of the identity construction of victims revealed that Dr. Ford was mainly described as the object of sexual violence and, more precisely, sexual assault. This discourse was found in both corpora, although it was much more frequent in the *#NoKC* corpus as it was mainly used to disaffiliate from AsJ Kavanaugh (RQ1.1). Additionally, the data unveiled that Dr. Ford was also constructed as a victim of verbal violence and victimization. Some tweeters used these hashtags to denounce Trump's mockery of her testimony in his rallies, as well as the Republican Senators' negative attitude towards her during the Hearing, which resulted in the dismissal of the sexual assault allegations. Nevertheless, tweeters who described Dr. Ford as a victim also used positive semantic and discourse prosodies to express their support and construct her identity as that of a reliable narrator by describing her testimony as real and credible (Clark-Parsons, 2019; Loney-Howes, 2018; Palomino-Manjón, 2022a). Therefore, this suggests that the identity construction of victims-survivors of sexual violence is not always realized through negative evaluations of their experiences.

In addition, Dr. Ford's family was also constructed as collateral victims of the events, as they became the target of verbal violence, especially in the form of death threats from AsJ Kavanaugh's and GOP supporters. However, Kavanaugh supporters in the *#KC* corpus constructed his family as collateral victims of the allegations when describing AsJ Kavanaugh as a victim. Interestingly, users also described AsJ Kavanaugh's family as victims, but the reasons for this construction differed between both corpora. Tweets in the *#NoKC* corpus as well as some found in the *#KC* corpus attributed his wife and

daughter the identities of potential victims of domestic violence, especially his wife, which further constructed his identity as a perpetrator of gender-based violence.

Women were also surrounded by negative evaluative and discursive prosodies which depicted them as the main object of gender-based violence as well as the victims of victimization and verbal violence. In addition, there was an ongoing debate in both corpora that highlighted social inequalities and presented (American) women as victims of patriarchy, rape culture, and American institutions to the advantage of traditionally empowered men (i.e., white men). Tweeters denounced the presence of these men in American political and legal institutions. This fact perpetuates the impunity of (white) male perpetrators and the presence of rape culture in such institutions to the detriment of women and other socially disadvantaged citizens. Furthermore, women in general were also presented as indirect victims of the confirmation process because of AsJ Kavanaugh's newly gained power and position. Some tweeters feared that his conservative views would be pernicious to women's rights in issues such as abortion. These findings are closely related to news articles suggesting that Trump wanted a majority of Justices with ideological affinity to the Republican Party in the SCOTUS⁴⁰. However, some collocations also presented a positive evaluative prosody surrounding women and victim-survivors, especially *survivor* and *survivors*. These results relate to previous research which claims that the difference between the discursive construction of a victim and a survivor and the evaluative prosody of the two words is not always clear-cut (see Palomino-Manjón, 2022a; Williamson and Serna, 2018).

On the other hand, tweeters who sided with Kavanaugh also negotiated his identity as that of a victim. More precisely, he was constructed as a political victim, probably due to the nature of the event and the timing of the accusation. Therefore, these users made use of positive semantic prosodies to construct him as a decent and fair man (Boyle 2019). Such identity construction was closely linked to antifeminist discourses which denied Dr. Ford's testimony and described AsJ Kavanaugh as innocent of the sexual assault allegations. These discourses were also present in the negotiation of men as victims of feminism since some tweeters discussed how feminism is detrimental to men. This construction creates a discourse that diminishes the importance of sexual violence and

⁴⁰ https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/trump-supreme-court-barrett-lagoa-ginsburg/2020/09/22/09c08bf4-fce0-11ea-8d05-9beaaa91c71f_story.html.

constructs women as the real perpetrators (Boyle 2019). This type of attribution of identity is further discussed in the following paragraphs.

The analysis presented in this chapter also revealed that several social actors were depicted as perpetrators through different discourses concerning sexual violence. The main social actors who were constructed as perpetrators of sexual aggression were AsJ Kavanaugh and Donald Trump, followed by male Republican Senators. It is no coincidence that tweeters frequently debated the identities of the aforementioned social actors, as they intended to denounce the presence of privileged men in power who perpetuate rape culture and patriarchy (as it has been discussed already) as well as the presence of authoritative figures with sexual assault allegations in America's political and legal institutions.

As expected, AsJ Kavanaugh was the main social actor that was constructed as a perpetrator of sexual aggression. Additionally, tweets from both corpora included a negative prosody as he was described as an angry, drunken, and unfit judge and, therefore, he was negatively evaluated as a potential Justice by tweeters. However, it is interesting to mention that the *#KC* corpus showed a focus on his drinking habits and his potential perjury. This is of special interest, since one of the main reasons why he was being accused of perjury by Twitter users was because of his past drinking habits, among other statements unrelated to sexual aggression⁴¹. These results are of great relevance since the minimization of his sexual assault allegations helps sustain patriarchal discourses of gender-based violence (Bou-Franch & Garcés-Conejos Blitvich, 2014b; Coates & Wade, 2007).

The *#NoKC* corpus heavily focused on the construction of Donald Trump as a perpetrator of sexual violence as he was usually depicted as a sexual predator. In fact, his attributed identity was also employed to make comparisons with AsJ Kavanaugh by mirroring their attitudes and highlighting their mutually beneficial relationship. In addition, tweeters criticized the lack of investigation by the FBI and a potential case of corruption during the confirmation process to emphasize the GOP's, as well as Trump's, intention to reinforce patriarchal views and laws in America's institutions. Consequently,

⁴¹ Except his statement concerning Deborah Ramirez's claims. See <https://www.vox.com/2018/10/2/17927606/brett-kavanaugh-perjury-lied-congress>.

these users depicted privileged and powerful men (i.e., old, white, and rich men) as perpetrators and enablers of rape culture.

On the contrary, the *#KC* corpus featured a strong antifeminist discourse (RQ1.1) that constructed Dr. Ford's and other self-claimed female victim-survivors' identities as the real perpetrators. Tweets in this corpus described Dr. Ford's claims as false and depicted her as a liar and a radical political activist, thus creating a negative discourse prosody. Furthermore, she was also characterized as an ally of the Democratic Party, which was accused by AsJ Kavanaugh's supporters of attempting to delegitimize his nomination in order to avoid a Republican majority in the SCOTUS. These claims are linked to discourses that denounce the Democratic Party's intentions to use her testimony as a political tool, which sometimes resulted in the presentation of Dr. Ford as a political victim.

Additionally, both corpora included discourses that created in-groups and out-groups of women (RQ.1.1). The *#NoKC* corpus was found to construct an out-group of women who supported Kavanaugh. These women were usually described as Republican voters as well as white and privileged. Tweeters debated the exclusion of these women from feminism. In contrast, the *#KC* corpus created an out-group of women, as well as men, who decided to side with Dr. Ford. These users denied Dr. Ford's testimony and considered her as detrimental to those women whom they considered to be "real" victim-survivors of gender-based violence. Moreover, these women were negatively constructed as dishonest beings capable of hurting men with false allegations of sexual violence. Thus, tweeters in the *#KC* corpus enacted a discourse of male victimization (Boyle, 2019; Heritage & Koller, 2020; Keller et al., 2022; Palomino-Manjón, 2022a).

The results in this chapter indicate that the distinction between the identities of perpetrators and victims was blurred during the confirmation process due to the presence of discourses that constantly negotiated Dr. Ford's and AsJ Kavanaugh's identities, as well as the identities of other social actors, depending on their ideologies and political stances. The next chapter moves on to further discuss the construction of discourses of sexual violence and victim-perpetrators identities and by examining keywords in both corpora which might have not been present in the frequency analysis.

CHAPTER 7

**Key concepts and identity features
in the (re)production of discourses
of sexual violence**

CHAPTER 7: KEY CONCEPTS AND IDENTITY FEATURES IN THE (RE)PRODUCTION OF DISCOURSES OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

A keyword analysis was performed in order to identify statistically significant words in both corpora. This way it was possible to compare and gain insights into key discourses (RQ1.1) and identity features specific to each dataset when contrasted to a reference corpus (RQ1.2). As mentioned in Chapter 3, the focus of this Ph.D. dissertation is the examination of social actors and discourses of sexual aggression, and, therefore, only keywords in relation to these categories were further scrutinized in Section 7.1. Section 7.2. is divided into five main subsections, each of which presents the results relating to the collocation analysis of a selection of keywords. Lastly, Section 7.3. discusses the findings which emerged from both the keyword and collocation analyses.

7.1. Keyword analysis

The analysis of the 50 keywords of each corpus revealed the salience of gendered social actors –frequently, political social actors– as well as the presence of terms relating to the legal field, veracity, behavior, and evaluative lexis (see Table 24 and Appendix III). Interestingly, the only reference to Dr. Ford was her maiden name *Blasey* in both lists. It is also worth noting that both keyword lists featured *boofing* as the most statistically significant term. Moreover, the #KC corpus also included the past form *boofed*. The word *boof* was used to make reference to a phrase written on AsJ Kavanaugh’s senior yearbook page (i.e., “*Have you boofed yet?*”) which, according to him, is an informal term for flatulence. However, some Twitter users discussed the possibility of it being a slang term to refer to having anal sex while drinking alcohol and/or consuming drugs⁴².

Semantic category	#NoKC	#KC
Social actors	Kavanaugh, Blasey, Kav, Swetnick, Brett, Murkowski, Merrick, Grassley, Avenatti, Heitkamp, Manchin, Gorsuch, POTUS, Flake, GOP, repubs, rapist,	Blasey, Kavanaugh, Swetnick, demoncrats, demonrats, DiFi, demorats, Kav, libtards, Avenatti, Grassley, Hirono, Flake, dems, SCJ, Murkowski, Manchin, Feinstein, Brett,

⁴² <https://www.vox.com/culture/2018/9/27/17905818/brett-kavanaughs-yearbook-boof>.

	misogynist, rapists, assaulted, abuser	Heitkamp, Mazie, Merrick, RBG, assaulter
Legal field	Assaulter, SCOTUS, accuser, accusers, polygraph	Assaulter, SCOTUS, accuser, polygraphs, accusers, polygraph
(Political) authorities	Kavanaugh, SCOTUS, Kav, Brett, Murkowski, Merrick, Grassley, Avenatti, Heitkamp, Manchin, Gorsuch, POTUS, Flake, GOP, repubs	Kavanaugh, demoncrats, demonrats, DiFi, demorats, Kav, libtards, Avenatti, Grassley, Hirono, Flake, dems, SCJ, Murkowski, Manchin, Feinstein, Brett, Heitkamp, Mazie, Merrick, RBG
Veracity	Perjurer, perjured, horseplay, perjury, liar, sham, lied, corroborating	Shitshow, uncorroborated, perjurer, perjured
Behavior	Belligerent, frat, unhinged, temperament, partisanship, partisan	Unhinged
Evaluation	Horseplay, disqualifying, unfit, disqualifies, disqualify,	Anti-Kavanaugh, demoncrats, demonrats, demorats, libtards, bigly, grandstanding
Alcohol	–	Kegger
Gender and violence	Boofing, assaulter, rapey, rapist, misogynist, misogynistic, rapists, assaulted, abuser, raped	Boofing, boofed, boof, assaulter, rapey, rapist, MeToo
Miscellaneous	Retweet, midterms	GTFOH, mid-terms, midterms, retweet, ICYMI

Table 24: Categorization of keywords in both corpora.

Among those social actors related to (political) authorities, the analysis revealed a big focus on male Senators in both hashtags, except for *POTUS*, *Kavanaugh*, and other

Justices and Judges (*Gorsuch* and *Merrick*) (see Table 25). On the other hand, female (political) authorities were more frequently featured in the *#KC* corpus as the *#NoKC* corpus only included the surnames *Heitkamp* and *Murkowski*. Keywords included the names and surnames of Senators affiliated with the Democratic Party, namely Dianne Feinstein (*DiFi* and *Feinstein*), Mazie K. Hirono (*Mazie* and *Hirono*), and Heidi Heitkamp (*Heitkamp*). In addition, the keyword *RBG* was also found to refer to former AsJ Ruth Bader Ginsburg. Table 25 summarizes the presence of gendered (political) authorities in the keyword list.

Keyword	<i>#NoKC</i>	<i>#KC</i>
Male (political) authorities	Kavanaugh, Kav, Merrick, Grassley, Avenatti, Brett, Manchin, Gorsuch, POTUS, Flake	Kavanaugh, Avenatti, Grassley, Flake, Manchin, Merrick
Female (political) authorities	Murkowski, Heitkamp	Murkowski, DiFi, Hirono, Feinstein, Heitkamp, Mazie, RBG

Table 25: List of gendered (political) authorities.

These results point to a predominance of tweets posted during the Hearing. Moreover, Senator Grassley was condemned in both corpora for supporting AsJ Kavanaugh’s nomination and for victimizing Dr. Ford (e.g., “*CHUCK GRASSLEY is a RAPE APOLOGIST*” in *#NoKC*; “*Grassley is the perfect example of how a victim gets re-victimized*” in *#KC*), whereas Senator Feinstein was accused of using the case as a political tool by Kavanaugh supporters (e.g., “*DiFi just needed a vehicle that would allow her to create chaos*” in *#KC*). In contrast, Senator Heitkamp was the only Senator to be praised in the *#NoKC* corpus for supporting Dr. Ford’s testimony since Senator Feinstein did not appear as a keyword in that corpus (e.g., “*Thanking Senator Heitkamp for standing up for truth and justice*”).

The keyword lists also included lexis relating to veracity, behavior, and evaluation. The keywords in this category were closely related to those in the legal field, such as *uncorroborated*, *perjurer*, and *perjured* in *#KC*, and *perjurer*, *perjured*, *perjury*, *liar*, *sham*, *lied*, and *corroborating* in *#NoKC*. Closely related to these veracity terms, the nouns *polygraph* and *polygraphs* were also included in both corpora in the category of

Legal field, since tweeters demanded that Kavanaugh and Dr. Ford took a polygraph test to verify if their testimony was valid (see Chapter 6). Similarly, *uncorroborated* and *corroborating* were also employed to discuss the claims made by the accuser and the accused (e.g., *uncorroborated*, “*uncorroborated allegations*” or “*uncorroborated accusations*”; *corroborating*, “*she has more corroborating witnesses*”, “*does he have any corroborating witnesses?*” or “*still no corroborating evidence*”).

The category of terms relating to behavior included *belligerent*, *frat*, *unhinged*, and *temperament* in #NoKC, and *unhinged* in #KC. Although most evaluative lexis was employed to refer to Kavanaugh, some of these keywords also evaluated other social actors. For example, *unhinged* was used to refer to Kavanaugh (e.g., “*unhinged Kavanaugh*” or “*unhinged, belligerent, partisan Justice*” in #NoKC; “*partisan and unhinged behavior*” or “*unhinged drunk*” in #KC) as well as to other politicians and their supporters (e.g., “*unhinged President*” in #NoKC; “*unhinged & vulgar leftist*” or “*unhinged left*” in #KC). However, terms such as *belligerent* (e.g., “*belligerent drunken Brett*” or “*your nominee is belligerent*”), *partisan* (e.g., “*He’s power hungry, partisan*” or “*Kavanaugh is totally partisan*”), *partisanship* (e.g., “*Kav. Revealed his gross partisanship*” or “*alcohol problems, partisanship behavior*”) and *temperament* (e.g., “*his lies, his temperament*” or “*Judicial temperament*”) in #NoKC were only used to describe Kavanaugh. In addition, #NoKC also included the term *frat*, a derogatory term employed to define a group of college men of racist and misogynist ideology⁴³, to refer to Kavanaugh (e.g., “*drunken frat boy*”).

As can be seen in Table 24, the #NoKC corpus contained a higher number of evaluative keywords than #KC. Whereas #KC included *Anti-Kavanaugh*, *bigly*, and *grandstanding*, #NoKC featured *unfit*, *horseplay*, *disqualifying*, *disqualifies*, and *disqualify*. The evaluative terms in #NoKC were frequently used to describe Kavanaugh in relation to his confirmation to SCOTUS and his behavior during the last hearing (e.g., *unfit*, “*unfit for SCOTUS*” or “*unfit to be a SC Justice*”; *disqualify*, “*Brett Kavanaugh’s lies are enough to disqualify him*” or “*so lying doesn’t disqualify him?*”; *disqualifies*, “*his temperament disqualifies him*” or “*his crying and anger disqualifies him*”; *disqualifying*, “*his temperament is disqualifying*” or “*his temperament is disqualifying*”). Regarding #KC, *Anti-Kavanaugh* was found to describe people opposing Kavanaugh’s confirmation,

⁴³ <https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=Fraternity>.

such as “*anti-Kavanaugh protestors in DC*” or “*Anti-Kavanaugh protests outside the Capitol*”, as well as to create an out-group of people with leftist ideology, as in “*anti-Kavanaugh fascist left*”. The noun *grandstanding* was found to criticize both parties’ actions during the confirmation process (e.g., “*political grandstanding*”, “*Democrats just keep grandstanding*” or “*Both Dem and Rep senators grandstanding all morning*”). Lastly, the adverb *bigly*⁴⁴ was more frequently used in tweets that negatively evaluated the performance of the Democratic party, such as “*BACK FIRING on Democrats BIGLY!!!*” or “*the Democrats will lose bigly in the midterms*”. However, it was also used to mock Donald Trump, the GOP, and Republican voters (e.g., “*Trump’s vocabulary he is a bigly disaster*” or “*republicans don’t screw up bigly*”). The Evaluation category in #KC also included derogatory terms which referred to the Democratic Party and its supporters. These derogatory terms are comprised of blended nouns, such as *demoncrats* (*demon* and *democrats*), *demonrats* (*demon* and *rats*), *demorats* (*democrats* and *rats*), and *libtards* (*liberal* and *retard*) (see subsection 7.2.4). This points to the initial hypothesis that #KC was more frequently tweeted by Kavanaugh’s supporters.

Both lists were also comprised of words relating to different attitudes and forms of violence against women. However, as shown in Table 24, the #NoKC corpus included a higher number of keywords relating to gender and violence than the #KC dataset. Among these, there were social actors (i.e., *assaulted*, *rapist*, *misogynist*, *rapists*, and *abuser* in #NoKC; *assaulter*, *assaulters*, and *rapist* in #KC), sexual crimes (i.e., *rapey*, *assaulted*, and *raped* in #NoKC; *rapey* in #KC) and gender ideologies towards women (i.e., *misogynistic*, *misogynist* and *rapey* in #NoKC; *rapey* in #KC). These keywords were found to build Kavanaugh’s identity as a perpetrator of sexual aggression as well as a misogynist (see subsection 7.2.5). However, some of these keywords were also used to construct Trump’s identity as a perpetrator as well as the identity of other members of the Republican Party (e.g., “*spineless misogynistic senior senator from TX*” in #NoKC; “*GOP is just a Rapist Party*” in #KC). A more detailed analysis of these keywords is provided in subsection 7.2.5. The corpus #KC also included *MeToo* as a reference to #MeToo and the MeToo Movement. References to MeToo were found to criticize the movement for spreading false cases of sexual violence (see subsection 7.2.5.3.1).

⁴⁴ This adverb was actually popularized by Donald Trump in 2016 due to a misinterpretation of one of his speeches. See <https://www.lexico.com/definition/bigly>.

The subsections that follow explore the collocations regarding the social actors AsJ Kavanaugh, Dr. Ford, and Julie Swetnick, political parties, and gender and violence, which have been briefly mentioned in this section.⁴⁵ The reason for selecting the aforementioned keywords, and not further exploring other terms such as proper names concerning Senators and other Judges, was to widen the analysis performed in Chapter 6 regarding the representation of victims and perpetrators and the presence of discourses of (linguistic) sexual aggression. Although some Senators did perform verbal violence against Dr. Ford, it is beyond the scope of this thesis to examine the identity construction of such politicians.⁴⁶ The following sections first include the list of collocates, which is next followed by a discussion of the analysis of keywords and their collocations in context.

7.2. Collocation analysis

7.2.1. Brett, Kav, and Blasey

The keyword *Brett* was previously identified in the 100 most frequent words in the *#KC* corpus, but not in the *#NoKC* corpus (see Chapter 6). Since the proper noun *Brett* frequently precedes the surname *Kavanaugh*, it was expected that most of its collocates were also included in the list of collocations of *Kavanaugh* (see Chapter 6, subsection 6.3.1). Therefore, this subsection will only examine those collocates exclusive to *Brett* and not previously examined as collocations of *Kavanaugh*. Indeed, most of the collocates of *Brett* in *#KC* were already identified and examined in the previous chapter, with the exception of the social actors *nominee*, *Christine* and *Blasey*, the violent act *assault*, and the verb denoting endorsement *support* (see Table 26 and Appendix IV). Nonetheless, *#KC* had a higher number of frequent collocates which did not appear as statistically significant collocates of *Kavanaugh*. Pronouns, social actors, lexis relating to the legal field, the authority *FBI*, and terms related to sexual crimes featured among these collocates.

⁴⁵ Due to the low frequency in the corpus of most key words, collocations were examined according to frequency and not considering their statistical measure.

⁴⁶ This was decided after a close examination of those keywords in context. On most occasions, tweeters appealed to their role in the Senate and asked them to vote for or against the nomination. Some other tweets evaluated their performance but did not contribute to the research questions which guide this dissertation. Nonetheless, the instances in which some Senators were constructed as perpetrators are discussed at the beginning of this chapter. Some future research might examine their role during the confirmation process.

Semantic categories	#NoKC	#KC
Gendered pronouns	He, his	He, his, her, she, him
Social actors	Kavanaugh, judge, Trump, Ford, nominee, Brett, women, boy, woman, people	Kavanaugh, Judge, Justice, Ford, Christine, women, Blasey, nominee, Trump, FBI
Legal processes	Vote, Supreme, Court, judge, investigation, nominee, withdraw, nomination, confirmed, confirmation	Supreme, court, confirmed, Justice, vote, confirmation, Senate, nominee, confirm, nominations, allegations, hearing, accuser, investigation
(Political) authorities	Kavanaugh, judge, Brett, Trump, Supreme, Court, judge, FBI	Kavanaugh, judge, Trump, FBI, Senate, Justice
Demeanor	–	Good
Veracity	Lied	–
Gender and violence	Sexual, misconduct	Sexual, assault
Alcohol	–	Beer
Support	–	Believe, support
Miscellaneous	Please	–

Table 26: List of collocates of *Brett*.

The exclusive collocates of *Brett* in #KC revealed that the collocates *Christine*, *Blasey* and *nominee* were used in news headlines as part of the 3-grams *Christine Blasey Ford* and *nominee Brett Kavanaugh*, whereas *sexual* was found both in headlines, such as “*Brett Kavanaugh dismisses sexual assault allegations*”, and in tweets commenting on the last Hearing, as in “*Dr. Ford describing her assault by Brett Kavanaugh*”. In fact, there was only one tweet that contained just the proper names *Brett* and *Christine*, without the surnames, and which defined Kavanaugh as a perpetrator of sexual violence: “*1 July 1982: The day 17 yo Brett assaulted 15 yo Christine*”. However, the qualitative analysis of some collocations in context unveiled that a considerable number of users expressed

their affiliation with Kavanaugh, especially with the collocate *support*. Although some users also expressed their disaffiliation from the nominee, such as in the tweet “we do not support Kavanaugh”, the verb *support* was frequently found in tweets that advocated for Kavanaugh’s confirmation, at the same time that Twitter users explicitly mentioned their gender as women or the fact that many women were siding with him, for example “*I am a woman. And I support Brett Kavanaugh*” or “*Women rally in support of Brett Kavanaugh.*”

On the other hand, #NoKC unveiled a more negative stance towards Kavanaugh, as examined in the previous chapter. The pronoun *his* revealed a negative evaluation of Kavanaugh including his physical appearance, such as “*Brett Kavanaugh why his head is so big*”, and his behavior, such as “*Brett Kavanaugh, his behavior showed bias*”, as well as his relationship with alcohol and his drinking habits, as in “*Brett likes his booze*” or “*Brett Kavanaugh’s characterization of his drinking habits*”. His behavior was further evaluated negatively with the collocate *boy*, which constructed Kavanaugh’s identity as related to Trump and the GOP with the pronoun *your* (e.g., “*ur boy Brett*”, “*your boy Judge Brett Kavanaugh*” or “*your boy Brett*”). Lastly, the noun *FBI* denounced the lack of police investigation to protect Kavanaugh, as has been already discussed in the previous chapter (e.g., “*Limited sham FBI investigation into Brett Kavanaugh*” or “*Afraid of FBI investigating? What’s Brett Kavanaugh hiding?*”).

Moreover, the collocates *woman*, *Ford* and *misconduct* build Kavanaugh’s identity as a perpetrator of (sexual) violence. Although *Ford* frequently collocated with terms relating to sexual violence, it was also observed that users commented on the symbolic violence that Kavanaugh exerted on her by ignoring and diminishing her testimony, as in “*Brett didn’t watch Ford’s testimony.*” In addition, collocates of *Brett* shed light on the discursive representation of the second and third victims, namely Deborah Ramirez and Julie Swetnick. Although *sexual misconduct* is a broader term for sexual violence⁴⁷, the collocate *misconduct* as part of the n-gram *sexual misconduct* revealed the presence of these women, especially Ramirez (e.g., “*Second sexual misconduct allegation against Brett Kavanaugh*” or “*2nd ‘sexual misconduct’ incident involving Brett Kavanaugh*”) as well as the noun *woman* (e.g., “*Second woman accuses*

⁴⁷ <https://www.covenant.edu/students/resources/sexualmisconduct/what-is-sexualmisconduct>.

Brett Kavanaugh of sexual assault” or *“Third woman has officially accused Brett Kavanaugh of sexual assault”*).

The keyword *Kav*, which is a shortening for the surname Kavanaugh, unveiled a similar list of keywords (see Table 27 and Appendix IV). These collocates were also employed to express disaffiliation from AsJ Kavanaugh and opposition to his nomination (e.g., *“don’t want Kav on SCOTUS”* in #NoKC) as well as Trump (e.g., *“Both Trump and Kav are the same”* in #NoKC; *“Sexual predator loves Kav”* in #KC). Moreover, the #NoKC also included the frequent creation of in-groups and out-groups of tweeters, especially women, who support Kavanaugh (e.g., *“Kav obtained 60+ women to vouch for him”*) and women who oppose his confirmation (e.g., *“We do not like Kav, said all the women in the world”* and *“we don’t want Kav, Uncle Sam”*⁴⁸), as already discussed in Chapter 6.

Semantic categories	#NoKC	#KC
Gendered pronouns	He, his	He, his, her
Social actors	Women, Trump, world, uncle, Sam	Judge, Brett, Kavanaugh, Kav, Ford, Dr, advisor, women, Wade, country
Legal processes	SCOTUS, voted	Court, confirmed, vote, Supreme, evidence
(Political) authorities	SCOTUS	Judge, Brett, Kavanaugh, Kav
Veracity	Lying	Truth
Support	–	Stop, believe
Gender and violence	–	Sexual
Miscellaneous	Box, time, know, calendar	Know

Table 27: List of collocates of *Kav*.

However, a major difference between both corpora was the discussion of evidence towards the claims. In the #NoKC corpus, there was only a reference to the calendar

⁴⁸ Uncle Sam’s Misguided Children is an organization created by members of the US Marine Corps which is known for a racist, homophobic, and misogynist ideology.

submitted as evidence by Kavanaugh’s team⁴⁹ to justify that he did not attend the high school party (e.g., “*Kav’s calendar*”). Then, users in the #KC corpus denounced the lack of evidence presented by Dr. Ford’s legal team (e.g., “*I don’t believe there is evidence to show Kav guilt*”) and questioned the credibility of the claims (e.g., “*Dr. Ford is as believable as Judge Kavanaugh*”). Additionally, the collocate *Roe* was part of the 3-gram *Roe v. Wade*⁵⁰ and was found to be used to celebrate Kavanaugh’s confirmation in relation to his views on abortion (e.g., “*Bye bye Roe v. Wade spare no one Kav*”).

On the other hand, *Blasey* also shared a great number of collocates with *Ford* (see Chapter 6, subsection 6.3.2). As expected, this was due to the fact that it was part of the 3-gram *Christine Blasey Ford*. However, *Blasey* frequently collocated with different lexis in both corpora (see Table 28 and Appendix IV). In #NoKC, collocates included the female social actors *Hill*, *Deborah*, and *Anita*, the authorities *Senate* and *Committee*, the adjective relating to sexuality and violence *sexual*, and the lexis denoting support. In addition, there were some miscellaneous words, namely *make*, *listen*, and *today*. The #KC corpus included social actors, words relating to the legal field, terms related to veracity, verbs denoting support, and the miscellaneous lexis *says*, *thank*, *know*, *today* and *say*.

Semantic categories	#NoKC	#KC
Gendered pronouns	Her, she, he, his	Her, she, he
Social actors	Ford, Christine, Dr, Kavanaugh, professor, women, Brett, woman, Ramirez, Hill, Deborah, Anita	Ford, Christine, Dr, Kavanaugh, Brett, accuser, Judge, Trump, Mitchell, women, Professor, lawyer, woman
Legal processes	Testimony, Senate, investigation, committee	Testimony, testify, hearing, allegations, Senate, statement, court
(Political) authorities	Kavanaugh, Brett, Senate, committee	Kavanaugh, Brett, Judge, Trump, Mitchell, Senate
Veracity	–	Credible, truth, lying, liar

⁴⁹ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2018/09/26/kavanaughs-calendar-annotated/> .

⁵⁰ *Roe v. Wade* refers to the 1973 law which protected women’s freedom to have an abortion.

Gender and violence	Sexual	Sexual, assault
Support	Stand, solidarity, believe	Believe, stand, support
Miscellaneous	Make, thank, listen, today, deserves	Story, says, thank, know, today, say, letter

Table 28: List of collocates of *Blasey*.

Analysis of these collocates in context revealed two different stances in both corpora. Whereas #NoKC only included tweets supporting Dr. Ford, tweeters expressed mixed opinions in #KC. The collocates *we*, *woman*, *stand* and *support* revealed an in-group of Tweeters who disclosed collective support for the accuser, and gave credibility to her accusation through the collocate *believe* (e.g., *we*, “*We stand with Dr. Christine Blasey Ford*” or “*We believe Dr. Christine Blasey Ford*”; *women*, “*Women support Christine Blasey Ford*”; *support*, “*I believe and support Christine Blasey Ford*”; *stand*, “*I stand in solidarity with Dr. Christine Blasey Ford*”). However, there was one tweet in which *support* created an out-group of people who supported Trump and Kavanaugh (i.e., “*Trumpian lunatics that support this monster*”). Further solidarity with Dr. Ford was expressed through the collocate *truth* to positively evaluate the veracity of her testimony, for instance “*Dr. Christine Blasey Ford is telling the truth*” and “*Proud of Christine Blasey Ford for speaking her truth*”. This result contrasts with those observed with the collocate *Trump*, which denounced the former President’s negative behavior and victimization of Dr. Ford (e.g., “*Trump taunts Christine Blasey Ford*” or “*Trump mocks Christine Blasey Ford’s testimony*”)

The presence of legal figures as collocates of *Blasey* played an important role in her characterization as a perpetrator. The collocate *lawyer*, which was frequently employed to refer to Debra Katz in “*Christine Blasey Ford’s lawyer*”, also expressed implicit disaffiliation from Kavanaugh’s accusers by negatively evaluating Michael Avenatti, Julie Swetnick’s lawyer, as in examples “*Creepy porn lawyer linking Christine Blasey Ford to Julie Swetnick*” and “*According to creepy porn lawyer Christine Blasey Ford and Julie Swetnick are friends*”. In addition, the collocate *Mitchell* showed that tweeters discussed and supported Rachel Mitchell’s final ruling (e.g., “*Rachel Mitchell sizes up Christine Blasey Ford’s testimony*”) as well as an ongoing discussion of users who expressed disaffiliation from Dr. Ford during the Hearing by mentioning the

lawyer's name (e.g., "*Ms. Mitchell, Blasey Ford is a terrible actress*"). Additionally, the collocate *lying* was also employed to deny her testimony and, therefore, disaffiliate from her (e.g., "*Christine Blasey Ford You're a lying sack of garbage lady!!!*" or "*Christine Blasey Ford is straight up lying*").

As previously mentioned, the #NoKC corpus frequently included tweets expressing solidarity with Dr. Ford, especially with the collocates *sexual*, *stand*, *solidarity* and *thank*. The verb *stand* and the noun *solidarity* were part of the same 3-gram "*stand in solidarity*", which occurred 38 times in the corpus with tweets such as "*I stand in solidarity with Dr. Christine Blasey Ford*" and "*I stand in solidarity with *Christine Blasey Ford* NO MORE SEXUAL PREDATORS IN SCOTUS*". In addition, *stand* also appeared in 21 instances on its own to also express solidarity and support, for instance "*I stand with Christine Blasey Ford*" and "*I stand with Professor Christine Blasey Ford*". Moreover, the collocate *thank* was also found to be used to express gratitude to Dr. Ford for coming forward and for bringing awareness to sexual violence, as in "*Thank you Christine Blasey Ford for your incredible bravery*" and "*Thank you Dr. Blasey Ford*".

On the other hand, the collocates *sexual* and *listen* constructed Dr. Ford as a victim of verbal and symbolic violence, as seen in the previous chapter. The adjective *sexual*, together with the collocate *Trump*, mentioned Donald Trump's mocking attitude towards Dr. Ford (e.g., "*Trump mocked Christine Blasey Ford's sexual assault testimony*"), whereas *listen* was used to highlight the fact that male Senators were not paying attention and interrupted Dr. Ford's testimony during the hearing (e.g., "*Grassley is awful he will not listen to Dr. Ford*" or "*Shut up and listen to what Dr. Blasey Ford has to say*"). Female social actors also shed some light into the discursive construction of sexual violence and its victims. The collocate *Deborah* was included in tweets that listed the women who accused Kavanaugh (e.g., "*Dr. Christine Blasey Ford, Deborah Ramirez and Julie Swetnick*"). The social actors *Anita* and *Hill* compared the past allegation made by Anita Hill to those of Dr. Ford, as Twitter users expressed their wish for the sexual allegations not to be exonerated as in 1991 (e.g., "*Don't make Christine Blasey Ford the next Anita Hill*" or "*I believe Anita Hill. I believe Christine Blasey Ford*").

7.2.2. Swetnick

The keyword *Swetnick* referred to Kavanaugh's third accuser Julie Swetnick, who accused him of gang raping, and probably drugging, her at a party. The list of collocations included gendered pronouns, social actors, (political) authorities, the verb *believe* to

express support, and lexis relating to gender and violence (see Table 29 and Appendix IV). In addition, the #KC corpus included words regarding legal processes and veracity, as well as some miscellaneous words.

As expected, the #NoKC corpus revealed that tweeters using #NoKavanaughConfirmation constructed Julie Swetnick as a victim of sexual violence (e.g., “*Julie Swetnick, a sexual abuse victim*”) and expressed their support for her claims (e.g., “*I believe Julie Swetnick*”). Therefore, AsJ Kavanaugh was defined as her perpetrator (e.g., “*Julie Swetnick accuses Brett Kavanaugh of sexual misconduct*”). Moreover, collocates concerning Dr. Ford and Deborah Ramirez were used to list the three women as his victims.

Semantic categories	#NoKC	#KC
Gendered pronouns	Her	She, his, her
Social actors	Julie, Ford, Kavanaugh, Ramirez, Blasey, Deborah, Brett	Julie, accuser, Ms, Ford, Ramirez, Kavanaugh, Avenatti, client, women, FBI, Dr, democrats, Deborah, Blasey
Legal processes	–	Allegations, claims, client, sued, stand, affidavit
(Political) authorities	Kavanaugh, Brett	Kavanaugh, Avenatti, FBI, democrats
Veracity	–	False, joke
Support	Believe	Believe
Gender and violence	Sexual	Rape, gang
Miscellaneous	–	Thing, today, please, new, story, says

Table 29: List of collocates of *Swetnick*.

On the other hand, the #KC corpus showed strong disaffiliation from Swetnick. Although she was defined as an accuser of sexual violence (e.g., “*Kavanaugh’s accuser Swetnick*” and “*Julie Swetnick - who says she was gang raped*”), most tweeters accused her of fabricating her claims (e.g., *joke*, “*The Swetnick thing is a joke*”; *false*, “*Swetnick’s*

claims are false”) and of contributing to the alleged Democratic Party’s attempt to avoid Kavanaugh’s confirmation (e.g., “*Avenatti-Swetnick allegations exposed the scam*”). However, some users also expressed their support with the collocate *believe* (e.g., “*I believe Julie Swetnick*”) and condemned the GOP’s refusal to let her testify and be investigated (e.g., *FBI*, “*Denying an FBI investigation into Julie Swetnick*”; *affidavit*, “*Swetnick has produced a signed affidavit with penalty of perjury*”).

7.2.3. Assaulter and accuser

The keyword analysis revealed the presence of two social actors concerning victim-perpetrator identities in both corpora, namely *assaulter* and *accuser*⁵¹. Collocations of the keyword *accuser* were divided into similar categories as those already mentioned in the subsection above and in Chapter 6, namely gendered pronouns, social actors, legal field, (political) authorities, competence, and gender and violence, as can be seen in Table 30 below (also see Appendix IV). Additionally, the #NoKC corpus also included terms in relation to drinking alcohol and veracity, which points to a negative evaluation of AsJ Kavanaugh.

	#NoKC	#KC
Gendered pronouns	He, her, himself	His, he
Social actors	Kavanaugh, Trump, women	Friends, women, senators, Ford, president, chief
Legal field	Supreme, court, accused, SCOTUS, confirm, alleged	Court, supreme, SCOTUS, accused, office, nominated, confessed, alleged
(Political) authorities	Chief, Supreme, court, SCOTUS, Kavanaugh, Trump	President, chief, court, supreme, SCOTUS
Competence	Partisan	Partisan
Alcohol	Drunk	—
Veracity	Lying, liar	—

⁵¹ The reason why *accuser* was compared to *assaulter* and not the collocation *rapist* is that AsJ Brett Kavanaugh was accused of sexual assault and not rape by Dr. Christine Blasey Ford.

Gender and violence	Sexual, serial, rapist, misogynist, harasser	Sexual, sex, assaulter, serial
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Table 30: Collocations of *assaulter*.

Most of the collocations constructed AsJ Kavanaugh’s identity as the main perpetrator in both corpora, such as “*sexual assaulter and potential rapist*” in #NoKC and “*he is a sexual assaulter*” in #KC. In addition, this construction also served to denounce the presence of sexual assaulters in SCOTUS, as had already been identified in the previous chapter, including “*sexual assaulter in a SCOTUS seat*” in #NoKC and “*another assaulter on SCOTUS*” in #KC. However, the collocation analysis revealed that *assaulter* was also used to negotiate Trump’s identity as a sexual assaulter, as in “*our “president” is also an assaulter of women*” in #KC and “*he himself is a sexual assaulter & harasser*” in #NoKC. Moreover, this construction was intensified with the collocates *serial* and *chief* (e.g., “*Assaulter in chief*” in #KC; “*serial sexual predator/assaulter himself*” #NoKC), as well as with the noun *misogynist*, such as “*master misogynist, woman assaulter himself*” in #NoKC. Interestingly, the #KC corpus also established a contrast between the identities of Trump and AsJ Kavanaugh as perpetrators. Whereas Trump was constructed as a self-acknowledged and well-known sexual assaulter with the adjective *confessed* (e.g., “*confessed sexual assaulter*”), some users decided to mitigate the claims on AsJ Kavanaugh and, thus, used the adjective *alleged* in light of the principle of presumption of innocence (e.g., “*alleged sexual assaulter*”).

Furthermore, collocates regarding veracity and competence built a negative evaluative prosody surrounding AsJ Kavanaugh’s identity as he was described as biased and condemned for lying under oath and for his drinking habits (e.g., “*lying partisan sexual assaulter*” in #KC; “*sexual assaulter and drunk*” and “*liar, sexual assaulter and partisan*” in #NoKC). Therefore, this also contributed to the ongoing discussion of him not being suitable to become a Justice of the SCOTUS (see Chapter 6 for a detailed discussion on this topic). The #NoKC corpus also revealed that the collocate *friends* was found in tweets denouncing that AsJ Kavanaugh used a popular informal fallacy to deny the allegations, for example “*Did he really just pull the ‘I can’t be a sexual assaulter, I have female friends’ card?*”, which echoes the racist expression “I’m not racist, I have black friends” (see, for example, Jackman and Crane, 1986).

On the other hand, the keyword *accuser* featured the categories concerning gendered pronouns, social actors, legal field, (political) authorities, veracity, support, gender and violence, and some miscellaneous words (see Table 31 and Appendix IV). Moreover, the analysis revealed that the category of terms concerning the legal field was more populated in comparison to other keywords due to its legal nature and meaning.

	#NoKC	#KC
Gendered pronouns	She, his, her, he	Her, she, he
Social actors	Kavanaugh, Ford, Trump, roommate, schoolmate, Republican, GOP, Christine, Brett, Blasey	Kavanaugh, Ford, Christine, Blasey, lawyer, judge, Brett, Swetnick, FBI, Dr, accuser, Trump, Ramirez, Julie
Legal field	Testify, test, Senate, passed, investigation, hearing, vote, polygraph, nomination, detector, claim	Testify, hearings, lawyer, judge, testimony, vote, investigation, Senate, claims, accused, proof, evidence
(Political) authorities	FBI, Kavanaugh, Trump, Republican, GOP, Brett	–
Veracity	Lie	–
Support	Believe	–
Gender and violence	Assault, sexual	Sexual
Miscellaneous	Says, knew, suggest, news, retweet, new, name, heard, deny	Says, story, breaking, wants, please, face

Table 31: Collocations of *accuser*.

The analysis of collocations in context revealed that *accuser* was mainly used to refer to Dr. Ford, as in “she is the accuser” in #KC and “*Kavanaugh’s accuser Christine Blasey Ford*” in #NoKC. Also, it was employed to refer to Deborah Ramirez and Julie Swetnick as the second and third accusers in #KC (e.g., “*second accuser Deborah Ramirez*” and “*third accuser Julie Swetnick*”). However, sometimes Ford’s identity as

the accuser was rendered as related to AsJ Kavanaugh's through the omission of her name and surname when collocating with the pronoun *his* and the surname *Kavanaugh* in both corpora (e.g., "*Kavanaugh's accuser*" and "*his accuser*"), as already discussed in Chapter 6. This was also found with the collocate *lawyer*, as the performance of Debra Katz during the hearing was discussed by referring to her as "*Kavanaugh accuser's lawyer*" in the #KC corpus.

The analysis of collocates of *accuser* also revealed the polarized stances on Dr. Ford's testimony. When collocating with *GOP* and *Republican* in #NoKC and *Trump* in #KC, tweeters denounced the verbal aggression that Dr. Ford received from the GOP, as in "*Kavanaugh accuser against GOP attacks*" and "*Trump goes after Kavanaugh accuser*". However, the collocate *Trump* also revealed an opposing discourse that constructed Dr. Ford as hostile towards Trump's politics, for instance "*Accuser is an Anti-Trump*". This proves, once again, the multifunctionality of #KavanaughConfirmation.

Due to the legal and political nature of the event, most of the collocates involved the discussion of the hearings as well as the investigation and confirmation processes. Consequently, collocations regarding the legal field were found to be used to discuss those different processes, such as Dr. Ford's willingness to testify in the last hearing (e.g., "*accuser to testify publicly*" in #KC; "*Kavanaugh's accuser will testify*" in #NoKC) and her wish for the FBI to be involved in the investigation (e.g., "*accuser demands an investigation*" in #KC; "*his accuser wants a FBI investigation*" in #NoKC). Moreover, those tweets were also found to create a positive evaluative prosody surrounding Ford's identity as the validity of her testimony was supported by the polygraph test she underwent (e.g., "*accuser to provide evidence*" in #KC; "*Kavanaugh's accuser passed a lie detector test*" in #NoKC).

All in all, the analysis of these two polarized identities allowed the examination of tweeter's identity construction of AsJ Kavanaugh and Ford as the perpetrator and the victim respectively. It revealed that both corpora included a negative evaluative prosody when referring to AsJ Kavanaugh as an assaulter. In contrast, *accuser* was more frequently used to discuss the process and name the three victims.

7.2.4. Republican and Democratic Parties

The list of keywords included several references to the GOP in the #NoKC corpus (i.e., *POTUS*, *GOP*, and *Repubs*) and the Democratic Party in the #KC corpus (i.e.,

demoncrats, demonrats, and demorats)⁵². As discussed in Chapter 6, both parties were constructed as perpetrators, which, in turn, contributed to the negotiation of Dr. Ford and AsJ Kavanaugh as victims. Therefore, the following subsections are devoted to examining the collocates of these terms, except those of *GOP*, which were examined in Chapter 6 already⁵³.

7.2.4.1. *POTUS* and *Repubs* in the #NoKC corpus

The keyword *POTUS* revealed collocations relating to male gendered pronouns, social actors and (political) authorities, lexis concerning the confirmation process, the veracity term *fake*, and the miscellaneous noun *word* (see Table 32 and Appendix IV). As mentioned in Chapter 6, Kavanaugh’s nomination was considered a strategy to have a conservative majority in SCOTUS, and some users denounced Trump’s intentions in tweets such as “*Fake POTUS, Fake SCOTUS*” and “*No SCOTUS confirmations from a coconspirator POTUS*”, as well as the corruption in the nomination process and the investigations, for instance “*POTUS is the reason Kavanaugh will get confirmed*”. Lastly, *GOP* as a collocate of *POTUS* formed an out-group of people who used verbal violence over Kavanaugh’s victims (e.g., “*have been shamed by the GOP and the POTUS*”) and from which tweeters disaffiliated (e.g., “*POTUS & GOP they MUST BE STOPPED*”).

#NoKC	
Gendered pronouns	He, his
Social actors	SCOTUS, Kavanaugh, GOP
Legal field	Vote, confirmations
(Political) authorities	SCOTUS, Kavanaugh, GOP
Veracity	Fake
Miscellaneous	Word

Table 32: Collocations of *POTUS*.

The keyword *Repubs*, which is an informal shortening for the noun *Republicans*, revealed a strong negative evaluation of the *GOP* and Republican Senators. Reading of concordances revealed a strong positioning against the *GOP* by criticizing their support

⁵² The #KC corpus also featured the noun *libtards*, but it was used to refer to the supporters of the Democratic Party and not to the party itself.

⁵³ The term *repubs* as well as the evaluative terms employed by tweeterers to refer to the Democratic Party did not retrieve any lexical term during the collocation analysis. Therefore, these keywords were scrutinized and examined in context using the Concordance tool.

for Kavanaugh while ignoring Dr. Ford's testimony, as in "*so no one has spoken to Kavanaugh, yet you have repubs stumping for⁵⁴ him?*" and "*Senate Repubs aren't even pretending they want to hear Dr. Ford's testimony⁵⁵*". Additionally, tweeters also shared emotional terminology – or AFFECT, according to Martin & White's (2005) terminology – to express disgust towards the demeanor and actions of the Republican Senators during the Hearing, such as "*What a horrible display-11 angry repubs*" and "*You & the rest of the repubs on the judiciary committee should be ashamed of your action/words⁵⁶*".

