

The growing problem of white and male privilege in modern community

[Sociology](#), [Identity](#)



In fact, the moment I saw *The Hunting Ground* listed on the syllabus I felt a pit in my stomach. I have been in at least 3 classes where my peers or my professors found assault to be a debatable or not highly important issue. Most recently, I attended a class this summer where a story we had to read for the course featured a scene including assault. Due to the fact that this class was designed to discuss the contents and form of fictional works I brought up the assault and mentioned that a trigger warning would have been nice. Not only did the professor ignore me entirely but he stated that the character in the story though having repeatedly spoken of 'loathing' and 'fearing' the sex she would 'have to have' with her new husband and could not remember any of the intercourse as she blacked out, still the professor said that the girl's young naïve curiosity towards sex was why the sex was consensual. This not only upset me but several other classmates of mine. It is often varied how much I can trust professors. I had a sociology professor this summer who was extremely accommodating and extended all of my deadlines and repeatedly sent me emails to remind me that I was not at fault for my assault and that her door was open.

The movie, *The Hunting Ground* showed me a lot of the processes of the aftermath of sexual assault that I was not aware of. I have only my own experience to rely on, but it was extremely informative to me to see other women's experiences. I have had a relatively easy process through the university and the police, thus far, no one has really made me feel doubted or attacked. To see so personally into the lives of women who were so aggressively denied their basic rights to a fair trial and were treated more as criminals than victims was eye-opening. As someone who has been

assaulted I often would like to think I am an expert on the issue, however, that is not true and I learned so much that I had not thought of before when I was so focused on my own experiences.

Movies like *The Hunting Ground* are highly relevant right now on campuses across America and bring up the issue of rape culture, misogyny in the treatment and understanding of assault, and the white privilege and male privilege that often allow many assailants to be given preferential treatment and if they even make it to trial to often get off scot-free or even with a sentence below the minimum jail time for sexual assault.

I found a lot of this information to also correlate with Peggy McIntosh's article on white and male privilege. In McIntosh's piece, she describes male privilege as an issue with a systemic and institutionalized propensity to 'over empower men as a group'. It reminded me regularly of my treatment in classes and in social settings when McIntosh discussed how widespread the male privilege problem actually was. When she spoke to the colleagues she believed were most likely to be the most understanding she found out that she was wrong and that even they found excuses to explain why they didn't believe fully in the breadth of their privilege. They often, attempting to think with their intellectual backgrounds, would attempt to tell McIntosh that in reality this so-called privilege was explainable and only an effect of 'sociobiology and psychobiology' attempting to convince her that it was the environment and evolution that created a false image of privilege. The whole defense is largely false and ludicrous, but it reminded me of how current and relevant the fight for equal female rights is. I have attended a few marches

in the last year for racial movements but other than the women's march after the presidential election I haven't really found many large public gatherings fighting for the female equality causes.

Delgado Romero's piece on The Face of Racism reminded me of how relevant racial issues also still are in our community. I very much so related to his comments of feeling like you're in between a rock and a hard place as a non-Caucasian American when one is trying both to fit in with their own people as well as assimilate. This is a growing issue that often not recognized in the varied ethnic and racial communities in the United States when choosing to raise children in this country. I also very much agree with the Ronald L Jackson II on his strong feelings against people who people racism no longer exists.

In my sociology class, we learned about racism fallacies such as the ahistorical fallacy which is the idea that racism is in our past and not a part of our present. It is these kinds of fallacies and negative attitudes that lead to events like those in 3 ½ minutes 10 bullets, police brutality is an incredibly large part of our world today. It is when we start believing in racism, when we start dismantling privilege, and when we start accessing the travesties of the past and working to have reparations for the sins that built America through the blood, sweat, and tears of the Native Americas and the African slaves then will we only begin to truly begin to move forward towards real meaningful change. I was reminded of a joint issue between both issues of sexual assault and racism when I read the heterosexual privilege list that I had not thought of ever. Amongst the list of privilege of

being heterosexual and many privileges associated with other aspects as well such as being gender binary, or white, or male. The risk of being a victim of police brutality is higher when a black male, the risk for getting assaulted is higher if you are a woman of color or a trans teen, “ Native American’s are the most highly assaulted race and are twice as more likely than all races to experience assault (RAINN)”. Racial stereotyping, police brutality, inequality has been and still is a massive, deeply rooted, and difficult to resolve because it seems that we often as a country tend to focus on one fight at a time which makes larger progress forward slower and achieving them is then delayed as well.