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WGST/ANTH 106

December 1, 2017

Social Issue Analysis

A very important social issue that has come up repeatedly in the media is the problem of sexual assault. The stories from different universities and cities around the country have shocked the masses and brought a very large problem to light. This has created a huge social movement which is very prevalent at colleges and on social media outlets, like the #MeToo campaign that is extremely prevalent on Twitter. These programs and movements don't just show how prevalent this issue is, but also shows the magnitude. While this is an issue for both men and women, people have usually kept the conversation more female orientated. This concern for women needs to move toward men as well because of statistics like, 1 in 16 men will be sexually assaulted in college ("Statistics About Sexual Violence"). The social issue of sexual assault on men and the problems that accompany it can be viewed through a gender specific lens, using social norms and the definition of masculinity.

Certain societal norms have created an attitude or idea that men can not be effected by the crimes of sexual assault and rape. This statement is made false by showing that 1 out of every 10 sexual assault victims are male ("Victims of Sexual Violence"). Not only do men fall victim to these horrible crimes, but they sometimes find more adversity then women. While society has created an atmosphere where it is more standard for women to get rapped, it has also created a system where men feel they can not come forward to report a sexual assault. The fear of being

ridiculed, judged, or even being perceived as gay, are all different things that keep male victims from coming forward. The fact that, “both men and women are socialized to see men as powerful, assertive and in control of their bodies,” can also produce the fears that men face from a very young age (“Male Victims”). This also brings in the false concept that men can not experience the same emotions and reactions as women, even if, “male victims experience similar effects of sexual violence as female victims such as shame, grief, anger and fear” (“Male Victims”). The societal norms that keep men apart from women have not helped them with the issue of sexual assault, and this needs to change if men are ever going to be able to truly get justice for these crimes.

The idea of masculinity is a huge factor behind the issues that men have about coming forward after a sexual assault. It is socially known that, “being a man means not being like a woman” (Kimmel 272). This thought and taught principle is a problem that has surrounded the men in the world, which only allows them to be a certain way or have certain character traits. This affects the issue of sexual assault, because fundamentally men feel as though coming forward as a victim it takes away their masculinity. The idea of masculinity is based on the premise that, “to admit weakness, to admit frailty or fragility, is to be seen as a wimp, a sissy, not a real man” (Kimmel 275). A world that teaches men to be strong and never admit weakness, aids the problem that men face as sexual assault victims. Masculinity is a topic that is taught at a very young age and is reaffirmed through societal norms. The idea of a masculine man is not helping the men in the world mentally, especially when becoming a victim creates, “issues surrounding their sexual and/or gender identity,” along with the other issues that follow a sexual

assault (“Male Victims”). The social problem of sexual assault on males is significant and a change in society must be made to allow for men to feel safe to come forward as victims.

Solutions to this problem calls for a complete change of how people look and treat men. While, “sexual violence has fallen by half in the last 20 years” this does not account for the many other mental problems that men face on a bigger scale (“Victims of Sexual Violence”). The need to be a strong provider is a need that cannot continue without severe deficits to the men of the world. Not only should men feel safe to come forward as victims of sexual assault, but they should also feel safe to be anything they want to be. This problem of men coming forward as sexual assault victims is something that will take a lot of changes to effect and this change needs to happen.

Works Cited

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