7.2.4.2. *Demoncrats, demonrats, and demorats in the #KC corpus*

As explained at the beginning of this chapter, the keyword list featured three blended nouns to refer to the members of the Democratic Party, namely *demoncrats*, *demonrats*, and *demorats*. Concordance lines revealed that GOP and Kavanaugh's supporters used these derogatory terms to express disaffiliation from the Democratic Party by accusing them of fabricating the events and the sexual assault accusations in an attempt to stop the former Judge Kavanaugh's confirmation process (e.g., "*The Kavanaugh accuser right now is meeting with her attorney and Demoncrats to concoct a story that will further delay the confirmation proceedings*"). Also, tweeters accused the Party of defaming AsJ Kavanaugh's public image and of manipulating public opinion by using metaphors concerning murder, as already examined in Chapter 6 (e.g., "*I know it doesn't matter to Blasey Ford and the Demoncrats, but this kind of character assassination is evil*"). Additionally, concordance lines also showed strong hatred towards the Democratic Party, for example "*I hate the DemoRats even more today than yesterday*".

However, some users also constructed Dr. Ford's identity as a victim of the Democrats' accusations against AsJ Kavanaugh (e.g., "*Ms Ford is being used by Demoncrats*"). This suggests that some Kavanaugh supporters did not put the blame on Dr. Ford for coming forward and, instead, blamed the Democratic Party for using her experience as a political tool.

⁵⁴ <https://idioms.thefreedictionary.com/stump+for>.

⁵⁵ The original tweet is misspelled: *Senate Republicans aren't even pretending they want to hear Dr. Ford's testimony.

⁵⁶ This tweet was directed towards Senator Orrin Hatch.

7.2.5. Gender and violence

7.2.5.1. *Boofing, boofed, and boof*

Analysis of collocations revealed *boofing* collocated with *Kavanaugh* and *Brett* as well as with a few other terms in relation to alcohol, gender and sex, veracity (in #NKC), the Supreme Court (in #KC), and some miscellaneous words, including *flatulence* (see Table 33 and Appendix IV). Analysis of those collocations in context revealed that they were used in both corpora to disaffiliate from Kavanaugh and to construct his identity as that of a perpetrator and a liar, for instance “*He lied about ‘boofing’, ‘devil’s triangle’, and ‘ralphing’⁵⁷*” in #NoKC and “*KAVANAUGH LIED UNDER OATH – “BOOFING” IT [sic] NOT THE SAME THING AS FARTING*” in #KC. Some tweets also included the description of *boof* to justify that he was lying, for example “*Boofing isn’t flatulence, it’s anal sex.*” in #NoKC and “*Boofing: ingesting drugs and alcohol anally*” in #KC. In addition, tweeters also made fun of Kavanaugh and his drinking habits in tweets by referring to “boofing” the alcohol, such as “*Did Judge Kavanaugh celebrate his nomination by drinking or boofing a beer?*” in #KC.

	#NoKC	#KC
Social actors	Kavanaugh	Kavanaugh, Brett
Legal field	–	Supreme
(Political) authorities	Kavanaugh	Kavanaugh, Brett, Supreme
Veracity	Perjury, lied	–
Alcohol	Drinking	Beer, alcohol
Gender and violence	Triangle, devil, devils	Triangle, devil
Miscellaneous	Flatulence	Flautulence, explain, please

Table 33: Collocations of *boofing*.

Similarly, the keyword *boof* and *boofed* from the #KC corpus further showed disaffiliation from AsJ Kavanaugh, although they collocated with a fewer number of lexical terms (see Table 34). However, these keywords did not suggest that AsJ

⁵⁷ In this conext, *ralphing* means vomiting after drinking too much alcohol. See: <https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=meet%20Ralph>.

Kavanaugh committed that kind of sexual intercourse but focused on the fact that he did not mention what Twitter users considered to be the real meaning, for example “*If you lie about the meanings of slang words (boof, Devil’s Triangle) under oath, is that perjury?*” with the keyword *boof*.

	Boof	Boofed
Gendered pronouns	He	He
Social actors	–	Kavanaugh
(Political) authorities	–	Kavanaugh
Gender and violence	Triangle, devil, boof, sex	Triangle, devil

Table 34: Collocations of *boof* and *boofed* in the #KC corpus.

7.2.5.2. Rapist and rapey

The keywords *rapist* featured similar collocations in both corpora, such as gendered pronouns, social actors, terms concerning the legal field, (political) authorities, alcohol, veracity, support, and gender and violence, as can be seen in Table 35 (see Appendix IV). Additionally, the #KC corpus included the terms *white* and *racist*.

	#NoKC	#KC
Gendered pronouns	He, his, him, he’s	He, his, him, he’s, her
Social actors	Kavanaugh, women, woman, people, nominee, child	Kavanaugh, man, women, Brett, GOP, boy, Bill
Social identity	–	White
Legal field	Court, supreme, SCOTUS, vote, accused, nominee, Justice, confirm, rights, highest	Court, Supreme, alleged, accused, vote, judge, highest, confirmed, SCOTUS, Justice
(Political) authorities	Court, supreme, SCOTUS, highest, Justice	Court, Supreme, Kavanaugh, judge, SCOTUS, Justice, GOP, Bill

Alcohol	Drunk	Drunk
Ideology	–	Racist
Veracity	Liar, lying, perjurer,	Liar
Support	Support, defending, want	Want
Gender and violence	Attempted, rapist, alleged, sexual, serial, predator, potential, possible, rape	Serial, gang, attempted, rapist, potential, sexual

Table 35: Collocations of *rapist*.

The keyword *rapist* was revealed to describe AsJ Kavanaugh as a perpetrator on most occasions. His surname frequently occurred as a collocation (e.g., “*Kavanaugh is a serial rapist*” in #NoKC; “*Brett Kavanaugh is a rapist*” in #KC) and, therefore, explicitly constructed him as a perpetrator. In addition, some users also highlighted AsJ Kavanaugh’s race (e.g., “*white male rapist*” in #KC) to denounce his social privilege (see Chapter 6). It was also frequent to find the keyword as a collocate of *Supreme*, *Court*, *highest* and *SCOTUS* to express their disaffiliation with the nomination and to explicitly build his identity as that of a perpetrator and not of a legal authority (e.g., “*The American People don’t want a Rapist as SCOTUS Justice*” in #NoKC; “*don’t let a rapist sit on the Supreme Court*” in #KC). Moreover, this opposition to his nomination also created outgroups of women (e.g., “*how any woman supports a rapist, is beyond me*”) and tweeters (e.g., “*HOW THE HELL CAN ANYONE SUPPORT A RAPIST*”) in the #NoKC corpus. Lastly, his identity as a perpetrator of sexual violence was sometimes complemented by his construction as a perjurer (e.g., “*perjurer and attempted rapist*” in #NoKC; “*a liar and a rapist*” in #KC) and his drinking habits (e.g., “*lying drunk & alleged rapist*” in #NoKC; “*serial rapist, serial liar, alcoholic*” in #KC), which intensifies the negative discursive prosody which surrounds his identity.

Analysis of collocates of *rapist* also revealed that tweeters denounced the perpetuation of rape culture in American institutions (see Chapter 6), especially with the collocates *GOP*, *confirm* and *want*, such as “*now they want a rapist as their supreme court justice*” in the #KC corpus and “*their rush to confirm an alleged rapist*” in #NoKC. Additionally, the keyword was also used to describe Trump as a (serial) sexual violence perpetrator (e.g., “*Trump, a serial sexual predator and rapist*” or “*a rapist defending a*

rapist” in #NoKC; “*we have a literal serial rapist as our president*” in #KC) as well as the male members of the GOP, who were also condemned for their (extreme) conservative views (e.g., “*racist, homophobic, rapist pigs*” in #KC).

Lastly, *rapey* revealed fewer collocations than *rapist*. Among these collocations, there were terms concerning gendered pronouns, male social actors, legal authorities, alcohol, gender and violence, and the miscellaneous words *time* and *know* (see Table 36 and Appendix IV). Similar to the collocates of *rapist*, the analysis of those of *rapey* in context revealed a negative characterization of AsJ Kavanaugh. The keyword was usually preceded or followed by other adjectives with a negative evaluative meaning (e.g., “*rapey, corrupt, hates women*” or “*Shitbag Rapey Kavanaugh*” in #NoKC; “*Rapey Judge is a disgrace*” or “*Rapey Brett Kavanaugh*” in #KC) to intensify his negative identity construction. Moreover, the collocate *white* was, once again, employed to denounce AsJ Kavanaugh’s social privilege (e.g., “*white male rapey frat boy privilege*” in #KC). On the other hand, *rapey* also was employed to build male Senators’ as well as current Justices in the SCOTUS as privileged predators (e.g., “*They rapey men just want you to think us hysterical*” in #NoKC; “*we need a Supreme Court Justice who is not rapey*” in #KC), which was already examined and discussed in Chapter 6.

	#NoKC	#KC
Gendered pronouns	He	He
Social actors	Men, Kavanaugh	Kavanaugh, SCOTUS, Judge
Social identity	White	White
Legal field	Court, SCOTUS	
(Political) authorities	Kavanaugh, Court, SCOTUS	Court, SCOTUS
Alcohol	Drunk	–
Gender and violence	–	Sex
Miscellaneous	Time	Know

Table 36: Collocations of *rapey*.

7.2.5.3. Other keywords

Keyword analysis revealed a set of words regarding gender and violence worth exploring to examine victim-perpetrator identities and discourses of sexual violence. The keyword *MeToo* in the *#KC* corpus refers to the (digital) feminist movement which emerged in 2017 (see Chapter 2). On the other hand, the *#NoKC* corpus included keywords relating to gender ideology (*misogynist* and *misogynistic*) and sexual violence as well as social actors (*rapists*, *assaulted*, *abuser*, and *raped*). An individual analysis of collocates of the aforementioned keywords is provided in the following subsections.

7.2.5.3.1. *MeToo*

Analysis of collocations of *MeToo* only included three lexical words, as can be seen in Table 37 (see Appendix IV).⁵⁸ The examination of those collocations in context revealed the multifunctionality of *#KavanaughConfirmation* since some tweeters wrote to demonize and disaffiliate from the feminist movement. There were thus tweets that named the *MeToo* Movement as a political tool against the GOP (e.g., “*stop Democrats they are using the MeToo movement*”) as well as to claim it was being used against men and, therefore, spread anti-feminist discourses and denied the testimony of Dr. Ford (e.g., “*the Metoo movement and false allegations*”). Therefore, the keyword *MeToo* was also used to disaffiliate from the Democratic Party and Dr. Ford.

MeToo
Movement
Stop
Political

Table 37: Collocations of *MeToo*.

7.2.5.3.2. *Rapists and abuser*

Examination of collocations of *rapists* and *abuser* contributed to the analysis of the identity construction of perpetrators. As shown in Table 38, both keywords shared word categories in reference to gendered pronouns, social actors, the legal field, (political) authorities, and gender and violence (see Appendix IV). Nevertheless, *rapist* collocated

⁵⁸ This might be due to the fact that hashtags were filtered out for the frequency and keyword analyses, so instances of *MeToo* as a hashtag were not examined.

with terms related to support, and *abuser* included collocations concerning evaluation, demeanor, and veracity.

	Rapists	Abuser
Gendered pronouns	He	He, his, her
Social actors	Rapists, predators, boys, women, men, mexicans	Predator, Kavanaugh, abuser, women,
Social identity	Mexicans	–
Legal field	Supreme, court, accused, attempted, accountable	Court, Supreme, Justice, SCOTUS, right
(Political) authorities	Supreme, court	Court, Supreme, Justice, SCOTUS, Kavanaugh
Evaluation	–	Partisan, unfit
Demeanor	–	Angry
Veracity	–	Lying
Support	Support, stick, believe	
Gender and violence	Sexual, rapists	Serial, predator, abuser

Table 38: Collocations of *rapists* and *abuser*.

Tweeters in the *#NoKC* corpus strongly denounced and condemned the presence of rape culture in American institutions and the lack of action towards sexual perpetrators, for example “*No more protection for rapists and predators*” and “*Rapists need to be held accountable*”. Collocations also revealed both implicit descriptions of Trump as a perpetrator (e.g., “*Sexual predators AKA rapists stick together*”) and more explicit references by referring to his past statement about Mexican immigrants⁵⁹ (e.g., “*irony is that Trump called Mexicans rapists*”). Interestingly, some users used *#NoKavanaughConfirmation* to discuss the meaning of the saying “boys will be boys” (i.e., traditionally accepted aggressive and noisy male behavior) which should not be used to shield and justify sexual violence exerted by young men (e.g., “*Boys can be boys..just not attempted rapists..*”). Lastly, the collocate *women* was found to create an out-group

⁵⁹ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2017/06/16/theyre-rapists-presidents-trump-campaign-launch-speech-two-years-later-annotated/>

of female supporters of Kavanaugh (e.g., “*real women don’t empower attempted rapists*”).

On the other hand, collocates of *abuser* revealed an explicit characterization of AsJ Kavanaugh as a perpetrator by constructing him as a (serial) sexual abuser (e.g., “*Kavanaugh who is an abuser of women*” and “*Serial abuser to the highest court*”). This negative depiction of the Justice as a perpetrator was sometimes aggravated by his behavior and bias when collocating with *liar*, *angry*, and *partisan*, as in “*Kavanaugh is a liar, a drunk, a sexual abuser and clearly partisan*” and “*Angry, entitled, partisan, lying abuser completely unfit*”.

7.2.5.3.3. *Misogynist and misogynistic*

Keywords *misogynist* and *misogynistic* also showed some similar collocations and shared the categories relating to social actors, social identity, ideology, (political) authorities, evaluation, and gender and violence (see Table 39 and Appendix IV). However, *misogynistic* also included the gendered pronouns *he* and the noun *time*. Au contraire, *misogynist* collocated with the adjective *liar* and a wider variety of evaluative terms.

	Misogynist	Misogynistic
Gendered pronouns	–	He
Social actors	Women, misogynist, president, men, Kavanaugh, assaulter	Men, Kavanaugh, predator, women, GOP
Social identity	Old	White, old
Ideology	Racist, misogynist	Sexist
(Political) authorities	President, Kavanaugh, branch	Kavanaugh, GOP
Evaluation	Pig, love, disgusting	Partisan
Veracity	Liar	–
Gender and violence	Sexual, misogynist, assaulter	Sexist
Time	–	Time

Table 39: Collocations of *misogynist* and *misogynistic*.

Both keywords were similarly used to describe AsJ Kavanaugh and the male members of the GOP, especially Donald Trump, as men with hatred against women and, therefore, detrimental to the outcome of the sexual assault allegations. The keywords *misogynist* and *misogynistic* were more frequently used to depict AsJ Kavanaugh's character as prejudiced against women, which is linked to the previously discussed AsJ Kavanaugh's statements on women's reproductive rights (see Chapter 6). Therefore, it was discussed that he was sexist as well as a sexual assaulter (e.g., "*misogynist, molester of women*" and "*Misogynistic, predator or women*"). However, both keywords were also found with terms relating to veracity and evaluation (e.g., "*Brett Kavanaugh is a misogynist, liar*" and "*He is sexist, misogynistic and hyper-partisan*") to further construct his identity negatively. Similarly, AsJ Kavanaugh's identity was built alongside Trump's, as in "*takes one misogynist to love another misogynist*", whose identity was also negotiated as a perpetrator and a chauvinist (e.g., "*misogynist pig*" and "*His hateful, misogynist, racist leadership leads me to tears*").

Members of the GOP were also constructed as misogynist, especially when collocating with social identities (e.g., "*eleven misogynistic white GOP Senators*") and racist and sexist ideologies (e.g., "*Disgusting, racist, misogynist, old white male Republicans*"). In addition, some tweeters also denounced the misogynistic views of the members who compose the Senate and the U.S. Government, for example "*The Legislative Branch is misogynist*" and "*The Executive Branch is misogynist*". These results are aligned with those obtained in Chapter 6 (see subsection 6.5.1).

7.2.5.3.4. *Assaulted and raped*

As illustrated in Table 40, the keywords *assaulted* and *raped* included fewer lexical categories than those previously examined in the sections above (see Appendix IV). In addition, they also collocated with terms related to time. Although the verbs *assaulted* and *raped* were employed to construct AsJ Kavanaugh and Dr. Ford as the perpetrator and the victim respectively (see Chapter 6), the main focus of the two keywords was to share first-person and third-person stories of sexual violence.

	Assaulted	Raped
Gendered pronouns	He, her, his	She, her, his
Social actors	Women, woman, someone, Kavanaugh, men, Ford, person, anyone, man, friend	Man, women, someone, men, friend, boyfriend, girls, boys, Kavanaugh, people, boy, woman
Veracity	Lied	–
Gender and violence	Sexually, raped, abused	Assaulted, sexually, molested, brutally, date, virgin, gang, rape,
Time	Age, years, time, times	Years, age, year, time,
Miscellaneous	School, remember, watching, high, told	Drugged, school, party

Table 40: Collocations of *assaulted* and *raped*.

Most of the concordances started with the phrase “*I was sexually assaulted*” or “*I was raped*” to share personal experiences of abuse, in which victim-survivors presented themselves as narrators of their own experiences. Some users would also include the collocate and adverb *brutally* in their narrative to stress cruelty and physical pain (e.g., “*I was brutally raped*”). In other cases, tweeters would use the #NoKC hashtag to share stories of sexual violence from people close to them, such as “*I know someone who has been sexually assaulted*”. Collocations concerned with close relatives (i.e., *friend* and *boyfriend*) were found to be the agent of the sentence, thus accentuating that sexual violence was exerted in contexts of familiarity or intimate relationships, for example “*I was sexually assaulted/raped by two friends*” and “*I was raped by my boyfriend*”. These findings corroborate those of Palomino-Manjón (2022a), who argues most personal narratives of sexual violence published in social media do not omit the presence of the perpetrator, as opposed to narratives of abuse in traditional media.

Moreover, generic (male) identities (i.e., *person*, *men*, *man*, and *boys*) also emphasized that men were the perpetrators of sexual violence, as in “*I still remember the boy who assaulted me*” and “*I’ve been raped and molested by men*”. Sometimes, these experiences would also be used to construct AsJ Kavanaugh as a perpetrator of sexual violence, for example “*I was sexually assaulted by men like him*”. In contrast, women

were described as the victims of such abuse, more frequently by sharing statistics on sexual violence, such as in “*I in every 6 women has been sexually assaulted, raped or suffered uncompleted rape*”.

In addition, collocates regarding time as well as the miscellaneous collocates *school* and *high* illustrate that most of these victim-survivors suffered sexual violence at a young age, for instance “*I was sexually assaulted/raped from ages 6-12*” and “*I was assaulted twice in high school*”. The collocate *drugged* revealed that some Tweeters denounced their incapacity to consent to sexual acts (e.g., “*Grown men planned, drugged, and gang raped me at 17*”) as well as to raise awareness of sexual violence in American party culture (e.g., “*parties where girls were drugged and raped*”). These results illustrate that *#NoKavanaughConfirmation* was used to oppose AsJ Kavanaugh’s confirmation as well as to denounce American rape culture and affiliate with Dr. Ford by sharing experiences of sexual violence.

7.3. Discussion

In order to examine the discursive construction of sexual violence and the negotiation of victim-perpetrator identities on Twitter, this chapter focused on relevant terms from each corpus. The aim was to address Objective 1 and, consequently, RQ1. The analysis of keywords pointed to a salience of legal lexis and terms concerning the confirmation process and (political) authorities, as well as evaluative words related to veracity and behavior (RQ1.1). The analysis revealed that, in general terms, the *#NoKC* corpus made use of such terms to oppose AsJ Kavanaugh’s nomination, whereas the *#KC* corpus focused on providing negative evaluations of the prosecution (i.e., Dr. Ford, Swetnick, and the Democratic Party). However, both corpora also included negative semantic prosodies related to AsJ Kavanaugh and Donald Trump. In addition, the list of keywords also showed a high presence of lexis relating to gender and violence, which helped provide a better picture of discourses in relation to sexual aggression.

The identity construction of victims and perpetrators (RQ.1.2) was similar to the results presented in Chapter 6. AsJ Kavanaugh was depicted as the main perpetrator of sexual aggression as he was described as a sexual assaulter and a (potential) rapist. By constructing him as a perpetrator, tweeters expressed their disaffiliation from the nominee and denounced the lack of investigation and corruption of the process. Nevertheless, and

similarly to the previous chapter, both corpora also had a strong focus on his drinking habits. It is relevant to mention, however, that the analysis of the lemma *boof* also showed that perjury was debated in relation to his statements about being involved in sexual intercourse under the effects of drugs and alcohol and, therefore, expressed disaffiliation from the former nominee. Notwithstanding that, the *#KC* corpus showed more frequent instances of support for AsJ Kavanaugh than the *#NoKC* dataset, especially concerning a potential derogation of *Roe v. Wade*⁶⁰. Thus, the *#KC* corpus constructed him as a victim.

Perpetrator identities were also discussed in relation to political social actors and authorities. Tweeters expressed their repulsion and voiced their concerns about the presence of sexual predators and misogynists in higher institutions (i.e., the White House and SCOTUS), and denounced that rape culture, together with the social privilege of men in power, helps them avoid being punished to the detriment of their victims. The representation of Anita Hill as a victim in some collocates also served to echo previous instances of allegations of sexual violence against other SCOTUS Justices. Contrarily, AsJ Kavanaugh's supporters accused the Democratic Party of using Dr. Ford's allegations and the MeToo Movement as political tools for their own benefit. This depiction of the Democratic Party as a perpetrator is closely linked to discourses of male victimization spread by the GOP, as well as to anti-feminist discourses, which constructed AsJ Kavanaugh and men as victims of feminist movements and ideologies (Boyle, 2019) (RQ1.1). In addition, some tweeters also raised their concerns about Dr. Ford and argued that she was also a victim of the Democratic Party's political campaign, which also built her identity as a political victim. Again, these results show that the identities of victims and perpetrators were fluid and unstable as they were attributed to different people depending on the ideologies of different socio-political groups (Bou-Franch 2022; Bucholtz & Hall, 2005; see Chapters 2 and 6).

On the other hand, both corpora, especially the *#NoKC* corpus, featured tweets that explicitly supported Dr. Ford's allegations and testimony. Also, the keyword and the collocation analyses revealed the presence of Deborah Ramirez and Julie Swetnick, who were also constructed as victims. These women were not present in the frequency analysis. In addition, Dr. Ford was not only described as a victim of sexual assault but

⁶⁰ In fact, the *Roe v. Wade* ruling was revoked on June 24th, 2022. See <https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2022/06/24/supreme-court-abortion-ruling>.

also as a victim of symbolic violence since tweeters denounced her re-victimization and the lack of concern of her testimony by Republican Senators.

An important finding was the presence of a safe space for Dr. Ford and victim-survivors of sexual violence in the *#NoKC* corpus. Dr. Ford's testimony was given credibility by users who expressed their support for Dr. Ford and solidarity with her experience. Moreover, the corpus also included personal narratives of sexual violence. Victim-survivors used the hashtag *#NoKavanaughConfirmation* to share their experiences of sexual violence with other users as a way to justify the many reasons why women do not report sexual violence. In these narratives, men were constructed as perpetrators, and sometimes were compared to AsJ Kavanaugh to denounce social male privilege. Interestingly, most of the narratives included child sexual abuse and rape in High School and University. These results underline the multifunctionality of the use of the hashtag *#NoKavanaughConfirmation*; it was not only used to oppose AsJ Kavanaugh's nomination but also to report on a discursive protest in order to resist patriarchal discourses which attempted to invalidate Dr. Ford's testimony (Jones et al., 2022; Loney-Howes, 2019; Palomino-Manjón, 2022a). Therefore, it can be argued that *#NoKavanaughConfirmation* also served as a form of online networked feminism with other hashtags such as *#WeBelieveChristine* (Deal et al., 2020) and *#WhyIDidntReport* (Palomino-Manjón, 2022a) (RQ1.1).

Chapters 6 and 7 have provided a fine-grained picture of the discourses of (linguistic) sexual aggression in the platform Twitter, as well as their relation to the discursive construction of victim-perpetrator identities. The following chapter addresses the uses of evaluative language in a subcorpus of tweets in order to specifically address Objective 2. The examination of evaluation in the subcorpa will also contribute to address Objective 1.

CHAPTER 8

**Evaluative language and discourses
during the confirmation process**

CHAPTER 8: EVALUATIVE LANGUAGE AND DISCOURSES DURING THE CONFIRMATION PROCESS

The last part of the analysis consisted in the examination of the use of evaluative language by tweeters to convey gender ideologies and to (re)produce and challenge such ideologies, especially those concerning sexual violence. More specifically, the analysis focused on the use of APPRAISAL resources. Ten subcorpora including the terms *Kavanaugh*, *Ford*, *men*, *women*, and *sexual* were scrutinized drawing on Appraisal Theory (Martin & White, 2005) (see Chapter 5). This chapter is structured as follows: Section 8.1. provides a quantitative overview of the APPRAISAL resources identified in each subcorpora; next, Section 8.2. offers a qualitative overview of said resources and discusses the different discourses which contributed to the discursive construction of sexual violence as well as victim-survivors and perpetrators.

8.1. Quantitative overview of APPRAISAL resources

Bearing in mind the objectives and research questions of this dissertation, five terms concerning victims and perpetrators and sexual violence were selected based on the frequency analysis presented in Chapter 6. In order to examine the negotiation of victim-perpetrator identities, the surnames *Kavanaugh* and *Ford* as well as the general gendered identities which were explored during the frequency analysis were selected for scrutiny. While it is true that the *#KC* corpus featured the singular male form *man* and the *#NoKC* corpora included the plural form *men*, both corpora included the plural female noun *women*. Therefore, the plural forms *women* and *men* were selected for the analysis for the sake of consistency. Additionally, the adjective *sexual*, which appeared in the top 100 most frequent words in each corpus, was subjected to scrutiny.

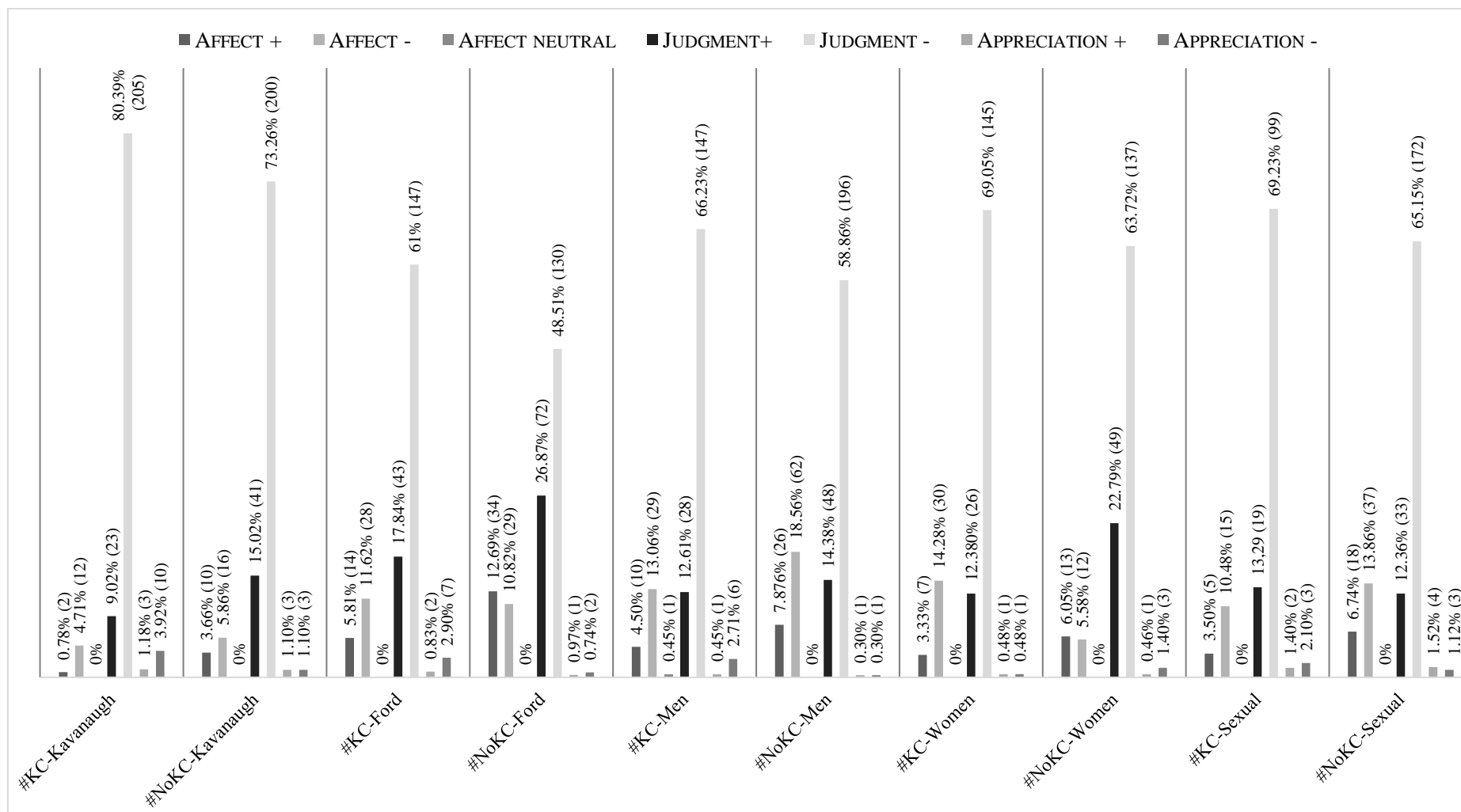


Figure 6: Total instances of APPRAISAL resources in each subcorpus.

As can be seen in Figure 6, negative values of JUDGMENT comprised more than half of the total occurrences of APPRAISAL in each subcorpus and made up three-quarters of the total resources in the *#KC-Kavanaugh* (80.39%, 205 instances) and *#NoKC-Kavanaugh* (73.26%, 200 instances) subcorpora. However, negative JUDGMENT made up less than half of the identified resources in the *#NoKC-Ford* subcorpus (48.51%, 130), although it was the most prevalent APPRAISAL resource in such subcorpus. This might be due to the fact that the *#NoKC-Ford* subcorpus featured higher frequencies of positive AFFECT and JUDGMENT than the rest of the subcorpora, with 34 (12.49%) and 72 (26.87%) instances, respectively. These results point to a high presence of negative discourse prosodies to discuss the actions of the social actors involved in the confirmation process.

AFFECT was mainly conveyed through negative values in all subcorpora, with the exception of the *#NoKC-Ford* subcorpus which, as already mentioned above, featured more instances of positive AFFECT resources. Negative AFFECT was discussed through the categories of *Unhappiness-misery*, *Unhappiness-antipathy*, *Insecurity-disquiet*, *Insecurity-distrust*, and *Dissatisfaction-displeasure*, with a few instances of *Disinclination* and negative *Surprise* (see Appendix V). These values were found to display authorial affect (i.e., the writer's emotions) regarding the events (see example 1), although it was also used to describe the emotions of political authorities and other tweeters (see example 2).^{61,62}

- (1) "I have great disdain [- AFFECT; unhappiness-antipathy] for these men and for the GOP" (*#NoKC-Men*)
- (2) "Why does the GOP hate [- AFFECT; unhappiness-antipathy] men?" (*#NoKC-Men*)

In contrast, positive values of AFFECT were conveyed almost entirely through the category *Security-Trust*. This is due to the fact that this category was employed to express tweeter's support for Dr. Ford's testimony, which, at the same time, also conveyed implicit positive values of JUDGMENT, as in example 3 below:

⁶¹ The examples included in this subsection only contain excerpts of the original tweets so as to exemplify the APPRAISAL resource being discussed.

⁶² Explicit APPRAISAL resources are underlined, whereas implicit resources are highlighted in italics.

(3) “I believe [+ AFFECT; security-trust] Dr. Ford” (#NoKC-Ford).

Additionally, the #KC-Kavanaugh, #KC-Ford, #NoKC-Ford, #KC-Men, and #NoKC-Men subcorpora also included some instances concerning *Happiness-cheer* and *Happiness-affection*, and #KC-Ford, #NoKC-Ford, #KC-Men and #NoKC-Men those relating to *Security-quiet*, as can be observed in Appendix V.

Positive and negative JUDGMENT was the most frequent resource identified in all subcorpora, excluding those which included higher frequencies of negative AFFECT resources, namely #KC-Men, #NoKC-Men, #KC-Women, and #NoKC-Sexual. The subcorpora included a wide range of instances of categories concerning Social Esteem and Social Sanction, except *Normality*, which only appeared in the #KC-Kavanaugh and #NoKC-Kavanaugh corpora to express negative JUDGMENT, and in the #KC-Ford corpora and #NoKC-Ford to convey both positive and negative values (see Appendix V). Nevertheless, due to the political and social nature of the confirmation process, values regarding *Veracity* and *Propriety* were the most common resources in all subcorpora. Values related to *Veracity* were used to discuss the veracity of Dr. Ford’s and Kavanaugh’s claims on most occasions, such as in example 4. On the other hand, *Propriety* was employed to evaluate ethics and to praise or condemn social actors and institutions, as in example 5.

(4) “Christine Ford is a LIAR [- JUDGMENT; veracity]” (#KC-Ford)

(5) “Sexual assaulter [- JUDGMENT; propriety] In chief” (#NoKC-Kavanaugh).

As explained in Chapter 5, ATTITUDE can be conveyed explicitly or implicitly depending on the formulation employed by the writer as well as on the construction of potential hybrid realizations. JUDGMENT was the only APPRAISAL value that was expressed implicitly, except APPRECIATION in the #NoKC-Kavanaugh subcorpus, which only yielded one instance of a hybrid realization between AFFECT and APPRECIATION (see Appendix V). Implicit JUDGMENT resources were more frequently found to express judgments of *Veracity* and *Propriety* through hybrid realizations as well as factual statements. However, explicit values of JUDGMENT were more frequent in all subcorpora than implicit realizations, as can be seen in Table 41 (see also Appendix V for a more detailed breakdown of explicit and implicit resources).

- (6) *Is it too late to hold senate hearings on Ted Kennedy's sexual misconduct [-JUDGMENT; propriety], given we're willing to investigate 35 yr old allegations? [- token of JUDGMENT; propriety] (#KC-Sexual).*

Nevertheless, the #KC-Sexual subcorpus featured more instances of implicit JUDGMENT realizations due to a greater presence of informational content or evaluative formulations. In example 6, which is a tweet originally directed towards Democrats, the Tweeter questions the process and the investigation of Dr. Ford's accusations by mentioning former Senator Kennedy's allegations of pedophilia.

Subcorpus	Explicit JUDGMENT	Implicit JUDGMENT	Total JUDGMENT
#KC-Kavanaugh	161 (70.61%)	67 (29.39%)	228 (100%)
#NoKC-Kavanaugh	141 (58.51%)	100 (41.49%)	241 (100%)
#KC-Ford	161 (84.74%)	29 (15.26%)	190 (100%)
#NoKC-Ford	108 (53.47%)	94 (46.53%)	202 (100%)
#KC-Men	95 (54.29%)	80 (45.71%)	175 (100%)
#NoKC-Men	136 (55.74%)	108 (44.26%)	244 (100%)
#KC-Women	99 (57.89%)	72 (42.11%)	171 (100%)
#NoKC-Women	119 (63.98%)	67 (36.02%)	186 (100%)
#KC-Sexual	44 (37.29%)	74 (62.71%)	118 (100%)
#NoKC-Sexual	133 (64.88%)	72 (35.12%)	205 (100%)

Table 41: Breakdown of explicit and implicit JUDGEMENT occurrences in the subcorpora.

Lastly, APPRECIATION resources were the least frequent resources in all subcorpora, which was an expected result given the nature of the event. Overall, the most frequent value of APPRECIATION was *Valuation*, which was employed to evaluate the claims made by AsJ Kavanaugh, Dr. Ford, and politicians, and, far less frequently, *Balance* and *Complexity*, which evaluated the investigations carried out by the FBI. In fact, APPRECIATION values formed hybrid realizations with JUDGMENT, as they were used to evaluate the performance of people, as in example 7 below:

- (7) “The woman making the obvious *false* [- APPRECIATION; valuation] *accusation*” [- token of JUDGMENT; veracity] (#KC-Kavanaugh)

On the other hand, GRADUATION was frequently found to be employed to intensify ATTITUDE resources rather than to downscale them. As can be seen in Appendix V, *Force* was the most frequent resource in all subcorpora, which was mainly used to strengthen evaluations. This amplification of APPRAISAL resources was performed frequently through *Intensification*, which took up more than half of the GRADUATION resources in all subcorpora. This resource was mostly realized through repetitions of attitudinal lexis, superlatives, and the use of capital letters. In example 8 below, the user employed the superlative *saddest* to intensify the AFFECT resource:

- (8) “...the *saddest* [+ GRADUATION; force-intensification] [- AFFECT; unhappiness-misery] case” (#KC-Kavanaugh)

However, GRADUATION, especially *Focus*, was also used to weaken the impact of evaluative resources, especially when AsJ Kavanaugh’s supporters discussed the sexual assault allegations. The use of focus to soften APPRAISAL resources helps lessen “the speaker/writer’s investment in the value position” (Martin and White, 2005, p. 139). For instance, the use of *alleged* as a softener allowed some users to express disaffiliation from the accusations, as shown below:

- (9) “...just remember on the day before a confirmation vote on your *alleged* [- GRADUATION; focus-softening] attacker, I do NOT [GRADUATION; force-intensification] believe you” (#KC-Sexual)

The user in example 9 employs the adjective *alleged* to refer to AsJ Kavanaugh as Dr. Ford’s attacker. Although it can be argued that the term *alleged* is legalese and is not always used to convey evaluations, some tweeters did use it to attenuate the negative connotations of terms such as *assaulter*, *rapist*, and *attacker* when supporting AsJ Kavanaugh’s innocence. The fact that this tweeter was expressing their disaffiliation from Dr. Ford is supported by the use of *Focus* to emphasize *Distrust* and negative *Veracity*.

8.2. Qualitative analysis of APPRAISAL resources

The subsections that follow explore and discuss the different discourses identified in both subcorpora through the use of APPRAISAL values. These subsections are divided into the following discourses: discourses of truth and falsehood, discourses of violence, discourses of feminism and male victimhood, and discourses of abortion. Nevertheless, these discourses are not always clear-cut and sometimes overlap within the same tweet. The examples in the following subsections reflect the most salient discourses, but, sometimes, will also inevitably convey more than one discourse.

8.2.1. Discourses of truth and falsehood

As already discussed in Chapters 6 and 7, whether Dr. Ford and AsJ Kavanaugh were lying was highly debated by tweeters. Consequently, both corpora presented a high frequency of *Veracity* resources to discuss the authenticity of Dr. Ford's allegations and the credibility of her and Kavanaugh's testimonies during the Hearing. In fact, *Veracity* was the second most frequent JUDGEMENT resource in all subcorpora, with negative *Veracity* being more frequent than its positive counterpart. However, positive *Veracity* was mainly conveyed implicitly, in contrast with the negative value. Examples 10 and 11 below illustrate the use of negative *Veracity* to express disaffiliation from both individuals:

- (10) **Tweet54/KC-Kavanaugh:** #Kavanaugh has lied [- JUDGMENT; veracity] under oath [+ GRADUATION; force-intensification] multiple times [+ GRADUATION; force-quantification] so my vote is with *the woman who passed a polygraph* [+ token of JUDGMENT; veracity] #KavanaughConfirmation
- (11) **Tweet91/KC-Ford:** *I don't believe* [- AFFECT; insecurity-distrust] a word [+ GRADUATION; force-intensification] *Dr. Christine Blasey Ford is saying* [- token of JUDGMENT; veracity] - *and that vocal fry is annoying* [- AFFECT; dissatisfaction-displeasure] as hell [+ GRADUATION; force-intensification] [- token of JUDGMENT; normality] #KavanaughConfirmation

In example 10, the user compares AsJ Kavanaugh's testimony to Dr. Ford's allegations. They use explicit JUDGMENT to construct AsJ Kavanaugh as a perjurer, which is followed by the GRADUATION resources of *Intensification* (*under oath*) and *Quantification*

(*multiple times*) to amplify the negative depiction of the Justice. The tweeter continues by providing a positive evaluation of Dr. Ford by evoking positive JUDGMENT. This implicit *Veracity* is realized through the use of facts, in this case, that Dr. Ford had passed a polygraph test to verify her testimony. This contrast allows the user to disaffiliate from AsJ Kavanaugh and support Dr. Ford. On the other hand, the user in example 11 expresses disaffiliation from her. They express *Distrust* to evoke negative *Veracity* and, therefore, portray her as a liar. Moreover, the tweeter also negatively evaluates Dr. Ford's voice as irritating through negative AFFECT for using a glottalized voice during the testimony. Consequently, the expression of *Displeasure* also evokes negative *Normality*⁶³.

Discourses of truth and falsehood were also present to evaluate the role of the GOP during the confirmation process. These discourses were also closely related to a discourse of corruption as they were intertwined in many tweets with discussions of the fabrication of evidence and claims, as exemplified below:

(12) **Tweet62/NoKC-Kavanaugh:** *Can we believe ANYTHING [+ GRADUATION; force-intensification] Republicans say anymore [- AFFECT; insecurity-distrust] ?!?!? [- token of JUDGMENT; veracity] [+ GRADUATION; force-intensification] All lies [- JUDGMENT; veracity]. All the time [+ GRADUATION; force-intensification]. #NoKavanaughConfirmation #NoKavanaugh #Kavanaugh #KavaNOPE #KavaNO #GOPlies [- JUDGMENT; veracity]*

(13) **Tweet93/NoKC-Kavanaugh:** *I'm impressed [- AFFECTION; dissatisfaction-displeasure] that Team #Kavanaugh was so quickly able to find 65 transgender women to vouch for his respectful [- JUDGMENT; propriety] behavior to them when they attended Brett's all-boy high school. [- token of JUDGMENT; veracity] #KavaNO #KavanaughConfirmation*

⁶³ Glottalized voice or vocal fry has been seen as detrimental to women in work contexts as it has been considered to be unprofessional and distracting (see Anderson et al., 2014). However, it has been recently perceived as an empowering tool for women, and its negative reception by (mostly) men has been considered to respond to sexist attitudes since vocal fry has traditionally been linked to men in power (see Chao & Bursten, 2021). Although taking into consideration previous research the use of the glottalized voice is linked to professional performance (i.e., *Capacity*), the tweeter seems to criticize Dr. Ford's use of the vocal fry in relation to their personal preference and how unusual they consider this practice to be, thus conveying *Normality*.

The tweet in example 12 questions the validity of the statements made by the party and the evidence presented throughout the process. The user chooses a great use of *Veracity* to condemn the declarations of some Republican figures as well as GRADUATION resources to strengthen the negative evaluation of the party (i.e., use of capital letters, overuse of exclamation and question marks, and quantifications of *Veracity*). The display of negative *Veracity* is further reinforced with the hashtag #GOPLies. Therefore, this tweet also evokes a discourse of corruption since the tweeter suggests that the GOP was hiding the truth about AsJ Kavanaugh. Example 13 illustrates one of the alleged fabrications by the GOP. The user employs sarcasm to criticize the letter sent to the Judiciary Committee and signed by women who defended Kavanaugh⁶⁴. This letter was heavily condemned by tweeters as some of these women stated they were AsJ Kavanaugh's classmates at the time he attended an all-boys high school. Hence, the reason why this user referred to them as transgender. Although they use lexis concerning positive *Pleasure (impressed)* and positive *Propriety (respectful)*, the intentions of the speaker imply a negative evaluation of the GOP and, therefore, such values are also used to convey negative AFFECT and JUDGMENT.

In contrast, there was a discourse of truth which was more frequently identified in tweets that supported Dr. Ford's allegations. Both examples 14 and 15 below make use of positive *Veracity* resources to evaluate Dr. Ford's claims while also employing negative *Veracity* to condemn Kavanaugh, as was discussed in examples 10 and 11 already:

- (14) **Tweet36/NoKC-Kavanaugh:** It takes immense [+ GRADUATION; force-intensification] courage [+ JUDGMENT; tenacity] *to put her face, name, & reputation on the line* [+ token of JUDGMENT; tenacity]. I totally [+ GRADUATION; force-intensification] believe [+ AFFECT; security-trust] her [+ token of JUDGMENT; veracity]. He's a proven [+ GRADUATION; force-intensification] liar [- JUDGMENT; veracity] #UNFIT [- JUDGMENT; capacity] #NoKavanaughConfirmation

⁶⁴ <https://www.foxnews.com/politics/65-women-defend-kavanaugh-as-a-good-person-amid-allegations>.

- (15) **Tweet59/NoKC-Ford:** @MSNBC *I believe Dr. Ford* [+ AFFECT; security-trust] [+ token of JUDGMENT; veracity] and will *always* [+ GRADUATION; force-quantification] *believe* [+ AFFECT; security-trust] *DR FORD!* [+ GRADUATION; force-intensification] [+ token of JUDGMENT; veracity] *#NoKavanaughConfirmation #IBelieveChristine* [+ AFFECT; security-trust] [+ token of JUDGMENT; veracity] *#metoo*

Example 14 presents a series of positive APPRAISAL resources to express support and admiration for Dr. Ford. The tweet begins by expressing admiration for her for publicly coming out as a victim-survivor, which is conveyed through *Tenacity* and intensified with *Force*. Then, the user discloses their support by using a *Trust* resource (*believe*) and a *Force* value (*totally*) and, therefore, expresses implicit positive *Veracity*. Similarly to examples 10 and 11, this tweeter compares Dr. Ford and AsJ Kavanaugh by employing negative *Veracity*, which is amplified by stating that there is proof about him committing perjury (*proven*) and using the hashtag *#UNFIT* to disaffiliate from his candidature. However, some tweets did not resort to the comparison between both social actors to express support and focused on depicting Dr. Ford as a reliable narrator. This can be seen in example 15, in which the tweeter reinforces their support for her by repeating the AFFECT resource *Trust* twice and using GRADUATION (i.e., the adverb of time *always* and the use of capital letters and exclamation marks) to intensify the emotion. Altogether, the tweet also serves to provide an implicit evaluation of Dr. Ford as a credible victim-survivor through *Veracity*.

8.2.2. Discourses of violence

Discourses relating to violence were divided into 1) gender-based and (sexual) violence, and 2) political violence. Even though these depictions were intertwined in most tweets, some tweeters focused more saliently on either the crime or the political nature of the event. In addition, these discourses also brought some light on the identity construction of victims and perpetrators. The subsections that follow examine the different discourses of violence identified in the subcorpora.

8.2.2.1. *Sexual and gendered violence*

As expected, Dr. Ford was depicted as a victim-survivor of sexual violence, whereas AsJ Kavanaugh was constructed as a perpetrator of sexual and gender-based violence. Interestingly, all subcorpora focused more frequently on the construal of AsJ Kavanaugh as a perpetrator than on Dr. Ford. However, the portrayal of AsJ Kavanaugh as a perpetrator also derived in the depiction of Dr. Ford as a victim-survivor.

