

Rape culture is woven into our society

[Sociology](#), [Violence](#)



Introduction

Rape culture is the normalization of violent sexual acts and abuse. Without even realizing it, this society has turned into ones of prey and predator. Wild animals on the loose looking for release within its prey. All around people find themselves to be shocked and disgusted by the existence of rape, when they themselves, unknowingly, foster acts of rape. Rape culture has somehow slipped its way into our ways of existing, making it harder and harder to escape these tormenting acts. Starting from the gender roles developed in the past, objectifying roles emphasized on tv sitcoms, victim blaming and much more. Without realizing how rape culture is woven into our society we can never begin to extinguish the prevalence of these acts.

History

Though society's current state is the main issue at hand, rape culture is dated back centuries and centuries in the past. Beginning in 1642, rape first became acknowledged world-wide as an issue that should be mentioned in laws. Backed up English common law, the American colonies passed a statute deeming a male's carnal copulation with any person under specific restricts, illegal (James 234). This would seem like a step in the right direction when it came to safety and protection of all victims, but it wasn't. The "specific restricts" that would deem this act illegal are: if the woman is under 10 years old, if the victim is a female, if there was physical violence used during the act against the will of the woman, and more (James 234). The issue with these restrictions is that it invalidates the rape of males, same sex rape and any other rape not included in the set. It makes it extremely difficult for a

case to be considered an actual rape. Moving forward into the 1900s, rape laws were beginning to modify themselves. Though the laws were being modified to support victims better, the citizens and people involved in these acts weren't. Rapes committed by people close to the victim, such as date partners and family members, were entirely disregarded by the public and the government. Everyone was soon turning a blind eye to an act that could never be forgotten.

Victim Blaming

Rape culture has several faces, some too ugly to forgive. One of the few is victim blaming emphasized amongst people in the eyes of the public. A rape case involving famous basketball player, Kobe Bryant, was recently released to the public. The facts of the case are the basketball player brought an underage girl to a hotel he was staying at. When the girl was ready to leave the hotel, Bryant blocked her path forced himself on her while she continuously pleaded in objection (Rape Culture R9). When news of this was released, instead of going after Bryant, the public blamed the girl for going to his hotel, claiming she should have expected it to happen. When the trial was over the victim was left with a lifetime trauma while her attacker received sympathy from the press and no consequence to his career. This is what rape culture truly looks like. The victim getting the short end of the stick. This case doesn't go unnoticed. With Bryant being such a big figure, millions of people have heard the case and realized what happens in similar situations. Because Bryant was able to get away with such a large offense, people of the same character will believe they can get away with it as well,

thus turning into more rape cases. This issue will continue to present itself if rape culture is not put to a stop.

Gender Roles

Gender roles and power imbalances amongst the sexes are a great contribution to rape culture and the prevalence of rape itself. From very early in history, men and women were taught to accept completely different roles. While women took on the quiet and passive roles, men took the aggressive and violent roles. Women were conditioned to take up less space in a setting where a man was present, while men boisterously made their presence clear. Society constantly insisted that this is right way to live. So in a relationship between a man and woman where the woman assumes the subordinate role, rape only seems a like logical extension of the power imbalance and usual interactions between them (Power Imbalances).

Because of these gender roles, in many sexual assault situations, women feel as if they can't speak out against what is happening to them. That it's considered " unladylike" or " inappropriate" to do so. Men's aggressive and dominating traits lead them to most likely being the perpetrator in a case with a vulnerable victim. It's in their nature to have that controlling trait to them. Because of the roles they were conditioned to accept as young kids.