

Gender Violence

{ Oppression & Justice (Fall 2013)
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6:30-13:01



<http://www.upworthy.com/a-ted-talk-that-might-turn-every-man-who-watches-it-into-a-feminist-its-pretty-fantastic-7?q=3&c=upw1>

& Nearly **1 in 5** women and **1 in 71 men** in the U.S. have been raped at some point in their lives.

≈ **32%** of students have been victims of sexual assault or relationship violence in the past 12 months.

& **44.6%** of women have been subject to sexual coercion, unwanted sexual contact, or unwanted sexual experiences in their lifetime.



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y4LkrQCylz8>

& Of completed and attempted rapes, **9 in 10 offenders were known** by the victim.

& Almost 70% of sexual assaults are reported to occur in private residences.

U.S. Data

- ⌘ **Gender violence:** violence or threats of violence meant to maintain structural gender inequalities – includes rape, sexual assault, relationship violence, stalking, sex trafficking.
- ⌘ **Sexual assault:** “wide range of victimizations [...] include attacks or attempted attacks between victim or offender [...] may or may not involve force” (bjs.gov)
- ⌘ **Rape:** “Forced sexual intercourse including both psychological coercion as well as physical force” (bjs.gov)
- ⌘ **Rape culture:** Social/cultural environment that explicitly or implicitly propagates the normalcy of rape, significantly contributing to its toleration; evident through casual and common victim-blaming and romanticization of sexual coercion and force

Terms

⌘ “Sexual violence victimizes not only those women who are directly attacked, but all women [...] the fact that all women’s lives are restricted by sexual violence is indisputable”

Susan Brison

- ⌘ Ruptures ability to be oneself with others or to know oneself, to feel at home in the world
 - ⌘ “one can no longer *be oneself* even to oneself, since the self exists fundamentally in relation to others” (Brison)
- ⌘ Changes her relationship to others, herself, her body
 - social death
 - ⌘ “during a rape, the victim is defined out of existence by the attitudes and actions of the rapist, which incapacitate the victim’s self” (ibid.)
- ⌘ Traumatic memories “stay in the skin” – cause intense, regular, and unexpected rage, guilt, crying, and other behavior

Lived Experience of Sexual Trauma

- ‡ Emotional numbness causes loss of motivation in making sense out of the trauma, incorporating it into personal narrative
 - ‡ “spectral existence” (Brison)
- ‡ Pre-trauma self separated from the “endless present” of the current self... hard to foresee or plan for the future
- ‡ “How does one go on with a shattered self, with no guarantee of recovery, believing that one will always stay tortured and never feel at home in the world?” (ibid)
- ‡ One aim of recovery: Regain control over aspects of narrative

Fracturing of the Self

- ⌘ “My sense of unreality was fed by the massive denial of those around me [...] denial takes the shape of attempts to explain the assault in ways that leave the observers’ worldview unscathed” (Brison)
- ⌘ Need trustworthy community to give uptake to healing narrative, bear witness, provide safe venue
- ⌘ Obstacles:
 - ⌘ Others’ fear of empathizing with trauma
 - ⌘ Difficulty of making meaning out of violence
 - ⌘ Victim’s worries about being further silenced, oppressed, excluded, disbelieved, stuck in victim identification

Importance of Community

- ⌘ What are ways in which a rape culture could be manifested?
 - ⌘ In work places and universities, what should those in charge do to eliminate or at least undermine that culture?
- ⌘ If someone makes a joke about rape (e.g., Daniel Tosh controversy), do you think it is wrong to laugh? Do you think the comedian has done anything wrong in making light of rape? What are the relevant moral considerations?
- ⌘ At what point do you think bystanders have a responsibility to step in to prevent possible gender violence or the perpetuation of rape culture?

Questions about Personal Responsibility

- ⌘ Myths and Facts about Sexual Violence (GU Law Center): <http://www.law.georgetown.edu/campus-life/advising-counseling/personal-counseling/sarvl/general-information.cfm>
- ⌘ Sexual Assault and Relationship Violence (GU Student Health Services):
<http://studenthealth.georgetown.edu/health-issues/sexual-assault-relationship-violence-stalking/>
- ⌘ Rape and Sexual Assault Statistics (Bureau of Justice Statistics): <http://www.bjs.gov/index.cfm?ty=tp&tid=317>
- ⌘ National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey, 2010 (CDC):
http://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/pdf/NISVS_Report2010-a.pdf
- ⌘ Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network:
<http://www.rainn.org/statistics>

Additional Resources

Questions?

{ Comments?