- (16) **Tweet82/KC-Kavanaugh:** The Brave [+ JUDGMENT; tenacity] woman who lying [- JUDGMENT; veracity] #SCOTUS nominee #BrettKavanaugh tried to rape [- JUDGMENT; propriety] just *came out with her story* [+ token of JUDGMENT; tenacity] she has *also* [+ GRADUATION; force-intensification] taken a lie detector test which shows she was being truthful [+ JUDGMENT; propriety] *Will #kavanaugh volunteer a lie detector test too* [- token of JUDGMENT; veracity] #KavanaughLied [- JUDGMENT; veracity] #KavanaughConfirmation

Example 16 features different discourses, such as a discourse of feminism and empowerment to describe Dr. Ford as well as a discourse of falsehood to refer to AsJ Kavanaugh. The use of the adjective *brave* is linked to the evoked *Tenacity* resource “*came out with her story*”. This is due to the fact many feminists and allies of feminism consider the telling of sexual violence stories as an act of boldness (Clark-Parsons, 2021; Palomino-Manjón, 2022a). This depiction of Dr. Ford contrasts with that of AsJ Kavanaugh, who is constructed as a perpetrator of sexual violence as he is positioned as the agent of the negative *Propriety* resource “(*tried to*) *rape*”. Hence, Dr. Ford is presented as the object of the sexual crime and portrayed as a victim. Lastly, the tweet also contains some *Veracity* resources that emphasize the negative prosody around AsJ Kavanaugh through discourses of falsehood, as previously examined in subsection 8.2.1.

The representation of AsJ Kavanaugh as a perpetrator of (sexual) violence was also conveyed *vis-à-vis* that of Donald Trump. As examined in previous chapters, both social actors were constructed mirroring each other, as in the examples below:

- (17) **Tweet50/NoKC-Women:** Trump & Kavanaugh don't respect [- judgment; propriety] women & *both should be in Prison* [- token of judgment; propriety] #StopKavanaugh #noKavanaughConfirmation

- (18) **Tweet65/NoKC-Sexual:** A nominee for the Supreme Court committed sexual assault [- judgment; propriety] and the President is a pussy-grabber [- judgment; propriety] (in his own words). *And Trump sits in the Oval Office* [- token of judgment; propriety]. Gotta love [- affect; unhappiness-antipathy] republicans! #NoKavanaughConfirmation

Both are described as perpetrators of (sexual) violence through *Propriety* resources (i.e., “*don’t respect*” in example 17; “*(committed) sexual assault*” and “*pussy-grabber*” in example 18). Then, both users convey implicit *Propriety* to denounce the presence of AsJ Kavanaugh and Donald Trump as authoritative figures as well as a lack of action to prevent a sexual perpetrator from occupying a seat in the highest U.S. institutions. This is conveyed by stating that they are not being prosecuted as criminals (example 17) and that Donald Trump was still being POTUS at that time even after publicly acknowledging he was a sexual predator⁶⁵.

Lastly, suspicions of domestic violence were brought up in conversation when discussing the presence of AsJ Kavanaugh’s wife and daughters during the process:

- (19) **Tweet50/KC-Kavanaugh:** Now that #ChristineBlaseyFord *has come forward* [+ token of JUDGMENT; tenacity], I will re-up my assessment of what #Kavanaugh evokes in the women in his life - *look at the faces of women in pictures with him, and I think you’ll see it too: fear* [- AFFECT; insecurity-disquiet] [- token of JUDGMENT; propriety]. #KavanaughHearings #KavanaughConfirmation #kavanope #TheResistance

As can be seen in example 19, AsJ Kavanaugh’s female family members were constructed as potential victims of gender-based violence. The tweeter states that, taking into consideration Dr. Ford’s allegations, the accused’s wife and daughters seem fearful when being next to him. This is conveyed through a non-authorial *Disquiet* value, which, in turn, portrays AsJ Kavanaugh as a perpetrator by evoking negative *Propriety*. As previously discussed in Chapter 6, discussions of the behavior of AsJ Kavanaugh’s wife during the confirmation process often led to debates about whether he was a perpetrator

⁶⁵ <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/08/us/donald-trump-tape-transcript.html>

of domestic violence. However, example 18 illustrates that her daughters were also considered to be potential victims.

8.2.2.2. *Political violence*

Discourses of violence also contributed to the identity construction of political victims and perpetrators in all subcorpora. As previously examined in Chapters 6 and 7, both Dr. Ford and AsJ Kavanaugh were depicted as victims of a political process. Tweeters considered that they were being used as tools by the GOP and the Democratic Party to wage political campaigns. However, these discourses were different when referring to the accused and the accuser, as can be seen in the following examples:

- (20) **Tweet7/NoKC-Ford:** So it's all a lie [- JUDGMENT; veracity] and a sham [- JUDGMENT; veracity] [+ GRADUATION; force-intensification]. There was NEVER [+ GRADUATION; force-intensification] any intention of a fair [- JUDGMENT; propriety] hearing for Dr. Ford. You disgust [- AFFECT; dissatisfaction-displeasure] me, @SenateMajLdr, @lisamurkowski @SenatorCollins @JeffMerkley - Fuck you all [- AFFECT; dissatisfaction-displeasure]. #TakeBackTheSenate #IStandWithChristineBlaseyFord [+ token of JUDGEMENT; veracity] #NoKavanaughConfirmation #BlueTsunami

As opposed to the previous subsection, Dr. Ford was frequently depicted as a victim of politicians. Example 20 illustrates how some tweeters condemned the outcome of the last Hearing. This user makes use of *Veracity* resources (*lie* and *sham*) to evaluate the confirmation process and then proceeds to provide an ethical condemnation of the GOP and the Republican Senators by questioning the course and the credibility of the hearing. This tweet is linked to the previous chapters, in which Dr. Ford was found to be represented as a victim of verbal violence and was frequently questioned and victimized by the Republican Senators. The tweeter ends the tweet by expressing *Dissatisfaction-Displeasure* to convey negative emotions and disaffiliation from those Senators.

In contrast, example 21 below, which is explicitly directed towards the Democrat Senator Diane Feinstein, evaluates the allegations as a political strategy to discredit the confirmation process and, more specifically, AsJ Kavanaugh's reputation:

(21) **Tweet100/KC-Kavanaugh:** Such a FAKE ATTEMPT [- JUDGMENT; veracity] [+ GRADUATION; force-intensification] to dishonor [- JUDGMENT; propriety] a very [+ GRADUATION; force-intensification] smart [+ JUDGMENT; capacity] & very [+ GRADUATION; force-intensification] fine [+ JUDGMENT; normality] *man Judge Kavanaugh* [- token of JUDGMENT; propriety], Diane Feinstein *YOU* [+ GRADUATION; force-intensification] employed a CHINESE SPY [+ GRADUATION; force-intensification] 4 20 yrs [- token of JUDGMENT; propriety] YOU [+ GRADUATION; force-intensification] are the threat [- JUDGMENT; propriety] to America *not Judge Kavanaugh* [+ token of JUDGMENT; propriety] #KavanaughConfirmation

The user above employs *Veracity* to appraise Senator Feinstein and the allegations as deceitful. Then, they continue to provide a positive evaluation of AsJ Kavanaugh with the use of Social Esteem resources (i.e., *Capacity* and *Normality*) to create a positive discourse prosody. Then, the negative evaluation of Senator Feinstein is further intensified by bringing up the news that one of her staffers was a spy for the Chinese Government⁶⁶; this helps the user to present Senator Feinstein as an unethical politician through *Property* values. The contrast between both social actors helps the tweeter to depict Senator Feinstein as a political perpetrator, whilst AsJ Kavanaugh is presented as a political victim.

Interestingly, AsJ Kavanaugh's wife and daughters were also presented as victims of the process. However, as opposed to the results presented in the previous chapters, AsJ Kavanaugh was depicted as the perpetrator, which adds up to the representation of his family as his victims:

(22) **Tweet3/KC-Women:** As he toured the Senate over the past month, Kava_nope [- JUDGMENT; capacity] *was using his daughters as stage props* [- token of JUDGMENT; propriety]. *They accompanied him, not so that they could have an enriching experience, but so that he could promote his image as a compassionate [+ JUDGMENT; propriety] man, sympathetic [+ JUDGMENT;*

⁶⁶ <https://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/matier-ross/article/Sen-Feinstein-had-a-Chinese-connection-she-13121441.php>.

propriety] *to women* [- token of JUDGMENT; propriety].
 #KavanaughConfirmation

In example 22, the user condemns his nomination with the blended name *Kava_nope*, which conveys negative *Capacity*. Then, the tweeter denounces the use of AsJ Kavanaugh's daughters to improve his public image after the allegations came to light, therefore making use of implicit *Propriety* to appraise this action as unethical. These results are in line with those obtained in Chapter 6, in which tweeters brought into the conversation his identity as a family man, either to praise him or criticize him.

The corpora included a fourth political victim that was constructed in the aftermath of the hearing and the confirmation. American women were depicted as victims of the patriarchal system which prevails in American institutions. These tweets intertwined with feminism discourses very frequently, as illustrated in the examples below:

(23) **Tweet39/NoKC-Men:** @peterdaou THEY. HAVE. NO. CONSCIENCE [- JUDGMENT; propriety] [+ GRADUATION; force-intensification]. They gaslighted [- JUDGMENT; propriety] Ford so bad [+ GRADUATION; force-intensification], that as a victim I worry [- AFFECT; insecurity-disquiet] that she is questioning [- AFFECT; insecurity-disquiet] *all of her memories of the event* [- token of JUDGMENT; capacity]. *That is what we do was survivors* [- token of JUDGMENT; capacity]. BECAUSE. MEN. AND. WOMEN IN. POWER. REFUSE [- AFFECT; disinclination-non-desire]. TO. BELIEVE. US. [- token of JUDGMENT; propriety] [+ GRADUATION; force-intensification]
 #NoKavanaughConfirmation #VoteThemOut #MeToo

Example 23 contains a disclosure of sexual assault which also constructs Dr. Ford as a political victim. The user employs judgments of *Propriety*, which are enhanced with GRADUATION resources, to condemn the attitude of Senators during the Hearing and to construct them as political perpetrators, as was previously discussed in example 20. Then, they go on to denounce rape myths and victim-blaming attitudes that make victim-survivors question their memories, which, in turn, deepen their traumatic wound (Palomino-Manjón, 2022a). This is conveyed with implicit negative *Capacity* resources

to refer to victim-survivors, as well as negative AFFECT and implicit negative *Propriety* to blame the use of such patriarchal discourses by American institutions.

(24) **Tweet90/NoKC-Women:** @JeffFlake *Women and girls deserve a Supreme Court Justice who will protect [+ JUDGMENT; propriety] and respect [+ JUDGMENT; propriety] [+ GRADUATION; force-intensification] our rights [- token of JUDGMENT; propriety] #NoKavanaughConfirmation*

Example 24 illustrates the frustration that some female users experienced throughout the confirmation process. In this tweet, which explicitly mentions the Republican Senator Jeff Flake, the tweeter expressed disaffiliation from AsJ Kavanaugh's candidature by describing the profile of a Justice who would stand up for women's rights with the use of positive *Propriety* resources (*protect* and *respect*). In turn, the tweet expresses implicit negative *Propriety* and, therefore, negatively evaluates AsJ Kavanaugh as the tweeter considers that he does not fit into that description.

8.2.3. Discourses of feminism and antifeminism

The subcorpora featured two opposed discourses, namely, those of feminism and male victimhood. Additionally, the discourses of feminism were divided into two types: 1) discourses of empowerment and support; and 2) discourses of fear and emotional pain. The antifeminist discourse concerned male victimhood and was more frequently found in the subcorpora obtained from the #KC corpus, especially when examining the plural social actor *men*. The following subsections provide an in-depth analysis of these discourses.

8.2.3.1. Discourses of empowerment and support

The subcorpora, particularly those extracted from the #NoKC corpus, included a positive discourse prosody that portrayed women and victim-survivors as empowered individuals and reliable narrators of experiences of sexual violence and, more precisely, sexual assault. Such positive prosody was conveyed through positive APPRAISAL values, as shown in the examples below:

(25) **Tweet89/NoKC-Kavanaugh:** *I believe [+ AFFECT; security-trust] #AnitaHill! [+ graduation; force-intensification] [+ token of JUDGMENT; veracity] I believe [+ affect; security-trust] #ChristineBlaseyFord! [+*

graduation; force-intensification] [+ token of JUDGMENT; veracity] If #Kavanaugh makes #SCOTUS 2 out of 9 [+ GRADUATION; force-quantification] would be #sexual #harrassers! [- JUDGMENT; propriety] #really? [- AFFECT; surprise] #WomensRights #NoKavanaughConfirmation

The user in example 25 expresses *Trust* values to show support for Dr. Ford as well as Anita Hill, which, in turn, also evokes positive *Veracity*. As previous examples in subsection 8.2.1, the discourse of truth was intertwined with a feminist discourse which portrays both women as reliable narrators of their experiences. Expressions of credibility and support for victim-survivors have been identified as a common trait in the fourth wave of feminism taking place in social media (Clack-Parsons, 2019; Palomino-Manjón, 2022a). Additionally, the tweeter also expresses opposition to AsJ Kavanaugh’s nomination by evaluating Hill’s and Dr. Ford’s perpetrators as sexual harassers and, therefore, expressing explicit negative *Propriety*. This negative evaluation is further amplified by bringing up the number of Justices accused of sexual misconduct that could end up passing or repealing laws concerning women (“2 out of 9”). In fact, the tweeter expresses negative *Surprise* at this fact and ends the tweet with the hashtag #WomensRights as a form of hashtag feminism.

(26) **Tweet99/NoKC-Men:** Women are strong [+ JUDGMENT; capacity] and truly [+ GRADUATION; force-intensification] unpredictable [+ JUDGMENT; normality]. Mechanistic [-JUDGMENT; propriety] old men [-JUDGMENT; propriety] [+ GRADUATION; force-intensification], not all men, are weak [-JUDGMENT; capacity], insecure [- AFFECT; insecurity-disquiet] [- token of JUDGMENT; capacity] and scared [- AFFECT; insecurity-disquiet] [+ GRADUATION; force-intensification] of strong [+ JUDGMENT; strong] women. *November we show them what we are made of, we will not give-up* [+ token of JUDGMENT; tenacity]. #NovemberIsComing #ProtectOurCare #NoKavanaughConfirmation

Example 26 illustrates the discourse of empowerment that surrounded women in the subcorpora. The user begins the tweet by expressing positive *Capacity* (*strong*) and

Normality (*unpredictable*⁶⁷) to present women as powerful social actors. Then, they proceed to create an out-group of men defined as mechanistic and old. As previously examined in Chapter 6, *old* as a direct collocate of *men* conveyed a negative prosody as men were constructed as conservatives, sexists, and misogynists. Therefore, the cluster *old men* is used to convey negative *Propriety*. In addition, the adjective *mechanistic*, which defines a patriarchal ideology that considers men as the foundation of society and human nature (Hultman & Pulé, 2018), also amplifies the negative depiction of this out-group of men. Such negative prosody is further intensified with a negative JUDGMENT resource (i.e., *Capacity*) and two *Disquiet* values that express fear, which, in turn, also evoke negative *Capacity*. The use of negative *Capacity* to portray a fearful, weak out-group of men who sustain a patriarchal system is contrasted with the positive *Capacity* resource *strong* that depicts women as empowered individuals. Lastly, the tweeter evokes positive *Tenacity* to construct women as resolute and determined to end the Republican administration.

8.2.3.2. *Discourse of fear and emotional pain*

A discourse of fear and emotional pain was frequently found in the *#KC-Women* and *#NoKC-Women* subcorpora. AsJ Kavanaugh's confirmation to SCOTUS provoked insecurity and fear in some American women due to his conservative views. Their horror and despair were expressed through a variety of negative AFFECT resources, as exemplified in the following excerpts:

(27) **Tweet70/KC-Women:** I feel sick to my stomach [- AFFECT; dissatisfaction-displeasure] *if we are about to take a million steps backwards* [+ GRADUATION; force-quantification] *for women I wanna* [- AFFECT; inclination-desire] [- token of JUDGMENT; propriety] move to Italy [- AFFECT; insecurity-disquiet] like NOW [+ GRADUATION; force-intensification] #boysclub #KavanaughHearing #KavanaughConfirmation

In example 27, the tweeter uses the idiom “*sick to my stomach*” to convey *Displeasure* and to express their emotional distress during the Hearing. This negative emotion is

⁶⁷ Although Martin and White (2005) categorize *unpredictable* as an example of negative *Normality*, the context in which this adjective appears helps the user convey a positive discourse prosody (see Chapter 5).

followed by the user's desire to move to a European country through the use of different APPRAISAL resources. Affect resources *Desire* and *Disquiet* are used to convey the tweeter's agitation and concern about America's future for women, which are amplified with the expression of GRADUATION in the time adverb *now* in capital letters to express urge. Taken together, AFFECT values help disclose evoked negative *Propriety* of the American political system, especially of the Republican politicians involved in the confirmation process, for being detrimental to women's rights ("*take a million steps backwards*"). This negative evaluation is further reinforced with the hashtag *#boysclub*⁶⁸.

(28) **Tweet71/KC-Women:** This is beyond [+ GRADUATION; force-quantification] maddening [+ GRADUATION; force-intensification] [- AFFECT; dissatisfaction-displeasure], sad [- AFFECT; unhappiness-misery], unbelievably [+ GRADUATION; force-intensification] disappointing [- AFFECT; unhappiness-misery] and *a* wake up call [- AFFECT; surprise] for women all around the globe [+ GRADUATION; force-quantification]. #wematter #KavanaughConfirmation

Similarly, the user in example 28 employs a great variety of AFFECT resources to display uneasiness, anger, and emotional pain. This is conveyed through *Misery* (*sad*, *disappointing*) and *Displeasure* (*maddening*). Moreover, these values are intensified with *Force* with the prepositions *beyond* and the adverb *unbelievably* as well as the adjective *maddening* itself, thus emphasizing the emotional discomfort that the tweeter is experiencing. Lastly, the user expresses negative *Surprise* regarding the events and amplifies the emotion to all women⁶⁹.

As expected from feminist protests taking place in social media, the subcorpora *#NoKC-Sexual* and *#KC-Sexual* included personal narratives of sexual violence experienced by tweeters. The use of AFFECT values helped victim-survivors to display their experiences as traumatic, as shown in the examples below:

(29) **Tweet17/NoKC-Sexual:** Not really going explain all the sexual assault [- JUDGMENT; propriety] that I've gone through but I blamed myself [- AFFECT;

⁶⁸ Male-dominated organizations. See: <https://www.macmillandictionary.com/dictionary/british/boys-club>.

⁶⁹ The original tweet denounced the arrests of women protesting against AsJ Kavanaugh's confirmation.

dissatisfaction-displeasure] for years [+ GRADUATION; force-quantification]. I was ashamed [- AFFECT; insecurity-disquiet]. I told no one for so long because I didn't know who to trust [- AFFECT; insecurity-distrust]. It never goes away nor will it ever [+ GRADUATION; force-quantification]. Its *a life long* [+ GRADUATION; force-quantification] pain [- AFFECT; unhappiness-misery] I will live with. #NoKavanaughConfirmation

Example 29 features a tweeter who conveys different AFFECT resources to express their trauma. The author of the tweet begins by stating that they do not wish to explain their experience of sexual assault, which carries negative *Propriety* values, and focuses instead on a range of terms relating to negative emotions. Among these, the tweeter expresses *Displeasure* for self-blaming for the assaults; this is intensified through *Quantification* as they express that their emotions lasted for a long period of time. They also express *Insecurity* to convey their shame (*Disquiet*) and fear to trust other people (*Distrust*) about the crime. In addition, all the emotional pain displayed by the author is magnified with more *Quantification* resources (“*It never goes away nor will it ever*” and “*life long*”), which shows the long-term damage that sexual violence causes to victim-survivors.

(30) Tweet35/NoKC-Sexual: I have never publicly opened up about my rape/sexual assault [- JUDGMENT; propriety] trauma [- AFFECT; insecurity-disquiet] for fear [- AFFECT; insecurity-disquiet] of being blamed [- JUDGMENT; propriety] and criticized [- JUDGMENT; propriety] [+ GRADUATION; force-quantification]. How can we come forward when the justice system so blatantly [+ GRADUATION; force-intensification] fails [- JUDGMENT; capacity] us? [- token of JUDGMENT; propriety] #NoKavanaughConfirmation

On the other hand, the author in example 30 combines AFFECT and JUDGMENT to express their experience. In contrast to example 29, this user does not convey emotions of self-blame but instead expresses fear (*Disquiet*) for being victim-blamed and shamed by people and society, thus negatively evaluating them through negative *Propriety*. Then, the tweeter provides an assessment of negative *Capacity* of the justice system in reference to the outcome of the Hearing, in which Dr. Ford’s allegations were dismissed. Therefore, they also provide a token of negative *Propriety* to condemn such system.

8.2.3.3. *Discourse of male victimhood*

The subcorpora #KC-Men was heavily influenced by a discourse of male victimhood which portrayed men as victims of feminist movements and, more precisely, of the #MeToo Movement⁷⁰. The examples below show how this discourse was employed to demonize the movement:

- (31) **Tweet26/KC-Men:** Victory over women like you *who support lodging false [- APPRECIATION; valuation] [- token of JUDGMENT; veracity] sexual assault allegations on men [- token of JUDGMENT; propriety]. All of you #metoo lying [- JUDGMENT; veracity] bitches [+ GRADUATION; force-intensification] can eat shit [- AFFECT; dissatisfaction-displeasure] [- token of JUDGMENT; propriety]. #KavanaughConfirmation #KavanaughHearings*

The tweeter in example 31 uses misogynistic hate speech (Jaki et al. 2019; Loney-Howes, 2018; Palomino-Manjón, 2022a) to attack women who had expressed support for Dr. Ford's allegations⁷¹. The user makes implicit judgments of *Veracity* through negative *Valuation*, to condemn women for allegedly reporting false cases of sexual assault against men. The hate speech is increased by using the derogatory term *bitches*, which intensifies the *Veracity* resource *lying*, and the derogatory expression “*can eat shit*” to express anger. Ultimately, the tweet is used to provide an evaluation of negative *Propriety* on women who support and are part of the #MeToo Movement.

- (32) **Tweet78/KC-Women:** *Men are not safe [+ AFFECT; insecurity-disquiet] anywhere [- token of JUDGMENT; propriety]. The #MeToo movement has successfully launched the “Men are Evil [-JUDGMENT; propriety]” narrative [- token of JUDGMENT; propriety] and there are enough dishonest [-JUDGMENT; veracity] politicians and media on the left to pump up this narrative [- token of JUDGMENT; propriety]. A out of control [+ GRADUATION; force-intensification] [- JUDGMENT; propriety] MeToo movement is bad [-*

⁷⁰ The #MeToo movement was analyzed in all subcorpora as a group of people with a shared ideology and, therefore, in terms of JUDGMENT instead of APPRECIATION (Thompson, 2008).

⁷¹ By the time this thesis was written, the tweet had been deleted and it was not possible to confirm the addressee.

JUDGMENT; propriety] for both men and women [+ GRADUATION; force-intensification]. #KavanaughConfirmation

Example 32 promotes a discourse of fear which constructs men as victims of the movement. This fear is expressed with the *Disquiet* value *safe*, which already provides an assessment of negative *Propriety* on the #MeToo Movement and the elites. Other implicit negative *Propriety* evaluations are provided as the movement is blamed for victimizing men, as well as the elites (i.e., right-wing politicians and media) for taking advantage of this movement to further deprecate men. Lastly, the tweeter provides two more negative *Propriety* evaluations that justify how the movement is becoming dangerous for both men and women.

8.2.5. Discourse of abortion

The discourse of abortion was the less frequent discourse in the subcorpora, as it was identified only in 8 tweets. In fact, it was usually intertwined with the discourses which have been discussed in the previous subsections. This discourse was used to express support towards Kavanaugh or disaffiliation from his candidature, as already observed in Chapter 7.

- (33) **Tweet96/NoKC-Sexual:** Reading #MeToo stories always makes me incredibly [+ GRADUATION; force-intensification] sad [- AFFECT; unhappiness-antipathy]. And it makes me even sadder [+ GRADUATION; force-intensification] [- AFFECT; unhappiness-antipathy] *when the perpetrators of sexual violence* [- JUDGMENT; propriety] want [+ AFFECT; inclination-desire] *to use their power to take away women's birthcontrol and right to an abortion.* [- token of JUDGMENT; propriety] #NoKavanaughConfirmation

As seen in example 33, the user starts by expressing emotional pain through negative values of AFFECT after reading personal stories of sexual violence. However, their message is followed by an increased emotional reaction by using the adverb *even* and the comparative *sadder* to condemn the fact that Justices of the Supreme Court have the power to limit women's rights regarding their choice to undergo an abortion. These Justices are depicted as "*perpetrators of sexual violence*", thus providing negative moral

and ethical evaluations of AsJ Kavanaugh and AsJ Thomas for their sexual misconduct allegations and their abuse of power.

On the other hand, Twitter users who supported Kavanaugh used the abortion controversy to accuse the Democratic Party of fabricating false sexual assault claims to prevent the future derogation of *Roe v. Wade*, as illustrated in example 34 below:

- (34) **Tweet24/KC-Kavanaugh: *DemonRats*** [- JUDGMENT; propriety] are not trying to **#Bork**⁷² [- JUDGMENT; propriety] #Kavanaugh they kept *their phoney*⁷³ [- APPRECIATION; valuation] *#MeToo professor letter* [- token of JUDGMENT; veracity] *as last ditch cause they knew it was risky* [- token of JUDGMENT; propriety] Liberal woman are **evil** [- JUDGMENT; propriety] **desperate** [- AFFECT; disinclination-desire] [+ GRADUATION; force-intensification] to be able to *kill* babies! [- JUDGMENT; propriety] #KavanaughConfirmation

The tweeter begins by using a derogatory term to refer to the Democratic Party (*DemonRats*, see Chapter 7) and evaluates the allegations as fraudulent, thus conveying explicit *Valuation* and implicit *Veracity* at the same time. Then, they continue to create an outgroup of women (i.e., liberal women) who are appraised as immoral (*evil* and *desperate*) for wishing to maintain *Roe v. Wade* to the detriment of AsJ Kavanaugh's reputation. Therefore, this tweet also conveys support for AsJ Kavanaugh's nomination and depicts him as a political victim, as already discussed in subsection 8.2.2.2.

8.3. Discussion

The last chapter in the analysis sought to address Objective 2, namely, to observe the evaluative resources employed by Twitter users to convey (linguistic) violence against women as well as to sustain, challenge, and resist gender ideologies and discourses. It was hypothesized that tweeters would draw upon negative APPRAISAL resources to condemn perpetrators of sexual violence, as well as patriarchal oppression and practices

⁷² To obstruct a political candidature by defamation. See: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/bork>.

⁷³ Fraudulent. See: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/phoney>.

derived from rape culture. Also expected were anti-feminist discourses as well as hegemonic discourses derived from rape culture, such as sexism, misogyny, victim-blaming, and slut-shaming, that would blame victims and undermine the relevance of sexual violence. Additionally, the analysis of evaluative language provided some insights into Objective 1 concerning victim-perpetrator identities and (linguistic) aggression.

The analysis of APPRAISAL resources revealed a high frequency of the use of negative evaluative language regarding sexual violence and the social actors involved in the confirmation process. The negative discourse prosody which prevailed in all subcorpora was frequently employed to construct discourses of violence, truth, and falsehood concerning the confirmation process. Negative assessments were mainly conveyed with values of JUDGMENT to condemn the morality and ethics of social actors as well as to denounce the lack of veracity during the hearings. The expression of emotions also played an important role in the creation of negative discursive prosodies since a range of AFFECT lexis was employed to show anger, fear, and sadness as the confirmation process proceeded. It is important to highlight the frequent use of GRADUATION resources, which were employed to intensify and strengthen those negative assessments and to display common discomfort and emotional distress among tweeters.

Evaluations of *Veracity* to disclose discourses of truth and falsehood were relevant in the subcorpora. In fact, they sometimes combined with discourses of violence, especially those of political violence, when referring to AsJ Kavanaugh as a victim. Assessments of negative *Veracity* were employed to negotiate their identities as victims or perpetrators by mirroring each other. When AsJ Kavanaugh was constructed as a liar, it was frequently intensified by stating that he committed perjury during the several hearings that took place during the confirmation process. Therefore, this statement also helped tweeters disaffiliate from his nomination by presenting him as an unsuitable Justice. On the other hand, Dr. Ford was explicitly accused of falsehood with lexis relating to lies as well as assessments of *Distrust*. In turn, this discourse of falsehood also contributed to her identity construction as a political perpetrator. However, Dr. Ford was also surrounded by positive discourse prosodies which gave credibility to her story, frequently by stating that she had successfully passed a polygraph.

Nevertheless, the discourses of sexual and political violence were the most common in all subcorpora. As already examined in previous chapters, AsJ Kavanaugh's identity construction mirrored that of Donald Trump as both social actors were depicted as sexual deviants. JUDGMENT resources were heavily employed by tweeters to construct them as perpetrators and to condemn American political and justice systems for maintaining male authorities accused of sexual misconduct in power and, therefore, for sustaining patriarchal practices and discourses. The GOP was portrayed through negative assessments of *Propriety* and *Veracity* as a corrupt institution and as a political aggressor for hiding and fabricating evidence. The discursive construction of AsJ Kavanaugh as a perpetrator was further conveyed through a discourse of (non-authorial) *Disquiet* (i.e., fear) to represent his family as victims of potential domestic and political violence, as it was frequently debated whether they were being used to help him maintain a positive public image. Nonetheless, his supporters also represented him as a political victim of left-wing activists and politics. Therefore, Dr. Ford and the members of the Democratic Party were depicted as political perpetrators.

Furthermore, the victimization of women and men was also portrayed through feminist and antifeminist discourses frequently conveyed through negative APPRAISAL resources. Although it is true that online feminism also features positive assessments, and therefore positive ATTITUDE, negative discourse prosodies still prevail in this form of networked activism. Negative evaluative patterns, especially AFFECT, were found to convey negative discourses relating to fear, trauma, emotional damage, and violence itself (Jones et al., 2022; Palomino-Manjón, 2022a). Victim-survivors and female users made frequent use of emotional lexis to express their trauma and emotional suffering, as well as to condemn their fear due to a deep-rooted rape culture in American society, which also helped construct themselves as political victims. Similarly, tweeters' use of negative APPRAISAL resources displayed collective anger as a response to what these users considered that AsJ Kavanaugh's confirmation to SCOTUS would entail for American women: the perpetuation of patriarchal practices in higher institutions and the limitation of women's rights. This is closely linked to one of the discourses identified during the analysis, namely the discourse of abortion. In fact, his confirmation was key for the derogation of *Roe V. Wade* in 2022.

Both feminist and pro-abortion discourses made use of a negative discourse prosody to condemn the possibility that patriarchy-sympathizers would be able to decide over women's bodies and rights. As briefly mentioned in Chapter 7, abortion was a relevant topic during the process due to AsJ Kavanaugh's conservative views and pro-life stance. Although anti-abortion views have been considered a form of patriarchal and social oppression since the second wave of feminism, the fourth wave is showing great opposition to the derogation of abortion laws, as well as to the implementation of laws in countries in which abortion is illegal or not regulated at all (see Acosta, 2022; Cisne et al., 2018; Fetcher, 2018)⁷⁴.

However, some tweeters also demeaned and vilify feminism and echoed anti-feminist and anti-abortion discourses to create an out-group of women with left-wing ideology who are considered to be detrimental to men and other women (Jaki et al. 2019; Loney-Howes, 2018; Krendel et al., 2022; Palomino-Manjón, 2022a). Negative assessments of JUDGEMENT portrayed feminist movements, especially the *#MeToo* Movement, as extremist campaigns used to vilify men to support female dominance and maintain abortion regulations. These users employ negative evaluations through gendered, misogynistic hate speech and victim-blaming discourses to portray this out-group of women as political aggressors and murderers. This, in turn, also helped construct AsJ Kavanaugh's identity as a political victim for his pro-life views.

On the other hand, positive APPRAISAL resources, especially JUDGEMENT, were used to build positive discourse prosodies, which featured far less frequently in the corpora. A few of these resources were employed by AsJ Kavanaugh's supporters to praise him and to construct his identity as a suitable candidate by using positive APPRAISAL resources. However, most of the positive evaluations were employed to portray Dr. Ford, Deborah Ramirez, Julie Swetnick, and Anita Hill as reliable narrators of their stories of sexual assault. The discourse of truth overlapped with a feminist discourse which gave credibility to all victim-survivors' stories and empowered them for coming out publicly through JUDGEMENT lexis relating to bravery and courage. Positive prosody serves as a discursive protest (Lazar, 2018) against the hegemonic, patriarchal

⁷⁴ However, there is a branch of feminism which opposes abortion (see, for example Oaks, 2000).

discourses employed by Republican politicians and AsJ Kavanaugh's supporters to victimize victim-survivors and invalidate their experiences (Clark-Parsons, 2019; Loney-Howes, 2018; Palomino-Manjón, 2022a).

Overall, these results indicate the coexistence of opposing discourses on Twitter during the confirmation process. On the one hand, the subcorpora featured hegemonic discourses which invalidated Dr. Ford's testimony, and which allowed the spread of antifeminist and victim-blaming discourses. These reflected the power imbalance that persists in the *offline* world (Herring, 1999), and which resulted in the dismissal of Dr. Ford's allegations by Republican authorities. On the other hand, tweeters conveyed counter-hegemonic discourses to resist patriarchal discourses and practices in social media by demystifying the rape scripts and myths which invalidated Dr. Ford's testimony. Additionally, these discourses not only contributed to the identity construction of Dr. Ford and AsJ Kavanaugh as either victims or perpetrators but also to the online identities and ideologies of tweeters themselves who sided with or disaffiliated from the social actors and political groups involved in the confirmation process through the (re)production and resistance of, broadly, feminist and patriarchal discourses (Bou-Franch & Garcés-Conejos Blitvich, 2014b; van Dijk, 2006).

PART IV
CONCLUSION AND FUTURE
RESEARCH

CHAPTER 9
Conclusion

CHAPTER 9: CONCLUSION

The present chapter addresses the conclusions of this dissertation. It is divided into two sections. First, Section 9.1. presents the concluding remarks and the implications of the findings concerning the research questions posed in relation to the objectives of this dissertation. In addition, it also discusses the implications of this research concerning the previous literature. Then, Section 9.2. describes the main limitations of the thesis and proposes future research lines that could expand the results obtained in this research and deals with some relevant issues that arose during the analyses.

9.1. Concluding remarks and implications of the research

The purpose of this thesis research was to examine the discursive construction of victim-survivors and perpetrators of sexual violence as well as sexual violence itself on the microblogging platform Twitter. Therefore, two objectives were proposed: 1) to examine gender-based ideologies and discourses on Twitter and how these contribute to the construction of victim-perpetrator identities, and 2) to identify how tweeters use evaluative language to enact, (re)produce, and resist such discourses. To do so, this study examined reactions to AsJ Kavanaugh's allegations of sexual assault and confirmation process to SCOTUS as a case study.

The first part of this Ph.D. thesis offered an overview of the previous literature on DMC and gender studies. Chapter 1 provided a review of the field of DMC through a (digital) discourse analytical lens and problematized the rapid evolution of technologies and digital platforms for research. This presents a challenge for scholars, who must adapt previous frameworks and create new tools and approaches for the analysis of digital data. Nonetheless, these new technologies also allow researchers to examine the practices and ideologies of a wider part of society. With a focus on SNSs, it later discussed the performance of digital practices to form social groups and enact identities. These concepts are crucial for ideological analysis as people reconfigure and (re)negotiate social identities and differences in social media. The emergence of SNSs also pointed to the democratization of discourses, which allow users to share opinions freely. Although social media were created to socialize and share content and information, they are slowly being used for socio-political purposes. The use of the affordance *hashtag* on Twitter is of special interest for scholars to examine how people bond around a topic or share similar

ideological stances depending on the hashtag they use. Chapter 1 also highlighted the importance of terms such as *ambient affiliation* (Zappavigna, 2012) and *affective publics* (Papacharissi, 2016) to understand how people bond around a shared common topic of interest on social issues, which leads to the formation of discourse communities. Since hashtags help connect loosely groups of people who might not know each other, they are widely used to raise awareness and for political mobilization and solidarity. However, the study of communities of divergent ideologies regarding hashtags and the conflicts that arise within said communities (have) played a central role in addressing the objectives of this dissertation, as will be discussed later in this section.

Chapter 2 aimed to discuss the relationship between DMC and gender, with a diachronic focus on verbal and sexual violence against women and networked feminism. This chapter highlighted that digital platforms have been used to harass and intimidate women as well as to spread misogynist and anti-feminist discourses since the early years of DMC, thus reflecting a male-dominated Internet culture. Women, as well as socially disadvantaged groups, have adapted and created new strategies to resist newer digital practices and ideologies (Bou-Franch, 2016) and to raise public awareness of issues relating to gender-based violence which were traditionally kept in the private sphere or debated by the elites (Bou-Franch, 2013). Then, this chapter focused on the use of Twitter to raise awareness of (sexual) violence against women and to spread counterhegemonic discourses (Blevins, 2018; Jones et al., 2022; Mendes et al., 2018; Palomino-Manjón, 2022; Regehr & Ringrose, 2018; to mention a few). These activities led hashtag feminism to become the main activity shaping the fourth wave of feminism. However, it also highlighted that Twitter is usually employed to intimidate and harass female users (e.g., Hardaker & McGlashan, 2016; Lewis et al., 2017) and to spread discourses derived from rape culture (e.g., Idoiaga Mondragon et al., 2019).

The second part of the present Ph.D. thesis addressed the objectives and its theoretical and methodological underpinnings. Chapter 3 was devoted to outlining the two main objectives of the present thesis as well as to posing the research questions and hypotheses. Then, the chapter introduced the data and the *#KC* and *#NoKC* corpora employed for the analyses. Chapter 4 offered an overview of the social-political context of the case study selected for analysis and justified the significance of the event to tackle the objectives and research questions that were proposed. Chapter 5 reviewed the theoretical and methodological foundations of this Ph.D. dissertation. For this purpose, it

presented the theoretical tenets of CDS which informed this research, with special attention to FCDA (Lazar, 2005). Therefore, it introduced notions such as *ideology*, *discursive power*, and *hegemony*, which are of great interest to this thesis. Likewise, it discussed the FCDA approach and justified the relevance of taking a political perspective on gender in the analyses undertaken. Then, the chapter discussed the analytical framework adopted to examine evaluative language, namely Appraisal Theory (Martin & White, 2005). Emphasis was placed on the systems of ATTITUDE and GRADUATION, and it described the modifications to the original framework by taking Bednarek's (2008) modified AFFECT subsystem. The last section of the chapter aimed to introduce and discuss CL and CADS as the methodological approach adopted in this thesis. Finally, the chapter described the step-by-step procedure followed to examine the data drawing on the aforementioned approaches and analytical frameworks.

The third part of this Ph.D. thesis presented the three different analyses which were undertaken. Chapter 6 took a CADS approach and examined the top 100 most frequent words in the #KC and #NoKC corpora to pinpoint and compare frequent topics of debate among both datasets. Then, a collocation analysis of the gendered pronouns, social actors, authorities, and lexis concerning gender and violence obtained during the frequency analysis was performed. For its part, a keyword analysis was performed in Chapter 7 to identify and compare key features of both corpora, followed by a collocation analysis of words relating to social actors, authorities, and gender and violence among the top 50 keywords. Overall, chapters 6 and 7 provided insights into the discursive portrayal of (verbal) sexual violence and of victims and perpetrators of such violence. Finally, Chapter 8 examined ten subcorpora, which consisted of 100 tweets each, obtained from a concordance analysis including the search terms *Kavanaugh*, *Ford*, *woman*, *men*, and *sexual*. The tweets were scrutinized drawing on Appraisal Theory to determine the use of evaluative language on Twitter to challenge, sustain, and/or (re)produce gender ideologies and discourses regarding sexual violence and gender inequality.

Even though Chapters 6 and 7 mainly focused on RQ1 and Chapter 8 addressed RQ2, the results of the three chapters certainly contribute to both research questions. While the evaluative prosody evoked by the collocates examined in Chapters 6 and 7 shed light on the use of evaluative language, the APPRAISAL resources, and discourses identified in Chapter 8 also contributed to the discursive construction of (verbal) sexual

aggression and victim-perpetrator identities. The following paragraphs are devoted to answering these research questions by bringing together the results from the analyses.

The first research question aimed to address Objective 1, that is to say, to investigate the gendered ideologies and discourses of tweeters, and how they connect to the portrayal of victim-perpetrator identities. RQ1 is reproduced below for clarity:

Research question 1:

RQ1.1. What ideologies and discourses did tweeters draw from in their discussion of gender-based violence during AsJ Kavanaugh's confirmation process?

RQ1.2. How do such gendered ideologies and discourses relate to the construction of the victim-perpetrator identities?

As was hypothesized, tweeters drew from different linguistic patterns to evoke discourses that constructed sexual violence as a social malady deep-rooted in American society as well as in higher institutions (RQ1.1). A group of Tweeters in both corpora drew from feminist discourses to support Dr. Ford's testimony and construct her as a reliable victim-survivor. This served to create a counter-discourse to traditional discourses of rape. The corpora also brought up Anita Hill's past allegations of sexual misconduct against AsJ Thomas, which were employed to emphasize the presence of perpetrators in SCOTUS and to express support for the victims. In addition, both corpora included negative semantic and discourse prosodies surrounding (American) women to denounce the perpetuation of oppressive practices and the impunity of perpetrators in power, especially when discussing AsJ Kavanaugh's nomination to SCOTUS. Consequently, women were portrayed as victims of patriarchal oppression and culture in America's higher institutions (RQ1.2) while denouncing the presence of traditionally empowered men (i.e., white men) in such institutions.

The results of the analyses also revealed a strong focus on AsJ Kavanaugh's drinking habits in relation to perjury⁷⁵, corruption and the possibility of him having sexual intercourse under the influence of drugs and alcohol during his teenage days. The negative assessment of AsJ Kavanaugh reinforced the negative construction of his identity as a perpetrator (RQ1.2). Nevertheless, tweeters' focus on his alleged perjury sometimes minimized his allegations of sexual assault, as was mentioned in Chapter 6.

⁷⁵ The focus on perjury, however, was stronger during the APPRAISAL analysis, in which a wide variety of *Veracity* resources were employed to construct him as a liar.

In contrast, hegemonic and patriarchal discourses were very frequent in the *#KC* corpora. Tweeters using *#KavanaughConfirmation* in their tweets denounced a potential political campaign organized by the Democratic Party to sabotage the confirmation process and to avoid the presence of conservative Justices in SCOTUS. Such discourses also praised AsJ Kavanaugh and supported his innocence of the sexual assault allegations, thus drawing from antifeminist discourses and contributing to the perpetuation of rape culture.

The aforementioned discourses contributed to the construction of victim-perpetrators of sexual violence as tweeters would negotiate such identities depending on their political stances and ideologies regarding gender (in)equality and violence (RQ1.2). The analyses which were carried out in this thesis show that the identities of victims and perpetrators were fluid and frequently negotiated during the confirmation process. This negotiation seemed to depend on the tweeter's socio-political group and the hashtag being examined (Bou-Franch, 2022), although these were not the only variables affecting the identity construction of such social actors. The corpus which featured the most unstable portrayal of victims and perpetrators of violence was the *#KC* dataset. In contrast to the hashtag *#NoKavanaughConfirmation*, which expressed a clear opposition to AsJ Kavanaugh's nomination, the hashtag *#KavanaughConfirmation* was multifunctional: it was not only used to express affiliation with and support for him but also to share information and updates about the process (i.e., a topic-based hashtag). Consequently, the hashtag included opposing views among Tweeters and, therefore, different digital discourse communities (RQ1.1).

The discursive construction of the identity of victims was frequently negotiated *vis-à-vis* the identity of perpetrators and other victim-survivors. Dr. Ford was frequently depicted as the object of sexual assault and potential rape and, therefore, as a victim. In addition, she was also portrayed as a victim of verbal violence and of society since she was victimized not only by politicians but also by a group of Tweeters themselves. Moreover, the construction of victims of sexual aggression was further negotiated alongside Ramirez and Swetnick, which aggravated AsJ Kavanaugh's identity as a perpetrator.

The corpora also discussed the identities of Dr. Ford's and AsJ Kavanaugh's families as collateral victims. However, the portrayal of both families greatly differed from one another. On the one hand, Dr. Ford's family was depicted as victims of death

threats and doxing from AsJ Kavanaugh's supporters. On the other hand, his family was constructed as indirect political victims since the family man was suffering the consequences of the allegations. However, his wife and daughters were also portrayed as direct victims of violence. Tweeters frequently discussed their potential as victims of domestic violence through negative prosodies and negative evaluative resources relating to mistreatment and fear. Moreover, the analysis in Chapter 8 revealed that Tweeters accused him of using his daughters to clear his image. These accusations, in turn, strengthened AsJ Kavanaugh's identity as a perpetrator of sexual violence and a potential batterer.

In contrast, the discursive construction of perpetrator identities was more fluid even though Kavanaugh was depicted as the main perpetrator in both corpora. More specifically, he was described both as a sexual assaulter (Chapter 6) and a potential rapist (Chapter 7). Additionally, his identity was also surrounded by negative evaluative prosodies concerning perjury, drinking habits, and incapacity to be a fair Justice. In contrast, AsJ Kavanaugh's supporters created positive semantic and discourse prosodies in opposition to Dr. Ford. AsJ Kavanaugh was described as the ideal candidate, a family man, and, most importantly for this thesis, as innocent of the sexual assault allegations. This positive portrayal of Kavanaugh as a political victim drew from antifeminist discourses which further denied Dr. Ford's testimony (RQ.1.1).

The second set of social actors who were frequently portrayed as perpetrators were Donald Trump and the GOP, especially the Republican Senators who were present during the hearing. This out-group of privileged men was publicly denounced for perpetuating rape culture and reinforcing patriarchal oppression in society. Tweeters also denounced Trump's intention to create a majority of Republican Justices in SCOTUS to perpetuate and reinforce patriarchal oppression in higher institutions. According to Twitter users, this would allow the impunity of white male perpetrators in power as well as the spread of conservative views in American society by modifying the law. In fact, AsJ Kavanaugh's conservative views were considered to be detrimental to women's rights in issues such as abortion, which further constructed American women as direct political victims of the confirmation process. The impact of the confirmation process became evident when the *Roe v. Wade* ruling was overturned on June 24th, 2022.

In addition, AsJ Kavanaugh's identity as a perpetrator of sexual violence was often negotiated by mirroring Donald Trump's identity since the former president was

frequently constructed as an admitted sexual aggressor. Furthermore, Trump was also depicted as a political perpetrator. This depiction of perpetrators and perpetrators of gender inequality was closely related to the construction of the different members of the GOP as perpetrators of verbal aggression. Donald Trump and Republican Senators were criticized for verbal abuse and aggression against Dr. Ford during the process. Tweeters denounced that Dr. Ford was mocked by the former POTUS as well as constantly questioned by the members of the GOP (see Palomino-Manjón, 2022a). Thus, the dismissal of Dr. Ford's testimony reproduced and sustained discourses derived from the rape culture (RQ1.1).

Additionally, the corpora, especially *#NoKC*, included feminist discourses conveyed by personal narratives of sexual violence written by victim-survivors themselves (RQ1.1). However, in contrast to the findings in Palomino-Manjón (2022a), some users did not focus on the construction of victim-survivor identities but described men as the perpetrators of their stories to compare them to AsJ Kavanaugh, which, therefore, emphasized his identity description as a perpetrator of sexual violence. However, some women were also constructed as perpetrators by AsJ Kavanaugh's supporters. This construction was conveyed by creating an out-group of women, mostly feminists with a right-wing ideology, who supported Dr. Ford. In turn, this portrayed men and AsJ Kavanaugh as victims of false accusations of sexual violence prompted by feminist movements, thus contributing to the creation of antifeminist discourses and male victimization (RQ1.1) (Boyle, 2019).

Lastly, the most unstable identity which was identified in the corpora was that of Dr. Ford. As has been mentioned in the paragraphs above, Dr. Ford was vastly described as a victim of sexual violence and as a victim of verbal and political violence. Nevertheless, the data also revealed that many Twitter users in the *#KC* corpus described her as a liar and as a left-wing activist. As a result, she was portrayed as a political aggressor together with the Democratic Party. However, AsJ Kavanaugh's supporters sometimes did depict her as a victim of political violence as well. These users blamed the Democratic Party for using sexual violence and Dr. Ford's testimony as tools only to delay and prevent the confirmation. These results demonstrate that those tweeters who affiliated around *#KavanaughConfirmation* came into conflict and formed different discursive subcommunities as they constantly tried to renegotiate her identity (Bou-Franch, 2021a; De Cock and Pizarro Pedraza, 2018).

On the other hand, the second objective of this Ph.D. thesis was to identify the use of evaluative resources by Twitter users to enact discourse prosodies regarding gender-based violence as well as to maintain, constrain, and oppose gendered ideologies and discourses. Therefore, RQ2 reads as follows:

Research question 2: What evaluative resources did tweeters draw upon to signal different gender ideologies and discourses? Were these resources employed to sustain or challenge gender (in)equality and sexual violence?

It was hypothesized that tweeters would draw upon negative evaluative resources to condemn sexual violence. The use of evaluative resources was expected to construct discourses relating to violence and crime to condemn rape culture and gendered power structures in American society. Moreover, the hypothesis also considered the co-existence of feminist and antifeminist discourses in the corpora to (dis)affiliate with Dr. Ford and AsJ Kavanaugh as well as to sustain or challenge patriarchal discourses.

As expected, the different analyses revealed a strong use of negative evaluation, which was conveyed through APPRAISAL resources (Chapter 8). The negative assessment of the social actors, (sexual) violence and the event itself was frequently expressed through lexis concerning *Veracity* and *Propriety* (i.e., immoral and unethical evaluations). In addition, the use of evaluative language was greatly intensified through GRADUATION resources to offer stronger negative evaluations and collective distress. These assessments resulted in different discourses concerning (sexual) violence and gender ideology and inequality.

Discourses of violence concerning politics and gender-based aggression were the most frequent discourses. Discourses of sexual violence focused on AsJ Kavanaugh and Donald Trump and portrayed them as perpetrators. In addition to verbal aggression, the GOP was also depicted as a political aggressor for hiding and fabricating evidence to sustain patriarchal oppression in society through the SCOTUS. Discourses of truth and falsehood were enacted through assessments of *Veracity*. Contrary to expectations, APPRECIATION resources were not employed to negatively evaluate the physical appearance and fashion of victim-survivors. In turn, they were used to negatively assess the allegations and, thus, evoke negative *Veracity*. In addition, discourses of falsehood constructed Dr. Ford as a political aggressor (i.e., a liar and a manipulator) and AsJ Kavanaugh as a perjurer concerning his testimony during the hearings. However, the

discourse of truth contributed to constructing Dr. Ford as a reliable narrator, which challenged traditional rape discourses.

As hypothesized, the corpora included feminist and antifeminist discourses. Both discourses coexisted in the *#KC* corpus, whereas *#NoKC* only featured discourses derived from feminism. This proves, once again, the multifunctionality of *#KavanaughConfirmation* as tweeters made use of hegemonic and counter-hegemonic discourses. Feminist discourses were varied, but the most predominant ones were those concerning empowerment and emotional pain. Discourses of empowerment constructed women as powerful and resolute individuals through assessments of positive JUDGMENT, especially with the subsystems relating to *Social Esteem*. Female empowerment was also conveyed through *Trust* and positive *Veracity* to express support and render victim-survivors' testimonies credible, especially when referring to Dr. Ford and Anita Hill. This discourse of empowerment and support works as a counter-hegemonic discourse to traditional rape scripts (Loney-Howes, 2019), in which testimonies of rape can only be approved by authorities. Therefore, the fact that tweeters expressed their explicit support for these women in opposition to the denial of the testimony by Donald Trump and the Republican Senators presented a form of digital discursive protest (Lazar, 2018). Moreover, this discourse also serves as a tool to resist discourses of femininity that victimize women and portray them as weak individuals (Boyle 2019). These results echo early research on gender and DMC (e.g., Herring et al., 1995); women still use digital platforms to build solidarity among themselves and support one another publicly (Clark-Parsons, 2021) and to resist the patriarchal oppression and rape discourses that try to silence them (Jones et al., 2022; Palomino-Manjón, 2022a).

Discourses of fear and emotional pain were also part of networked feminism. The use of evaluative resources concerning negative AFFECT has been proven to be a crucial part of networked activism (Chiluwa & Ifukor, 2015; Palomino-Manjón, 2022a) to express collective emotions and build solidarity with victim-survivors. Such discourses signaled emotional distress from tweeters, especially those who sided with Dr. Ford or identified themselves as women. In addition, these discourses were employed by victim-survivors themselves to tell their stories of sexual assault, thus building solidarity with Dr. Ford and relating to the emotions that she described during the hearing. Therefore, it can be suggested that *#NoKavanaughConfirmation* also acted as a form of networked feminism as most of these self-narratives were identified in the *#NoKC* corpus.

In contrast, antifeminist discourses were prompted by male victimhood. Feminism was constructed as detrimental to men, especially concerning the emergence of the MeToo Movement. Therefore, men were considered to be victims, whereas women were portrayed as perpetrators. Male victimhood was frequently accompanied by victim-blaming discourses, hate speech, and aggressive behavior (Frenda et al., 2019). This confrontation was, in fact, one of the strategies identified by Herring et al. (1995), which was used to intimidate and silence women as well as to depict women as perpetrators. Consequently, early forms of verbal aggression against women and power imbalance (Dibbell, 1993) persist in digital platforms decades later to sustain patriarchal oppression, as has also been observed in more recent research on online platforms (Bou-Franch, 2013; Bou-Franch & Garcés-Conejos Blitvich, 2014b) and the manosphere (Heritage & Koller, 2020; Jaki et al., 2019; Krendel et al., 2022).

Research on gender inequality and sexual violence in social media is steadily gaining momentum and attracting the attention of (critical) discourse analysts. Nevertheless, this dissertation argued that there is still a vast number of topics and issues which need to be studied and addressed further. The findings from this thesis make several contributions to the current literature. It has provided a deeper understanding of how tweeters use particular hashtags to bond and rally around topics of social relevance such as those of sexual violence and verbal aggression against victim-survivors (Papacharissi, 2016; Zappavigna, 2012). In addition, the analysis and comparison of the hashtags *#NoKavanaughConfirmation* and *#KavanaughConfirmation* contributed to our understanding of how Internet users still use digital platforms to negotiate gender dynamics and reproduce patriarchal discourses. These reflect the gender inequality and oppression that remains prevalent in the offline world (Herring, 1999). In contrast, this dissertation also examined how some tweeters employ the platform to generate counter-hegemonic discourses to form discursive protests in networked feminism. However, it might be argued that this particular protest ended as a form of slacktivism (Chiluwa & Ifukor, 2015) since AsJ Kavanaugh was confirmed to SCOTUS and Dr. Ford continued being doxed and threatened by GOP supporters.

On the other hand, this dissertation has also provided some insights into the discursive construction of victim-perpetrator identities by ordinary people (i.e., tweeters). It has supported previous research which described identities as fluid and negotiable (Bucholtz & Hall 2005) depending on the users' ideologies and socio-political

communities. In turn, it showed how tweeters curated their online persona and negotiated their online identity (Adroutsopoulos, 2006; Bou-Franch, 2022) depending on the hashtag they used and the discourses from which they draw support or disaffiliation.

9.2. Limitations and future research

This thesis has presented different analyses of Twitter data concerning (verbal) sexual aggression against women. However, the study is not without limitations. The major limitation of this research lies in the compilation of the data. The analyses presented in this thesis are mostly text-based and do not include any type of multimodal data such as the images and videos embedded in the tweets⁷⁶. Multimodality and paralinguistic resources contribute to the negotiation of meaning and, therefore, are relevant to the study of DMC. However, CADS is mainly text-based and does not deal with the use of multimodality and semiotic resources, a point that has already been noted in the literature (KhosraviNik & Unger, 2016). Even though some analytical nuances may escape scrutiny, the advantage of adopting CADS is that this approach allows for the analysis of ideological discourses in large corpora. This section has proven that adopting a CADS approach was useful to address the objectives of this dissertation.

Another limitation related to the corpora is the hashtags that were selected for the analysis. As mentioned in Chapter 4, tweeters used a wide range of hashtags to comment on the event (e.g., *#KavanaughHearings*) and to express support for either Dr. Ford (e.g., *#WeBelieveFord* and *#WhyIDidntReport*) or AsJ Kavanaugh (e.g., *#BeersForBrett* and *#HimToo*). The addition of such hashtags to the dataset would have provided a more in-depth analysis of the different socio-political stances of tweeters. Yet, the comparison between two opposing hashtags provided significant insights into the discourses of sexual violence and the identity construction of social actors on Twitter.

The generalizability of these results is also subject to certain limitations. For instance, AsJ Kavanaugh's confirmation process is linked to American politics and society. This work offers valuable insights into the discourses produced by ordinary people to negotiate identities and (re)produce, challenge, and sustain patriarchal discourses and gendered asymmetry in society. However, the results of this thesis cannot

⁷⁶ However, Chapter 8 did take into account the use of emojis to express emotions or regulate the impact of the evaluative resources (i.e., GRADUATION).

be considered to represent all discourses regarding (sexual) violence against women on Twitter.

Future research based on this Ph.D. dissertation would contribute to our better understanding of tweeter's perception of sexual violence as well as the negotiation of the discourses linked to it. As was briefly mentioned in Chapter 7, the keyword analysis did not scrutinize those keywords relating to the names and surnames of Senators, Justices, and lawyers other than AsJ Kavanaugh and Dr. Ford. This decision was taken after a qualitative reading of those keywords in context. It was determined that the analysis of these social actors would not contribute to the objectives of this research, and the few instances in which some of the Senators were depicted as perpetrators were discussed in the first section of the chapter. However, it cannot be ignored that the aforementioned authorities played an important role in the outcome of the confirmation process (Kaur, 2022), as was shown when examining more generalized groups of social actors. Consequently, further work should be carried out to fully understand how tweeters perceived the role of individual authorities during the process.

Another fruitful area for further work would be the inclusion of gender variables in the data. Previous research has shown that the gender of tweeters has an impact on language use, therefore, on the reproduction of discourses relating to violence against women and feminism (Moriwaka, 2019a, 2019b). It would be interesting to examine if the gender of tweeters plays a role during the negotiation of the identities of victims and perpetrators of (sexual) violence as well as in the reproduction of their (gendered) ideological stances and discourses.

Despite the aforementioned limitations, this Ph.D. thesis has advanced our knowledge of the discourses and ideologies which surround violence against women and, more precisely, sexual violence as well as their co-existence on the microblogging platform Twitter. In addition, it has also proven the methodological synergy between CADS, FCDA and Appraisal Theory to be effective to the study of gender-related social media data.

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APPENDIX I
Frequency list

APPENDIX I: FREQUENCY LIST

#NoKC

#NoKC					
Rank	Word	Frequency	Rank	Word	Frequency
1	the	15364	51	right	1096
2	to	11482	52	out	1094
3	and	7775	53	him	1091
4	you	7717	54	sexual	1083
5	is	6868	55	from	1051
6	of	6580	56	why	1047
7	this	4901	57	one	1038
8	for	4559	58	her	1029
9	he	4286	59	like	1025
10	in	3971	60	now	1007
11	not	3609	61	investigation	1000
12	that	3606	62	it's	997
13	on	3440	63	know	995
14	are	3353	64	can	993
15	it	3274	65	please	969
16	kavanaugh	3178	66	their	963
17	be	2989	67	there	958
18	your	2559	68	would	955
19	no	2551	69	people	937
20	we	2495	70	she	913
21	his	2450	71	our	909
22	have	2091	72	ford	879
23	women	2069	73	when	861
24	with	2052	74	more	853
25	will	1961	75	fbi	853
26	all	1878	76	assault	833
27	they	1875	77	me	793
28	do	1870	78	dr	757

29	if	1840	79	time	741
30	vote	1808	80	get	738
31	was	1770	81	never	728
32	who	1727	82	trump	726
33	what	1690	83	them	717
34	so	1613	84	us	690
35	about	1612	85	want	667
36	an	1421	86	supreme	663
37	at	1320	87	gop	661
38	i	1298	88	men	655
39	has	1291	89	did	648
40	my	1285	90	because	627
41	just	1258	91	need	613
42	as	1215	92	any	612
43	how	1211	93	he's	608
44	should	1194	94	even	603
45	up	1193	95	thing	596
46	or	1174	96	i'm	595
47	by	1138	97	say	594
48	court	1138	98	too	582
49	don't	1132	99	scotus	582
50	but	1128	100	thank	574

#KC

#KC					
Rank	Word	Frequency	Rank	Word	Frequency
1	the	79881	51	she	5010
2	to	50076	52	out	4990
3	a	39392	53	how	4920
4	and	32611	54	their	4803
5	is	32384	55	it's	4766
6	of	31273	56	my	4580

Appendix I: Frequency List

7	you	22833	57	don't	4461
8	in	21032	58	when	4430
9	this	20624	59	can	4409
10	for	20317	60	court	4353
11	i	18892	61	should	4178
12	that	16366	62	ford	4159
13	on	16087	63	get	4127
14	be	13439	64	one	4102
15	it	13096	65	would	4038
16	are	13076	66	people	3982
17	not	12156	67	why	3744
18	have	10465	68	more	3663
19	kavanaugh	10326	69	him	3631
20	he	9915	70	know	3568
21	will	9571	71	right	3528
22	with	9193	72	there	3521
23	we	9037	73	time	3469
24	they	8759	74	judge	3458
25	if	8442	75	me	3429
26	all	8253	76	supreme	3393
27	what	8101	77	our	3385
28	was	7735	78	i'm	3249
29	your	7411	79	senate	3138
30	vote	7403	80	fbi	3112
31	as	7326	81	today	3066
32	no	7315	82	sexual	3065
33	about	7196	83	been	3008
34	his	6703	84	investigation	2990
35	so	6701	85	brett	2938
36	who	6510	86	democrats	2861
37	just	6422	87	them	2838
38	has	6150	88	think	2828
39	at	6050	89	us	2810

40	but	6044	90	did	2789
41	now	5737	91	over	2779
42	do	5691	92	these	2757
43	an	5661	93	going	2697
44	like	5562	94	want	2626
45	her	5551	95	justice	2600
46	by	5523	96	because	2580
47	or	5348	97	man	2579
48	from	5220	98	good	2522
49	women	5152	99	dr	2501
50	up	5106	100	after	2489

APPENDIX II
Collocation list of frequent words
in *#KC* and *#NoKC*

APPENDIX II: COLLOCATION LIST OF FREQUENT WORDS IN #KC AND #NoKC**He**

He (#NoKC)						He (#KC)					
Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Stat	Collocate	Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Stat	Collocate
1	1609	800	809	35.24832	the	1	4024	2042	1982	54.81313	the
2	1360	504	856	34.51519	is	2	3249	1353	1896	53.11227	is
3	1298	649	649	34.23024	he	3	2908	1176	1732	48.91285	a
4	1316	574	742	32.26099	to	4	3011	1276	1735	48.62525	to
5	947	496	451	27.56745	and	5	2188	1094	1094	44.99191	he
6	637	299	338	24.00639	his	6	2121	1196	925	41.21307	and
7	651	219	432	23.71755	not	7	1572	1108	464	36.58074	that
8	604	192	412	23.53620	was	8	1353	351	1002	35.34501	was
9	601	401	200	22.49177	that	9	1226	532	694	33.70566	his
10	591	356	235	20.87250	of	10	1509	893	616	33.33877	of
11	493	248	245	19.67413	it	11	1280	389	891	33.20552	be
12	457	140	317	19.60097	be	12	1225	459	766	32.62063	not
13	459	234	225	18.72171	for	13	1239	595	644	31.08883	in
14	406	223	183	17.98074	on	14	991	803	188	29.64174	if
15	351	95	256	17.86050	has	15	1076	545	531	29.04178	it
16	320	72	248	17.56955	lied	16	1008	534	474	28.27549	on
17	352	276	76	17.51465	if	17	1076	598	478	27.84530	i
18	389	321	68	17.38405	kavanaugh	18	1030	529	501	27.76405	for
19	376	191	185	16.78206	in	19	837	224	613	27.47659	has
20	383	220	163	16.38825	this	20	911	512	399	25.50351	this
21	326	193	133	16.25822	no	21	788	613	175	25.21154	kavanaugh
22	285	203	82	15.47129	what	22	652	266	386	25.01704	said
23	245	107	138	14.49720	an	23	721	471	250	24.60451	what
24	225	82	143	14.44881	did	24	708	184	524	24.14795	will
25	246	130	116	14.36815	so	25	626	501	125	23.80637	when
26	225	177	48	14.26874	when	26	572	240	332	23.11744	did
27	221	153	68	13.81943	how	27	606	362	244	22.58059	as
28	212	74	138	13.71891	would	28	582	400	182	22.40832	but
29	217	38	179	13.69448	should	29	636	187	449	22.38260	have
30	212	186	26	13.60830	him	30	593	310	283	22.32967	about
31	235	61	174	13.59671	have	31	559	319	240	21.69246	so
32	366	208	158	13.58848	you	32	536	185	351	21.24838	can
33	222	106	116	13.52772	about	33	523	303	220	21.20142	like
34	193	148	45	13.32013	because	34	497	419	78	21.17940	him
35	186	62	124	13.17700	under	35	528	213	315	21.06564	just
36	219	66	153	13.11400	will	36	534	262	272	20.92719	no
37	195	75	120	12.68837	can	37	510	186	324	20.86494	an
38	186	144	42	12.58657	but	38	483	122	361	20.66494	should

39	189	89	100	12.57813	just	39	542	271	271	20.57959	with
40	170	37	133	12.56087	doesn	40	722	387	335	20.49757	you
41	183	97	86	12.56036	like	41	443	136	307	20.46614	confirmed
42	180	126	54	12.42492	why	42	442	359	83	20.18464	because
43	202	103	99	12.38094	with	43	455	343	112	19.73967	how
44	162	51	111	12.30848	said	44	431	131	300	19.40587	would
45	183	88	95	12.28758	at	45	442	274	168	19.15341	now
46	177	102	75	12.14606	as	46	380	180	200	18.82130	does
47	154	54	100	12.03568	oath	47	375	99	276	18.71251	doesn
48	172	129	43	11.35705	vote	48	400	223	177	17.92250	at
49	171	96	75	11.34961	who	49	370	280	90	17.88910	why
50	140	58	82	11.27272	does	50	425	247	178	17.77312	all
51	130	43	87	11.14262	himself	51	372	192	180	17.50076	out
52	145	89	56	10.99272	know	52	366	212	154	17.21713	or
53	143	91	52	10.88405	now	53	334	211	123	16.95552	judge
54	137	65	72	10.83798	me	54	377	198	179	16.80007	vote
55	160	85	75	10.76339	do	55	297	212	85	16.74642	says
56	157	89	68	10.57369	all	56	277	77	200	15.96100	didn't
57	138	74	64	10.54914	out	57	327	145	182	15.92371	do
58	160	72	88	10.39347	i	58	290	184	106	15.91676	man
59	113	24	89	10.16133	didn'tt	59	290	73	217	15.82167	been
60	107	24	83	10.04373	unfit	60	314	158	156	15.70145	up
61	128	102	26	10.03035	court	61	266	71	195	15.46492	had
62	111	46	65	10.01810	lying	62	313	134	179	15.41355	she
63	150	74	76	9.96650	women	63	258	128	130	15.09206	even
64	117	37	80	9.94912	never	64	298	142	156	15.07265	by
65	123	58	65	9.91399	her	65	234	53	181	15.06792	lied
66	126	76	50	9.89758	or	66	281	104	177	15.06740	get
67	128	66	62	9.87231	my	67	292	151	141	14.99915	from
68	120	53	67	9.74013	one	68	262	209	53	14.99010	think
69	99	51	48	9.57900	partisan	69	259	49	210	14.94842	going
70	116	56	60	9.53290	from	70	273	203	70	14.70356	court
71	115	70	45	9.40769	right	71	262	184	78	14.67646	know
72	115	60	55	9.28116	up	72	261	111	150	14.63250	right
73	100	61	39	9.25817	scotus	73	229	107	122	14.49881	beer
74	94	50	44	9.23889	lies	74	232	145	87	14.25900	say
75	89	25	64	9.17187	liar	75	211	69	142	14.10578	guilty
76	111	64	47	9.16354	by	76	197	65	132	13.77474	knows
77	84	11	73	8.96315	fit	77	201	78	123	13.74273	innocent
78	95	49	46	8.95967	even	78	240	111	129	13.63157	one
79	106	47	59	8.93833	there	79	214	59	155	13.56614	never
80	80	41	39	8.74579	knows	80	222	156	66	13.52483	investigation
81	136	74	62	8.71404	we	81	224	128	96	13.52353	fbi
82	79	43	36	8.69702	innocent	82	305	138	167	13.49117	we
83	83	33	50	8.65946	could	83	224	130	94	13.41305	supreme

Appendix II: Collocation list of frequent words in #KC and #NoKC

84	94	55	39	8.61370	trump	84	249	146	103	13.41247	women
85	83	29	54	8.60657	had	85	186	58	128	13.36463	himself
86	99	43	56	8.54923	sexual	86	184	38	146	13.26545	wants
87	86	47	39	8.51744	judge	87	220	119	101	13.22974	me
88	86	57	29	8.48326	man	88	205	145	60	13.14815	believe
89	88	61	27	8.48325	supreme	89	189	43	146	13.14684	got
90	86	45	41	8.43540	any	90	191	42	149	12.99017	still
91	82	45	37	8.33000	rape	91	200	143	57	12.93668	after
92	75	43	32	8.28101	says	92	249	151	98	12.81535	who
93	81	36	45	8.27719	being	93	171	68	103	12.78095	drunk
94	72	24	48	8.16248	confirmed	94	209	114	95	12.72227	more
95	73	24	49	8.15366	already	95	173	85	88	12.70671	angry
96	80	25	55	8.13898	been	96	195	126	69	12.67981	trump
97	70	22	48	8.13319	guilty	97	187	82	105	12.44763	being
98	70	33	37	8.06195	drunk	98	177	73	104	12.41975	too
99	78	52	26	8.00616	believe	99	186	96	90	12.36313	good
100	77	32	45	7.92957	too	100	221	100	121	12.30873	her

His

His (#NoKC)						His (#KC)					
Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Stat	Collocate	Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Stat	Collocate
1	673	334	339	24.11561	and	1	1923	1247	676	39.55997	to
2	637	338	299	24.00639	he	2	1733	971	762	38.68873	and
3	635	415	220	22.42246	to	3	1873	887	986	36.33964	the
4	609	275	334	20.88044	the	4	1226	694	532	33.70566	he
5	479	300	179	20.05180	of	5	1232	606	626	31.63352	is
6	470	215	255	19.74879	is	6	1190	775	415	31.09153	of
7	376	188	188	18.62020	his	7	1037	667	370	29.73555	in
8	332	226	106	16.88742	in	8	1022	514	508	27.32596	a
9	255	160	95	14.65433	on	9	760	380	380	26.65554	his
10	250	209	41	14.40996	kavanaugh	10	841	545	296	26.36931	for
11	249	162	87	14.01729	for	11	734	428	306	24.85754	on
12	200	105	95	12.45728	that	12	658	529	129	23.93324	kavanaugh
13	170	138	32	12.28536	about	13	602	227	375	20.89700	i
14	178	96	82	11.69085	not	14	476	334	142	20.23481	with
15	184	78	106	11.35950	this	15	529	287	242	20.09652	that
16	148	112	36	11.13766	with	16	417	318	99	19.09676	about
17	173	96	77	11.10196	it	17	412	205	207	18.86689	was
18	146	61	85	11.06681	was	18	359	27	332	18.77999	family
19	146	83	63	10.57331	be	19	489	222	267	18.60673	this
20	110	10	100	10.33826	own	20	355	235	120	18.11769	him
21	121	74	47	9.92967	all	21	440	214	226	17.74731	it
22	100	16	84	9.84834	behavior	22	386	214	172	17.31964	not
23	117	60	57	9.77773	if	23	323	214	109	16.68679	has
24	129	44	85	9.56024	are	24	372	184	188	16.66829	be

25	176	71	105	9.42737	you	25	293	135	158	15.50924	as
26	100	62	38	9.33427	him	26	278	162	116	15.30511	at
27	101	60	41	9.32017	should	27	299	142	157	15.21298	will
28	98	53	45	9.08549	at	28	397	147	250	15.20653	you
29	102	68	34	9.02541	who	29	230	19	211	14.99185	name
30	92	56	36	8.92426	from	30	279	129	150	14.80097	if
31	81	12	69	8.83284	temperament	31	286	143	143	14.58920	have
32	90	49	41	8.44160	so	32	220	28	192	14.52383	life
33	86	57	29	8.42504	has	33	292	94	198	14.21556	are
34	72	9	63	8.39986	wife	34	258	146	112	14.05939	all
35	98	54	44	8.32502	no	35	214	178	36	13.91761	man
36	88	46	42	8.16147	what	36	250	118	132	13.71634	what
37	76	48	28	8.14000	trump	37	199	25	174	13.66528	confirmation
38	91	49	42	8.13278	women	38	211	157	54	13.61391	judge
39	69	37	32	7.99132	lying	39	228	131	97	13.50165	just
40	65	8	57	7.94138	name	40	215	111	104	13.11244	but
41	67	20	47	7.92566	lies	41	173	11	162	12.91850	own
42	67	28	39	7.90780	hearing	42	211	123	88	12.86030	can
43	66	10	56	7.88787	life	43	168	11	157	12.85989	wife
44	74	59	15	7.79515	by	44	201	102	99	12.75941	or
45	72	41	31	7.79187	would	45	209	145	64	12.68033	who
46	84	55	29	7.77288	have	46	197	131	66	12.63939	from
47	73	46	27	7.75270	out	47	199	123	76	12.63532	by
48	63	5	58	7.72546	nomination	48	204	89	115	12.50993	so
49	81	44	37	7.66948	will	49	186	91	95	12.47710	should
50	60	37	23	7.61622	during	50	159	20	139	12.35366	nomination
51	59	16	43	7.45039	partisan	51	188	125	63	12.27899	up
52	71	33	38	7.41054	can	52	181	100	81	12.21444	when
53	56	16	40	7.38076	past	53	178	89	89	12.18431	would
54	66	31	35	7.36456	now	54	189	90	99	12.17730	now
55	68	32	36	7.33992	how	55	182	92	90	11.93851	like
56	67	30	37	7.24181	just	56	177	100	77	11.88212	out
57	74	26	48	7.00921	i	57	192	92	100	11.85916	no
58	63	35	28	7.00489	as	58	173	89	84	11.73626	how
59	53	42	11	6.90362	lied	59	167	89	78	11.64583	court
60	60	28	32	6.85663	but	60	153	87	66	11.52011	over
61	59	28	31	6.80968	sexual	61	172	86	86	11.49041	an
62	62	35	27	6.77094	an	62	149	94	55	11.41302	because
63	48	7	41	6.75677	testimony	63	180	73	107	11.33744	vote
64	57	31	26	6.71726	like	64	135	22	113	11.26346	testimony
65	55	29	26	6.70578	when	65	148	105	43	11.22808	brett
66	48	11	37	6.67765	job	66	144	83	61	11.12559	did
67	49	27	22	6.56842	under	67	128	82	46	10.98875	during
68	56	29	27	6.52695	or	68	117	26	91	10.61862	character
69	56	37	19	6.49032	up	69	115	17	98	10.55029	behavior

Appendix II: Collocation list of frequent words in #KC and #NoKC

70	63	25	38	6.33344	they	70	129	88	41	10.49078	trump
71	69	32	37	6.31877	we	71	125	55	70	10.35625	being
72	44	26	18	6.29718	oath	72	125	70	55	10.34316	after
73	41	9	32	6.24902	drinking	73	170	78	92	10.18705	they
74	51	16	35	6.24674	why	74	113	34	79	9.96738	way
75	44	21	23	6.09608	too	75	121	49	72	9.83943	supreme
76	46	27	19	6.06389	me	76	122	47	75	9.75811	why
77	43	26	17	6.04379	judge	77	161	53	108	9.68617	we
78	42	24	18	6.00236	over	78	114	62	52	9.43889	time
79	45	24	21	5.95005	assault	79	93	18	75	9.40908	statement
80	40	24	16	5.76791	man	80	103	31	72	9.36229	hearing
81	45	31	14	5.75574	one	81	116	73	43	9.32134	get
82	46	29	17	5.75406	court	82	114	57	57	9.19505	one
83	35	30	5	5.75135	clear	83	94	49	45	9.18615	through
84	47	23	24	5.71311	my	84	122	47	75	9.15559	her
85	35	9	26	5.69061	confirmation	85	85	8	77	9.11985	reputation
86	34	4	30	5.67844	character	86	90	20	70	9.08704	school
87	33	8	25	5.65762	anger	87	85	16	69	9.07143	calendar
88	35	21	14	5.64737	off	88	103	54	49	9.03626	been
89	39	26	13	5.63347	because	89	106	35	71	8.98351	right
90	38	18	20	5.62295	only	90	95	63	32	8.90311	against
91	36	12	24	5.59090	way	91	83	19	64	8.88148	past
92	33	20	13	5.54735	questions	92	83	19	64	8.86131	face
93	39	20	19	5.50863	time	93	83	21	62	8.83742	drinking
94	50	30	20	5.50508	vote	94	99	48	51	8.78898	sexual
95	31	4	27	5.49666	calendar	95	85	13	72	8.77602	high
96	50	22	28	5.45081	do	96	94	44	50	8.71061	good
97	36	27	9	5.40817	brett	97	100	39	61	8.70687	today
98	31	8	23	5.40039	interview	98	84	57	27	8.68543	god
99	30	2	28	5.37714	hand	99	78	17	61	8.66652	temperament
100	30	29	1	5.35713	withdraw	100	87	43	44	8.63640	before

Him

Him (#NoKC)						Him (#KC)					
Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Stat	Collocate	Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Stat	Collocate
1	415	222	193	18.84109	to	1	1393	825	568	34.58941	to
2	365	146	219	16.91932	the	2	1358	520	838	32.43405	the
3	212	26	186	13.60830	he	3	756	360	396	25.08215	and
4	195	89	106	12.45220	and	4	665	220	445	22.66775	a
5	155	86	69	11.01313	of	5	577	351	226	22.29927	for
6	145	88	57	11.01250	for	6	544	262	282	21.24897	i
7	153	60	93	10.86153	is	7	497	78	419	21.17940	he
8	157	72	85	10.71878	you	8	500	163	337	19.41129	is
9	117	48	69	9.81579	in	9	489	237	252	19.23424	of
10	110	29	81	9.59638	on	10	411	126	285	18.14908	in

11	100	38	62	9.33427	his	11	355	120	235	18.11769	his
12	107	59	48	9.31770	that	12	414	199	215	17.84247	you
13	89	52	37	8.84338	with	13	370	190	180	17.35353	that
14	98	45	53	8.68528	it	14	355	132	223	17.09951	on
15	84	51	33	8.54627	they	15	310	202	108	16.46226	they
16	87	45	42	8.53857	we	16	293	179	114	16.02383	with
17	74	37	37	8.25749	him	17	321	149	172	15.86737	it
18	91	30	61	8.14222	this	18	292	93	199	14.62825	this
19	80	35	45	7.84707	not	19	239	95	144	14.34552	if
20	75	41	34	7.60980	are	20	214	107	107	14.12345	him
21	67	31	36	7.51692	was	21	231	140	91	13.79799	have
22	65	19	46	7.51423	so	22	213	143	70	13.55858	vote
23	59	14	45	7.28895	out	23	180	171	9	13.08417	against
24	62	35	27	7.24739	vote	24	217	123	94	13.04846	not
25	62	22	40	7.23809	if	25	194	137	57	12.92890	who
26	62	43	19	7.15192	have	26	197	117	80	12.64757	will
27	64	22	42	7.13188	no	27	199	119	80	12.64289	we
28	60	19	41	6.95764	i	28	207	74	133	12.48438	be
29	55	22	33	6.90204	can	29	200	102	98	12.45275	kavanaugh
30	51	43	8	6.68387	should	30	200	96	104	12.26079	are
31	47	40	7	6.59042	want	31	177	64	113	11.95450	what
32	58	27	31	6.54848	be	32	161	76	85	11.84961	up
33	48	35	13	6.52394	like	33	157	76	81	11.62406	like
34	51	39	12	6.46460	who	34	162	72	90	11.49101	was
35	44	40	4	6.46018	against	35	164	67	97	11.44447	all
36	51	27	24	6.39429	will	36	155	36	119	11.25152	as
37	40	38	2	6.29709	disqualify	37	153	87	66	11.18466	about
38	57	26	31	6.24208	kavanaugh	38	148	56	92	11.14907	at
39	44	27	17	6.20406	why	39	128	122	6	11.11923	confirm
40	44	30	14	6.15742	don'tt	40	147	93	54	11.04273	can
41	42	26	16	6.07621	would	41	138	47	91	10.84305	from
42	45	14	31	5.94842	what	42	139	58	81	10.74460	but
43	43	30	13	5.89027	about	43	132	93	39	10.74204	should
44	40	16	24	5.83923	but	44	131	75	56	10.71424	would
45	43	16	27	5.75742	all	45	133	43	90	10.64335	out
46	39	22	17	5.67005	at	46	141	52	89	10.61102	no
47	38	19	19	5.60616	just	47	123	96	27	10.60703	want
48	35	14	21	5.54909	me	48	134	46	88	10.56487	now
49	35	23	12	5.53670	trump	49	136	59	77	10.54035	just
50	36	15	21	5.46852	or	50	121	87	34	10.52250	let
51	32	20	12	5.44576	call	51	124	43	81	9.90289	so
52	32	24	8	5.38291	let	52	107	79	28	9.86225	believe
53	35	15	20	5.35642	up	53	118	65	53	9.75850	she
54	31	25	6	5.34647	make	54	112	70	42	9.70739	don't
55	38	18	20	5.33628	do	55	108	74	34	9.57830	get

Appendix II: Collocation list of frequent words in #KC and #NoKC

56	35	18	17	5.32614	my	56	102	45	57	9.33640	why
57	33	6	27	5.24803	from	57	110	60	50	9.29414	has
58	33	8	25	5.22394	there	58	106	37	69	9.23717	or
59	38	29	9	5.19452	women	59	102	55	47	8.98546	by
60	32	8	24	5.10753	court	60	101	49	52	8.89350	do
61	27	27	0	5.08334	confirm	61	95	24	71	8.82902	court
62	32	11	21	5.07394	as	62	91	47	44	8.59207	when
63	30	15	15	4.99362	please	63	94	32	62	8.50425	an
64	28	7	21	4.99146	scotus	64	93	60	33	8.49086	women
65	28	18	10	4.91094	get	65	78	66	12	8.46336	allegations
66	26	20	6	4.88772	someone	66	85	43	42	8.43059	know
67	31	10	21	4.87268	an	67	81	31	50	8.41661	because
68	27	8	19	4.86867	because	68	88	32	56	8.30413	how
69	29	19	10	4.84894	she	69	81	21	60	8.17079	more
70	30	15	15	4.83704	has	70	75	52	23	8.14602	see
71	25	8	17	4.77800	stop	71	81	60	21	8.08470	people
72	24	0	24	4.76325	unfit	72	67	53	14	7.93965	give
73	24	18	6	4.70232	enough	73	71	49	22	7.79265	trump
74	28	15	13	4.66219	how	74	75	41	34	7.66983	one
75	24	5	19	4.56936	say	75	69	37	32	7.62191	did
76	26	16	10	4.51408	sexual	76	63	41	22	7.60753	support
77	23	15	8	4.44837	need	77	70	12	58	7.53950	supreme
78	20	17	3	4.32892	ask	78	61	48	13	7.53921	tell
79	20	16	4	4.23910	see	79	60	50	10	7.53621	ask
80	23	9	14	4.22258	now	80	63	35	28	7.51146	didn't
81	30	9	21	4.20727	your	81	55	53	2	7.39344	disqualify
82	19	3	16	4.18456	through	82	63	32	31	7.35287	even
83	19	14	5	4.15779	after	83	59	19	40	7.32295	look
84	23	18	5	4.15071	by	84	61	48	13	7.32155	make
85	19	14	5	4.14908	support	85	60	30	30	7.29495	before
86	20	11	9	4.12319	believe	86	64	33	31	7.27963	think
87	22	11	11	4.11411	know	87	63	35	28	7.24629	going
88	19	10	9	4.05008	under	88	57	44	13	7.24063	call
89	18	15	3	4.04754	allegations	89	58	40	18	7.19203	someone
90	18	15	3	3.99124	tell	90	55	9	46	7.18450	family
91	19	9	10	3.92618	us	91	61	41	20	7.14763	good
92	18	12	6	3.92152	going	92	54	41	13	7.04158	put
93	19	8	11	3.88882	time	93	56	24	32	7.03440	yes
94	17	11	6	3.88219	oath	94	60	38	22	7.01090	over
95	19	12	7	3.83901	assault	95	56	14	42	6.99663	confirmed
96	15	11	4	3.78469	makes	96	55	31	24	6.95582	still
97	19	15	4	3.76928	people	97	55	30	25	6.89440	then
98	18	6	12	3.76927	never	98	61	28	33	6.89091	judge
99	16	9	7	3.75982	anyone	99	59	32	27	6.86602	sexual
100	16	8	8	3.73335	didn't	100	58	31	27	6.84758	democrats

She

She (#NoKC)						She (#KC)					
Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Stat	Collocate	Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Stat	Collocate
1	298	134	164	15.50451	to	1	1633	698	935	36.31329	to
2	248	100	148	14.59514	is	2	1781	924	857	35.94269	the
3	198	99	99	13.87148	she	3	1349	541	808	33.81477	is
4	195	106	89	13.76956	her	4	1392	564	828	33.81008	a
5	257	118	139	13.49561	the	5	1092	546	546	32.45633	she
6	195	66	129	13.10303	s	6	954	537	417	30.29242	her
7	204	114	90	12.84377	and	7	875	245	630	28.71669	was
8	173	56	117	12.74801	was	8	943	508	435	27.20166	and
9	159	66	93	11.74839	t	9	615	263	352	24.54197	said
10	116	90	26	10.31775	if	10	663	450	213	23.46737	that
11	118	59	59	9.78560	it	11	608	273	335	22.24142	it
12	128	75	53	9.77460	of	12	635	386	249	21.09906	of
13	113	77	36	9.65788	that	13	490	394	96	20.87324	if
14	101	38	63	9.09929	not	14	511	210	301	20.82605	not
15	104	52	52	9.01515	for	15	558	320	238	20.29741	i
16	121	56	65	8.99164	you	16	491	165	326	20.15320	be
17	89	32	57	8.59525	be	17	522	264	258	19.78870	in
18	75	33	42	8.53182	said	18	430	115	315	19.75645	has
19	81	40	41	7.82903	in	19	510	283	227	19.61153	for
20	86	51	35	7.81870	he	20	469	259	210	18.50669	this
21	64	14	50	7.57333	has	21	367	311	56	18.27975	ford
22	60	56	4	7.39159	ford	22	429	238	191	18.14078	on
23	61	37	24	7.25955	so	23	371	267	104	17.74853	what
24	62	22	40	7.21436	will	24	306	178	128	16.10873	as
25	74	38	36	7.09406	this	25	302	128	174	15.97729	no
26	63	27	36	7.08548	no	26	314	108	206	15.93576	will
27	67	34	33	7.01114	kavanaugh	27	288	182	106	15.65799	so
28	54	23	31	7.00117	would	28	304	82	222	15.45413	have
29	49	23	26	6.75392	did	29	313	179	134	15.41355	he
30	51	37	14	6.69194	as	30	267	83	184	15.03771	can
31	47	39	8	6.56008	dr	31	241	132	109	14.92961	did
32	53	26	27	6.53508	with	32	250	185	65	14.88387	when
33	59	29	30	6.49589	on	33	246	170	76	14.63932	how
34	42	11	31	6.32053	didn't	34	251	159	92	14.58071	but
35	45	36	9	6.29507	why	35	235	187	48	14.51384	why
36	45	28	17	6.26277	but	36	217	81	136	14.50197	lying
37	45	20	25	6.22772	up	37	233	92	141	14.37449	would
38	41	9	32	6.20054	doesn	38	217	46	171	14.31671	doesn
39	44	18	26	6.15371	should	39	217	37	180	14.27929	had
40	41	36	5	6.04622	when	40	222	118	104	13.71274	or
41	45	20	25	5.99221	vote	41	244	125	119	13.67604	with

Appendix II: Collocation list of frequent words in #KC and #NoKC

42	42	14	28	5.89942	an	42	218	139	79	13.51721	like
43	41	29	12	5.89686	how	43	195	151	44	13.35406	because
44	45	13	32	5.88311	have	44	181	114	67	13.15216	says
45	44	20	24	5.86336	all	45	210	108	102	12.85040	about
46	40	12	28	5.79488	just	46	307	172	135	12.80155	you
47	39	18	21	5.74792	or	47	199	93	106	12.60208	just
48	42	27	15	5.71515	what	48	191	122	69	12.44609	now
49	39	16	23	5.65061	can	49	158	57	101	12.41412	testify
50	32	20	12	5.53589	says	50	222	114	108	12.29746	kavanaugh
51	36	16	20	5.51124	out	51	187	93	94	12.20732	at
52	31	6	25	5.50133	knows	52	158	88	70	12.06626	does
53	35	22	13	5.45522	like	53	176	88	88	12.01206	out
54	36	23	13	5.43374	my	54	177	80	97	11.93170	by
55	35	15	20	5.40699	by	55	175	67	108	11.92284	up
56	31	7	24	5.39599	had	56	158	117	41	11.90113	dr
57	40	18	22	5.38467	i	57	151	43	108	11.84187	didn't
58	34	22	12	5.37967	know	58	166	46	120	11.80297	should
59	32	25	7	5.37897	say	59	146	44	102	11.69222	remember
60	34	13	21	5.23151	at	60	157	92	65	11.58789	know
61	29	8	21	5.10651	been	61	169	77	92	11.55840	an
62	34	16	18	5.10057	about	62	178	87	91	11.22041	all
63	28	9	19	5.07681	lying	63	164	90	74	11.04211	who
64	34	17	17	5.02400	who	64	134	101	33	10.96776	woman
65	28	19	9	4.97845	because	65	133	100	33	10.83121	believe
66	29	17	12	4.96129	fbi	66	130	40	90	10.53057	been
67	27	16	11	4.90380	believe	67	146	59	87	10.52221	do
68	29	10	19	4.84894	him	68	125	26	99	10.50884	never
69	25	6	19	4.77015	truth	69	127	100	27	10.43955	think
70	24	7	17	4.73018	forward	70	154	81	73	10.43253	vote
71	38	19	19	4.72782	are	71	122	73	49	10.39763	say
72	24	8	16	4.62233	being	72	118	64	54	10.16983	even
73	21	8	13	4.52031	testify	73	125	53	72	9.93534	one
74	22	5	17	4.51073	needs	74	106	53	53	9.78952	years
75	25	10	15	4.41190	right	75	118	53	65	9.75850	him
76	20	3	17	4.40125	votes	76	117	60	57	9.71803	right
77	21	13	8	4.36119	before	77	102	30	72	9.56853	could
78	21	13	8	4.28913	over	78	97	61	36	9.56439	saying
79	20	12	8	4.28132	after	79	123	66	57	9.53612	from
80	21	7	14	4.24531	too	80	116	45	71	9.48468	there
81	23	16	7	4.24109	investigation	81	94	45	49	9.48263	credible
82	19	4	15	4.19828	ll	82	93	44	49	9.46913	told
83	29	13	16	4.18173	his	83	97	23	74	9.44376	got
84	30	10	20	4.16957	we	84	101	56	45	9.42500	then
85	18	6	12	4.11748	wants	85	105	36	69	9.37838	going
86	19	10	9	4.10252	yes	86	98	59	39	9.32679	before

87	22	11	11	4.09955	one	87	100	54	46	9.17664	after
88	18	9	9	4.06081	nothing	88	86	26	60	9.08288	knows
89	17	17	0	4.05390	mouth	89	97	30	67	9.02593	being
90	19	8	11	4.04251	does	90	89	61	28	8.93446	where
91	17	3	14	4.03917	telling	91	103	40	63	8.79622	get
92	18	12	6	4.01099	woman	92	99	56	43	8.79601	me
93	25	12	13	4.00610	do	93	87	36	51	8.77722	truth
94	21	12	9	3.97665	from	94	84	26	58	8.75792	won't
95	16	2	14	3.96962	scream	95	84	33	51	8.72408	show
96	18	5	13	3.94810	were	96	81	53	28	8.63846	story
97	21	11	10	3.94725	there	97	80	14	66	8.57569	needs
98	16	7	9	3.93065	came	98	80	26	54	8.54469	made
99	16	14	2	3.92669	accuser	99	80	38	42	8.51260	forward
100	17	8	9	3.87833	well	100	95	39	56	8.50422	more

Her

Her (#NoKC)						Her (#KC)					
Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Stat	Collocate	Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Stat	Collocate
1	404	261	143	18.63942	to	1	2029	1263	766	41.57755	to
2	252	126	126	14.62230	and	2	1304	636	668	33.29828	and
3	204	102	102	14.09878	her	3	1528	648	880	32.71584	the
4	195	89	106	13.76956	she	4	954	417	537	30.29242	she
5	236	106	130	12.80331	the	5	848	424	424	28.52572	her
6	158	55	103	11.17295	is	6	896	383	513	26.56081	is
7	125	72	53	10.26874	in	7	826	493	333	25.34939	of
8	134	79	55	10.12106	of	8	839	358	481	24.71397	a
9	123	65	58	9.91399	he	9	680	396	284	23.64943	for
10	132	48	84	9.62952	you	10	695	344	351	23.55306	i
11	106	68	38	9.16250	for	11	640	346	294	22.69279	in
12	82	45	37	8.08307	on	12	526	290	236	20.51880	that
13	77	28	49	8.02985	no	13	448	357	91	20.41690	ford
14	69	63	6	7.98704	ford	14	499	297	202	20.08936	on
15	79	33	46	7.76364	that	15	476	211	265	18.24220	you
16	80	30	50	7.67908	it	16	426	187	239	17.91710	it
17	68	29	39	7.62157	was	17	385	199	186	17.68799	not
18	58	9	49	7.57954	mouth	18	306	30	276	17.31741	story
19	66	43	23	7.47836	with	19	338	164	174	17.07402	was
20	63	24	39	7.41319	so	20	346	237	109	17.06092	with
21	78	32	46	7.41100	this	21	298	248	50	16.82074	believe
22	63	29	34	7.21297	i	22	397	149	248	16.69584	this
23	65	36	29	7.20311	we	23	269	189	80	15.10199	who
24	61	22	39	7.19588	what	24	304	138	166	15.03181	be
25	67	15	52	7.13903	are	25	257	109	148	14.38669	if
26	53	44	9	7.07831	believe	26	265	162	103	14.38396	they
27	67	34	33	7.05663	not	27	246	162	84	14.25433	about

Appendix II: Collocation list of frequent words in #KC and #NoKC

28	54	25	29	6.70697	if	28	246	111	135	14.22040	no
29	52	33	19	6.63994	about	29	242	103	139	14.08831	as
30	47	40	7	6.56980	dr	30	256	148	108	13.96337	have
31	48	27	21	6.50779	by	31	250	127	123	13.92528	will
32	50	16	34	6.37260	all	32	223	119	104	13.64963	has
33	40	3	37	6.19730	life	33	221	83	138	13.59724	but
34	48	25	23	6.15744	they	34	259	105	154	13.56292	are
35	38	4	34	6.10307	family	35	216	93	123	13.26738	so
36	53	16	37	6.00331	kavanaugh	36	182	22	160	13.23671	testimony
37	36	5	31	5.92718	story	37	188	139	49	13.13311	dr
38	49	29	20	5.90681	be	38	199	96	103	12.99401	out
39	41	23	18	5.88758	has	39	199	109	90	12.88589	by
40	38	19	19	5.72962	one	40	202	99	103	12.88091	at
41	42	23	19	5.70564	will	41	195	91	104	12.76972	or
42	35	22	13	5.69237	rape	42	230	111	119	12.75439	kavanaugh
43	38	20	18	5.67740	or	43	197	104	93	12.60928	just
44	39	26	13	5.51633	who	44	203	97	106	12.37427	all
45	40	24	16	5.47820	have	45	221	121	100	12.30873	he
46	33	11	22	5.20416	as	46	176	81	95	12.03825	up
47	27	22	5	5.00291	tell	47	187	68	119	11.98246	vote
48	27	20	7	4.98816	against	48	193	72	121	11.91407	what
49	25	22	3	4.91006	hear	49	167	95	72	11.66459	from
50	29	10	19	4.84855	but	50	156	93	63	11.46425	would
51	26	17	9	4.84397	over	51	168	103	65	11.41279	can
52	32	7	25	4.83572	vote	52	150	75	75	11.17471	should
53	25	13	12	4.83443	could	53	158	50	108	11.14471	now
54	28	9	19	4.80237	now	54	157	73	84	11.14332	like
55	28	15	13	4.75553	out	55	142	66	76	10.92641	why
56	28	12	16	4.71014	should	56	136	89	47	10.91537	did
57	28	14	14	4.67055	my	57	176	77	99	10.88391	we
58	28	14	14	4.61309	can	58	130	105	25	10.81946	woman
59	22	2	20	4.58419	testimony	59	121	13	108	10.76740	own
60	31	12	19	4.55681	women	60	139	72	67	10.58674	don't
61	26	11	15	4.51626	don't	61	139	63	76	10.47849	how
62	29	6	23	4.49271	do	62	116	93	23	10.46948	tell
63	25	12	13	4.47264	like	63	142	68	74	10.42359	do
64	24	14	10	4.46349	assault	64	118	77	41	10.28512	had
65	20	13	7	4.45728	covered	65	131	75	56	10.23697	when
66	20	15	5	4.42072	hand	66	114	66	48	10.03806	against
67	25	10	15	4.37657	up	67	104	66	38	9.69077	didn't
68	25	12	13	4.35204	just	68	109	59	50	9.67022	let
69	21	7	14	4.30882	doesn	69	118	54	64	9.65416	one
70	19	3	16	4.26511	name	70	123	55	68	9.49669	an
71	21	15	6	4.26421	let	71	114	70	44	9.46434	get
72	23	12	11	4.23590	from	72	103	36	67	9.39565	being

73	29	17	12	4.22132	his	73	101	64	37	9.25019	because
74	18	8	10	4.21494	scream	74	98	33	65	9.16878	assault
75	24	12	12	4.20898	at	75	122	75	47	9.15559	his
76	19	16	3	4.19301	put	76	96	53	43	9.07333	even
77	19	10	9	4.18012	back	77	89	10	79	9.03146	life
78	19	14	5	4.12854	didn't	78	103	39	64	8.86200	there
79	22	8	14	4.11899	why	79	91	49	42	8.79708	never
80	20	5	15	4.11392	because	80	86	22	64	8.75169	truth
81	18	14	4	4.05896	blasey	81	80	70	10	8.72225	assaulted
82	21	11	10	4.04398	would	82	80	15	65	8.69963	name
83	20	9	11	3.97794	when	83	85	19	66	8.67937	allegations
84	19	10	9	3.97672	did	84	86	38	48	8.65302	doesn
85	18	11	7	3.96923	make	85	78	26	52	8.62946	letter
86	16	14	2	3.96806	threats	86	94	37	57	8.56401	time
87	16	10	6	3.94187	tried	87	83	35	48	8.52347	before
88	17	10	7	3.91427	support	88	89	49	40	8.51016	over
89	22	10	12	3.91362	an	89	89	39	50	8.49894	think
90	17	11	6	3.89878	had	90	74	34	40	8.37871	witnesses
91	21	9	12	3.89846	how	91	72	17	55	8.34259	voice
92	16	1	15	3.83520	own	92	81	44	37	8.34185	then
93	15	11	4	3.82812	death	93	78	42	36	8.15050	said
94	16	13	3	3.80007	forward	94	81	36	45	8.13988	only
95	19	10	9	3.78680	please	95	79	40	39	8.12897	say
96	16	7	9	3.76238	woman	96	74	54	20	8.10155	rape
97	16	8	8	3.74258	way	97	68	19	49	8.08919	friend
98	16	7	9	3.73683	today	98	77	41	36	8.08646	party
99	18	10	8	3.72713	more	99	80	44	36	8.07601	after
100	15	11	4	3.69750	assaulted	100	83	21	62	8.05848	sexual

Kavanaugh

Kavanaugh (#NoKC)						Kavanaugh (#KC)					
Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Stat	Collocate	Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Stat	Collocate
1	1252	629	623	31.45564	the	1	4515	2327	2188	59.36405	the
2	1051	575	476	29.21812	to	2	3478	1875	1603	53.38308	to
3	797	201	596	26.03232	is	3	2294	2238	56	47.47855	brett
4	560	420	140	22.34890	on	4	2645	714	1931	47.28479	is
5	618	305	313	22.03258	and	5	2158	813	1345	40.85652	a
6	544	318	226	20.77113	of	6	1834	1187	647	38.02005	of
7	475	347	128	20.73386	no	7	1808	781	1027	37.47663	and
8	433	420	13	20.55557	brett	8	1433	1328	105	37.24191	judge
9	552	282	270	20.27965	you	9	1395	862	533	33.77106	for
10	441	273	168	19.03591	for	10	1319	851	468	33.39711	on
11	393	330	63	18.99582	vote	11	1194	555	639	30.52638	in
12	423	171	252	18.97877	not	12	1167	459	708	29.58265	i
13	389	68	321	17.38405	he	13	1113	521	592	28.42454	you

Appendix II: Collocation list of frequent words in #KC and #NoKC

14	346	219	127	16.70129	that	14	887	594	293	28.14173	vote
15	338	154	184	16.42480	in	15	1012	610	402	28.13410	that
16	297	109	188	15.66382	be	16	794	675	119	27.56665	justice
17	310	163	147	15.08721	this	17	761	105	656	27.15951	confirmed
18	242	175	67	14.48499	if	18	964	491	473	26.67271	this
19	250	41	209	14.40996	his	19	876	292	584	26.60714	be
20	281	145	136	14.37636	it	20	833	389	444	26.08619	not
21	217	61	156	13.49467	was	21	788	175	613	25.21154	he
22	200	70	130	12.88636	will	22	843	403	440	24.94751	it
23	186	33	153	12.78242	has	23	709	463	246	24.53631	if
24	186	113	73	12.57047	about	24	633	226	407	24.27050	supreme
25	213	90	123	12.51980	are	25	658	129	529	23.93324	his
26	174	110	64	11.78499	with	26	593	122	471	23.90355	confirmation
27	145	121	24	11.62675	judge	27	690	230	460	23.87053	will
28	154	62	92	11.53326	should	28	658	176	482	23.66779	was
29	141	9	132	11.53201	lied	29	602	281	321	23.35728	court
30	162	56	106	11.24106	have	30	622	153	469	23.31706	has
31	171	68	103	11.20396	we	31	552	282	270	22.06963	ford
32	160	78	82	10.81877	your	32	558	366	192	21.61701	about
33	132	80	52	10.72175	please	33	565	347	218	21.22470	with
34	166	83	83	10.33344	kavanaugh	34	515	210	305	20.56863	as
35	125	57	68	10.29239	sexual	35	579	254	325	20.48853	are
36	138	74	64	10.26094	all	36	548	215	333	20.47003	have
37	142	53	89	10.21075	i	37	498	316	182	20.14319	no
38	118	66	52	10.17506	trump	38	457	198	259	19.60815	now
39	135	78	57	10.15655	do	39	407	365	42	19.46010	against
40	133	74	59	10.13754	who	40	367	343	24	18.78602	confirm
41	129	62	67	10.06301	so	41	448	208	240	18.42405	what
42	108	97	11	10.02462	against	42	380	239	141	18.40251	senate
43	121	45	76	10.00224	as	43	464	232	232	17.95572	kavanaugh
44	118	80	38	9.99877	ford	44	326	25	301	17.69982	accuser
45	124	47	77	9.97874	an	45	384	148	236	17.43857	just
46	117	62	55	9.86044	court	46	366	174	192	17.21339	like
47	111	66	45	9.79486	fbi	47	377	177	200	17.13156	so
48	110	72	38	9.62077	investigation	48	300	257	43	17.10687	congratulations
49	115	54	61	9.60937	at	49	412	175	237	17.00949	we
50	107	56	51	9.42801	why	50	357	212	145	16.96973	by
51	125	64	61	9.40041	women	51	350	182	168	16.87298	from
52	106	54	52	9.37350	from	52	402	193	209	16.80131	they
53	109	43	66	9.34320	just	53	303	93	210	16.60339	hearing
54	109	45	64	9.22466	can	54	345	123	222	16.56461	an
55	104	62	42	9.18825	by	55	307	184	123	16.53672	trump
56	91	12	79	9.06971	under	56	321	109	212	16.36800	should
57	86	82	4	9.06322	confirm	57	365	199	166	16.15459	all

58	93	41	52	9.02168	supreme	58	345	192	153	16.15166	who
59	94	47	47	8.73384	like	59	289	127	162	16.12352	com
60	86	38	48	8.70378	scotus	60	331	162	169	15.99655	at
61	95	53	42	8.69859	but	61	315	154	161	15.88068	out
62	106	48	58	8.64790	what	62	290	174	116	15.80937	fbi
63	78	9	69	8.61083	confirmed	63	323	122	201	15.61373	can
64	91	56	35	8.59624	know	64	304	115	189	15.15118	but
65	108	59	49	8.57562	they	65	260	165	95	14.90248	investigation
66	77	16	61	8.54952	confirmation	66	223	43	180	14.55467	nomination
67	87	46	41	8.51871	assault	67	243	134	109	14.53648	after
68	91	32	59	8.42673	or	68	300	157	143	14.50445	your
69	77	12	65	8.39819	oath	69	257	133	124	14.47736	why
70	74	12	62	8.31250	nomination	70	255	100	155	14.27460	would
71	85	35	50	8.08004	don't	71	271	155	116	14.18031	do
72	71	51	20	8.06487	support	72	257	145	112	13.99480	how
73	75	48	27	8.03963	say	73	257	118	139	13.83408	or
74	85	51	34	8.01734	how	74	233	88	145	13.78010	today
75	81	40	41	7.98326	now	75	225	87	138	13.77442	did
76	70	32	38	7.96388	hearing	76	227	47	180	13.75343	been
77	82	54	28	7.94810	out	77	204	123	81	13.54657	allegations
78	80	35	45	7.88484	one	78	239	138	101	13.13534	women
79	79	56	23	7.75703	right	79	212	107	105	12.98976	me
80	65	32	33	7.72052	allegations	80	205	90	115	12.90440	sexual
81	68	18	50	7.67439	does	81	183	77	106	12.84560	beer
82	66	27	39	7.62368	must	82	228	120	108	12.82096	up
83	75	31	44	7.51079	there	83	196	89	107	12.80425	dr
84	63	40	23	7.48430	senate	84	174	42	132	12.76887	via
85	58	6	52	7.32517	unfit	85	230	119	111	12.75439	her
86	70	26	44	7.32363	would	86	211	93	118	12.64353	get
87	68	38	30	7.30851	more	87	200	98	102	12.45275	him
88	64	38	26	7.23669	gop	88	205	84	121	12.38154	one
89	63	41	22	7.06434	dr	89	206	98	108	12.31763	when
90	67	33	34	7.01114	she	90	222	108	114	12.29746	she
91	60	40	20	6.96462	want	91	181	131	50	12.25621	believe
92	56	14	42	6.96425	lying	92	181	52	129	12.25377	being
93	61	30	31	6.96247	re	93	185	109	76	12.21122	democrats
94	53	25	28	6.95874	says	94	193	104	89	12.18878	right
95	50	5	45	6.92927	accuser	95	168	129	39	12.12377	yes
96	52	17	35	6.77391	lies	96	155	62	93	11.93675	scotus
97	53	33	20	6.75525	yes	97	186	102	84	11.93601	m
98	55	22	33	6.74871	only	98	175	109	66	11.91858	want
99	56	27	29	6.69627	did	99	186	98	88	11.86950	more
100	48	6	42	6.60616	temperament	100	156	126	30	11.81274	support

Ford

Appendix II: Collocation list of frequent words in #KC and #NoKC

Ford (#NoKC)						Ford (#KC)					
Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Stat	Collocate	Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Stat	Collocate
1	698	687	11	26.34479	dr	1	2474	2397	77	49.59340	dr
2	279	274	5	16.65619	blasey	2	1597	789	808	34.25454	the
3	252	242	10	15.82803	christine	3	1387	732	655	33.40350	to
4	264	116	148	14.42401	to	4	1019	1000	19	31.82903	blasey
5	277	107	170	14.25835	the	5	1019	1010	9	31.82358	christine
6	228	73	155	13.77041	and	6	1141	275	866	31.04261	is
7	209	45	164	13.23050	is	7	886	311	575	26.64175	and
8	196	99	97	12.45908	you	8	903	300	603	26.29803	a
9	142	124	18	11.47191	with	9	698	440	258	23.04263	of
10	127	66	61	10.22415	for	10	552	270	282	22.06963	kavanaugh
11	136	79	57	10.20383	of	11	612	287	325	21.99730	i
12	118	38	80	9.99877	kavanaugh	12	527	300	227	20.74676	that
13	117	85	32	9.86524	in	13	535	262	273	20.62461	for
14	92	46	46	8.98648	i	14	448	91	357	20.41690	her
15	77	62	15	8.60591	believe	15	529	274	255	19.89508	you
16	70	65	5	8.33854	solidarity	16	424	171	253	18.90452	not
17	86	42	44	8.18532	that	17	348	286	62	18.28034	believe
18	69	6	63	7.98704	her	18	367	56	311	18.27975	she
19	78	31	47	7.77548	not	19	421	187	234	17.57725	in
20	67	10	57	7.54995	was	20	324	72	252	16.77432	was
21	71	27	44	7.39986	are	21	386	193	193	16.64879	this
22	60	4	56	7.39159	she	22	362	217	145	16.60891	on
23	66	18	48	7.26313	we	23	268	52	216	16.17905	testimony
24	73	28	45	7.20666	it	24	297	181	116	15.83312	if
25	74	25	49	7.12950	this	25	297	194	103	15.71175	with
26	60	42	18	6.59824	on	26	339	141	198	15.61766	it
27	67	25	42	6.57572	he	27	244	32	212	14.49708	has
28	49	16	33	6.40000	so	28	238	119	119	14.48629	ford
29	41	37	4	6.37532	professor	29	263	96	167	13.85121	be
30	47	5	42	6.36946	has	30	226	152	74	13.66734	about
31	48	33	15	6.32794	about	31	209	117	92	13.36618	by
32	41	3	38	6.32456	testimony	32	243	97	146	13.19660	are
33	41	31	10	6.21134	stand	33	208	91	117	12.97248	as
34	48	13	35	6.14808	have	34	204	100	104	12.30563	they
35	46	25	21	6.08053	if	35	204	56	148	12.19410	have
36	41	22	19	5.99740	investigation	36	191	95	96	11.99956	what
37	46	17	29	5.98733	they	37	165	65	100	11.65635	or
38	44	23	21	5.90284	what	38	173	68	105	11.55466	no
39	46	21	25	5.80741	your	39	175	71	104	11.38135	all
40	38	18	20	5.80282	fbi	40	144	80	64	11.33578	did
41	39	10	29	5.74761	should	41	164	81	83	11.28285	who
42	36	19	17	5.56443	now	42	157	73	84	11.2110	now
43	40	16	24	5.53606	all	43	176	50	126	11.20847	will

44	38	10	28	5.41905	who	44	156	47	109	11.19429	an
45	35	9	26	5.29423	an	45	185	81	104	11.04247	he
46	42	14	28	5.28848	be	46	152	60	92	10.92326	at
47	33	15	18	5.23259	by	47	151	53	98	10.88286	but
48	30	12	18	5.17012	did	48	118	106	12	10.80428	ms
49	28	19	9	5.12720	support	49	141	90	51	10.62065	from
50	31	16	15	5.00478	as	50	130	54	76	10.51924	judge
51	31	18	13	5.00247	up	51	138	58	80	10.18705	just
52	34	15	19	4.99872	do	52	112	25	87	10.15217	allegations
53	30	14	16	4.98313	why	53	113	35	78	10.08970	had
54	24	6	18	4.83631	credible	54	113	59	54	10.05968	hearing
55	26	16	10	4.80759	thank	55	131	63	68	10.05572	like
56	28	17	11	4.78835	like	56	104	19	85	10.02339	credible
57	32	8	24	4.76024	will	57	136	59	77	10.01248	so
58	33	14	19	4.75520	women	58	101	15	86	9.88173	testify
59	26	13	13	4.57333	ford	59	125	57	68	9.84602	up
60	22	10	12	4.47920	see	60	131	48	83	9.83986	can
61	22	12	10	4.47920	before	61	114	62	52	9.83341	fbi
62	26	10	16	4.45747	just	62	147	60	87	9.73754	we
63	24	7	17	4.28021	or	63	105	59	46	9.60064	assault
64	21	12	9	4.24198	even	64	106	57	49	9.45420	brett
65	19	19	0	4.22751	question	65	100	48	52	9.37535	against
66	20	5	15	4.22120	truth	66	89	25	64	9.26059	letter
67	29	8	21	4.15923	no	67	108	44	64	9.23568	one
68	22	10	12	4.11233	from	68	114	61	53	9.15176	do
69	19	6	13	4.09256	must	69	104	63	41	9.13898	why
70	22	9	13	4.01553	how	70	106	37	69	9.12731	should
71	16	12	4	3.97807	ms	71	104	36	68	9.04788	would
72	21	12	9	3.94585	but	72	92	35	57	9.01737	said
73	17	13	4	3.87720	tell	73	86	73	13	8.97340	accuser
74	17	9	8	3.87720	didn't	74	106	50	56	8.92083	how
75	26	13	13	3.85792	his	75	86	31	55	8.89596	says
76	19	8	11	3.85227	more	76	94	60	34	8.81418	investigation
77	15	14	1	3.82835	believes	77	98	46	52	8.62023	when
78	15	3	12	3.80104	testify	78	79	18	61	8.57207	story
79	15	2	13	3.78572	telling	79	89	39	50	8.50392	sexual
80	17	5	12	3.76770	been	80	91	48	43	8.47084	know
81	17	2	15	3.75832	brett	81	84	49	35	8.46028	com
82	17	7	10	3.75081	say	82	95	34	61	8.41445	don't
83	19	12	7	3.70193	out	83	74	45	29	8.39098	assaulted
84	14	3	11	3.68926	brave	84	82	47	35	8.37312	say
85	16	7	9	3.64656	only	85	71	64	7	8.36595	professor
86	15	8	7	3.63518	republicans	86	79	36	43	8.35533	didn't
87	15	1	14	3.62519	woman	87	75	65	10	8.34568	question
88	17	10	7	3.60564	trump	88	107	44	63	8.29967	your

Appendix II: Collocation list of frequent words in #KC and #NoKC

89	17	5	12	3.58187	when	89	80	43	37	8.04134	think
90	19	11	8	3.57587	at	90	84	37	47	8.02405	more
91	13	1	12	3.57550	ramirez	91	79	46	33	7.96578	democrats
92	18	8	10	3.56585	right	92	69	36	33	7.86613	evidence
93	15	3	12	3.54592	doesn	93	65	8	57	7.85336	liar
94	16	14	2	3.53627	them	94	86	52	34	7.72395	out
95	18	7	11	3.53544	don't	95	78	32	46	7.69211	m
96	15	5	10	3.52793	&	96	70	24	46	7.67586	were
97	14	5	9	3.52584	forward	97	81	33	48	7.67141	there
98	13	5	8	3.47890	heard	98	69	26	43	7.64863	does
99	17	6	11	3.46674	one	99	69	41	28	7.63285	thank
100	14	6	8	3.45138	said	100	71	18	53	7.59554	being

Man

Man (#NoKC)						Man (#KC)					
Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Stat	Collocate	Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Stat	Collocate
1	255	150	105	14.65409	the	1	1450	1143	307	36.69984	a
2	204	175	29	13.81506	this	2	854	461	393	25.62993	the
3	154	57	97	11.65243	is	3	595	473	122	23.24901	this
4	145	62	83	10.74682	to	4	616	275	341	23.06401	is
5	109	59	50	9.34363	you	5	658	342	316	23.05799	to
6	82	29	53	8.28681	he	6	434	150	284	18.77150	and
7	84	31	53	8.00985	and	7	421	203	218	18.51405	of
8	67	9	58	7.89169	who	8	308	146	162	15.68660	you
9	79	39	40	7.87519	of	9	247	205	42	15.50686	good
10	71	26	45	7.84277	not	10	250	24	226	15.23770	who
11	59	21	38	7.07411	on	11	240	191	49	14.99360	an
12	52	39	13	6.94361	an	12	256	94	162	14.92461	he
13	59	24	35	6.87091	for	13	270	115	155	14.81992	for
14	54	35	19	6.62467	that	14	236	81	155	13.33837	i
15	49	16	33	6.41437	be	15	228	73	155	13.27423	in
16	36	33	3	5.89440	old	16	221	116	105	13.27166	that
17	43	24	19	5.85987	are	17	189	33	156	13.07390	his
18	35	15	20	5.45540	with	18	189	89	100	12.55622	not
19	36	21	15	5.42986	no	19	174	54	120	12.25950	with
20	35	12	23	5.35329	his	20	182	75	107	12.15842	be
21	38	19	19	5.19083	it	21	142	129	13	11.73505	white
22	30	4	26	5.15712	has	22	172	62	110	11.48069	on
23	36	12	24	5.10135	in	23	175	77	98	11.41486	it
24	35	18	17	5.08851	kavanaugh	24	146	81	65	10.64803	are
25	27	23	4	5.06421	white	25	111	101	10	10.42054	innocent
26	31	8	23	4.93747	your	26	127	75	52	10.41196	as
27	29	13	16	4.83602	i	27	119	11	108	10.15246	has
28	29	9	20	4.70741	we	28	121	66	55	9.94519	if
29	22	16	6	4.61494	a	29	127	71	56	9.88806	kavanaugh

30	24	16	8	4.61107	one	30	113	49	64	9.69281	no
31	23	16	7	4.47214	by	31	105	46	59	9.22992	was
32	22	7	15	4.41186	would	32	83	17	66	8.98780	family
33	20	16	4	4.41151	angry	33	80	7	73	8.76015	life
34	23	6	17	4.39598	can	34	76	74	2	8.65040	destroy
35	19	4	15	4.28155	unfit	35	89	49	40	8.64754	by
36	19	17	2	4.23030	every	36	87	35	52	8.54639	or
37	23	10	13	4.17862	women	37	76	25	51	8.38349	woman
38	22	5	17	4.12463	will	38	88	51	37	8.35074	about
39	21	16	5	4.05804	vote	39	94	32	62	8.27881	have
40	18	13	5	4.04529	any	40	90	49	41	8.23553	what
41	21	11	10	4.03535	if	41	84	34	50	8.21237	can
42	19	13	6	3.97698	as	42	80	43	37	8.11792	like
43	16	13	3	3.95540	innocent	43	67	62	5	7.98703	old
44	17	2	15	3.95104	does	44	65	7	58	7.91902	accused
45	18	9	9	3.90754	like	45	73	25	48	7.88727	would
46	20	9	11	3.90198	what	46	63	51	12	7.79097	angry
47	20	11	9	3.90166	do	47	81	32	49	7.74769	all
48	18	10	8	3.88634	right	48	77	30	47	7.74482	so
49	16	8	8	3.80824	man	49	76	32	44	7.73428	just
50	15	5	10	3.74312	woman	50	69	32	37	7.72846	judge
51	17	4	13	3.72581	should	51	82	37	45	7.60171	we
52	17	8	9	3.71798	up	52	64	32	32	7.53541	man
53	19	7	12	3.70270	have	53	67	41	26	7.50061	one
54	16	11	5	3.61998	out	54	73	37	36	7.41962	your
55	18	12	6	3.61945	all	55	67	35	32	7.32680	from
56	15	7	8	3.46563	don't	56	78	33	45	7.32052	they
57	15	5	10	3.43952	how	57	76	18	58	7.27991	will
58	14	3	11	3.36769	why	58	56	44	12	7.27204	great
59	14	6	8	3.35793	from	59	66	31	35	7.14251	but
60	16	7	9	3.32321	was	60	62	19	43	7.14030	should
61	12	5	7	3.30391	today	61	63	26	37	7.05285	up
62	14	6	8	3.28359	my	62	52	40	12	6.91363	every
63	14	6	8	3.27796	just	63	56	24	32	6.87379	me
64	14	6	8	3.26669	at	64	59	25	34	6.67097	do
65	11	9	2	3.25309	face	65	51	18	33	6.55626	sexual
66	12	8	4	3.24389	believe	66	43	39	4	6.53115	honorable
67	11	3	8	3.23657	liar	67	49	37	12	6.52030	any
68	12	8	4	3.19522	us	68	53	29	24	6.46460	when
69	13	3	10	3.17383	court	69	47	19	28	6.38826	assault
70	14	10	4	3.16419	about	70	55	23	32	6.33127	at
71	13	8	5	3.15786	or	71	46	21	25	6.29255	being
72	12	6	6	3.13804	trump	72	45	34	11	6.27001	against
73	11	3	8	3.12601	go	73	49	17	32	6.21856	court
74	12	9	3	3.07072	investigation	74	56	32	24	6.20899	vote

Appendix II: Collocation list of frequent words in #KC and #NoKC

75	11	5	6	3.06586	m	75	51	15	36	6.15408	women
76	11	2	9	3.04257	supreme	76	44	25	19	6.09160	want
77	12	3	9	3.03179	sexual	77	48	26	22	5.96497	how
78	10	1	9	3.02367	needs	78	44	15	29	5.88136	him
79	11	7	4	3.02308	never	79	38	29	9	5.87540	another
80	9	8	1	2.98455	con	80	35	3	32	5.85940	reputation
81	10	9	1	2.90639	say	81	41	9	32	5.79135	been
82	10	5	5	2.90372	thing	82	38	19	19	5.73026	america
83	11	4	7	2.85534	but	83	41	28	13	5.69396	re
84	10	6	4	2.84641	re	84	36	11	25	5.68479	rape
85	10	3	7	2.82375	me	85	43	21	22	5.66089	my
86	9	8	1	2.81315	come	86	37	17	20	5.65257	does
87	8	8	0	2.80608	fine	87	34	29	5	5.59018	confirm
88	9	1	8	2.79817	lied	88	34	23	11	5.58749	god
89	10	5	5	2.79310	more	89	45	17	28	5.58445	now
90	10	4	6	2.79310	fbi	90	41	20	21	5.36849	out
91	8	1	7	2.76088	fit	91	29	27	2	5.34618	decent
92	8	5	3	2.74796	cannot	92	35	13	22	5.26983	did
93	9	8	1	2.74150	let	93	30	20	10	5.25580	guilty
94	9	5	4	2.71715	because	94	35	11	24	5.21501	supreme
95	9	4	5	2.69842	men	95	38	16	22	5.18504	don't
96	8	6	2	2.69829	sure	96	36	19	17	5.17346	more
97	8	4	4	2.66799	down	97	35	15	20	5.12151	right
98	9	2	7	2.65862	time	98	27	25	2	5.11654	young
99	11	4	7	2.65075	so	99	33	16	17	5.06484	democrats
100	12	7	5	2.64286	they	100	33	14	19	5.05965	brett

Men

Men (#NoKC)						Men (#KC)					
Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Stat	Collocate	Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Stat	Collocate
1	237	135	102	13.78641	the	1	604	358	246	21.75011	the
2	176	125	51	12.46600	of	2	428	290	138	19.37331	of
3	154	151	3	12.34451	white	3	457	191	266	19.31905	to
4	178	73	105	11.96330	to	4	323	305	18	17.89267	white
5	136	63	73	11.36252	women	5	360	175	185	17.47669	and
6	152	73	79	11.31584	and	6	283	116	167	16.54535	women
7	129	41	88	10.88279	are	7	296	94	202	16.53800	are
8	117	115	2	10.74756	old	8	268	158	110	14.24894	a
9	93	2	91	9.34966	who	9	214	69	145	13.38240	in
10	81	14	67	8.29337	in	10	180	168	12	13.33637	old
11	70	65	5	8.25549	these	11	207	134	73	13.16989	for
12	73	42	31	7.68485	for	12	180	22	158	12.96919	who
13	80	35	45	7.43440	you	13	190	92	98	12.64661	that
14	61	34	27	7.00701	that	14	153	123	30	11.76660	all
15	53	37	16	6.85175	all	15	183	88	95	11.39749	is

16	47	9	38	6.36355	have	16	112	100	12	10.35237	these
17	46	6	40	6.28759	they	17	127	49	78	10.01145	on
18	40	20	20	6.15583	men	18	116	31	85	9.92685	have
19	51	32	19	6.15020	it	19	130	41	89	9.78340	this
20	48	22	26	5.79071	this	20	125	54	71	9.34082	i
21	38	21	17	5.75099	about	21	99	12	87	9.06257	they
22	42	12	30	5.73465	be	22	118	40	78	8.87150	you
23	39	21	18	5.73025	with	23	97	37	60	8.64169	be
24	36	12	24	5.72052	like	24	93	40	53	8.52010	not
25	43	15	28	5.67326	not	25	82	26	56	8.48859	do
26	36	18	18	5.49875	what	26	78	31	47	8.30601	up
27	37	19	18	5.41944	no	27	72	36	36	8.29363	men
28	32	6	26	5.38531	their	28	84	47	37	8.27844	with
29	31	24	7	5.32045	more	29	78	57	21	8.27608	by
30	47	30	17	5.23891	is	30	73	43	30	7.84418	so
31	31	4	27	5.23355	don't	31	77	26	51	7.83004	will
32	35	16	19	5.18841	we	32	70	16	54	7.78226	like
33	29	17	12	5.05931	there	33	74	37	37	7.59012	we
34	26	19	7	4.73993	by	34	68	25	43	7.47109	about
35	29	10	19	4.73745	i	35	64	40	24	7.44822	how
36	26	4	22	4.72011	should	36	63	14	49	7.43412	don't
37	32	11	21	4.68464	on	37	84	41	43	7.43334	it
38	24	9	15	4.66661	them	38	61	9	52	7.27319	their
39	26	4	22	4.65544	can	39	61	13	48	7.07069	can
40	23	5	18	4.51700	assault	40	64	29	35	7.01847	what
41	24	8	16	4.48126	just	41	49	47	2	6.88747	two
42	25	15	10	4.47903	so	42	55	28	27	6.88666	when
43	30	12	18	4.42291	kavanaugh	43	50	16	34	6.68015	sexual
44	21	9	12	4.40106	think	44	55	23	32	6.65145	just
45	25	7	18	4.39817	do	45	58	24	34	6.60800	if
46	20	7	13	4.39284	power	46	46	16	30	6.46982	assault
47	22	7	15	4.31382	sexual	47	43	9	34	6.43289	power
48	20	3	17	4.29058	rape	48	45	35	10	6.38374	good
49	26	9	17	4.28725	your	49	53	23	30	6.37479	no
50	19	16	3	4.26842	republican	50	42	35	7	6.36223	angry
51	21	11	10	4.15409	as	51	49	28	21	6.28766	now
52	21	11	10	4.15264	up	52	50	27	23	6.16713	as
53	23	7	16	4.14316	will	53	44	26	18	6.11090	why
54	19	6	13	4.13271	need	54	40	18	22	6.06710	country
55	21	9	12	4.12516	at	55	40	21	19	6.01974	woman
56	17	15	2	4.08975	young	56	36	33	3	5.95440	young
57	18	12	6	4.03486	only	57	38	15	23	5.87724	america
58	19	12	7	3.99662	know	58	53	17	36	5.86568	kavanaugh
59	18	7	11	3.98799	want	59	37	33	4	5.86415	many
60	15	14	1	3.84603	rich	60	40	27	13	5.80588	more

Appendix II: Collocation list of frequent words in #KC and #NoKC

61	17	4	13	3.83616	get	61	39	7	32	5.63308	should
62	16	7	9	3.78376	country	62	41	12	29	5.57193	at
63	18	8	10	3.77592	how	63	35	11	24	5.54520	believe
64	16	11	5	3.69801	time	64	33	26	7	5.51651	other
65	19	9	10	3.68034	if	65	31	2	29	5.50950	shut
66	14	3	11	3.67523	afraid	66	33	18	15	5.43441	than
67	14	14	0	3.65619	angry	67	33	5	28	5.40627	need
68	15	7	8	3.64067	believe	68	33	21	12	5.40609	against
69	14	14	0	3.57027	good	69	31	25	6	5.38347	republican
70	14	2	12	3.49189	too	70	29	28	1	5.35283	rich
71	13	8	5	3.46814	those	71	33	12	21	5.33716	over
72	14	11	3	3.44849	gop	72	35	18	17	5.28381	there
73	13	8	5	3.42494	other	73	36	10	26	5.26964	out
74	14	10	4	3.37364	when	74	30	11	19	5.25431	committee
75	13	7	6	3.34084	say	75	28	23	5	5.24802	powerful
76	13	9	4	3.32797	because	76	34	6	28	5.21771	get
77	13	5	8	3.30085	us	77	33	25	8	5.21285	time
78	16	7	9	3.29121	vote	78	27	26	1	5.15686	bunch
79	13	5	8	3.28707	never	79	29	17	12	5.10340	some
80	14	6	8	3.25939	but	80	36	20	16	5.09051	has
81	13	2	11	3.25535	me	81	30	12	18	5.07606	being
82	11	9	2	3.25068	real	82	37	19	18	5.03809	your
83	12	3	9	3.24789	were	83	34	16	18	5.03374	from
84	14	6	8	3.23281	or	84	30	8	22	5.02496	them
85	11	10	1	3.23169	two	85	30	19	11	4.97482	our
86	12	4	8	3.22541	&	86	29	16	13	4.96001	because
87	11	4	7	3.22270	committee	87	26	21	5	4.86343	those
88	13	5	8	3.20067	our	88	33	18	15	4.82638	but
89	11	6	5	3.19172	assaulted	89	32	16	16	4.80506	or
90	11	1	10	3.17274	sexually	90	28	11	17	4.80182	been
91	11	5	6	3.10579	stand	91	28	6	22	4.78948	senate
92	11	4	7	3.10229	make	92	25	7	18	4.78255	forward
93	11	5	6	3.09929	than	93	30	10	20	4.76723	my
94	10	8	2	3.09887	sick	94	32	9	23	4.75925	her
95	11	7	4	3.05483	many	95	26	5	21	4.74330	were
96	10	4	6	3.05224	boys	96	29	21	8	4.69672	one
97	10	4	6	3.02080	where	97	25	10	15	4.60698	never
98	10	6	4	3.00665	raped	98	26	9	17	4.60610	think
99	12	7	5	2.97524	from	99	27	15	12	4.57621	know
100	10	5	5	2.95320	come	100	21	19	2	4.55227	privileged

Women

Women (#NoKC)						Women (#KC)					
Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Stat	Collocate	Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Stat	Collocate
1	795	480	315	25.32258	the	1	1876	1101	775	38.71333	the

2	595	304	291	21.92605	to	2	1307	722	585	32.66135	to
3	539	359	180	21.71978	of	3	1124	510	614	31.09630	and
4	515	227	288	20.89308	and	4	1115	738	377	31.05520	of
5	416	295	121	19.21857	for	5	742	221	521	26.03206	are
6	438	200	238	18.81726	you	6	715	458	257	24.86049	for
7	366	106	260	18.20845	are	7	719	398	321	23.09891	a
8	233	73	160	13.90122	in	8	586	181	405	22.04729	in
9	207	62	145	13.74277	who	9	614	296	318	21.44350	is
10	253	132	121	13.62612	is	10	489	105	384	21.33515	who
11	223	91	132	13.20657	this	11	481	357	124	20.95677	all
12	185	128	57	12.85133	all	12	529	236	293	20.30266	you
13	173	49	124	12.37434	will	13	477	250	227	19.78143	that
14	159	41	118	11.73416	have	14	396	107	289	18.59043	have
15	176	98	78	11.71935	that	15	447	180	267	18.35244	i
16	169	71	98	11.54082	not	16	435	171	264	18.31925	this
17	167	107	60	11.53047	on	17	353	203	150	16.62420	on
18	136	73	63	11.36252	men	18	283	167	116	16.54535	men
19	145	83	62	11.16817	with	19	308	213	95	16.50535	about
20	148	44	104	11.00777	we	20	316	136	180	16.02823	not
21	163	74	89	10.95312	it	21	291	145	146	15.69236	with
22	138	69	69	10.77497	women	22	310	124	186	15.67012	be
23	134	62	72	10.72534	do	23	330	128	202	15.65995	it
24	127	78	49	10.69744	up	24	285	91	194	15.47327	will
25	126	89	37	10.48216	about	25	282	104	178	15.28502	they
26	137	40	97	10.35315	be	26	247	214	33	15.27080	these
27	127	66	61	10.09803	no	27	252	98	154	14.30135	we
28	112	43	69	10.00773	don't	28	213	59	154	13.80974	don't
29	117	41	76	9.95909	vote	29	216	108	108	13.78676	women
30	148	76	72	9.95787	he	30	176	29	147	13.17306	rights
31	113	46	67	9.59740	they	31	199	103	96	13.10896	by
32	124	60	64	9.43885	kavanaugh	32	205	88	117	13.03744	as
33	112	48	64	9.30336	your	33	193	49	144	13.02649	their
34	92	19	73	9.06771	their	34	224	93	131	12.78561	he
35	74	12	62	8.48826	rights	35	191	77	114	12.75514	do
36	84	57	27	8.45829	how	36	173	63	110	12.55019	sexual
37	74	57	17	8.33637	stand	37	178	131	47	12.39272	how
38	75	65	10	8.30907	these	38	161	79	82	12.20948	assault
39	80	36	44	8.29814	sexual	39	202	86	116	12.13473	kavanaugh
40	76	58	18	8.20102	more	40	180	61	119	11.77570	if
41	80	23	57	8.19571	just	41	180	83	97	11.73782	what
42	83	36	47	8.04823	if	42	173	83	90	11.71578	no
43	73	55	18	7.91202	why	43	154	111	43	11.60889	why
44	68	52	16	7.88922	believe	44	159	60	99	11.49751	like
45	76	26	50	7.86894	can	45	150	103	47	11.47926	more
46	80	33	47	7.84416	what	46	143	110	33	11.43201	believe

Appendix II: Collocation list of frequent words in #KC and #NoKC

47	84	41	43	7.76326	his	47	160	83	77	11.29335	so
48	71	34	37	7.73386	right	48	157	70	87	11.23178	just
49	71	20	51	7.73000	out	49	144	56	88	10.84835	or
50	60	43	17	7.45481	against	50	124	97	27	10.76740	white
51	60	53	7	7.37922	many	51	120	10	110	10.66979	forward
52	66	29	37	7.33326	as	52	145	60	85	10.52807	your
53	62	39	23	7.31838	assault	53	131	74	57	10.28068	from
54	59	18	41	7.26120	need	54	138	62	76	10.20729	vote
55	62	35	27	7.25848	please	55	129	65	64	10.18529	up
56	58	15	43	7.24418	country	56	126	57	69	10.10530	out
57	54	48	6	7.22895	respect	57	106	84	22	9.93068	other
58	68	36	32	7.21272	so	58	126	55	71	9.87729	but
59	63	25	38	7.15246	or	59	119	66	53	9.87621	when
60	72	19	53	7.14037	i	60	104	88	16	9.82406	many
61	55	41	14	7.12891	other	61	126	45	81	9.74911	can
62	61	34	27	7.07516	there	62	123	57	66	9.71419	at
63	62	16	46	7.07120	should	63	104	32	72	9.70017	america
64	60	30	30	7.05867	now	64	103	75	28	9.59941	against
65	61	29	32	7.04323	by	65	120	76	44	9.52573	has
66	53	24	29	7.03660	support	66	98	4	94	9.48901	come
67	53	8	45	6.98149	america	67	110	62	48	9.46519	there
68	59	19	40	6.96688	like	68	93	43	50	9.31568	support
69	50	41	9	6.80426	american	69	99	47	52	9.27527	over
70	47	20	27	6.62791	sexually	70	86	44	42	9.08898	assaulted
71	52	14	38	6.54876	our	71	84	50	34	9.00233	sexually
72	49	24	25	6.48652	us	72	96	25	71	8.67935	should
73	46	7	39	6.46340	come	73	76	56	20	8.57390	respect
74	44	35	9	6.38888	those	74	108	50	58	8.48984	was
75	43	9	34	6.37721	watching	75	81	33	48	8.48111	country
76	43	5	38	6.30859	forward	76	87	39	48	8.46593	today
77	50	26	24	6.28751	from	77	85	31	54	8.41348	been
78	52	29	23	6.26007	at	78	88	35	53	8.39596	know
79	48	24	24	6.18248	know	79	83	40	43	8.36160	us
80	42	25	17	6.11685	than	80	74	56	18	8.35145	care
81	42	19	23	6.06331	&	81	83	33	50	8.33060	them
82	45	23	22	6.03662	when	82	94	40	54	8.22029	now
83	49	33	16	6.03345	has	83	98	57	41	8.12423	his
84	39	21	18	6.02797	assaulted	84	72	63	9	8.07610	american
85	41	8	33	5.93661	been	85	92	53	39	8.06470	an
86	48	27	21	5.85383	an	86	75	22	53	8.05957	were
87	41	20	21	5.85109	want	87	81	43	38	8.02663	time
88	41	24	17	5.84263	gop	88	81	26	55	7.94868	him
89	39	25	14	5.82136	white	89	69	54	15	7.89186	those
90	39	24	15	5.81962	rape	90	71	29	42	7.87333	make
91	39	25	14	5.80921	think	91	74	25	49	7.86973	being

92	40	21	19	5.80681	because	92	79	33	46	7.76479	people
93	39	26	13	5.73976	thing	93	73	37	36	7.70030	think
94	42	21	21	5.71615	people	94	73	33	40	7.62028	our
95	36	14	22	5.70363	remember	95	70	37	33	7.58068	trump
96	34	7	27	5.69521	girls	96	69	39	30	7.55511	only
97	36	18	18	5.64129	stop	97	61	37	24	7.49739	stand
98	38	18	20	5.56023	them	98	64	33	31	7.36126	than
99	33	28	5	5.48598	care	99	70	38	32	7.33233	me
100	41	20	21	5.48110	but	100	63	26	37	7.23504	need

Trump (#NoKC)

Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Stat	Collocate	Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Stat	Collocate
1	283	160	123	14.98504	the	51	25	15	10	4.43524	can
2	224	130	94	13.43265	to	52	25	9	16	4.43193	an
3	189	90	99	12.61359	and	53	21	5	16	4.36860	doesn
4	168	62	106	11.89389	is	54	23	18	5	4.36620	why
5	110	47	63	9.80070	kavanaugh	55	21	8	13	4.35731	&
6	115	62	53	9.48746	of	56	22	12	10	4.21011	but
7	109	63	46	8.82542	you	57	21	5	16	4.16275	would
8	94	39	55	8.63832	he	58	20	6	14	4.14186	get
9	79	42	37	8.00701	that	59	19	7	12	4.11923	does
10	73	25	48	7.97017	his	60	21	8	13	4.09413	out
11	76	31	45	7.93021	on	61	20	14	6	4.08773	when
12	74	29	45	7.67936	in	62	18	6	12	4.04711	america
13	75	51	24	7.60204	for	63	19	8	11	3.99726	me
14	71	39	32	7.25850	this	64	17	11	6	3.94951	much
15	63	30	33	6.82383	it	65	20	9	11	3.91936	how
16	54	31	23	6.66298	no	66	19	12	7	3.87386	from
17	51	33	18	6.57946	with	67	19	12	7	3.82593	don't
18	48	35	13	6.57437	as	68	17	11	6	3.82006	because
19	54	18	36	6.43186	are	69	19	8	11	3.80552	should
20	49	28	21	6.23222	we	70	22	8	14	3.76201	i
21	49	21	28	6.13765	be	71	15	3	12	3.73785	says
22	44	17	27	5.99828	have	72	14	13	1	3.66702	protect
23	40	32	8	5.99354	like	73	18	15	3	3.66289	up
24	49	26	23	5.96594	not	74	15	6	9	3.65879	said
25	40	9	31	5.91635	has	75	17	10	7	3.64495	know
26	34	32	2	5.81783	don'tald	76	16	7	9	3.63229	re
27	40	17	23	5.70897	all	77	15	7	8	3.61019	over
28	39	17	22	5.67822	who	78	15	10	5	3.57387	scotus
29	39	21	18	5.64376	what	79	14	6	8	3.43038	brett
30	37	16	21	5.54814	so	80	16	9	7	3.42697	court
31	35	12	23	5.54612	him	81	13	8	5	3.41736	lies
32	34	17	17	5.54571	trump	82	14	6	8	3.41269	need
33	35	23	12	5.48423	just	83	15	7	8	3.40241	our

Appendix II: Collocation list of frequent words in #KC and #NoKC

34	38	18	20	5.45733	women	84	15	6	9	3.36448	ford
35	37	15	22	5.44033	will	85	15	9	6	3.33671	one
36	32	24	8	5.25276	by	86	12	5	7	3.31899	predator
37	29	17	12	5.01254	investigation	87	11	4	7	3.30914	backed
38	32	22	10	5.00408	if	88	12	3	9	3.27778	needs
39	31	14	17	4.99632	about	89	11	2	9	3.27359	pick
40	32	14	18	4.91631	they	90	14	9	5	3.24738	please
41	28	15	13	4.87475	sexual	91	13	4	9	3.23433	supreme
42	30	22	8	4.83099	vote	92	13	5	8	3.23146	want
43	30	12	18	4.74941	was	93	12	9	3	3.21985	party
44	27	14	13	4.73871	or	94	11	2	9	3.19874	got
45	24	6	18	4.61944	gop	95	12	6	6	3.17268	white
46	23	17	6	4.56635	only	96	12	8	4	3.16432	think
47	30	20	10	4.53375	your	97	11	8	3	3.14323	put
48	21	4	17	4.49590	wants	98	12	6	6	3.13804	man
49	25	11	14	4.47662	at	99	12	6	6	3.12729	too
50	23	9	14	4.43738	fbi	100	11	7	4	3.11516	down

GOP (#NoKC)

Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Stat	Collocate	Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Stat	Collocate
1	550	452	98	22.36676	the	51	20	3	17	3.82045	who
2	187	67	120	12.29242	to	52	18	7	11	3.69141	an
3	164	75	89	11.91656	is	53	17	9	8	3.67611	out
4	143	80	63	10.88469	and	54	17	2	15	3.65917	don't
5	117	69	48	9.80741	of	55	16	8	8	3.58183	now
6	87	19	68	8.73278	are	56	27	12	15	3.57220	he
7	88	45	43	8.51725	this	57	13	9	4	3.56587	corrupt
8	79	36	43	7.32633	you	58	14	9	5	3.55182	lying
9	62	27	35	7.15603	on	59	16	4	12	3.54947	him
10	62	24	38	7.12012	kavanaugh	60	13	3	10	3.51674	committee
11	61	30	31	6.84411	for	61	14	8	6	3.48627	these
12	58	27	31	6.76900	that	62	14	8	6	3.47034	any
13	52	25	27	6.63593	no	63	14	3	11	3.44849	men
14	52	27	25	6.30453	in	64	14	3	11	3.44484	want
15	50	24	26	6.04199	it	65	15	8	7	3.43714	her
16	43	8	35	6.03143	they	66	13	3	10	3.40902	senator
17	39	10	29	5.90460	has	67	13	2	11	3.37690	going
18	40	20	20	5.90118	so	68	13	9	4	3.37501	white
19	41	17	24	5.90062	will	69	13	5	8	3.37312	over
20	40	17	23	5.84382	if	70	12	0	12	3.36969	wants
21	41	17	24	5.84263	women	71	12	2	10	3.32986	through
22	40	7	33	5.77622	have	72	17	3	14	3.32702	was
23	41	24	17	5.62689	be	73	13	7	6	3.26210	dr
24	34	29	5	5.50816	by	74	12	6	6	3.25955	against
25	30	2	28	5.34972	senators	75	17	5	12	3.25349	i

26	32	16	16	5.09016	all	76	11	2	9	3.25089	judiciary
27	36	20	16	5.00667	not	77	11	2	9	3.24524	hiding
28	30	15	15	4.87391	with	78	14	5	9	3.21085	should
29	29	19	10	4.81108	what	79	12	9	3	3.19268	let
30	26	8	18	4.64304	can	80	13	9	4	3.15581	ford
31	24	18	6	4.61944	trump	81	17	11	6	3.14401	his
32	25	16	9	4.59631	as	82	12	4	8	3.13810	us
33	24	9	15	4.57667	their	83	13	6	7	3.13124	one
34	28	22	6	4.48740	your	84	13	5	8	3.11943	she
35	24	10	14	4.48557	up	85	13	5	8	3.10526	there
36	23	18	5	4.43285	from	86	13	9	4	3.06274	or
37	24	7	17	4.36423	about	87	11	8	3	3.02902	scotus
38	22	11	11	4.33816	investigation	88	10	5	5	2.95059	other
39	24	12	12	4.30408	vote	89	11	2	9	2.94993	get
40	21	14	7	4.27369	more	90	10	7	3	2.94844	stop
41	23	11	12	4.15084	do	91	12	8	4	2.93502	right
42	20	12	8	4.12401	people	92	10	8	2	2.91935	old
43	20	14	6	4.09278	why	93	9	6	3	2.90859	process
44	20	10	10	4.01699	how	94	10	7	3	2.89350	&
45	20	10	10	4.00175	just	95	11	7	4	2.88984	when
46	24	8	16	3.99568	we	96	9	6	3	2.87850	power
47	19	10	9	3.93335	but	97	10	5	5	2.87572	only
48	18	9	9	3.90901	fbi	98	10	5	5	2.86549	been
49	18	12	6	3.83634	like	99	11	6	5	2.86416	our
50	16	9	7	3.83478	senate	100	9	6	3	2.84897	again

Democrats (#KC)

Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Stat	Collocate	Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Stat	Collocate
1	1897	1346	551	41.02161	the	51	59	20	39	7.34917	stop
2	818	328	490	26.15693	to	52	60	23	37	7.26610	over
3	500	95	405	21.54601	are	53	59	43	16	7.17644	these
4	527	238	289	20.99138	and	54	65	31	34	7.09913	like
5	389	239	150	17.53256	of	55	56	35	21	7.07063	against
6	382	220	162	17.20301	is	56	61	32	29	7.01164	when
7	369	185	184	16.33742	a	57	51	2	49	6.94526	trying
8	308	158	150	15.96453	for	58	58	24	34	6.93165	more
9	294	115	179	15.43722	this	59	54	25	29	6.80187	did
10	270	107	163	14.66935	in	60	63	24	39	6.78142	can
11	243	35	208	14.66285	have	61	52	16	36	6.73171	only
12	256	141	115	14.44364	that	62	54	29	25	6.65223	know
13	229	109	120	13.64482	on	63	48	14	34	6.65116	delay
14	197	171	26	13.48032	by	64	59	36	23	6.58064	at
15	187	50	137	12.71175	will	65	54	20	34	6.48533	don't
16	220	97	123	12.51613	you	66	52	24	28	6.48448	him
17	172	94	78	12.13068	with	67	49	23	26	6.42972	think

Appendix II: Collocation list of frequent words in #KC and #NoKC

18	172	40	132	12.04570	they	68	59	30	29	6.41412	his
19	191	118	73	11.99618	it	69	57	28	29	6.40185	has
20	161	66	95	11.39964	kavanaugh	70	48	12	36	6.38171	going
21	149	87	62	11.23651	all	71	51	32	19	6.37083	why
22	143	88	55	10.91535	what	72	56	32	24	6.36384	but
23	151	65	86	10.88775	not	73	50	22	28	6.35752	judge
24	131	22	109	10.86345	their	74	54	26	28	6.34040	women
25	162	77	85	10.16151	i	75	54	20	34	6.24474	an
26	122	64	58	10.12624	about	76	45	12	33	6.14183	dr
27	127	57	70	9.59381	be	77	44	20	24	6.10564	after
28	115	66	49	9.58709	if	78	46	25	21	6.06705	time
29	105	49	56	9.45141	do	79	45	25	20	6.03361	investigation
30	105	64	41	9.26923	vote	80	40	19	21	5.70248	them
31	98	68	30	9.19127	how	81	38	10	28	5.69708	were
32	89	45	44	9.16212	republicans	82	39	18	21	5.68696	believe
33	98	69	29	9.15369	from	83	38	12	26	5.66584	say
34	96	36	60	9.08760	out	84	43	16	27	5.65947	one
35	88	62	26	8.93107	senate	85	38	31	7	5.64101	com
36	104	45	59	8.84194	we	86	36	26	10	5.63839	political
37	90	48	42	8.48578	so	87	35	18	17	5.58830	committee
38	85	30	55	8.24250	just	88	32	19	13	5.53580	evil
39	87	41	46	8.23897	as	89	36	24	12	5.48255	see
40	76	21	55	8.04160	would	90	36	21	15	5.42384	good
41	70	30	40	7.79621	fbi	91	36	23	13	5.41341	let
42	72	21	51	7.76999	should	92	33	15	18	5.35025	left
43	75	35	40	7.74576	now	93	48	24	24	5.34789	was
44	79	40	39	7.71045	no	94	32	12	20	5.33937	new
45	76	23	53	7.62466	who	95	30	10	20	5.31192	media
46	69	17	52	7.62291	get	96	42	22	20	5.29984	or
47	64	9	55	7.52816	want	97	46	23	23	5.29424	your
48	89	45	44	7.51786	he	98	38	16	22	5.26741	people
49	70	38	32	7.48513	up	99	42	22	20	5.23634	her
50	69	31	38	7.39065	ford	100	32	8	24	5.21947	take

FBI

FBI (#NoKC)						FBI (#KC)					
Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Stat	Collocate	Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Stat	Collocate
1	588	456	132	22.93108	the	1	2066	1585	481	42.62971	the
2	406	32	374	20.04651	investigation	2	1338	70	1268	36.43476	investigation
3	292	134	158	15.69934	to	3	999	473	526	29.03447	to
4	196	175	21	13.79031	an	4	669	610	59	25.50024	an
5	143	49	94	10.76225	is	5	551	300	251	20.73929	a
6	142	71	71	10.45401	you	6	522	183	339	20.51682	is

7	106	4	102	10.24766	investigate	7	442	336	106	19.48421	for
8	125	54	71	9.73893	and	8	396	193	203	17.26255	and
9	109	45	64	9.72658	kavanaugh	9	299	14	285	17.21199	investigate
10	91	48	43	8.75512	not	10	350	184	166	16.02177	of
11	93	75	18	8.66144	for	11	269	105	164	15.24119	kavanaugh
12	100	56	44	8.62964	of	12	259	131	128	14.84951	not
13	89	43	46	8.35605	this	13	251	128	123	14.01449	that
14	66	38	28	7.48317	no	14	253	102	151	13.76254	this
15	58	49	9	7.30554	by	15	234	87	147	13.37990	it
16	68	40	28	7.26453	that	16	227	124	103	13.32797	on
17	70	29	41	7.10055	he	17	206	91	115	12.88754	he
18	62	37	25	6.97274	on	18	206	114	92	12.82216	be
19	60	41	19	6.94049	be	19	234	116	118	12.68435	you
20	52	22	30	6.86537	should	20	183	105	78	12.47947	if
21	48	28	20	6.62082	why	21	186	77	109	12.44211	they
22	48	13	35	6.37732	if	22	180	62	118	12.27450	will
23	46	15	31	6.20982	do	23	172	95	77	12.18634	no
24	50	16	34	6.08651	are	24	207	110	97	12.04606	in
25	45	17	28	6.06275	they	25	149	128	21	11.46370	by
26	45	32	13	6.05925	have	26	148	110	38	11.20750	vote
27	39	33	6	6.05600	let	27	134	113	21	11.19650	want
28	50	19	31	5.77928	it	28	189	78	111	10.98363	i
29	41	14	27	5.77234	will	29	152	90	62	10.96736	have
30	35	28	7	5.68044	want	30	137	34	103	10.84328	has
31	36	18	18	5.66074	ford	31	135	49	86	10.80276	do
32	32	3	29	5.60734	report	32	121	10	111	10.75784	into
33	38	11	27	5.49602	was	33	143	56	87	10.74501	what
34	34	19	15	5.48993	would	34	124	51	73	10.50146	should
35	33	13	20	5.47397	dr	35	103	77	26	9.96152	week
36	37	12	25	5.44476	what	36	129	64	65	9.94133	we
37	44	22	22	5.39610	in	37	118	45	73	9.88030	can
38	29	2	27	5.35221	background	38	114	47	67	9.81418	now
39	35	21	14	5.29769	vote	39	98	8	90	9.81167	report
40	36	24	12	5.07417	we	40	106	53	53	9.75640	fbi
41	26	1	25	4.99167	into	41	107	48	59	9.48839	ford
42	26	15	11	4.91619	then	42	102	48	54	9.46562	why
43	30	8	22	4.86355	so	43	110	59	51	9.43472	so
44	28	12	16	4.82722	or	44	97	80	17	9.43314	let
45	25	8	17	4.81697	must	45	113	33	80	9.43196	was
46	24	18	6	4.81518	wants	46	127	63	64	9.38896	are
47	24	19	5	4.71698	call	47	101	61	40	9.36217	there
48	26	6	20	4.71030	their	48	99	48	51	9.26065	would
49	31	11	20	4.65762	his	49	101	42	59	9.08015	but
50	29	9	20	4.63792	all	50	82	4	78	8.99850	background
51	23	6	17	4.63087	before	51	107	71	36	8.89245	with

Appendix II: Collocation list of frequent words in #KC and #NoKC

52	29	15	14	4.61489	with	52	96	44	52	8.88930	or
53	22	19	3	4.60016	until	53	80	78	2	8.71068	until
54	22	5	17	4.54819	needs	54	77	69	8	8.61543	ask
55	26	13	13	4.52663	can	55	78	68	10	8.61254	call
56	23	14	9	4.43738	trump	56	87	56	31	8.59297	one
57	23	13	10	4.37095	know	57	72	2	70	8.44895	investigation s
58	23	9	14	4.33706	she	58	84	45	39	8.44428	get
59	19	18	1	4.31720	demand	59	75	56	19	8.40242	delay
60	22	5	17	4.24276	now	60	91	66	25	8.30137	about
61	23	6	17	4.23942	has	61	73	21	52	8.22012	allegations
62	19	4	15	4.21566	allegations	62	92	25	67	8.15554	all
63	27	15	12	4.16824	your	63	70	28	42	7.98435	does
64	23	13	10	4.11013	about	64	78	45	33	7.85926	from
65	21	14	7	4.08846	there	65	70	40	30	7.79621	democrats
66	19	10	9	4.05183	did	66	80	37	43	7.77268	just
67	17	16	1	4.04791	without	67	63	22	41	7.57390	before
68	17	1	16	4.04428	clear	68	78	34	44	7.54983	his
69	18	15	3	3.94278	need	69	71	23	48	7.50638	their
70	18	9	9	3.90901	gop	70	62	29	33	7.48609	doesn
71	19	11	8	3.85758	from	71	62	45	17	7.41799	need
72	15	10	5	3.82164	wh	72	55	26	29	7.34545	investigated
73	15	12	3	3.81612	sham	73	72	34	38	7.09346	as
74	15	12	3	3.81005	asking	74	61	27	34	7.05873	judge
75	19	9	10	3.80803	don't	75	62	35	27	6.93692	don't
76	18	9	9	3.79209	please	76	50	43	7	6.86903	full
77	15	5	10	3.79017	witnesses	77	55	44	11	6.86722	after
78	19	6	13	3.77762	as	78	63	25	38	6.85636	up
79	16	8	8	3.74395	under	79	55	17	38	6.78613	did
80	14	0	14	3.73194	investigates	80	54	45	9	6.77201	trump
81	22	7	15	3.73083	i	81	64	30	34	6.77079	at
82	16	5	11	3.73006	does	82	61	33	28	6.76596	how
83	15	10	5	3.67258	hearing	83	64	27	37	6.73201	she
84	14	12	2	3.61079	ask	84	52	14	38	6.71290	against
85	13	10	3	3.58302	interviewed	85	47	39	8	6.71012	wants
86	17	5	12	3.55837	but	86	46	5	41	6.68633	check
87	13	0	13	3.51719	interview	87	45	36	9	6.59287	asking
88	12	4	8	3.45361	reopen	88	51	14	37	6.52252	dr
89	12	1	11	3.42089	check	89	51	28	23	6.47103	been
90	14	6	8	3.40107	any	90	53	29	24	6.46255	know
91	12	6	6	3.37831	hiding	91	43	11	32	6.40529	clear
92	13	10	3	3.36241	senators	92	61	35	26	6.39081	who
93	16	5	11	3.33984	just	93	52	21	31	6.36580	him
94	12	4	8	3.33510	question	94	44	28	16	6.36331	won't
95	15	9	6	3.31870	one	95	57	28	29	6.35335	like

96	12	3	9	3.29498	job	96	49	28	21	6.29882	senate
97	13	9	4	3.26397	say	97	53	29	24	6.28341	when
98	11	9	2	3.25989	investigated	98	47	22	25	6.26905	only
99	11	10	1	3.24958	allow	99	42	37	5	6.26651	without
100	17	8	9	3.23581	who	100	43	24	19	6.26131	flake

Sexual

Sexual (#NoKC)						Sexual (#KC)					
Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Stat	Collocate	Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Stat	Collocate
1	539	8	531	23.12103	assault	1	1560	21	1539	39.40562	assault
2	366	323	43	18.21227	of	2	1088	962	126	31.58305	of
3	325	199	126	15.75425	the	3	841	584	257	26.96405	a
4	224	105	119	13.58537	and	4	785	438	347	23.80378	the
5	236	146	90	13.38082	to	5	624	403	221	21.98553	to
6	180	69	111	12.04892	is	6	530	226	304	20.92459	and
7	136	12	124	11.60475	predator	7	444	170	274	18.74660	is
8	158	71	87	10.79141	you	8	262	63	199	16.02914	allegations
9	122	66	56	10.17995	kavanaugh	9	254	212	42	15.25565	about
10	87	82	5	9.26680	accused	10	213	14	199	14.56277	predator
11	99	34	65	9.05231	are	11	212	206	6	14.47104	accused
12	98	38	60	8.97991	on	12	264	97	167	14.34068	in
13	101	72	29	8.84083	for	13	203	2	201	14.21714	misconduct
14	78	18	60	8.74108	allegations	14	239	116	123	13.73575	that
15	94	27	67	8.60958	in	15	222	103	119	13.28234	on
16	83	60	23	8.59531	who	16	209	106	103	13.18286	not
17	92	44	48	8.59109	not	17	222	155	67	12.90112	for
18	97	54	43	8.46921	he	18	203	89	114	12.87947	are
19	80	44	36	8.29814	women	19	173	110	63	12.55019	women
20	67	3	64	8.15586	predators	20	224	100	124	12.50994	you
21	74	53	21	7.98376	with	21	156	81	75	12.40593	victims
22	81	42	39	7.84618	that	22	182	102	80	12.19331	kavanaugh
23	68	49	19	7.78953	an	23	174	104	70	12.02025	have
24	79	41	38	7.42053	this	24	168	121	47	11.89570	with
25	54	19	35	7.19320	against	25	158	112	46	11.75842	who
26	65	27	38	7.17840	we	26	199	54	145	11.62856	i
27	57	50	7	6.99108	about	27	166	76	90	11.31555	be
28	61	34	27	6.95512	no	28	129	6	123	11.30415	abuse
29	44	1	43	6.58404	abuse	29	130	25	105	11.11188	against
30	54	29	25	6.46386	his	30	142	70	72	11.00461	as
31	56	26	30	6.41379	be	31	173	61	112	10.76831	this
32	42	28	14	6.39694	victims	32	129	41	88	10.62334	by
33	41	0	41	6.38042	misconduct	33	141	72	69	10.24511	he
34	46	22	24	6.31766	or	34	116	49	67	10.00986	or
35	61	30	31	6.30999	it	35	148	63	85	9.94779	it
36	40	2	38	6.30330	harassment	36	111	77	34	9.71176	an

Appendix II: Collocation list of frequent words in #KC and #NoKC

37	45	17	28	6.25639	by	37	94	3	91	9.67101	harassment
38	35	1	34	5.88873	assaulter	38	111	61	50	9.65524	has
39	41	26	15	5.86853	has	39	118	39	79	9.48129	they
40	36	19	17	5.77600	rape	40	91	44	47	9.47918	survivors
41	43	29	14	5.70582	have	41	86	3	83	9.25177	predators
42	42	14	28	5.62370	they	42	110	52	58	9.24420	if
43	40	28	12	5.50837	all	43	105	45	60	9.15363	no
44	30	0	30	5.44868	assaults	44	84	37	47	9.03905	victim
45	33	9	24	5.43564	supreme	45	104	68	36	8.95540	all
46	31	24	7	5.38697	another	46	97	41	56	8.85195	can
47	35	14	21	5.36669	as	47	78	37	41	8.59099	rape
48	39	13	26	5.32047	i	48	86	42	44	8.54163	don't
49	37	13	24	5.27787	if	49	98	43	55	8.40440	we
50	40	22	18	5.24122	your	50	89	55	34	8.19192	was
51	33	13	20	5.21553	court	51	69	30	39	8.15752	accusations
52	36	19	17	5.16984	do	52	86	45	41	8.15047	his
53	36	13	23	5.13646	will	53	66	1	65	8.08218	violence
54	26	11	15	5.03985	survivors	54	77	27	50	8.07406	court
55	30	18	12	5.01301	their	55	90	37	53	8.00117	will
56	28	13	15	4.87475	trump	56	62	1	61	7.85007	assaults
57	29	16	13	4.86463	from	57	68	50	18	7.84883	woman
58	33	15	18	4.82449	was	58	74	37	37	7.82633	when
59	29	15	14	4.81319	don't	59	62	61	1	7.80129	alleged
60	25	17	8	4.80361	woman	60	69	39	30	7.77406	brett
61	26	13	13	4.77412	because	61	72	12	60	7.71976	should
62	28	17	11	4.77108	one	62	75	54	21	7.66364	her
63	23	21	2	4.75694	alleged	63	70	27	43	7.66265	why
64	29	11	18	4.75614	just	64	59	22	37	7.59192	allegation
65	23	7	16	4.74779	allegation	65	73	42	31	7.59094	ford
66	23	16	7	4.71919	perjury	66	72	43	29	7.55407	from
67	24	18	6	4.71590	support	67	66	15	51	7.55001	supreme
68	29	17	12	4.68993	can	68	56	4	52	7.46731	assaulter
69	28	9	19	4.68711	should	69	72	29	43	7.28748	so
70	27	11	16	4.66196	like	70	65	35	30	7.17790	their
71	22	11	11	4.62668	accusations	71	59	49	10	7.10774	been
72	24	8	16	4.58545	scotus	72	52	45	7	7.10018	report
73	21	0	21	4.53170	abuser	73	60	27	33	6.93240	one
74	26	10	16	4.52991	him	74	63	37	26	6.83809	do
75	21	9	12	4.46287	victim	75	47	18	29	6.81145	survivor
76	23	14	9	4.45840	even	76	64	20	44	6.79494	just
77	24	12	12	4.43372	more	77	58	16	42	6.78089	there
78	25	13	12	4.41907	there	78	62	14	48	6.73536	but
79	25	18	7	4.34775	up	79	61	30	31	6.72502	now
80	24	11	13	4.34134	why	80	52	32	20	6.69315	being
81	23	10	13	4.32057	when	81	50	34	16	6.68015	men

82	22	15	7	4.31382	men	82	55	25	30	6.66005	him
83	24	12	12	4.30215	sexual	83	58	31	27	6.63770	out
84	21	14	7	4.24560	brett	84	45	13	32	6.57873	claims
85	24	7	17	4.01885	so	85	51	33	18	6.55626	man
86	19	15	4	4.01218	been	86	42	36	6	6.44024	multiple
87	25	8	17	4.00435	what	87	53	26	27	6.24944	how
88	18	12	6	3.98857	other	88	46	18	28	6.20852	because
89	16	13	3	3.98560	serial	89	42	34	8	6.19557	forward
90	22	9	13	3.97699	my	90	46	23	23	6.08955	sexual
91	20	5	15	3.90175	would	91	45	37	8	5.98623	investigation
92	15	2	13	3.84466	violence	92	46	20	26	5.98616	judge
93	23	12	11	3.81728	vote	93	55	28	27	5.95973	your
94	16	13	3	3.79360	forward	94	39	28	11	5.85258	into
95	18	12	6	3.78298	re	95	41	30	11	5.81817	after
96	17	10	7	3.76188	believe	96	41	27	14	5.81349	any
97	15	12	3	3.74551	attempted	97	40	19	21	5.79640	never
98	20	6	14	3.73922	how	98	45	12	33	5.76772	would
99	16	12	4	3.72640	every	99	56	14	42	5.69971	what
100	19	6	13	3.71140	she	100	37	26	11	5.67669	someone

Assault

Man (#NoKC)						Man (#KC)					
Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Stat	Collocate	Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Stat	Collocate
1	539	531	8	23.12103	sexual	1	1560	1539	21	39.40562	sexual
2	285	239	46	16.09366	of	2	826	696	130	27.50660	of
3	240	141	99	13.48908	the	3	693	369	324	22.88583	the
4	199	109	90	12.47318	to	4	526	273	253	20.96071	a
5	181	67	114	12.29037	and	5	470	247	223	19.03383	to
6	144	48	96	10.84257	is	6	422	153	269	18.74054	and
7	123	45	78	9.56465	you	7	322	99	223	15.85120	is
8	101	19	82	9.25690	in	8	192	40	152	13.71553	allegations
9	84	39	45	8.37560	kavanaugh	9	199	166	33	13.51617	about
10	79	34	45	8.07077	not	10	213	77	136	12.66275	you
11	77	50	27	7.72669	for	11	161	82	79	12.20948	women
12	73	33	40	7.62390	that	12	197	31	166	12.12583	i
13	57	13	44	7.46953	allegations	13	181	76	105	12.08020	on
14	68	22	46	7.42634	are	14	144	67	77	11.93291	victims
15	62	23	39	7.31838	women	15	142	135	7	11.83283	accused
16	71	30	41	7.20535	he	16	167	71	96	11.83003	not
17	53	11	42	7.16146	against	17	178	60	118	11.56051	in
18	48	45	3	6.86646	accused	18	166	72	94	11.29803	that
19	63	23	40	6.81968	it	19	153	83	70	11.28428	kavanaugh
20	57	23	34	6.63701	on	20	164	92	72	11.02330	for
21	62	28	34	6.61982	this	21	155	43	112	10.51816	this
22	43	22	21	6.49474	victims	22	139	34	105	10.47546	be

Appendix II: Collocation list of frequent words in #KC and #NoKC

23	44	21	23	6.47986	rape	23	133	37	96	10.23632	are
24	46	39	7	6.31147	about	24	119	73	46	10.19182	who
25	45	27	18	6.28321	an	25	106	20	86	10.04948	against
26	44	22	22	6.27358	or	26	114	74	40	9.68501	with
27	47	30	17	6.26807	with	27	113	47	66	9.51628	have
28	46	37	9	6.25850	who	28	117	42	75	9.44523	he
29	46	25	21	6.15900	have	29	90	40	50	9.44041	survivors
30	43	11	32	5.91622	they	30	105	39	66	9.43393	as
31	44	20	24	5.89136	his	31	99	25	74	9.30700	by
32	44	10	34	5.81999	we	32	88	31	57	9.28636	victim
33	32	3	29	5.61574	charges	33	104	41	63	9.21713	if
34	34	6	28	5.48126	now	34	97	62	35	9.17306	an
35	30	28	2	5.36804	sexually	35	87	37	50	9.15257	rape
36	38	9	29	5.34421	no	36	121	40	81	9.11931	it
37	28	10	18	5.24834	survivors	37	94	62	32	9.01276	her
38	34	20	14	5.16076	all	38	86	38	48	8.60033	ford
39	33	8	25	5.09936	if	39	86	32	54	8.59639	or
40	37	8	29	5.08667	be	40	95	25	70	8.56621	they
41	29	15	14	4.95216	don't	41	89	43	46	8.48159	was
42	25	7	18	4.91694	victim	42	69	67	2	8.22498	sexually
43	28	4	24	4.85789	by	43	82	33	49	8.22400	can
44	23	10	13	4.76726	maryland	44	69	32	37	7.68002	don't
45	27	7	20	4.73021	should	45	72	22	50	7.47290	no
46	29	12	17	4.68495	do	46	64	7	57	7.37741	should
47	30	8	22	4.67922	i	47	72	43	29	7.34012	all
48	27	13	14	4.65069	can	48	67	27	40	7.31643	has
49	24	17	7	4.63365	did	49	52	15	37	6.94846	someone
50	26	9	17	4.59610	just	50	49	47	2	6.93728	alleged
51	28	11	17	4.53533	was	51	51	34	17	6.87149	didn't
52	30	8	22	4.53023	your	52	48	15	33	6.85235	allegation
53	23	18	5	4.51700	men	53	48	39	9	6.83968	report
54	20	2	18	4.45589	survivor	54	60	17	43	6.73985	so
55	24	13	11	4.37002	has	55	47	20	27	6.71713	accusations
56	23	9	14	4.36676	her	56	58	7	51	6.71308	but
57	19	8	11	4.33556	harassment	57	48	28	20	6.56553	woman
58	19	6	13	4.32127	gt	58	44	39	5	6.54140	sex
59	18	9	9	4.17706	perjury	59	52	20	32	6.50129	when
60	23	6	17	4.11521	so	60	46	30	16	6.46982	men
61	23	2	21	3.97796	will	61	55	17	38	6.45132	she
62	17	12	5	3.92217	every	62	53	30	23	6.44787	from
63	22	8	14	3.88692	what	63	47	28	19	6.38826	man
64	19	10	9	3.88444	why	64	49	26	23	6.27592	my
65	19	7	12	3.85491	him	65	45	24	21	6.20254	brett
66	19	6	13	3.79441	as	66	46	11	35	6.11648	why
67	19	13	6	3.79250	up	67	51	14	37	6.10633	just

68	19	7	12	3.78964	how	68	57	11	46	6.04664	we
69	18	7	11	3.78895	their	69	46	22	24	5.97625	their
70	18	5	13	3.72435	there	70	41	13	28	5.91620	dr
71	18	6	12	3.70966	but	71	54	13	41	5.87780	will
72	16	7	9	3.68646	because	72	46	23	23	5.79600	do
73	14	11	3	3.64177	attempted	73	42	8	34	5.73429	would
74	15	7	8	3.61886	doesn	74	39	24	15	5.71719	did
75	17	11	6	3.60842	from	75	38	19	19	5.71626	assault
76	17	3	14	3.60489	she	76	33	10	23	5.70411	survivor
77	16	8	8	3.58108	assault	77	41	17	24	5.64847	one
78	16	4	12	3.56862	when	78	40	17	23	5.64468	him
79	13	13	0	3.56639	alleged	79	41	7	34	5.64172	there
80	13	3	10	3.55718	allegation	80	38	28	10	5.61655	been
81	15	9	6	3.55667	even	81	37	9	28	5.59217	because
82	13	6	7	3.54278	accusations	82	32	8	24	5.53912	claims
83	13	7	6	3.51456	forget	83	45	13	32	5.51765	his
84	13	9	4	3.39650	hearing	84	41	13	28	5.50458	how
85	13	7	6	3.37922	other	85	42	11	31	5.49749	like
86	15	4	11	3.37438	would	86	38	14	24	5.49274	judge
87	14	5	9	3.36041	them	87	35	17	18	5.48314	never
88	13	6	7	3.32221	over	88	40	14	26	5.42147	out
89	12	5	7	3.30286	also	89	44	20	24	5.38464	your
90	11	3	8	3.29847	charge	90	36	24	12	5.38106	investigation
91	11	11	0	3.28344	press	91	41	18	23	5.31977	at
92	12	2	10	3.26330	anyone	92	34	7	27	5.27724	them
93	12	9	3	3.24232	before	93	46	14	32	5.27335	what
94	11	5	6	3.23962	open	94	33	21	12	5.24461	after
95	12	5	7	3.23393	someone	95	30	21	9	5.21850	forward
96	15	8	7	3.21890	my	96	27	14	13	5.16132	harassment
97	13	5	8	3.20646	never	97	32	15	17	5.15058	being
98	14	8	6	3.18005	like	98	31	12	19	5.14317	were
99	12	4	8	3.16380	being	99	26	21	5	5.05743	committed
100	12	5	7	3.14521	only	100	29	6	23	5.03146	still

APPENDIX III
Keyword list

APPENDIX III: KEYWORD LIST**#NoKC Corpus**

#NoKC					
Keyword	Frequency (focus)	Frequency (reference)	Relative frequency (focus)	Relative frequency (reference)	Score
boofing	15	219	30.29599	0.00487	5,161.308
kavanaugh	3240	62,076	6,543.934	1.38042	4,737.115
assaulter	62	1,208	125.2234	0.02686	4,494.299
blasey	259	6,125	523.1108	0.1362	3,812.63
rapey	31	919	62.61172	0.02044	2,920.873
scotus	685	25,593	1,383.517	0.56913	2,426.691
kav	57	2,433	115.1248	0.0541	2,089.248
perjurer	31	1,507	62.61172	0.03351	1,814.232
swetnick	23	1,200	46.45385	0.02669	1,677.976
perjured	58	5,326	117.1445	0.11844	980.813
horseplay	23	3,895	46.45385	0.08662	530.214
rapist	217	44,671	438.282	0.99337	440.763
murkowski	65	13,638	131.2826	0.30328	431.463
disqualifying	58	13,722	117.1445	0.30514	382.649
merrick	110	28,673	222.1706	0.63762	347.895
retweet	57	15,022	115.1248	0.33405	343.605
grassley	112	32,131	226.2101	0.71451	316.152
avenatti	20	5,941	40.39466	0.13211	303.468
heitkamp	17	5,134	34.33546	0.11417	298.143
perjury	153	49,030	309.0191	1.09031	283.165
accuser	100	32,839	201.9733	0.73026	276.201
unfit	255	92,007	515.0319	2.04601	251.603
misogynist	48	17,377	96.94717	0.38642	250.239
liar	371	138,450	749.3209	3.07879	243.303
midterms	48	18,300	96.94717	0.40695	237.649
brett	571	221,671	1,153.267	4.92942	233.909

accusers	67	26,167	135.3221	0.58189	232.159
manchin	29	11,733	58.57225	0.26091	223.636
sham	213	87,995	430.2031	1.95679	219.739
belligerent	89	37,681	179.7562	0.83793	214.269
misogynistic	46	20,333	92.90771	0.45216	205.026
frat	47	20,815	94.92744	0.46287	204.643
unhinged	59	26,274	119.1642	0.58427	203.608
disqualifies	16	7,137	32.31572	0.15871	202.347
gorsuch	35	15,700	70.69065	0.34913	201.902
rapists	75	34,327	151.48	0.76335	198.183
potus	47	21,566	94.92744	0.47957	197.531
polygraph	57	26,429	115.1248	0.58772	195.554
lied	448	209,029	904.8403	4.64829	194.619
flake	136	64,697	274.6837	1.4387	190.793
temperament	247	120,937	498.874	2.68934	185.432
corroborating	32	16,175	64.63145	0.35969	179.19
assaulted	290	147,050	585.7225	3.27003	179.064
gop	718	378,747	1,450.168	8.4224	172.16
repubs	17	9,120	34.33546	0.20281	168.476
disqualify	63	34,022	127.2432	0.75657	167.965
abuser	86	48,660	173.697	1.08208	160.374
partisanship	51	29,092	103.0064	0.64693	158.978
raped	309	182,573	624.0974	4.05998	153.682
partisan	321	200,635	648.3342	4.46163	145.281

#KC Corpus

#KC					
Keyword	Frequency (focus)	Frequency (reference)	Relative frequency (focus)	Relative frequency (reference)	Score
boofing	58	219	33.55505	0.00487	5716.511
boofed	25	99	14.46338	0.0022	4517.978
blasey	937	6,125	542.0876	0.1362	3950.94
anti-kavanaugh	37	203	21.40581	0.00451	3882.108
kavanaugh	8917	62,076	5158.799	1.38042	3734.425

Appendix III: Keyword list

swetnick	127	1,200	73.47398	0.02669	2653.959
gtfoh	16	197	9.25657	0.00438	1720.482
assaulter	66	1,208	38.18333	0.02686	1370.434
rapey	48	919	27.7697	0.02044	1295.498
demoncrats	20	415	11.57071	0.00923	1131.311
demonrats	25	534	14.46338	0.01187	1123.46
difi	26	559	15.04192	0.01243	1120.033
demorats	19	457	10.99217	0.01016	984.825
kav	88	2,433	50.91111	0.0541	923.929
scotus	800	25,593	462.8283	0.56913	811.803
accuser	850	32,839	491.755	0.73026	672.479
libtards	42	1,685	24.29848	0.03747	631.643
kegger	27	1,096	15.62045	0.02437	615.688
avenatti	128	5,941	74.05252	0.13211	556.32
boof	40	1,932	23.14141	0.04296	526.407
mid-terms	50	2471	28.92677	0.05495	517.038
grassley	633	32,131	366.2128	0.71451	511.819
assaulters	15	786	8.67803	0.01748	469.677
hirono	78	4329	45.12575	0.09627	463.95
midterms	282	18,300	163.147	0.40695	399.924
flake	958	64,697	554.2368	1.4387	384.967
bigly	19	1300	10.99217	0.02891	367.556
dems	1586	115,727	917.557	2.57348	356.405
scj	22	1,572	12.72778	0.03496	353.996
murkowski	182	136,38	105.2934	0.30328	346.05
polygraphs	25	1,860	14.46338	0.04136	341.448
shitshow	23	1,715	13.30631	0.03814	340.015
accusers	326	26,167	188.6025	0.58189	323.566
uncorroborated	51	4,216	29.5053	0.09375	311.401
manchin	136	11,733	78.6808	0.26091	300.412
feinstein	473	42,127	273.6472	0.9368	291.798
perjurer	17	1,507	9.8351	0.03351	285.005
polygraph	289	26,429	167.1967	0.58772	284.004
brett	2413	221,671	1396.006	4.92942	283.142
rapist	435	44,671	251.6629	0.99337	253.088
retweet	144	15,022	83.30908	0.33405	248.648
heitkamp	46	5,134	26.61262	0.11417	231.086
metoo	23	2,583	13.30631	0.05744	227.711
mazie	31	3,604	17.9346	0.08014	221.034
icymi	30	3,496	17.35606	0.07774	220.428
grandstanding	93	11,193	53.80378	0.2489	215.301
perjured	42	5,326	24.29848	0.11844	203.45
merrick	221	28,673	127.8563	0.63762	200.21
unhinged	183	26,274	105.872	0.58427	180.896
rbg	47	6,724	27.19116	0.14953	180.648

APPENDIX IV
Collocation list of keywords in *#KC*
and *#NoKC*

APPENDIX IV: COLLOCATION LIST OF KEYWORDS IN #KC AND #NoKC**Brett**

Brett (#NoKC)					Brett (#KC)				
Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Collocate	Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Collocate
1	447	16	431	kavanaugh	1	1879	43	1836	kavanaugh
2	158	85	73	the	2	909	472	437	the
3	145	39	106	is	3	707	378	329	to
4	139	78	61	to	4	529	175	354	is
5	119	30	89	s	5	470	198	272	a
6	113	46	67	a	6	450	309	141	of
7	92	60	32	of	7	332	159	173	and
8	84	48	36	and	8	277	181	96	for
9	77	45	32	you	9	273	131	142	i
10	62	42	20	for	10	254	132	122	you
11	59	24	35	not	11	251	130	121	in
12	59	14	45	he	12	224	108	116	supreme
13	56	39	17	on	13	223	163	60	on
14	54	23	31	i	14	205	117	88	court
15	53	35	18	that	15	200	123	77	that
16	47	18	29	in	16	196	169	27	judge
17	46	20	26	was	17	169	92	77	this
18	42	17	25	t	18	159	93	66	it
19	40	30	10	no	19	156	37	119	he
20	38	26	12	this	20	156	58	98	be
21	37	9	28	his	21	142	36	106	has
22	36	15	21	be	22	138	41	97	was
23	35	28	7	vote	23	134	70	64	not
24	35	21	14	supreme	24	132	39	93	his
25	35	21	14	about	25	131	23	108	confirmed
26	34	18	16	it	26	129	106	23	justice
27	33	15	18	who	27	123	53	70	will
28	33	24	9	court	28	121	44	77	as
29	28	17	11	like	29	117	80	37	with
30	27	18	9	by	30	107	71	36	if
31	27	13	14	are	31	105	83	22	vote
32	26	19	7	with	32	100	51	49	have
33	23	9	14	have	33	96	48	48	are
34	23	19	4	as	34	94	47	47	ford
35	22	10	12	we	35	91	61	30	com
36	22	9	13	sexual	36	90	45	45	what
37	22	13	9	if	37	90	45	45	at
38	21	12	9	what	38	89	57	32	about
39	21	16	5	now	39	85	40	45	confirmation

40	21	16	5	from	40	84	65	19	senate
41	20	13	7	judge	41	84	45	39	from
42	20	9	11	an	42	81	44	37	we
43	20	19	1	against	43	79	42	37	like
44	19	8	11	just	44	78	51	27	all
45	19	3	16	has	45	77	68	9	nominee
46	18	6	12	will	46	77	74	3	against
47	18	10	8	should	47	76	51	25	by
48	18	14	4	investigation	48	75	53	22	no
49	17	9	8	your	49	72	36	36	now
50	17	10	7	trump	50	72	30	42	just
51	17	9	8	so	51	70	25	45	an
52	17	4	13	must	52	69	35	34	so
53	17	14	3	know	53	69	30	39	sexual
54	17	14	3	ford	54	68	65	3	confirm
55	16	9	7	why	55	66	34	32	out
56	16	15	1	nominee	56	65	57	8	congratulations
57	15	8	7	please	57	64	43	21	do
58	15	12	3	do	58	62	25	37	should
59	15	8	7	all	59	62	39	23	her
60	14	13	1	our	60	60	34	26	who
61	14	7	7	brett	61	60	39	21	or
62	14	6	8	at	62	59	17	42	nomination
63	13	9	4	women	63	58	30	28	your
64	13	5	8	withdraw	64	56	25	31	can
65	13	7	6	one	65	55	20	35	today
66	12	6	6	there	66	55	28	27	but
67	12	7	5	out	67	54	17	37	christine
68	12	9	3	dr	68	54	40	14	allegations
69	12	9	3	boy	69	53	28	25	why
70	12	10	2	better	70	51	34	17	women
71	11	5	6	would	71	51	15	36	been
72	11	8	3	woman	72	50	26	24	they
73	11	2	9	via	73	50	26	24	beer
74	11	6	5	too	74	48	31	17	how
75	11	8	3	say	75	47	32	15	know
76	11	6	5	people	76	46	11	35	m
77	11	5	6	or	77	45	26	19	when
78	11	3	8	nomination	78	45	18	27	blasey
79	11	8	3	how	79	45	21	24	assault
80	11	0	11	confirmed	80	44	25	19	right
81	11	3	8	but	81	44	29	15	my
82	10	5	5	up	82	43	23	20	us
83	10	4	6	take	83	43	22	21	one
84	10	5	5	misconduct	84	42	18	24	me

Appendix IV: Collocation list of keywords in #KC and #NoKC

85	10	1	9	lied	85	42	34	8	believe
86	10	7	3	fbi	86	41	17	24	trump
87	10	4	6	confirmation	87	41	23	18	she
88	10	5	5	can	88	41	21	20	him
					89	39	22	17	up
					90	39	29	10	think
					91	39	37	2	support
					92	39	19	20	hearing
					93	39	12	27	did
					94	37	23	14	time
					95	37	30	7	fbi
					96	37	7	30	accuser
					97	36	31	5	investigation
					98	36	22	14	does
					99	35	19	16	good
					100	34	19	15	get

Kav

Kav (#NoKC)					Kav (#KC)				
Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Collocate	Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Collocate
1	35	13	22	the	1	51	26	25	the
2	24	11	13	to	2	41	19	22	to
3	19	7	12	is	3	32	8	24	is
4	16	10	6	on	4	30	12	18	a
5	14	3	11	s	5	23	11	12	and
6	13	11	2	not	6	19	13	6	for
7	12	8	4	you	7	16	6	10	that
8	12	11	1	we	8	15	6	9	on
9	11	2	9	in	9	14	8	6	this
10	11	5	6	and	10	14	10	4	of
11	10	3	7	women	11	13	8	5	if
12	10	4	6	for	12	12	3	9	i
13	8	8	0	do	13	12	2	10	have
14	8	3	5	can	14	11	3	8	it
15	7	2	5	said	15	11	4	7	he
16	7	1	6	be	16	10	5	5	not
17	7	4	3	a	17	10	7	3	judge
18	6	6	0	want	18	10	1	9	has
19	6	5	1	that	19	9	4	5	you
20	6	6	0	like	20	9	3	6	they
21	6	0	6	i	21	9	7	2	as
22	6	2	4	as	22	8	2	6	his
23	5	4	1	trump	23	8	3	5	do
24	5	4	1	of	24	7	2	5	will

25	5	2	3	by	25	7	5	2	in
26	5	1	4	all	26	7	3	4	did
27	4	4	0	world	27	7	4	3	court
28	4	0	4	will	28	7	3	4	are
29	4	1	3	was	29	6	2	4	what
30	4	0	4	uncle	30	6	5	1	so
31	4	3	1	t	31	6	0	6	confirmed
32	4	1	3	scotus	32	6	5	1	brett
33	4	0	4	sam	33	6	5	1	about
34	4	2	2	no	34	5	4	1	why
35	4	4	0	if	35	5	3	2	was
36	4	0	4	his	36	5	3	2	stop
37	4	4	0	box	37	5	2	3	show
38	4	0	4	am	38	5	4	1	one
39	3	3	0	your	39	5	2	3	know
40	3	2	1	why	40	5	1	4	just
41	3	0	3	voted	41	5	2	3	be
42	3	2	1	time	42	5	1	4	at
43	3	1	2	this	43	4	1	3	would
44	3	0	3	regardless	44	4	2	2	we
45	3	0	3	out	45	4	2	2	vote
46	3	2	1	one	46	4	2	2	too
47	3	2	1	lying	47	4	3	1	supreme
48	3	1	2	know	48	4	1	3	or
49	3	2	1	just	49	4	2	2	no
50	3	1	2	he	50	4	3	1	my
51	3	1	2	have	51	4	0	4	kavanaugh
52	3	0	3	has	52	4	2	2	kav
53	3	2	1	don't	53	4	3	1	her
54	3	0	3	calendar	54	4	2	2	go
55	3	3	0	at	55	4	1	3	ford
56	3	1	2	are	56	4	1	3	dr
					57	4	2	2	been
					58	4	1	3	an
					59	4	0	4	after
					60	4	3	1	advisor
					61	3	2	1	your
					62	3	1	2	woman
					63	3	1	2	witness
					64	3	0	3	who
					65	3	2	1	when
					66	3	2	1	wade
					67	3	3	0	truth
					68	3	3	0	sexual
					69	3	2	1	says

Appendix IV: Collocation list of keywords in #KC and #NoKC

70	3	2	1	out
71	3	1	2	only
72	3	0	3	most
73	3	2	1	making
74	3	2	1	like
75	3	1	2	hey
76	3	1	2	evidence
77	3	1	2	down
78	3	1	2	country
79	3	2	1	can
80	3	1	2	believe
81	3	1	2	all
82	3	3	0	against

Blasey

Blasey (#NoKC)					Blasey (#KC)				
Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Collocate	Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Collocate
1	262	7	255	ford	1	917	16	901	ford
2	198	194	4	christine	2	706	703	3	christine
3	115	112	3	dr	3	278	269	9	dr
4	87	46	41	i	4	246	117	129	the
5	75	66	9	with	5	228	118	110	to
6	62	54	8	stand	6	219	60	159	is
7	54	25	29	the	7	152	49	103	a
8	52	41	11	in	8	149	105	44	of
9	50	20	30	you	9	133	50	83	and
10	48	15	33	and	10	127	66	61	i
11	40	37	3	solidarity	11	114	68	46	kavanaugh
12	38	13	25	is	12	92	56	36	for
13	37	28	9	believe	13	78	54	24	that
14	33	17	16	to	14	73	41	32	you
15	33	12	21	a	15	69	41	28	on
16	31	18	13	of	16	67	19	48	her
17	23	7	16	kavanaugh	17	65	35	30	in
18	20	11	9	for	18	64	53	11	believe
19	16	5	11	her	19	59	45	14	with
20	15	7	8	your	20	56	9	47	testimony
21	14	3	11	what	21	55	32	23	this
22	14	5	9	we	22	48	7	41	she
23	14	6	8	this	23	47	31	16	if
24	14	3	11	testimony	24	46	18	28	not
25	14	3	11	are	25	46	22	24	it
26	13	5	8	that	26	45	22	23	t
27	12	1	11	was	27	45	27	18	brett

28	12	4	8	should	28	42	9	33	has
29	12	7	5	on	29	42	34	8	accuser
30	12	1	11	has	30	36	7	29	was
31	12	8	4	as	31	35	14	21	be
32	12	7	5	about	32	33	20	13	by
33	11	5	6	not	33	31	16	15	they
34	10	4	6	thank	34	30	9	21	will
35	10	8	2	professor	35	30	15	15	as
36	10	4	6	it	36	29	20	9	now
37	9	8	1	support	37	29	20	9	about
38	8	2	6	so	38	28	15	13	what
39	8	0	8	she	39	28	22	6	from
40	8	1	7	no	40	28	10	18	at
41	8	3	5	by	41	28	12	16	are
42	8	6	2	away	42	27	10	17	no
43	7	5	2	women	43	27	17	10	just
44	7	3	4	will	44	26	15	11	up
45	7	3	4	do	45	25	16	9	judge
46	7	2	5	brett	46	23	9	14	we
47	7	3	4	be	47	23	3	20	testify
48	7	2	5	all	48	23	17	6	hearing
49	6	0	6	woman	49	23	9	14	have
50	6	3	3	why	50	23	12	11	do
51	6	2	4	who	51	21	6	15	sexual
52	6	2	4	right	52	21	7	14	assault
53	6	0	6	ramirez	53	21	4	17	an
54	6	3	3	make	54	20	12	8	why
55	6	0	6	if	55	20	7	13	but
56	6	2	4	he	56	20	5	15	allegations
57	6	4	2	goes	57	20	14	6	against
58	6	1	5	don't	58	19	8	11	who
59	6	2	4	did	59	19	12	7	one
60	6	2	4	before	60	19	5	14	my
61	5	2	3	today	61	19	7	12	all
62	5	1	4	sexual	62	18	3	15	story
63	5	2	3	senate	63	18	7	11	senate
64	5	4	1	out	64	18	4	14	credible
65	5	2	3	now	65	17	13	4	stand
66	5	1	4	must	66	16	4	12	would
67	5	4	1	me	67	16	7	9	so
68	5	4	1	listen	68	16	6	10	says
69	5	2	3	just	69	16	9	7	or
70	5	3	2	investigation	70	16	9	7	m
71	5	3	2	his	71	16	14	2	did
72	5	3	2	hill	72	16	6	10	can

Appendix IV: Collocation list of keywords in #KC and #NoKC

73	5	2	3	have	73	16	7	9	am
74	5	3	2	fbi	74	15	7	8	when
75	5	2	3	ever	75	15	8	7	thank
76	5	0	5	deborah	76	15	14	1	support
77	5	2	3	committee	77	15	10	5	out
78	5	2	3	can	78	15	7	8	more
79	5	0	5	brave	79	15	8	7	know
80	5	3	2	been	80	14	7	7	your
81	5	3	2	anita	81	14	4	10	via
82	5	1	4	an	82	14	6	8	he
83	5	1	4	am	83	13	9	4	trump
84	5	5	0	after	84	13	6	7	today
85	4	3	1	well	85	13	5	8	statement
86	4	1	3	up	86	13	7	6	say
87	4	3	1	trump	87	13	10	3	mitchell
88	4	2	2	than	88	13	3	10	letter
89	4	1	3	take	89	13	11	2	court
90	4	2	2	swetnick	90	12	7	5	women
91	4	2	2	never	91	12	6	6	truth
92	4	2	2	my	92	12	4	8	should
93	4	3	1	much	93	12	8	4	professor
94	4	3	1	like	94	12	2	10	lying
95	4	2	2	know	95	12	3	9	liar
96	4	2	2	julie	96	12	4	8	lawyer
97	4	2	2	judiciary	97	12	6	6	how
98	4	2	2	grassley	98	12	4	8	don't
99	4	2	2	from	99	12	5	7	does
100	4	0	4	deserves	100	11	4	7	woman

Swetnick

Swetnick (#NoKC)					Swetnick (#KC)				
Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Collocate	Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Collocate
1	19	19	0	julie	1	84	83	1	julie
2	10	3	7	i	2	49	30	19	the
3	6	4	2	ford	3	35	16	19	to
4	6	1	5	believe	4	30	6	24	is
5	6	1	5	and	5	29	4	25	a
6	5	1	4	kavanaugh	6	28	13	15	and
7	5	3	2	is	7	21	12	9	of
8	5	3	2	a	8	21	7	14	for
9	4	0	4	the	9	20	16	4	accuser
10	4	3	1	ramirez	10	16	5	11	that
11	4	0	4	her	11	16	16	0	ms
12	4	2	2	blasey	12	15	12	3	ford

13	3	1	2	sexual	13	13	10	3	with
14	3	2	1	of	14	13	5	8	in
15	3	1	2	deborah	15	12	12	0	ramirez
16	3	0	3	brett	16	11	2	9	was
					17	11	10	1	kavanaugh
					18	11	2	9	allegations
					19	10	6	4	on
					20	10	4	6	not
					21	9	6	3	this
					22	9	0	9	she
					23	9	2	7	have
					24	8	2	6	you
					25	8	3	5	or
					26	8	2	6	i
					27	8	5	3	his
					28	8	4	4	her
					29	8	5	3	as
					30	8	8	0	about
					31	7	2	5	who
					32	7	3	4	up
					33	7	0	7	thing
					34	6	3	3	it
					35	6	3	3	did
					36	6	1	5	claims
					37	6	5	1	avenatti
					38	5	2	3	will
					39	5	4	1	why
					40	5	2	3	rape
					41	5	3	2	now
					42	5	0	5	joke
					43	5	0	5	has
					44	5	1	4	get
					45	5	1	4	gang
					46	5	0	5	false
					47	5	2	3	do
					48	5	3	2	believe
					49	5	2	3	be
					50	4	2	2	today
					51	4	2	2	third
					52	4	2	2	swetnick
					53	4	2	2	stand
					54	4	0	4	so
					55	4	2	2	say
					56	4	1	3	rd
					57	4	2	2	please

Appendix IV: Collocation list of keywords in #KC and #NoKC

58	4	4	0	new
59	4	1	3	my
60	4	0	4	if
61	4	1	3	com
62	4	4	0	client
63	4	1	3	but
64	4	1	3	are
65	4	0	4	any
66	4	0	4	all
67	4	0	4	affidavit
68	3	0	3	women
69	3	2	1	when
70	3	2	1	they
71	3	0	3	these
72	3	2	1	them
73	3	0	3	sued
74	3	1	2	story
75	3	2	1	should
76	3	2	1	says
77	3	1	2	only
78	3	0	3	let
79	3	3	0	just
80	3	3	0	here
81	3	1	2	he
82	3	2	1	give
83	3	3	0	fbi
84	3	2	1	dr
85	3	0	3	democrats
86	3	3	0	deborah
87	3	3	0	by
88	3	3	0	blasey

Assaulter

Assaulter (#NoKC)					Assaulter (#KC)				
Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Collocate	Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Collocate
1	49	48	1	sexual	1	56	52	4	sexual
2	35	27	8	a	2	49	39	10	a
3	24	9	15	the	3	30	10	20	the
4	20	5	15	to	4	20	10	10	to
5	18	7	11	and	5	14	5	9	and
6	15	13	2	is	6	12	2	10	in
7	10	1	9	in	7	11	1	10	on
8	10	10	0	an	8	11	2	9	of
9	9	5	4	on	9	10	4	6	is

10	9	2	7	of	10	10	1	9	court
11	9	5	4	he	11	10	8	2	be
12	8	8	0	serial	12	9	1	8	supreme
13	6	0	6	supreme	13	8	3	5	i
14	6	2	4	kavanaugh	14	7	1	6	scotus
15	6	0	6	court	15	7	4	3	not
16	5	3	2	trump	16	7	5	2	an
17	5	2	3	they	17	6	6	0	put
18	5	5	0	lying	18	5	2	3	you
19	5	3	2	liar	19	5	1	4	will
20	5	5	0	accused	20	5	0	5	who
21	4	1	3	would	21	5	2	3	this
22	4	0	4	women	22	5	2	3	that
23	4	0	4	we	23	5	3	2	president
24	4	2	2	this	24	5	0	5	now
25	4	2	2	that	25	5	0	5	friends
26	4	0	4	scotus	26	5	3	2	for
27	4	2	2	rapist	27	5	4	1	can
28	4	2	2	partisan	28	4	0	4	women
29	4	2	2	not	29	4	1	3	was
30	4	2	2	like	30	4	3	1	sex
31	4	4	0	if	31	4	0	4	one
32	4	0	4	i	32	4	0	4	it
33	4	4	0	her	33	4	2	2	have
34	4	3	1	confirm	34	4	2	2	has
35	4	0	4	be	35	4	2	2	assaulter
36	3	2	1	you	36	4	3	1	another
37	3	0	3	what	37	4	4	0	accused
38	3	0	3	one	38	3	2	1	we
39	3	2	1	misogynist	39	3	1	2	vote
40	3	1	2	himself	40	3	3	0	serial
41	3	1	2	have	41	3	1	2	senators
42	3	2	1	harasser	42	3	3	0	possible
43	3	1	2	drunk	43	3	2	1	partisan
44	3	0	3	chief	44	3	2	1	office
45	3	1	2	as	45	3	0	3	nominated
46	3	3	0	alleged	46	3	2	1	me
					47	3	1	2	if
					48	3	2	1	his
					49	3	1	2	he
					50	3	2	1	ford
					51	3	3	0	confessed
					52	3	1	2	chief
					53	3	2	1	are
					54	3	3	0	alleged

Accuser

Accuser (#NoKC)					Accuser (#KC)				
Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Collocate	Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Collocate
1	50	45	5	kavanaugh	1	484	350	134	the
2	41	31	10	the	2	315	290	25	kavanaugh
3	32	14	18	to	3	266	125	141	to
4	30	17	13	a	4	157	83	74	a
5	17	6	11	and	5	156	68	88	is
6	15	1	14	she	6	146	65	81	and
7	13	3	10	was	7	135	86	49	of
8	13	5	8	it	8	108	67	41	for
9	13	10	3	his	9	103	63	40	on
10	13	4	9	before	10	80	12	68	ford
11	12	12	0	second	11	72	67	5	his
12	11	6	5	on	12	71	32	39	this
13	11	8	3	of	13	69	7	62	has
14	11	5	6	is	14	68	38	30	with
15	11	5	6	in	15	64	25	39	not
16	11	3	8	i	16	63	25	38	that
17	11	0	11	has	17	63	14	49	i
18	11	10	1	about	18	62	29	33	in
19	9	4	5	says	19	60	13	47	her
20	9	2	7	be	20	60	23	37	be
21	8	5	3	not	21	59	28	31	it
22	8	4	4	if	22	58	7	51	she
23	8	5	3	for	23	49	6	43	testify
24	8	3	5	are	24	46	3	43	christine
25	8	2	6	an	25	42	8	34	blasey
26	7	1	6	you	26	41	27	14	if
27	7	3	4	that	27	41	3	38	forward
28	7	6	1	knew	28	40	19	21	have
29	7	4	3	ford	29	39	13	26	will
30	7	2	5	as	30	39	27	12	an
31	6	6	0	with	31	38	20	18	as
32	6	5	1	trump	32	37	19	18	you
33	6	0	6	testify	33	37	17	20	no
34	6	6	0	suggest	34	37	30	7	brett
35	6	3	3	news	35	36	3	33	was
36	5	3	2	this	36	36	22	14	by
37	5	3	2	there	37	34	17	17	are
38	5	2	3	test	38	33	7	26	can
39	5	0	5	story	39	32	8	24	who
40	5	2	3	so	40	32	24	8	hearing
41	5	1	4	senate	41	32	22	10	about

42	5	0	5	passed	42	31	16	15	from
43	5	1	4	investigation	43	31	13	18	all
44	5	0	5	her	44	30	29	1	second
45	5	2	3	he	45	30	5	25	lawyer
46	5	0	5	forward	46	29	8	21	via
47	4	3	1	would	47	29	22	7	judge
48	4	1	3	when	48	28	12	16	out
49	4	3	1	what	49	28	13	15	at
50	4	1	3	were	50	27	11	16	when
51	4	1	3	we	51	27	19	8	sexual
52	4	2	2	roommate	52	27	24	3	new
53	4	2	2	over	53	26	12	14	testimony
54	4	3	1	one	54	26	14	12	so
55	4	3	1	now	55	26	6	20	but
56	4	1	3	hearing	56	26	5	21	before
57	4	2	2	fbi	57	25	11	14	up
58	4	3	1	did	58	25	10	15	should
59	4	2	2	assault	59	25	13	12	now
60	4	3	1	all	60	24	23	1	third
61	3	0	3	will	61	24	9	15	says
62	3	1	2	why	62	24	15	9	one
63	3	0	3	wants	63	24	3	21	come
64	3	2	1	vote	64	23	10	13	he
65	3	3	0	third	65	22	15	7	vote
66	3	2	1	stand	66	22	7	15	they
67	3	2	1	sexual	67	22	17	5	another
68	3	0	3	schoolmate	68	21	4	17	won
69	3	0	3	retweet	69	21	10	11	investigation
70	3	0	3	republican	70	20	4	16	swetnick
71	3	0	3	polygraph	71	20	6	14	story
72	3	1	2	nomination	72	20	12	8	right
73	3	3	0	new	73	20	13	7	like
74	3	1	2	name	74	20	12	8	just
75	3	2	1	more	75	20	8	12	fbi
76	3	3	0	long	76	20	10	10	accuser
77	3	1	2	lie	77	19	13	6	your
78	3	0	3	let	78	19	7	12	what
79	3	1	2	heard	79	19	15	4	trump
80	3	2	1	gop	80	19	11	8	senate
81	3	2	1	from	81	19	9	10	ramirez
82	3	1	2	didn't	82	19	3	16	claims
83	3	1	2	detector	83	19	6	13	accused
84	3	3	0	deny	84	18	12	6	proof
85	3	1	2	claim	85	18	11	7	more
86	3	1	2	christine	86	18	5	13	julie

Appendix IV: Collocation list of keywords in #KC and #NoKC

87	3	0	3	can	87	18	1	17	doesn
88	3	3	0	brett	88	17	7	10	there
89	3	1	2	blasey	89	17	10	7	evidence
90	3	2	1	believe	90	17	5	12	dr
					91	17	12	5	breaking
					92	16	2	14	would
					93	16	12	4	why
					94	16	0	16	wants
					95	16	4	12	please
					96	16	6	10	do
					97	16	10	6	against
					98	16	12	4	after
					99	15	6	9	get
					100	15	13	2	face

POTUS

POTUS (#NoKC)				
Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Collocate
1	29	17	12	the
2	21	9	12	is
3	16	11	5	a
4	10	5	5	to
5	10	5	5	that
6	9	5	4	of
7	8	4	4	scotus
8	7	2	5	you
9	7	3	4	and
10	6	2	4	no
11	6	5	1	for
12	5	4	1	with
13	5	1	4	this
14	5	3	2	on
15	5	4	1	not
16	5	3	2	kavanaugh
17	4	2	2	who
18	4	2	2	his
19	4	2	2	from
20	4	3	1	by
21	4	2	2	be
22	3	1	2	word
23	3	0	3	we
24	3	3	0	vote
25	3	0	3	or
26	3	1	2	he

27	3	1	2	gop
28	3	2	1	fake
29	3	2	1	do
30	3	2	1	confirmations
31	3	1	2	are
32	3	0	3	all

Boofing

Brett (#NoKC)					Brett (#KC)				
Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Collocate	Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Collocate
1	7	4	3	triangle	1	21	7	14	and
2	5	2	3	and	2	18	7	11	the
3	4	2	2	the	3	17	2	15	is
4	4	1	3	that	4	15	7	8	triangle
5	4	2	2	perjury	5	14	7	7	devil
6	4	1	3	devil	6	14	4	10	a
7	4	4	0	about	7	12	8	4	to
8	3	3	0	of	8	11	4	7	you
9	3	3	0	lied	9	11	7	4	of
10	3	2	1	kavanaugh	10	10	3	7	in
11	3	0	3	is	11	8	2	6	not
12	3	0	3	flatulence	12	8	6	2	he
13	3	1	2	drinking	13	7	4	3	kavanaugh
14	3	2	1	devils	14	7	4	3	i
					15	7	3	4	but
					16	7	6	1	about
					17	6	4	2	that
					18	5	3	2	what
					19	5	2	3	for
					20	5	2	3	brett
					21	5	2	3	beer
					22	5	2	3	all
					23	4	2	2	was
					24	4	2	2	my
					25	4	0	4	alcohol
					26	3	1	2	your
					27	3	2	1	will
					28	3	1	2	supreme
					29	3	3	0	please
					30	3	2	1	out
					31	3	3	0	or
					32	3	1	2	on
					33	3	3	0	no
					34	3	1	2	like

Appendix IV: Collocation list of keywords in #KC and #NoKC

35	3	3	0	just
36	3	1	2	it
37	3	1	2	into
38	3	2	1	flatulence
39	3	3	0	explain
40	3	1	2	do
41	3	1	2	also

Boof

Boof (#KC)				
Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Collocate
1	20	9	11	the
2	15	8	7	and
3	10	7	3	to
4	9	4	5	triangle
5	9	4	5	is
6	9	2	7	a
7	8	4	4	you
8	7	4	3	that
9	7	2	5	devil
10	6	2	4	or
11	6	5	1	i
12	6	3	3	boof
13	5	5	0	of
14	4	3	1	what
15	4	2	2	lie
16	4	2	2	kavanaugh
17	4	2	2	he
18	4	4	0	don't
19	3	2	1	with
20	3	2	1	will
21	3	2	1	this
22	3	0	3	sex
23	3	1	2	said
24	3	1	2	nothing
25	3	0	3	in
26	3	2	1	his
27	3	0	3	have
28	3	1	2	has
29	3	2	1	from
30	3	1	2	but
31	3	3	0	about

Boofed

Boofed (#KC)				
Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Collocate
1	8	5	3	you
2	8	3	5	the
3	8	3	5	of
4	6	2	4	triangle
5	5	4	1	kavanaugh
6	5	1	4	is
7	5	1	4	devil
8	4	2	2	up
9	4	3	1	just
10	4	2	2	in
11	4	2	2	he
12	3	1	2	to
13	3	1	2	or
14	3	1	2	now
15	3	3	0	i
16	3	2	1	and
17	3	1	2	a

Rapist

Rapist (#NoKC)					Rapist (#KC)				
Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Collocate	Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Collocate
1	150	112	38	a	1	333	271	62	a
2	73	32	41	the	2	197	68	129	the
3	61	25	36	is	3	123	49	74	to
4	59	33	26	to	4	117	67	50	is
5	48	20	28	and	5	86	35	51	and
6	40	6	34	on	6	72	42	30	you
7	36	30	6	an	7	57	26	31	of
8	30	18	12	you	8	54	10	44	in
9	27	11	16	he	9	53	25	28	he
10	24	14	10	of	10	51	4	47	on
11	24	6	18	in	11	50	48	2	an
12	24	3	21	court	12	48	31	17	be
13	24	23	1	attempted	13	44	24	20	that
14	21	2	19	supreme	14	41	22	19	this
15	21	11	10	no	15	40	23	17	for
16	21	12	9	be	16	35	15	20	was
17	20	7	13	this	17	34	4	30	court
18	20	9	11	for	18	33	9	24	i
19	17	8	9	we	19	33	18	15	as
20	16	6	10	that	20	32	18	14	not
21	16	4	12	scotus	21	29	27	2	serial

Appendix IV: Collocation list of keywords in #KC and #NoKC

22	16	7	9	not	22	28	3	25	supreme
23	16	13	3	if	23	28	17	11	are
24	15	7	8	kavanaugh	24	27	20	7	kavanaugh
25	15	4	11	i	25	27	26	1	gang
26	14	6	8	they	26	26	14	12	we
27	14	7	7	rapist	27	26	26	0	alleged
28	14	8	6	my	28	25	16	9	if
29	14	14	0	alleged	29	24	24	0	accused
30	13	8	5	women	30	23	23	0	attempted
31	13	5	8	are	31	21	10	11	who
32	12	3	9	why	32	20	12	8	have
33	12	10	2	want	33	20	16	4	being
34	12	7	5	sexual	34	19	15	4	they
35	12	4	8	liar	35	19	10	9	like
36	12	4	8	as	36	18	8	10	now
37	11	3	8	who	37	18	11	7	liar
38	11	5	6	put	38	18	6	12	it
39	11	3	8	or	39	17	5	12	just
40	11	8	3	now	40	16	3	13	at
41	11	7	4	have	41	16	7	9	all
42	10	3	7	should	42	15	13	2	would
43	10	6	4	lying	43	15	4	11	has
44	10	3	7	it	44	15	7	8	can
45	9	4	5	with	45	14	7	7	will
46	9	4	5	will	46	14	7	7	rapist
47	9	2	7	was	47	14	4	10	no
48	8	3	5	your	48	14	5	9	his
49	8	6	2	vote	49	14	7	7	but
50	8	8	0	support	50	13	4	9	what
51	8	7	1	serial	51	13	8	5	vote
52	8	2	6	our	52	13	4	9	or
53	8	3	5	just	53	13	2	11	judge
54	8	7	1	don't	54	12	5	7	one
55	8	2	6	do	55	12	7	5	man
56	8	1	7	at	56	12	5	7	him
57	8	8	0	accused	57	12	5	7	because
58	7	5	2	would	58	11	7	4	women
59	7	2	5	woman	59	11	7	4	with
60	7	3	4	what	60	11	4	7	why
61	7	4	3	perjurer	61	11	4	7	when
62	7	5	2	out	62	11	10	1	put
63	7	5	2	drunk	63	11	10	1	potential
64	7	5	2	being	64	11	5	6	let
65	7	4	3	about	65	11	3	8	how
66	6	3	3	so	66	11	0	11	highest

67	6	5	1	predator	67	10	8	2	want
68	6	6	0	potential	68	10	4	6	up
69	6	6	0	possible	69	10	3	7	our
70	6	2	4	like	70	10	5	5	my
71	6	2	4	his	71	10	3	7	confirmed
72	6	1	5	him	72	10	3	7	by
73	6	5	1	he's	73	10	5	5	brett
74	6	0	6	gets	74	10	5	5	another
75	6	5	1	another	75	10	5	5	about
76	5	1	4	when	76	9	5	4	so
77	5	4	1	people	77	9	0	9	me
78	5	1	4	nominee	78	9	8	1	lying
79	5	2	3	justice	79	9	7	2	he's
80	5	0	5	has	80	8	3	5	there
81	5	3	2	get	81	8	5	3	still
82	5	4	1	confirm	82	8	0	8	scotus
83	4	3	1	very	83	8	3	5	justice
84	4	3	1	think	84	8	7	1	her
85	4	1	3	then	85	8	4	4	having
86	4	3	1	rights	86	8	6	2	gop
87	4	1	3	rape	87	8	2	6	get
88	4	3	1	only	88	8	3	5	from
89	4	1	3	one	89	8	5	3	back
90	4	1	3	how	90	7	5	2	your
91	4	1	3	highest	91	7	3	4	white
92	4	1	3	had	92	7	4	3	sexual
93	4	3	1	every	93	7	4	3	really
94	4	3	1	don't	94	7	3	4	racist
95	4	0	4	did	95	7	4	3	out
96	4	3	1	defending	96	7	1	6	going
97	4	1	3	come	97	7	2	5	drunk
98	4	4	0	child	98	7	7	0	credibly
99	4	3	1	can	99	7	6	1	boy
100	4	2	2	but	100	7	6	1	bill

Rapey

Rapey (#NoKC)					Rapey (#KC)				
Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Collocate	Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Collocate
1	11	8	3	a	1	24	13	11	the
2	8	4	4	to	2	18	14	4	a
3	7	5	2	the	3	10	5	5	to
4	7	3	4	is	4	10	6	4	of
5	6	5	1	no	5	9	3	6	i
6	6	2	4	and	6	8	2	6	we

Appendix IV: Collocation list of keywords in #KC and #NoKC

7	5	1	4	men	7	8	6	2	is
8	4	1	3	you	8	7	4	3	for
9	4	1	3	white	9	7	3	4	and
10	4	2	2	on	10	6	3	3	you
11	4	0	4	i	11	5	5	0	that
12	4	0	4	he	12	5	3	2	not
13	4	3	1	for	13	5	2	3	like
14	3	1	2	time	14	5	5	0	less
15	3	1	2	this	15	5	1	4	if
16	3	1	2	so	16	5	4	1	he
17	3	3	0	really	17	5	2	3	all
18	3	3	0	not	18	4	1	3	white
19	3	1	2	like	19	4	3	1	too
20	3	2	1	kavanaugh	20	4	3	1	on
21	3	2	1	drunk	21	4	1	3	in
22	3	2	1	can	22	4	3	1	court
23	3	3	0	as	23	4	2	2	but
24	3	2	1	are	24	4	0	4	are
25	3	1	2	all	25	4	3	1	any
					26	3	3	0	with
					27	3	2	1	was
					28	3	1	2	this
					29	3	1	2	than
					30	3	0	3	sex
					31	3	3	0	scotus
					32	3	2	1	over
					33	3	1	2	no
					34	3	2	1	know
					35	3	0	3	kavanaugh
					36	3	2	1	judge
					37	3	2	1	have
					38	3	1	2	don't
					39	3	1	2	as

MeToo

MeToo (#KC)				
Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Collocate
1	21	17	4	the
2	9	0	9	movement
3	9	4	5	in
4	7	2	5	to
5	6	5	1	of

6	6	4	2	he
7	5	2	3	a
8	4	0	4	is
9	4	2	2	and
10	3	3	0	was
11	3	2	1	stop
12	3	0	3	political
13	3	2	1	now
14	3	0	3	it
15	3	1	2	for
16	3	3	0	by

Rapists

Rapists (#NoKC)				
Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Collocate
1	37	18	19	the
2	24	7	17	to
3	24	10	14	and
4	14	8	6	you
5	13	10	3	are
6	12	4	8	of
7	12	10	2	no
8	10	5	5	that
9	10	1	9	on
10	10	2	8	a
11	9	4	5	in
12	9	3	6	i
13	9	6	3	for
14	8	2	6	who
15	7	1	6	their
16	7	1	6	supreme
17	7	5	2	not
18	7	6	1	is
19	7	2	5	he
20	7	1	6	don't
21	7	6	1	all
22	6	4	2	with
23	6	5	1	they
24	6	1	5	court
25	6	4	2	be
26	5	2	3	we

Appendix IV: Collocation list of keywords in #KC and #NoKC

27	5	3	2	sexual
28	5	3	2	or
29	5	4	1	liars
30	4	1	3	what
31	4	2	2	rapists
32	4	3	1	predators
33	4	1	3	have
34	4	1	3	get
35	4	3	1	boys
36	4	2	2	accused
37	3	2	1	women
38	3	1	2	this
39	3	2	1	support
40	3	0	3	stick
41	3	0	3	people
42	3	3	0	most
43	3	3	0	mexicans
44	3	2	1	men
45	3	3	0	many
46	3	1	2	look
47	3	2	1	just
48	3	0	3	has
49	3	1	2	do
50	3	1	2	can
51	3	1	2	believe
52	3	3	0	attempted
53	3	2	1	at
54	3	1	2	accountable
55	3	1	2	according

Abuser

Abuser (#NoKC)				
Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Collocate
1	56	42	14	a
2	54	54	0	sexual
3	31	7	24	the
4	24	10	14	is
5	22	10	12	and
6	18	7	11	to
7	17	17	0	predator
8	17	8	9	of
9	16	9	7	he
10	15	13	2	an
11	12	11	1	my

12	11	5	6	that
13	10	3	7	kavanaugh
14	8	1	7	on
15	8	4	4	liar
16	8	1	7	his
17	8	0	8	court
18	7	4	3	you
19	7	1	6	this
20	7	5	2	like
21	6	0	6	supreme
22	6	6	0	serial
23	6	4	2	one
24	6	4	2	no
25	6	5	1	another
26	6	4	2	also
27	5	2	3	was
28	5	2	3	not
29	5	0	5	justice
30	5	1	4	in
31	5	4	1	if
32	5	3	2	i
33	5	4	1	her
34	5	0	5	for
35	4	1	3	when
36	4	1	3	we
37	4	2	2	so
38	4	3	1	partisan
39	4	4	0	just
40	4	1	3	it
41	4	2	2	have
42	4	0	4	be
43	4	0	4	as
44	4	2	2	are
45	4	2	2	abuser
46	3	0	3	women
47	3	1	2	with
48	3	1	2	will
49	3	1	2	who
50	3	0	3	well
51	3	3	0	want
52	3	0	3	unfit
53	3	0	3	trump
54	3	0	3	there
55	3	0	3	should
56	3	0	3	scotus

Appendix IV: Collocation list of keywords in #KC and #NoKC

57	3	1	2	right
58	3	0	3	please
59	3	0	3	must
60	3	2	1	me
61	3	3	0	lying
62	3	2	1	know
63	3	0	3	has
64	3	2	1	don't
65	3	2	1	angry
66	3	0	3	all

Misogynist

Misogynist (#NoKC)				
Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Collocate
1	21	20	1	a
2	15	8	7	the
3	14	7	7	and
4	13	5	8	to
5	13	7	6	is
6	12	8	4	of
7	8	5	3	not
8	8	5	3	are
9	6	3	3	women
10	5	3	2	they
11	5	1	4	on
12	4	4	0	you
13	4	3	1	what
14	4	1	3	this
15	4	2	2	racist
16	4	4	0	one
17	4	2	2	misogynist
18	4	1	3	he
19	3	0	3	who
20	3	1	2	there
21	3	1	2	that
22	3	1	2	sexual
23	3	1	2	president
24	3	0	3	please
25	3	0	3	pig
26	3	1	2	old
27	3	0	3	men
28	3	1	2	love
29	3	2	1	like
30	3	1	2	liar

31	3	2	1	kavanaugh
32	3	0	3	i
33	3	3	0	disgusting
34	3	2	1	but
35	3	2	1	branch
36	3	2	1	be
37	3	1	2	assaulter
38	3	2	1	another
39	3	2	1	an
40	3	3	0	all
41	3	3	0	about

Misogynistic

Misogynistic (#NoKC)				
Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Collocate
1	14	8	6	the
2	13	12	1	of
3	12	9	3	a
4	8	6	2	you
5	8	2	6	white
6	8	6	2	it
7	7	3	4	your
8	7	3	4	to
9	7	0	7	men
10	7	2	5	and
11	6	4	2	this
12	6	4	2	is
13	5	5	0	sexist
14	5	2	3	kavanaugh
15	5	4	1	all
16	4	2	2	who
17	4	1	3	time
18	4	0	4	predator
19	4	3	1	on
20	4	1	3	old
21	4	3	1	are
22	4	4	0	an

Appendix IV: Collocation list of keywords in #KC and #NoKC

23	3	1	2	women
24	3	1	2	with
25	3	3	0	u
26	3	1	2	partisan
27	3	2	1	one
28	3	2	1	no
29	3	1	2	in
30	3	0	3	i
31	3	2	1	he
32	3	1	2	gop
33	3	2	1	from
34	3	1	2	for
35	3	2	1	be

Assaulted

Assaulted (#NoKC)				
Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Collocate
1	186	182	4	sexually
2	185	131	54	i
3	126	97	29	was
4	63	12	51	a
5	56	0	56	by
6	55	26	29	the
7	50	23	27	you
8	50	26	24	he
9	47	25	22	women
10	46	20	26	to
11	46	16	30	and
12	44	42	2	who
13	44	42	2	been
14	44	3	41	at
15	40	29	11	have
16	32	23	9	that
17	28	8	20	is
18	27	12	15	when
19	27	27	0	am
20	24	14	10	they
21	24	12	12	of
22	24	21	3	being
23	23	3	20	raped

24	23	3	20	in
25	22	9	13	woman
26	22	11	11	or
27	22	5	17	my
28	21	9	12	are
29	20	7	13	someone
30	20	18	2	kavanaugh
31	19	16	3	has
32	17	16	1	were
33	17	1	16	we
34	17	7	10	not
35	16	11	5	never
36	16	14	2	if
37	16	8	8	do
38	15	4	11	her
39	15	5	10	for
40	14	1	13	this
41	14	4	10	no
42	14	1	13	it
43	13	4	9	them
44	13	2	11	age
45	12	9	3	with
46	12	6	6	she
47	12	3	9	just
48	11	4	7	men
49	11	8	3	about
50	10	1	9	me
51	10	7	3	many
52	10	4	6	from
53	10	4	6	ford
54	9	0	9	would
55	9	4	5	on
56	9	0	9	don't
57	8	0	8	why
58	8	6	2	those
59	8	3	5	their
60	8	4	4	person
61	8	4	4	one
62	8	3	5	know
63	8	1	7	how
64	8	2	6	his
65	8	6	2	had
66	8	4	4	be
67	8	1	7	anyone
68	8	3	5	all

Appendix IV: Collocation list of keywords in #KC and #NoKC

69	7	7	0	zero
70	7	3	4	your
71	7	2	5	years
72	7	4	3	time
73	7	1	6	school
74	7	4	3	remember
75	7	0	7	real
76	7	1	6	man
77	7	3	4	because
78	7	1	6	again
79	7	4	3	after
80	7	5	2	abused
81	6	1	5	will
82	6	0	6	watching
83	6	0	6	should
84	6	4	2	old
85	6	5	1	may
86	6	0	6	high
87	6	1	5	here
88	6	2	4	friend
89	6	3	3	family
90	6	3	3	every
91	6	0	6	didn't
92	6	0	6	ago
93	5	0	5	what
94	5	0	5	told
95	5	2	3	times
96	5	0	5	then
97	5	1	4	right
98	5	2	3	only
99	5	1	4	like
100	5	2	3	lied

Raped

Raped (#NoKC)				
Rank	Freq	Fr(L)	Fr(R)	Collocate
1	487	331	156	i
2	335	217	118	was
3	139	2	137	by
4	124	19	105	when
5	118	15	103	a
6	97	96	1	am
7	71	9	62	at
8	54	13	41	my

9	52	23	29	and
10	49	18	31	the
11	31	14	17	he
12	26	13	13	to
13	23	20	3	assaulted
14	22	9	13	of
15	21	11	10	you
16	21	6	15	in
17	20	10	10	or
18	18	2	16	it
19	17	4	13	me
20	17	5	12	for
21	16	14	2	sexually
22	16	5	11	man
23	15	12	3	women
24	15	10	5	that
25	15	2	13	someone
26	14	7	7	years
27	14	7	7	is
28	14	11	3	have
29	14	13	1	been
30	13	12	1	who
31	13	2	11	on
32	13	3	10	not
33	13	13	0	being
34	12	10	2	they
35	12	3	9	one
36	12	5	7	old
37	12	8	4	never
38	12	4	8	age
39	11	4	7	men
40	11	9	2	if
41	10	9	1	were
42	10	4	6	this
43	10	7	3	are
44	9	3	6	year
45	9	5	4	so
46	9	6	3	molested
47	9	6	3	from
48	9	9	0	brutally
49	9	2	7	as
50	8	5	3	she
51	8	2	6	her
52	8	3	5	friend
53	8	8	0	date

Appendix IV: Collocation list of keywords in #KC and #NoKC

54	8	1	7	boyfriend
55	8	1	7	an
56	7	2	5	virgin
57	7	4	3	im
58	7	7	0	girls
59	7	7	0	gang
60	7	3	4	but
61	7	5	2	boys
62	6	2	4	with
63	6	2	4	what
64	6	3	3	time
65	6	5	1	say
66	6	4	2	kavanaugh
67	6	2	4	just
68	6	4	2	get
69	6	3	3	first
70	6	3	3	be
71	5	1	4	while
72	5	5	0	where
73	5	0	5	we
74	5	1	4	up
75	5	1	4	two
76	5	0	5	rape
77	5	3	2	people
78	5	3	2	out
79	5	1	4	no
80	5	2	3	his
81	5	5	0	drugged
82	5	2	3	boy
83	5	5	0	away
84	5	4	1	almost
85	5	0	5	again
86	5	3	2	about
87	4	2	2	your
88	4	3	1	would
89	4	3	1	woman
90	4	3	1	wait
91	4	2	2	until
92	4	2	2	u
93	4	1	3	too
94	4	2	2	then
95	4	1	3	should
96	4	2	2	school
97	4	2	2	said
98	4	1	3	remember

99	4	0	4	party
100	4	2	2	only

APPENDIX V
APPRAISAL resources in each
subcorpora

APPENDIX V: APPRAISAL RESOURCES IN EACH SUBCORPORA**Kavanaugh**

#KC			#NoKC		
ATTITUDE					
AFFECT	Total	%	AFFECT	Total	%
Happiness-cheer	1	7.14%	Happiness-cheer	0	/
Happiness-affection	0	/	Happiness-affection	0	/
Unhappiness-misery	2	14.29%	Unhappiness-misery	5	19.23%
Unhappiness-antipathy	1	7.14%	Unhappiness-antipathy	2	7.69%
Security-quiet	0	/	Security-quiet	0	/
Security-trust	1	7.14%	Security-trust	8	30.77%
Insecurity-disquiet	3	21.44%	Insecurity-disquiet	2	7.69%
Insecurity-distrust	4	28.57%	Insecurity-distrust	2	7.69%
Satisfaction-interest	0	/	Satisfaction-interest	0	/
Satisfaction-pleasure	0	/	Satisfaction-pleasure	1	3.85%
Dissatisfaction-ennui	0	/	Dissatisfaction-ennui	0	/
Dissatisfaction-displeasure	1	7.14%	Dissatisfaction-displeasure	5	19.23%
Inclination-desire	0	/	Inclination-desire	1	3.85%
Disinclination-non-desire	0	/	Disinclination-non-desire	0	/
Surprise +	0	/	Surprise +	0	/
Surprise -	1	7.14%	Surprise -	0	/
Surprise neu	0	/	Surprise neu	0	/
Total AFFECT	14	100%	Total AFFECT	26	100%
JUDGMENT	Total	%	JUDGMENT	Total	%
Social esteem: Normality+	0	/	Social esteem: Normality+	0	/
Social esteem: Normality-	1	0.62%	Social esteem: Normality-	2	1.42%
Social esteem: Capacity+	5	3.11%	Social esteem: Capacity+	1	0.71%
Social esteem: Capacity-	11	6.83%	Social esteem: Capacity-	8	5.67%
Social esteem: Tenacity+	1	0.62%	Social esteem: Tenacity+	12	8.51%
Social esteem: Tenacity-	4	2.48%	Social esteem: Tenacity-	0	/
Social sanction: Veracity+	4	2.48%	Social sanction: Veracity+	1	0.71%
Social sanction: Veracity-	38	23.60%	Social sanction: Veracity-	18	12.77%
Social sanction: Propriety+	8	4.97%	Social sanction: Propriety+	11	7.80%
Social sanction: Propriety-	89	55.29%	Social sanction: Propriety-	88	62.41%
Total	161	100%	Total	141	100%
Tokens (implicit)			Tokens (implicit)		
Social esteem: Normality+	0	/	Social esteem: Normality+	0	/

Social esteem: Normality-	0	/	Social esteem: Normality-	0	/
Social esteem: Capacity+	0	/	Social esteem: Capacity+	0	/
Social esteem: Capacity-	0	/	Social esteem: Capacity-	2	2%
Social esteem: Tenacity+	0	/	Social esteem: Tenacity+	0	/
Social esteem: Tenacity-	0	/	Social esteem: Tenacity-	0	/
Social sanction: Veracity+	2	2.99%	Social sanction: Veracity+	14	14%
Social sanction: Veracity-	16	23.88%	Social sanction: Veracity-	9	9%
Social sanction: Propriety+	3	4.47%	Social sanction: Propriety+	2	2%
Social sanction: Propriety-	46	68.66%	Social sanction: Propriety-	73	73%
Total	67	100%	Total	100	100%
Explicit	161	70.61%	Explicit	141	58.51%
Implicit	67	29.39%	Implicit	100	41.49%
Total JUDGMENT	228	100%	Total JUDGMENT	241	100%
APPRECIATION	Total	%	APPRECIATION	Total	%
Reaction: Impact +	0	/	Reaction: Impact +	0	/
Reaction: Impact -	0	/	Reaction: Impact -	0	/
Reaction: Quality +	0	/	Reaction: Quality +	0	/
Reaction: Quality -	0	/	Reaction: Quality -	0	/
Composition: Balance +	1	7.69%	Composition: Balance +	0	/
Composition: Balance -	0	/	Composition: Balance -	0	/
Composition: Complexity +	1	7.69%	Composition: Complexity +	0	/
Composition: Complexity -	0	/	Composition: Complexity -	1	20%
Valuation +	1	7.69%	Valuation +	2	40%
Valuation -	10	76.93%	Valuation -	2	40%
Total APPRECIATION	13	100%	Total	5	100%
Tokens (implicit)			Tokens (implicit)		
Reaction: Quality +	0	/	Reaction: Quality +	1	100%
Reaction: Quality -	0	/	Reaction: Quality -	0	/
Composition: Balance +	0	/	Composition: Balance +	0	/
Composition: Balance -	0	/	Composition: Balance -	0	/
Composition: Complexity +	0	/	Composition: Complexity +	0	/
Composition: Complexity -	0	/	Composition: Complexity -	0	/
Valuation +	0	/	Valuation +	0	/
Valuation -	0	/	Valuation -	0	/
Total	0	/	Total	1	100%
Explicit	13	100%	Explicit	5	80%
Implicit	0	/	Implicit	1	20%
Total APPRECIATION	13	100%	Total APPRECIATION	6	100%

GRADUATION					
Category	Total	%	Category	Total	%
Focus-sharpen	4	9.10%	Focus-sharpen	1	2.17%
Focus-soften	1	2.27%	Focus-soften	0	/
Force-intensification (up-scale)	32	72.73%	Force-intensification (up-scale)	42	91.30%
Force-intensification (down-scale)	1	2.27%	Force-intensification (down-scale)	0	/
Force-quantification (up-scale)	5	11.36%	Force-quantification (up-scale)	3	6.53%
Force-quantification (down-scale)	1	2.27%	Force-quantification (down-scale)	0	/
Total GRADUATION	44	100%	Total GRADUATION	46	100%

Ford

#KC			#NoKC		
ATTITUDE					
AFFECT	Total	%	AFFECT	Total	%
Happiness-cheer	0	/	Happiness-cheer	0	/
Happiness-affection	1	2.50%	Happiness-affection	2	3.17%
Unhappiness-misery	9	22.50%	Unhappiness-misery	5	7.94%
Unhappiness-antipathy	1	2.50%	Unhappiness-antipathy	4	6.35%
Security-quiet	3	7.50%	Security-quiet	2	3.17%
Security-trust	10	25%	Security-trust	30	47.62%
Insecurity-disquiet	5	12.50%	Insecurity-disquiet	6	9.52%
Insecurity-distrust	2	5%	Insecurity-distrust	1	1.59%
Satisfaction-interest	0	/	Satisfaction-interest	0	/
Satisfaction-pleasure	0	/	Satisfaction-pleasure	0	/
Dissatisfaction-ennui	0	/	Dissatisfaction-ennui	0	/
Dissatisfaction-displeasure	9	22.50%	Dissatisfaction-displeasure	11	17.46%
Inclination-desire	0	/	Inclination-desire	0	/
Disinclination-non-desire	0	/	Disinclination-non-desire	0	/
Surprise +	0	/	Surprise +	0	/
Surprise -	2	5%	Surprise -	2	3.17%
Surprise neu	0	/	Surprise neu	0	/
Total AFFECT	42	100%	Total AFFECT	63	100%
JUDGMENT	Total	%	JUDGMENT	Total	%

Social esteem: Normality+	2	1.24%	Social esteem: Normality+	1	0.93%
Social esteem: Normality-	6	3.73%	Social esteem: Normality-	3	2.78%
Social esteem: Capacity+	1	0.62%	Social esteem: Capacity+	3	2.78%
Social esteem: Capacity-	18	11.18%	Social esteem: Capacity-	9	8.33%
Social esteem: Tenacity+	7	4.35%	Social esteem: Tenacity+	17	15.74%
Social esteem: Tenacity-	3	1.86%	Social esteem: Tenacity-	3	2.78%
Social sanction: Veracity+	8	4.97%	Social sanction: Veracity+	10	9.26%
Social sanction: Veracity-	45	27.95%	Social sanction: Veracity-	22	20.37%
Social sanction: Propriety+	13	8.07%	Social sanction: Propriety+	0	/
Social sanction: Propriety-	58	36.03%	Social sanction: Propriety-	40	37.03%
Total	161	100%	Total	108	100%
Tokens (implicit)			Tokens (implicit)		
Social esteem: Normality+	0	/	Social esteem: Normality+	0	/
Social esteem: Normality-	1	3.45%	Social esteem: Normality-	0	/
Social esteem: Capacity+	1	3.45%	Social esteem: Capacity+	1	1.06%
Social esteem: Capacity-	1	3.45%	Social esteem: Capacity-	3	3.19%
Social esteem: Tenacity+	0	/	Social esteem: Tenacity+	4	4.08%
Social esteem: Tenacity-	0	/	Social esteem: Tenacity-	0	/
Social sanction: Veracity+	11	37.93%	Social sanction: Veracity+	33	35.11%
Social sanction: Veracity-	6	21%	Social sanction: Veracity-	7	7.14%
Social sanction: Propriety+	0	/	Social sanction: Propriety+	3	3.19%
Social sanction: Propriety-	9	31.03%	Social sanction: Propriety-	43	45.74%
Total	29	100%	Total	94	100%
Explicit	161	84.74%	Explicit	108	53.47%
Implicit	29	15.26%	Implicit	94	46.53%
Total JUDGMENT	190	100%	Total JUDGMENT	202	100%
APPRECIATION	Total	%	APPRECIATION	Total	%
Reaction: Impact +	0	11.11%	Reaction: Impact +	0	/
Reaction: Impact -	0	/	Reaction: Impact -	0	/
Reaction: Quality +	0	/	Reaction: Quality +	0	/
Reaction: Quality -	1	11.11%	Reaction: Quality -	0	/

Appendix V: APPRAISAL resources in each subcorpora

Composition: Balance +	0	/	Composition: Balance +	0	/
Composition: Balance -	0	/	Composition: Balance -	1	33.33%
Composition: Complexity +	0	/	Composition: Complexity +	0	/
Composition: Complexity -	1	11.11%	Composition: Complexity -	0	/
Valuation +	2	22.22%	Valuation +	1	33.33%
Valuation -	5	55.56%	Valuation -	1	33.33%
Total APPRECIATION	9	100%	Total APPRECIATION	3	100%
Total APPRAISAL	241		Total APPRAISAL	268	

GRADUATION

Category	Total	%	Category	Total	%
Focus-sharpen	2	5.13%	Focus-sharpen	0	/
Focus-soften	1	2.56%	Focus-soften	0	/
Force-intensification (up-scale)	33	84.62%	Force-intensification (up-scale)	28	90.32%
Force-intensification (down-scale)	1	2.56%	Force-intensification (down-scale)	3	9.68%
Force-quantification (up-scale)	2	5.13%	Force-quantification (up-scale)	0	/
Force-quantification (down-scale)	0	/	Force-quantification (down-scale)	0	/
Total GRADUATION	39	100%	Total GRADUATION	31	100%

Men

#KC			#NoKC		
ATTITUDE					
AFFECT	Total	%	AFFECT	Total	%
Happiness-cheer	0	/	Happiness-cheer	0	/
Happiness-affection	1	2.50%	Happiness-affection	1	1.14%
Unhappiness-misery	8	20%	Unhappiness-misery	12	13.64%
Unhappiness-antipathy	0	/	Unhappiness-antipathy	7	7.95%
Security-quiet	1	2.50%	Security-quiet	1	1.14%
Security-trust	8	20%	Security-trust	19	22%
Insecurity-disquiet	9	22.50%	Insecurity-disquiet	18	20.45%
Insecurity-distrust	0	/	Insecurity-distrust	0	/
Satisfaction-interest	0	/	Satisfaction-interest	0	/
Satisfaction-pleasure	0	/	Satisfaction-pleasure	0	/
Dissatisfaction-ennui	0	/	Dissatisfaction-ennui	0	/

Dissatisfaction-displeasure	9	22.50%	Dissatisfaction-displeasure	17	19.31%
Inclination-desire	0	/	Inclination-desire	5	5.68%
Disinclination-non-desire	0	/	Disinclination-non-desire	4	4.55%
Surprise +	0	/	Surprise +	0	/
Surprise -	3	7.50%	Surprise -	4	4.55%
Surprise neu	1	2.50%	Surprise neu	0	/
Total AFFECT	40		Total AFFECT	88	100%
JUDGMENT	Total	%	JUDGMENT	Total	%
Social esteem: Normality+	0	/	Social esteem: Normality+	1	0.74%
Social esteem: Normality-	3	3.16%	Social esteem: Normality-	3	2.21%
Social esteem: Capacity+	0	/	Social esteem: Capacity+	2	1.47%
Social esteem: Capacity-	8	8.42%	Social esteem: Capacity-	13	9.56%
Social esteem: Tenacity+	0	/	Social esteem: Tenacity+	13	9.56%
Social esteem: Tenacity-	2	2.11%	Social esteem: Tenacity-	0	/
Social sanction: Veracity+	4	4.21%	Social sanction: Veracity+	2	1.47%
Social sanction: Veracity-	9	9.47%	Social sanction: Veracity-	12	8.82%
Social sanction: Propriety+	11	11.58%	Social sanction: Propriety+	6	4.41%
Social sanction: Propriety-	58	61.05%	Social sanction: Propriety-	84	61.76%
Total	95	100%	Total	136	100%
Tokens (implicit)			Tokens (implicit)		
Social esteem: Normality+	0	/	Social esteem: Normality+	0	/
Social esteem: Normality-	0	/	Social esteem: Normality-	0	/
Social esteem: Capacity+	1	1.25%	Social esteem: Capacity+	0	/
Social esteem: Capacity-	1	1.25%	Social esteem: Capacity-	7	6.48%
Social esteem: Tenacity+	2	2.50%	Social esteem: Tenacity+	3	2.78%
Social esteem: Tenacity-	2	2.50%	Social esteem: Tenacity-	0	/
Social sanction: Veracity+	8	10%	Social sanction: Veracity+	18	16.67%
Social sanction: Veracity-	3	3.75%	Social sanction: Veracity-	5	4.63%
Social sanction: Propriety+	2	2.50%	Social sanction: Propriety+	3	2.78%
Social sanction: Propriety-	61	76.25%	Social sanction: Propriety-	72	66.67%
Total	80	100%	Total	108	100%
Explicit	95	54.29%	Explicit	136	55.74%
Implicit	80	45.71%	Implicit	108	44.26%
Total JUDGMENT	175	100%	Total JUDGMENT	244	100%
APPRECIATION	Total	%	APPRECIATION	Total	%
Reaction: Impact +	0	/	Reaction: Impact +	0	/
Reaction: Impact -	0	/	Reaction: Impact -	0	/
Reaction: Quality +	1	14.29%	Reaction: Quality +	1	50%

Appendix V: APPRAISAL resources in each subcorpora

Reaction: Quality -	0	/	Reaction: Quality -	0	/
Composition: Balance +	0	/	Composition: Balance +	0	/
Composition: Balance -	0	/	Composition: Balance -	0	/
Composition: Complexity +	0	/	Composition: Complexity +	0	/
Composition: Complexity -	2	27.57%	Composition: Complexity -	0	/
Valuation +	0	/	Valuation +	0	/
Valuation -	4	57.14%	Valuation -	1	50%
Total APPRECIATION	7	100%	Total APPRECIATION	2	100%
Total APPRAISAL	222		Total APPRAISAL	333	

GRADUATION

Category	Total	%	Category	Total	%
Focus-sharpen	1	2.70%	Focus-sharpen	1	2.70%
Focus-soften	0	/	Focus-soften	1	2.70%
Force-intensification (up-scale)	36	97.30%	Force-intensification (up-scale)	35	94.60%
Force-intensification (down-scale)	0	/	Force-intensification (down-scale)	/	/
Force-quantification (up-scale)	0	/	Force-quantification (up-scale)	/	/
Force-quantification (down-scale)	0	/	Force-quantification (down-scale)	/	/
Total GRADUATION	37	100%	Total GRADUATION	37	100%

Women

#KC			#NoKC		
ATTITUDE					
AFFECT	Total	%	AFFECT	Total	%
Happiness-cheer	0	/	Happiness-cheer	0	/
Happiness-affection	1	2.70%	Happiness-affection	1	4%
Unhappiness-misery	12	32.43%	Unhappiness-misery	3	12%
Unhappiness-antipathy	3	8.11%	Unhappiness-antipathy	0	/
Security-quiet	0	/	Security-quiet	0	/
Security-trust	6	16.22%	Security-trust	8	32%
Insecurity-disquiet	5	13.51%	Insecurity-disquiet	0	/
Insecurity-distrust	0	/	Insecurity-distrust	0	/
Satisfaction-interest	0	/	Satisfaction-interest	0	/
Satisfaction-pleasure	0	/	Satisfaction-pleasure	0	/

Dissatisfaction-ennui	0	/	Dissatisfaction-ennui	0	/
Dissatisfaction-displeasure	6	16.22%	Dissatisfaction-displeasure	5	20%
Inclination-desire	1	2.70%	Inclination-desire	4	16%
Disinclination-non-desire	1	2.70%	Disinclination-non-desire	3	12%
Surprise +	0	/	Surprise +	0	/
Surprise -	2	5.41%	Surprise -	1	4%
Surprise neu	0	/	Surprise neu	0	/
Total AFFECT	37	100%	Total AFFECT	25	100%
JUDGMENT	Total	%	JUDGMENT	Total	%
Social esteem: Normality+	0	/	Social esteem: Normality+	0	/
Social esteem: Normality-	2	2.02%	Social esteem: Normality-	8	6.73%
Social esteem: Capacity+	3	3.03%	Social esteem: Capacity+	0	/
Social esteem: Capacity-	10	10.10%	Social esteem: Capacity-	9	7.56%
Social esteem: Tenacity+	4	4.04%	Social esteem: Tenacity+	10	8.40%
Social esteem: Tenacity-	4	4.04%	Social esteem: Tenacity-	2	1.68%
Social sanction: Veracity+	2	2.02%	Social sanction: Veracity+	5	4.20%
Social sanction: Veracity-	11	11.11%	Social sanction: Veracity-	15	12.61%
Social sanction: Propriety+	7	7.07%	Social sanction: Propriety+	14	11.76%
Social sanction: Propriety-	56	56.57%	Social sanction: Propriety-	56	47.06%
Total	99	100%	Total	119	100%
Tokens (implicit)			Tokens (implicit)		
Social esteem: Normality+	0	/	Social esteem: Normality+	0	/
Social esteem: Normality-	0	/	Social esteem: Normality-	0	/
Social esteem: Capacity+	0	/	Social esteem: Capacity+	0	/
Social esteem: Capacity-	1	1.39%	Social esteem: Capacity-	4	5.97%
Social esteem: Tenacity+	0	/	Social esteem: Tenacity+	0	0%
Social esteem: Tenacity-	0	/	Social esteem: Tenacity-	0	/
Social sanction: Veracity+	6	8.33%	Social sanction: Veracity+	9	13.43%
Social sanction: Veracity-	4	5.56%	Social sanction: Veracity-	2	2.99%
Social sanction: Propriety+	4	5.56%	Social sanction: Propriety+	11	16.42%
Social sanction: Propriety-	57	79.17%	Social sanction: Propriety-	41	61.19%

Appendix V: APPRAISAL resources in each subcorpora

Total	72	100%	Total	67	100%
Explicit	99	57.89%	Explicit	119	63.98%
Implicit	72	42.11%	Implicit	67	36.02%
Total JUDGMENT	171	100%	Total JUDGMENT	186	100%
APPRECIATION	Total	%	APPRECIATION	Total	%
Reaction: Impact +	0	/	Reaction: Impact +	1	25%
Reaction: Impact -	0	/	Reaction: Impact -	0	/
Reaction: Quality +	0	/	Reaction: Quality +	0	/
Reaction: Quality -	0	/	Reaction: Quality -	0	/
Composition: Balance +	0	/	Composition: Balance +	0	/
Composition: Balance -	0	/	Composition: Balance -	0	/
Composition: Complexity +	0	/	Composition: Complexity +	0	/
Composition: Complexity -	0	/	Composition: Complexity -	0	/
Valuation +	1	50%	Valuation +	0	/
Valuation -	1	50%	Valuation -	3	75%
Total APPRECIATION	2	100%	Total APPRECIATION	4	100%
Total APPRAISAL	208		Total APPRAISAL	215	

GRADUATION

Category	Total	%	Category	Total	%
Focus-sharpen	0	/	Focus-sharpen	2	2.82%
Focus-soften	0	/	Focus-soften	0	/
Force-intensification (up-scale)	43	82.69%	Force-intensification (up-scale)	62	87.32%
Force-intensification (down-scale)	0	/	Force-intensification (down-scale)	0	/
Force-quantification (up-scale)	9	17.31%	Force-quantification (up-scale)	7	9.86%
Force-quantification (down-scale)	0	/	Force-quantification (down-scale)	0	/
Total GRADUATION	52	100%	Total GRADUATION	71	100%

Sexual

#KC			#NoKC		
ATTITUDE					
AFFECT	Total	%	AFFECT	Total	%
Happiness-cheer	0	/	Happiness-cheer	0	/
Happiness-affection	0	/	Happiness-affection	0	/

Unhappiness-misery	1	5%	Unhappiness-misery	1	1.82%
Unhappiness-antipathy	0	/	Unhappiness-antipathy	11	20%
Security-quiet	0	/	Security-quiet	0	/
Security-trust	5	25%	Security-trust	13	23.64%
Insecurity-disquiet	1	5%	Insecurity-disquiet	9	16.36%
Insecurity-distrust	3	15%	Insecurity-distrust	4	7.27%
Satisfaction-interest	0	/	Satisfaction-interest	0	/
Satisfaction-pleasure	0	/	Satisfaction-pleasure	0	/
Dissatisfaction-ennui	0	/	Dissatisfaction-ennui	0	/
Dissatisfaction-displeasure	7	35%	Dissatisfaction-displeasure	8	14.55%
Inclination-desire	0	/	Inclination-desire	5	9.08%
Disinclination-non-desire	1	5%	Disinclination-non-desire	2	3.64%
Surprise +	0	/	Surprise +	0	/
Surprise -	2	10%	Surprise -	2	3.64%
Surprise neu	0	/	Surprise neu	0	/
Total AFFECT	20	100%	Total AFFECT	55	100%
JUDGMENT	Total	%	JUDGMENT	Total	%
Social esteem: Normality+	0	0	Social esteem: Normality+	0	/
Social esteem: Normality-	0	0	Social esteem: Normality-	0	/
Social esteem: Capacity+	0	0	Social esteem: Capacity+	2	1.50%
Social esteem: Capacity-	6	13.64%	Social esteem: Capacity-	11	8.27%
Social esteem: Tenacity+	1	2.27%	Social esteem: Tenacity+	3	2.26%
Social esteem: Tenacity-	0	0	Social esteem: Tenacity-	2	1.50%
Social sanction: Veracity+	5	11.36%	Social sanction: Veracity+	4	3.01%
Social sanction: Veracity-	22	50%	Social sanction: Veracity-	10	7.52%
Social sanction: Propriety+	4	9.09%	Social sanction: Propriety+	3	2.26%
Social sanction: Propriety-	6	13.64%	Social sanction: Propriety-	98	73.68%
Total	44	100%	Total	133	100%
Tokens (implicit)			Tokens (implicit)		
Social esteem: Normality+	0	0	Social esteem: Normality+	0	/

Appendix V: APPRAISAL resources in each subcorpora

Social esteem: Normality-	0	0	Social esteem: Normality-	0	/
Social esteem: Capacity+	0	0	Social esteem: Capacity+	0	/
Social esteem: Capacity-	1	1.35%	Social esteem: Capacity-	0	/
Social esteem: Tenacity+	1	1.35%	Social esteem: Tenacity+	0	/
Social esteem: Tenacity-	0	0%	Social esteem: Tenacity-	0	/
Social sanction: Veracity+	6	8.11%	Social sanction: Veracity+	18	/
Social sanction: Veracity-	4	5.41%	Social sanction: Veracity-	5	/
Social sanction: Propriety+	2	2.74%	Social sanction: Propriety+	3	/
Social sanction: Propriety-	60	81.08%	Social sanction: Propriety-	46	/
Total	74	100%	Total	72	100%
Explicit	44	37.29%	Explicit	133	64.88%
Implicit	74	62.71%	Implicit	72	35.12%
Total JUDGMENT	118	100%	Total JUDGMENT	205	100%
APPRECIATION	Total	%	APPRECIATION	Total	%
Reaction: Impact +	0	/	Reaction: Impact +	0	/
Reaction: Impact -	0	/	Reaction: Impact -	0	/
Reaction: Quality +	0	/	Reaction: Quality +	0	/
Reaction: Quality -	1	20%	Reaction: Quality -	0	/
Composition: Balance +	1	20%	Composition: Balance +	0	/
Composition: Balance -	0	/	Composition: Balance -	0	/
Composition: Complexity+	0	/	Composition: Complexity+	0	/
Composition: Complexity -	0	/	Composition: Complexity -	0	/
Valuation +	1	20%	Valuation +	4	57.14%
Valuation -	2	40%	Valuation -	3	42.86%
Total APPRECIATION	5	100%	Total APPRECIATION	7	100%
Total APPRAISAL	143		Total APPRAISAL	264	
GRADUATION					
Category	Total	%	Category	Total	%
Focus-sharpen	2	5.88%	Focus-sharpen	1	2.08%
Focus-soften	5	14.71%	Focus-soften	0	/

Force-intensification (up-scale)	22	64.71%	Force-intensification (up-scale)	35	72.92%
Force-intensification (down-scale)	2	5.88%	Force-intensification (down-scale)	0	/
Force-quantification (up-scale)	3	8.82%	Force-quantification (up-scale)	11	22.92%
Force-quantification (down-scale)	0	/	Force-quantification (down-scale)	1	2.08%
Total GRADUATION	34	100%	Total GRADUATION	48	100%

RESUMEN

Introducción y objetivos

Las Naciones Unidas consideran la violencia contra las mujeres una violación de los derechos humanos (United Nations, s.f.). Una de las formas de violencia de género es la violencia sexual. La violencia sexual refleja el desequilibrio de poder y la discriminación entre hombres y mujeres, y está presente en todas las sociedades y clases sociales (Dartnall y Jewkes, 2013; Tavara, 2006). Este crimen se produce cuando la víctima/sobreviviente no da su consentimiento, y puede adoptar muchas formas y producirse en diversos entornos. A pesar de que la violencia sexual es un problema social común en muchos países del mundo, muchos casos de agresión sexual siguen sin denunciarse, lo que la hace invisible en gran parte de las ocasiones. Esto se debe a un entorno social de normas y actitudes aceptadas que trivializa y minimiza la violencia sexual al mismo tiempo que victimiza, culpa y avergüenza a las víctimas/sobrevivientes (Dartnall y Jewkes, 2013; Powell y Henry, 2017). Este entorno cultural se conoce comúnmente como *cultura de la violación*. La existencia de una cultura de la violación que excusa a los agresores impide que las víctimas/sobrevivientes denuncien los delitos sexuales que han sufrido (Powell y Henry, 2017).

Aunque tradicionalmente se consideraba que la violencia contra las mujeres pertenecía a la esfera privada (Bou-Franch, 2013), la violencia sexual se convirtió simultáneamente en una cuestión pública y privada poco después de la aparición de las plataformas digitales. Esta situación ha tenido un impacto tanto negativo como positivo en la vida de las víctimas/sobrevivientes. Investigaciones sobre las agresiones *online* contra las mujeres han tratado el uso de diferentes plataformas digitales para difundir discursos de culpabilización derivados de la cultura de la violación para negar la existencia de dicha violencia (*cf.* Bou-Franch, 2013; Bou-Franch y Garcés-Conejos Blitvich, 2014b). Más concretamente, la red social Twitter ha sido señalada como la red social más sexista y (sexualmente) agresiva (Jane, 2017b; Mendes *et al.*, 2018; Lewis *et al.*, 2017). Varios estudios han mostrado que Twitter se emplea para amenazar sexualmente a las mujeres (por ejemplo, Frenda *et al.*, 2019; Hardaker y McGlashan, 2016), así como para victimizar aún más a las víctimas/sobrevivientes de la violencia sexual (por ejemplo, Idoiaga Mondragón *et al.*, 2019; Stubbs-Richardson *et al.*, 2018). En estas interacciones en Twitter, se culpa a las víctimas/sobrevivientes de la violencia y se excusa a los agresores o incluso se les presenta como las verdaderas víctimas.

A pesar de esta visión negativa de Twitter, la plataforma también ha proporcionado a las víctimas/sobrevivientes y al movimiento feminista un espacio relativamente seguro para contribuir al feminismo digital. La función más popular de Twitter, el *hashtag* (#), se utiliza como herramienta de organización y resistencia sociopolítica y para formar comunidades *online*, a pesar de que los tuiteros nunca interactúan directamente ni se conocen entre sí (Zappavigna, 2012; Papacharissi, 2014). El colectivo feminista utiliza *hashtags* para hacer más visible la violencia (sexual) contra las mujeres y denunciar la cultura de la violación. Esta forma de protesta discursiva se conoce como *hashtivismo* feminista. En el *hashtivismo* feminista, los tuiteros se ofrecen apoyo mutuamente y dan validez a las autonarraciones de la violencia sexual, desafiando así los mitos y guiones tradicionales de la violación (Loney-Howes, 2019). De hecho, los estudios han señalado que compartir estas narrativas ayuda a las víctimas/sobrevivientes a pasar por un proceso terapéutico "beneficial for their recovery" (Masciantonio *et al.*, 2021). Aunque esta forma de activismo feminista apareció en Twitter a principios de la década de 2010, no fue hasta la (re)aparición del movimiento *#MeToo* en 2017 cuando se popularizó entre los tuiteros debido a su importante impacto en la sociedad. De hecho, esta forma de feminismo *online* fue clave para el establecimiento de la cuarta ola del feminismo (Blevins, 2018). Por ello, no es de extrañar que el estudio del *hashtivismo* feminista esté ganando impulso en el campo de la lingüística (*cf.* Bouvier, 2020; Jones *et al.*, 2022; Morikawa, 2019a, 2019b; Palomino-Manjón, 2022a).

Aunque algunos estudios han analizado la violencia (sexual) digital contra las mujeres y la resistencia feminista en Twitter por separado, no se han encontrado estudios que comparen los diferentes discursos que rodean la misoginia y el feminismo *online* cuando coexisten dentro de la misma plataforma digital (o incluso *hashtag*) desde una perspectiva lingüística. Esta investigación adopta la forma de estudio de caso al examinar la nominación del exjuez Brett Kavanaugh como juez asociado del Tribunal Supremo de los Estados Unidos de América. Su nominación se convirtió en una gran preocupación pública cuando la profesora californiana, la Dra. Christine Blasey Ford, lo acusó de intentar violarla en 1983. Las acusaciones de agresión sexual contra el exjuez constituyeron una crisis en relación con el futuro de las ciudadanas estadounidenses, especialmente en lo que respecta a sus derechos en cuestiones como el aborto. Además, su presencia en el Tribunal Supremo supondría que dos de los nueve jueces habrían sido acusados de conducta sexual inapropiada. Por lo tanto, su nominación por parte del entonces presidente de los Estados Unidos Donald Trump, que había confesado

públicamente haber cometido violencia sexual en numerosas ocasiones, para el más alto tribunal de la judicatura federal de los Estados Unidos supuso una forma de violencia simbólica para perpetuar la cultura de la violación y la opresión patriarcal en la sociedad y las instituciones estadounidenses.

Las plataformas digitales ofrecen a los ciudadanos la oportunidad de expresar públicamente sus opiniones sobre estos temas y de manifestar su (des)afiliación con las personas implicadas. Durante el proceso de confirmación, la Dra. Ford se convirtió en el blanco de agresiones y amenazas por parte de los internautas que apoyaban al juez asociado Kavanaugh, especialmente en Twitter (Boyle, 2019). Sin embargo, su caso también provocó el resurgimiento del feminismo digital que utilizó *hashtags* de Twitter para apoyar su testimonio de agresión sexual (Deal *et al.*, 2020; Palomino-Manjón, 2022a). La gran diversidad de opiniones en redes sociales ha provocado que el estudio del lenguaje evaluativo juegue un papel fundamental para entender las interacciones que tienen lugar en este tipo de plataformas (*cf.* Zappavigna, 2012, 2017a). Se ha demostrado que la evaluación es "an important resource for establishing and maintaining the alignments that are central to community membership" (Zappavigna, 2017a, p. 448). Varios estudios afirman que los usuarios de redes sociales crean comunidades (ambientales) de emociones compartidas mediante la negociación de valores con otros participantes. Sin embargo, la evaluación no solo es útil para examinar las relaciones interpersonales, sino también para identificar discursos. Por lo tanto, es necesario explorar el papel que tiene el lenguaje evaluativo en la (re)producción y negociación de las ideologías de género, y cómo los usuarios de las redes sociales se (des)alinean en torno a estos valores cuando tratan temas sobre violencia sexual.

En consecuencia, el objetivo de esta tesis es examinar los diferentes patrones lingüísticos y los discursos utilizados por los tuiteros para (re)producir opresión patriarcal y negociar las identidades de la Dra. Ford y del juez asociado Kavanaugh como víctimas o perpetradores de violencia (sexual). Por lo tanto, esta tesis tiene dos objetivos principales:

Objetivo específico 1: Examinar las ideologías y los discursos de los usuarios de Twitter relacionados con temas de género y cómo estos se relacionan con la construcción de la identidad de las víctimas y los autores de la violencia sexual.

Objetivo específico 2: Identificar el lenguaje evaluativo empleado por los tuiteros para (re)producir la violencia (lingüística) contra las mujeres y mantener, desafiar y (contra)resistir ideologías y discursos de género.

Para abordar estos objetivos, se plantearon dos preguntas de investigación:

Pregunta de investigación 1:

P.I.1.1: ¿Cómo se materializó discursivamente la agresión sexual y verbal de género durante el proceso de confirmación de Bret Kavanaugh en Twitter?

P.I.1.2: ¿Cómo se relacionan las ideologías y los discursos de los tuiteros con la construcción de las identidades de víctima y perpetrador?

Hipótesis 1: Se esperaba que los tuiteros recurran a diferentes patrones lingüísticos y prosodias semánticas para construir la violencia sexual y negociar los roles de víctimas y perpetradores. Además, era probable que estos discursos se utilizasen para destacar la falta de apoyo institucional que contribuye a mantener la cultura de la violación en la sociedad estadounidense. Sin embargo, dado que la violencia sexual está estrechamente relacionada con la política en este caso, la violencia de género también se construiría como una herramienta política, lo que a su vez haría que se socavara la relevancia de las alegaciones. Por lo tanto, también se esperaba que las interacciones en Twitter tuvieran discursos hegemónicos derivados de la cultura de la violación. Como consecuencia, las identidades de las víctimas y los agresores se negociarían constantemente en función de las posturas políticas de los tuiteros. Además, no sólo se negociarían las identidades del juez asociado Kavanaugh y de la Dra. Ford, sino también de las figuras políticas y las instituciones implicadas en el proceso.

Pregunta de investigación 2: ¿A qué recursos evaluativos recurren los tuiteros para señalar diferentes ideologías y discursos de género? ¿Se emplean estos recursos para mantener o desafiar la (des)igualdad de género y la violencia sexual?

Hipótesis 2: Teniendo en cuenta investigaciones anteriores sobre género y discurso digital, se planteó la hipótesis de que la violencia sexual se construiría a través de prosodias evaluativas negativas. Basándonos en la teoría de la valoración (Martin y White, 2005) como marco analítico, se esperaba que los usuarios de Twitter emplearan léxico evaluativo negativo relacionado con JUICIO (moralidad y ética) para condenar a los agresores, así como para construir discursos que culpen a las víctimas. Por otro lado, es posible que los usuarios más conservadores empleasen discursos antifeministas. Estos discursos podrían estar relacionados con el sexismo, la misoginia y otros derivados de la cultura de la violación, como la culpabilización de las víctimas. Por último, la emoción (AFECTO) se utilizaría

como recurso para reforzar las creencias de las diferentes subcomunidades *online* creadas en términos de (des)afiliación con las víctimas o los agresores.

En consecuencia, este estudio pretende aportar nuevas ideas sobre el papel de Twitter para ayudar a los usuarios a impugnar o apoyar las prácticas discursivas derivadas de una sociedad centrada en los hombres. Además, los resultados contribuirán de manera importante a nuestra mejor comprensión de la (re)producción de la agresión (verbal) de género y sexual en Twitter.

Metodología

Datos y corpus de estudio

Para responder a las preguntas de la investigación, se recopiló un corpus de *hashtags* utilizados durante el proceso de confirmación de Kavanaugh. El conjunto de datos de esta investigación se compone de dos *hashtags* relacionados con el proceso de confirmación: *#KavanaughConfirmation* y *#NoKavanaughConfirmation*. Los tuits publicados bajo el *hashtag* *#KavanaughConfirmation* se obtuvieron manualmente utilizando la aplicación TweetDeck de Twitter, cuyas herramientas permiten una búsqueda manual y avanzada utilizando términos booleanos y filtrando por ubicación, usuario(s) y fecha. Por otro lado, los tuits que contenían el *hashtag* *#NoKavanaughConfirmation* se recogieron a través del complemento *Twitter Archiver* (Agarwal, s.f.) de Google Sheets. *Twitter Archiver* recupera metadatos sobre los tuits, como la fecha, el nombre de usuario, el ID del tuit, la ubicación, los seguidores, etc. Por lo tanto, se eliminaron todos estos metadatos, ya que podrían afectar negativamente a los resultados del análisis cuantitativo. Los corpus resultantes estaban formados por 1.474.172 (*#KC*) y 417.639 palabras (*#NoKC*) (Tabla 42).

CORPUS	NÚMERO DE TUIITS	NÚMERO OF PALABRAS
#KC	88.643	1.753.370
#NoKC	20.912	612.416
Total:	109.555	2.365.786

Tabla 42: Número de tuits y de palabras que componen el corpus principal de análisis.

Análisis crítico (feminista) del discurso

El Análisis crítico del discurso (ACD) se define como un enfoque interdisciplinario que se ocupa del estudio de la relación dialéctica entre el lenguaje, el poder, la ideología y la sociedad (Van Dijk, 1993; Blommaert, 2005; Flowerdew y

Richardson, 2018). A su vez, el ACD no se considera un enfoque objetivo, sino uno "engaged and committed" (Fairclough y Wodak, 1997, p. 258) con el análisis y la identificación de la desigualdad social y el desequilibrio de poder. El ACD considera que el discurso es "socially constitutive as well as socially conditioned" (Fairclough y Wodak, 1997, p. 258). El discurso se utiliza para constituir relaciones entre diferentes individuos y grupos sociales (Kress, 1989). Por lo tanto, (re)produce y/o desafía las relaciones de poder entre estos grupos. Es por ello que el análisis de la ideología y el poder es un aspecto relevante del ACD. En consecuencia, el ACD se considera orientado a la resolución de problemas debido a que no pretende contribuir a ninguna teoría lingüística en particular, sino a identificar "hidden features of language use" (Flowerdew y Richardson, 2018, p. 1).

Durante los primeros años desde el surgimiento del ACD, varios estudios demostraron que podía estudiarse la relación entre lenguaje y género. Los académicos interesados en abordar los estudios de género y lenguaje desde una perspectiva crítica afirmaban que el lenguaje refleja y (re)construye las relaciones de género y de poder en la sociedad (West *et al.*, 1997). A lo largo del tiempo, diferentes subcampos de la lingüística han adoptado el adjetivo *feminista* para indicar su posición respecto al género. Estos enfoques del lenguaje comparten la idea de que el lenguaje refleja las ideologías patriarcales y las desigualdades de género, como el Análisis Crítico Feminista del Discurso (ACFD) (Lazar, 2005).

El ACFD adopta una perspectiva política del género. Se basa en la teoría feminista para examinar la ideología y las asimetrías de poder basadas en el género, y cómo éstas se reproducen, negocian y/o desafían en el discurso (Lazar, 2005, 2018). Lazar describe el ACFD como el análisis sobre "how [relations of] power and dominance are discursively produced and/or resisted in a variety of ways through textual representations of gendered social practices, and through interactional strategies of talk" (2005, p. 10). Para el ACFD, la ideología de género y el poder "often [do] not appear as domination at all; instead it seems largely consensual and acceptable to most in a community" (Lazar, 2005, p. 7). La aceptación de las ideologías de género dominantes está vinculada a una ideología patriarcal: un sistema social y una estructura androcéntrica que privilegia a los hombres en la sociedad a costa de las mujeres (Wodak, 2015). Por lo tanto, el ACFD apoya la idea de que las estructuras patriarcales crean desigualdades de poder basadas en el género, que se refuerzan y se cruzan con otras ideologías de la sociedad.

El ACFD considera que las prácticas sociales están condicionadas por el género y pretende transformar las estructuras sociales patriarcales. La combinación entre la teoría feminista y el ACD se consideró necesario para establecer “feminist politics of articulation” (Wethrell, 1995, citada en Lazar, 2005, p. 3) y así poder poner en primer plano las asimetrías de poder y la reproducción y promoción de los discursos patriarcales. Por lo tanto, esta tesis pretende contribuir a la creciente investigación sobre género y lenguaje adoptando un enfoque feminista para examinar cómo se reflejan, mantienen y desafían las ideologías de género en la comunicación digital.

Lingüística de corpus

La lingüística de corpus (LC) se ha descrito como un método o “collection of methods” (Baker, 2010, p. 19). Algunos programas informáticos ofrecen diferentes herramientas para examinar y procesar las características lingüísticas de grandes conjuntos de datos o corpus. Algunos lingüistas ilustran cómo las herramientas de los corpus pueden combinarse con los estudios (críticos) del discurso (*cf.* Baker *et al.*, 2008; Partington *et al.*, 2013). La aplicación de los métodos de LC al ACD también implica una triangulación de los resultados y reduce el sesgo del investigador (Baker, 2006; Baker y Levon, 2015). Al examinar patrones lingüísticos específicos, los investigadores evitan ser acusados de *cherry-picking* o de seleccionar los datos que se ajustan a sus hipótesis (Baker y Levon, 2015).

Esta tesis adopta un enfoque de análisis del discurso asistido por corpus (ADAC). El ADAC se refiere a un “set of studies into the form and/or function of language as *communicative discourse* which incorporate the use of computerised corpora in their analyses” (Partington *et al.*, 2013, p. 10, énfasis en el original). El objetivo principal de este enfoque es examinar el significado no evidente de un corpus de estudio. Como indica la etiqueta “asistido por corpus”, el ADAC impulsa el uso de las herramientas de LC que mejor se adapten a los objetivos de investigación del investigador (Partington *et al.*, 2013). La integración de estas herramientas ayuda a los investigadores a familiarizarse al máximo con los tipos de discurso y prosodias evaluativas que se encuentran en su corpus de análisis.

Teoría de la valoración

El estudio de la evaluación se ocupa de cómo los hablantes emplean el lenguaje para expresar sus opiniones, para reflejar el sistema de valores de su comunidad y/o para

construir y mantener relaciones interpersonales. Además, el lenguaje evaluativo también se emplea para construir relaciones y mostrar solidaridad con un posible receptor (Alba-Juez y Thompson, 2014; Thompson y Hunston, 2000). Esto es especialmente útil cuando se examinan interacciones en redes sociales, ya que los usuarios comparten y negocian valores para construir comunidades digitales basadas en compartir afección y valores (Zappavigna, 2012).

Esta tesis toma como marco analítico la Teoría de la Valoración de Martin y White (2005) para estudiar el lenguaje evaluativo de los tuiteros. La Teoría de la Valoración trata el análisis de cómo los hablantes emplean recursos lingüísticos para expresar y negociar su postura y, a su vez, su posicionamiento ideológico (Martin y Rose, 2007; Martin y White, 2005). Además, también examina cómo estos recursos permiten a los hablantes construir y/o (des)afiliarse a comunidades discursivas específicas, y cómo posicionan y persuaden a su audiencia para que se afilie a sus valores (White, 2011). La clasificación de recursos proporcionada por la Teoría de la Valoración "lends itself in particular to discourse analytical purposes" (Bednarek, 2008, p. 13), ya que se ocupa de la relación entre el lenguaje y el contexto social.

Este marco se divide en tres sistemas: ACTITUD, COMPROMISO y GRADACIÓN. La ACTITUD refiere a las emociones y las evaluaciones de las cosas y el comportamiento de las personas. Estas evaluaciones pueden ampliarse o debilitarse mediante la GRADACIÓN. Por otro lado, el COMPROMISO ayuda a los hablantes a posicionarse en relación con los recursos evaluativos de sus textos. Por lo tanto, la ACTITUD puede considerarse como el sistema central de valoración. Esta tesis se centra específicamente en la ACTITUD y la GRADACIÓN. Aunque la fuente de estas opiniones también es relevante para el estudio de la ideología de género (COMPROMISO), el intercambio y la negociación de opiniones y valores son fundamentales para esta investigación, y pueden identificarse a través de la ACTITUD y la GRADACIÓN.

La ACTITUD se refiere al lenguaje evaluativo utilizado para señalar las reacciones emocionales, el juicio sobre el comportamiento y la estética o el valor de las cosas. Por ello, se divide a su vez en tres subsistemas: AFECTO, JUICIO y APRECIACIÓN, respectivamente⁷⁷. El AFECTO se considera el significado actitudinal básico, mientras que el JUICIO y la APRECIACIÓN se ven como una institucionalización del primero (Martin,

⁷⁷ La traducción de las diferentes categorías de los subsistemas de ACTITUD y GRADACIÓN es propia.

2003). Además, estos subsistemas tienen polaridad, que se utiliza para transmitir evaluaciones positivas o negativas:

1. El AFECTO se utiliza para describir sentimientos, y puede reproducir las emociones del hablante o de un tercero. Martin y White (2005) ofrecieron una clasificación de AFECTO, pero, sin embargo, advirtieron que la Teoría de la Valoración se encontraba en una fase hipotética "about the organisation of the relevant meanings – offered as a challenge to those concerned with developing appropriate reasoning" (2005, p. 46). Es por este motivo que esta tesis toma la modificación de Bednarek (2008) de las categorías de AFECTO, que se dividen en *In/felicidad* (alegría, afecto; miseria, antipatía), *In/seguridad* (tranquilidad, confianza; inquietud, desconfianza); *Dis/satisfacción* (interés, placer; hastío, desagrado), *aversión/disposición* (deseable; indeseable) y *Sorpresa*.
2. El JUICIO tiene que ver con la evaluación de las acciones y los comportamientos humanos. Este subsistema implica no sólo las evaluaciones hacia una persona, sino también las instituciones de las organizaciones, como gobiernos, comisiones, tribunales, empresas, senados, etc. El juicio se divide en *Estima Social* (normalidad, capacidad y tenacidad) y *Sanción Social* (veracidad y decencia moral).
3. La APRECIACIÓN se ocupa de las evaluaciones sobre la estética, los productos del esfuerzo humano, el estado de las cosas y los fenómenos naturales. Los seres humanos también pueden ser evaluados por su apariencia física. La APRECIACIÓN se subdivide en tres tipos: *Reacción* (impacto y calidad), *Composición* (equilibrio y complejidad) y *Valoración*.

Por otro lado, La GRADACIÓN se refiere a la intensificación o el debilitamiento de la opinión del hablante. La GRADACIÓN distingue dos subsistemas: la graduación de categorías no escalables y la graduación según diferentes grados de intensidad y cantidad. Estos subsistemas se denominan FOCO y FUERZA, respectivamente.

Procedimiento

Esta tesis propone una metodología mixta y ofrece dos enfoques de análisis. El primero, adopta un enfoque ADAC, que combina herramientas de LC con el ACFD para examinar los discursos evaluativos de la violencia sexual y la construcción de la identidad de las víctimas y los perpetradores. Los dos corpus de análisis se analizaron por separado con el fin de obtener resultados detallados y comparar los diferentes discursos encontrados en cada *hashtag*. En el segundo enfoque, se examinó cualitativamente un subcorpus de tuits

obtenido a partir de un análisis de concordancias (LC) para identificar discursos e ideologías. Dado que el ACFD no está vinculado a una única metodología, se propuso la Teoría de la Valoración como marco analítico durante este último análisis.

Valoración de los resultados y conclusión

En relación con la primera pregunta de investigación, los análisis realizados muestran que las identidades de las víctimas y de los agresores eran fluidas, ya que fueron frecuentemente negociadas durante el proceso de confirmación. Esta negociación parecía depender, en gran parte, del grupo sociopolítico de los tuiteros (Bou-Franch 2022) y del *hashtag* que se examinaba. El corpus que presentó una representación más inestable de las víctimas y perpetradores fue *#KC*. A diferencia del *hashtag* *#NoKavanaughConfirmation*, que expresaba una clara oposición a la nominación, el *hashtag* *#KavanaughConfirmation* era multifuncional: no solo se utilizaba para expresar afiliación y apoyo, sino también para mostrar rechazo y compartir información y actualizaciones sobre el proceso. En consecuencia, el *hashtag* incluía puntos de vista opuestos entre los tuiteros y, por tanto, diferentes subcomunidades discursivas.

La construcción discursiva de la identidad de las víctimas se negoció con frecuencia frente a la identidad de los agresores. La Dra. Ford fue representada con frecuencia como objeto de una agresión sexual y de una posible violación y, por tanto, como una víctima. También se la representó como víctima de violencia verbal y de la sociedad americana, ya que fue víctima no sólo de los políticos, sino también de los propios tuiteros. Sin embargo, hubo un grupo de tuiteros en ambos corpus que dieron apoyo y credibilidad a su testimonio. Además, ambos corpus incluían prosodias semánticas y discursivas negativas en torno a las mujeres estadounidenses. Estas mujeres se construyeron a sí mismas como víctimas de opresión de la cultura patriarcal, y denunciaron la presencia de hombres tradicionalmente empoderados (es decir, hombres blancos) en dichas instituciones. Este grupo de hombres privilegiados fue condenado por perpetuar la cultura de la violación y reforzar la opresión patriarcal en la sociedad. Sin embargo, los partidarios de la confirmación del juez asociado Kavanaugh crearon un discurso positivo en oposición a la Dra. Ford. Kavanaugh fue descrito como el candidato ideal, un hombre de familia y, lo más importante para esta tesis, como inocente de las acusaciones de agresión sexual.

Por otro lado, la construcción discursiva de las identidades del agresor también fue fluida. Sin embargo, Kavanaugh fue representado como el principal perpetrador en

ambos corpus. Más concretamente, se le describió tanto como agresor sexual y como un violador en potencia. Además, su identidad también estaba rodeada de una prosodia semántica negativa en relación con el perjurio, sus hábitos de consumo de alcohol y su incapacidad para ser un juez justo. Así pues, esta evaluación negativa de Kavanaugh reforzó la construcción negativa de su identidad.

El segundo conjunto de actores sociales que fueron retratados con mayor frecuencia como perpetradores fueron Donald Trump y el Partido Republicano, especialmente aquellos senadores republicanos que estuvieron presentes durante la audiencia que se celebró antes de la confirmación. La identidad del juez asociado Kavanaugh como agresor de violencia sexual se negoció *vis-à-vis* la identidad de Donald Trump. Por otro lado, Donald Trump y los senadores republicanos fueron condenados por abuso y agresión verbal contra la Dra. Ford durante el proceso. Los tuiteros denunciaron que la Dra. Ford fue objeto de burlas por parte del expresidente, así como de constantes cuestionamientos y culpabilizaciones por parte de los miembros del Partido Republicano (cf. Boyle, 2019; Palomino-Manjón, 2022a).

Por último, la identidad más inestable que se identificó fue la de la Dra. Ford. Como se ha mencionado en los párrafos anteriores, la Dra. Ford fue ampliamente descrita como víctima de violencia sexual y verbal. Sin embargo, no se puede ignorar que muchos usuarios de Twitter en el corpus #KC la describieron como mentirosa y como una posible activista radical de izquierdas. Por esto, fue retratada como una perpetradora política junto con el Partido Demócrata. Sin embargo, los partidarios de la confirmación a veces también la describían como víctima de violencia política. Estos usuarios culpaban al Partido Demócrata de utilizar la violencia sexual y el testimonio de la Dra. Ford como herramientas para impedir la confirmación. Estos resultados demuestran que los tuiteros que se afiliaron en torno a #KavanaughConfirmation formaron diferentes subcomunidades discursivas al intentar renegociar constantemente su identidad (Bou-Franch, 2021a; De Cock y Pizarro Pedraza, 2018).

En cuanto a la segunda pregunta de investigación, y como se ha podido observar en los párrafos anteriores, la construcción discursiva de la violencia sexual y de las identidades de víctima y perpetrador estaba estrechamente relacionada con el uso del lenguaje evaluativo y de prosodias semánticas y discursivas. Como era de esperar, los resultados revelaron un fuerte uso de evaluación negativa, que se transmitió a través de recursos de ACTITUD y prosodias semánticas negativas. Esta evaluación negativa se expresó con mayor frecuencia a través de léxico relacionado con la veracidad y la

decencia moral (es decir, evaluaciones relacionadas con el JUICIO). Además, el uso del lenguaje evaluativo se intensificó en gran medida a través de los recursos de GRADACIÓN para ofrecer evaluaciones negativas más fuertes y angustia colectiva. Estas evaluaciones dieron lugar a diferentes discursos relativos a la violencia (sexual) y a la ideología y la desigualdad de género.

Los discursos de violencia relacionados con la política y la violencia de género fueron los más frecuentes. Los discursos de violencia sexual se centraron en el juez asociado Kavanaugh y en Donald Trump para construirlos como agresores. Además, el Partido Republicano también fue representado como un perpetrador político por ocultar y fabricar pruebas para así mantener la opresión patriarcal en la sociedad a través del Tribunal Supremo.

El corpus incluía discursos feministas y antifeministas. Ambos discursos coexistían en el corpus #KC, mientras que #NoKC solo incluía discursos derivados del feminismo. El empoderamiento femenino también se transmitió a través de valores de JUICIO para expresar apoyo y dar credibilidad a los testimonios de las víctimas/supervivientes, especialmente cuando se referían a la Dra. Ford. Este discurso de empoderamiento y apoyo funcionaba como un discurso contrario a los guiones tradicionales de violación (Loney-Howes, 2019) en los que los testimonios de violación sólo pueden ser aprobados por las autoridades. Por lo tanto, el hecho de que los tuiteros expresaran su apoyo explícito a estas mujeres significó una forma de protesta discursiva digital (Lazar, 2018). Además, también sirvió como herramienta para resistir discursos de feminidad que victimizan a las mujeres y las retratan como individuos débiles (Boyle 2019). Estos resultados se pueden relacionar con las primeras investigaciones sobre género e Internet (por ejemplo, Herring *et al.*, 1995), pues las mujeres siguen utilizando las plataformas digitales para solidarizarse entre ellas y apoyarse públicamente (Clark-Parsons, 2021) con el fin de resistir la opresión patriarcal y los discursos de violencia sexual que intentan silenciarlas (Jones *et al.*, 2022; Palomino-Manjón, 2022a).

Por el contrario, los discursos antifeministas fueron impulsados por el victimismo masculino. El feminismo se construyó como un movimiento perjudicial para los hombres, especialmente después del (re)surgimiento del movimiento #MeToo. Por lo tanto, los hombres fueron considerados víctimas, mientras que las mujeres fueron retratadas como perpetradoras sociales. Este victimismo masculino surgía junto a discursos de culpabilización de las víctimas/superviviente y de discursos de odio y comportamientos agresivos (Frenda *et al.*, 2019). Este tipo de confrontación es, de hecho, una de las

estrategias identificadas por Herring *et al.* (1995) y que se utiliza para intimidar y silenciar a las mujeres, así como para construir a las mujeres como perpetradoras. En consecuencia, se puede confirmar que el desequilibrio de poder y las primeras formas de agresión verbal contra las mujeres (Dibbell, 1993) aún persisten en Internet, como también se ha observado en las investigaciones más recientes sobre plataformas digitales (Bou-Franch, 2013; Bou-Franch y Garcés-Conejos Blitvich, 2014b) y sobre la manófera (Heritage y Koller, 2020; Jaki *et al.*, 2019; Krendel *et al.*, 2022).

Los resultados de esta tesis contribuyen a la literatura actual de varias formas. Esta tesis ha proporcionado un mayor entendimiento sobre cómo los tuiteros utilizan determinados *hashtags* para vincularse y unirse en torno a temas de relevancia social, como los de la violencia sexual y la agresión verbal contra las víctimas/sobrevivientes (Papacharissi, 2016; Zappavigna, 2012). Además, el análisis y la comparación de los *hashtags* #NoKavanaughConfirmation y #KavanaughConfirmation contribuyeron a una mejor comprensión de cómo los usuarios de Internet siguen utilizando estas plataformas para negociar dinámicas de género y reproducir discursos patriarcales, lo que refleja que la opresión y la desigualdad de género que siguen siendo frecuentes en el mundo *offline* (Herring, 1999). En cambio, esta tesis también ha analizado cómo algunos tuiteros emplean la plataforma para generar discursos contrahegemónicos y así formar protestas discursivas.

Por otra parte, también ha aportado algunas ideas sobre la construcción discursiva de las identidades de víctima y perpetrador por parte de la gente común (es decir, los tuiteros). El estudio ha respaldado investigaciones anteriores que describían las identidades como fluidas y negociables (Bucholtz y Hall, 2005) en función de las ideologías y las comunidades sociopolíticas de los usuarios. A su vez, mostró cómo los tuiteros negociaron su identidad digital (Adroustopoulos, 2006; Bou-Franch, 2022) dependiendo del *hashtag* que utilizaron y de los discursos que apoyaban o de los que mostraban rechazo.