

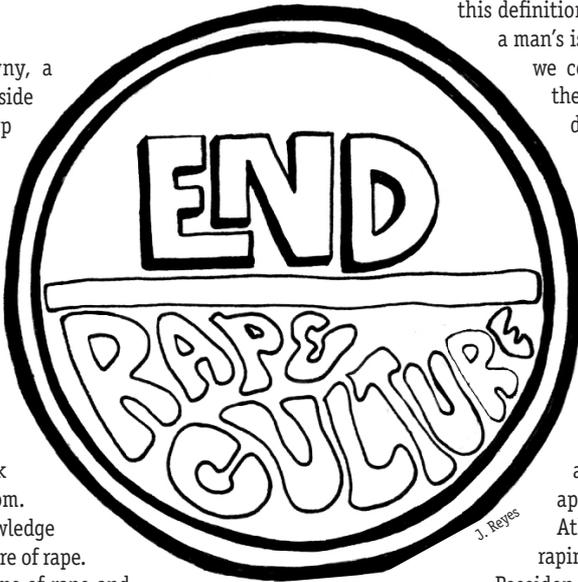
Perpetuating rape culture must be put to an end

by Kelsey Fleming
World Editor

The carnage never ends. Misogyny, a protean demon that crawls from one side of the globe to another, sinks its sharp claws into all realms of society. Violence against women, such as rape, is prevalent throughout the world and continues to tear away at our society. From one continent to another, gender-based discrimination has a firm and perpetual grip on all cultures, including our own. In order to make a change, we, as a society, must acknowledge gender inequality and see that change can only happen if we come together, take a hard look at ourselves, and fight for equal freedom.

First, we must analyze and acknowledge the fact that society perpetuates a culture of rape. Society and its taboos target the victims of rape and violence. Instead of focusing on the men who commit these crimes, society shifts the shame onto the woman. Victimization is visible in the ways we discuss rape. It is common for an individual to say, "She was raped by a group of men" instead of saying, "A group of men raped her." In the first sentence, the use of passive voice conceals the identity of the subject in the sentence. By making the female the subject of the sentence, the speaker shifts the attention onto the female instead of the perpetrators. Passive voice suggests that the woman is at fault. Using this simple yet deceiving writing convention, we emphasize the social stigma surrounding rape.

Society's vile victimization of the rape victim runs deeper than just that—it lies in the definition of rape. According to the Oxford American Dictionary, rape is a "crime, typically committed by a man, of forcing another person to have sexual intercourse with him without their consent and against their will," and according to the Oxford American Thesaurus, rape is synonymous with defilement, desecration, and even "sacking." According to these definitions of rape, it is an act that not only strips women of their dignity, but also defiles them in the eyes of society. Again, we see the use of passive voice. Instead of saying "rape is a crime typically committed by men" we see that the woman is the subject of the sentence, and her perpetrators remain in the shadows. Under



J. Reyes



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this definition, we classify rape as a woman's issue instead of a man's issue. When we shift the blame onto the woman, we conceal the identity of the criminal and allow the perpetual cycle of violence to continue. In this definition, rape is also referred to as an act of sexual intercourse. There is nothing "sexual" about rape. It is violence—pure violence.

Victimization of the victim has a strong foothold in classical literature, biblical texts, and ancient mythology as well. The myth of Medusa is a legendary tale of a woman and her "downfall." Radiant and beautiful, Medusa was a ravishing, young woman whom all men lusted for and all women wished they could be. One day, Medusa went to Athena's temple to pray, and Poseidon, the "Lord of the Sea," appeared and began to rape her at Athena's altar. Athena caught Poseidon raping Medusa, and instead of punishing Poseidon, she punished Medusa and gave her a terrible curse that caused her onlookers to turn to stone. For the rest of Medusa's life, she lived in solitude and in her own cloud of shame and disgust because, according to society, she was at fault, not Poseidon. Because Poseidon raped her, Medusa had to sequester herself. Her rape was what defined her for the rest of her life. In this tale, society explicitly victimizes the victim. In the end, society does most of the raping and pillaging. It is not that misogyny lurks in society; it is that society, itself, is misogynistic, and for the most part, it always has been. And, what makes up a society? It's you and me. What does that say about us? What does that say about society?

One way misogyny manifests itself is in the ways people discuss sex. People view sex like a game. First base, second base, third base—terms people use to brag about how far they get—all contribute to the sick and twisted view of sex that lurks in our society. Like every game, there is one winner and one loser. According to these derogatory and demeaning terms, someone loses during sex. This deranged game treats females like disposable commodities that boys can use to brag about their "sexual conquests." As the person moves from one base to another base, they get closer to what they believe is "victory."

In the world of media, the sexual exploitation of women has become a form of entertainment on

television. Today, popular television shows, such as Criminal Minds and Law and Order: Special Victims Unit, explicitly explore deviant sexual behavior and violence against women through their use of graphic images of men gagging, beating, raping, and torturing women. These television shows and sponsors need to reevaluate the message they are sending through the media. Is this "true" entertainment?

We must rise above the misogyny that lurks in our society. In order to make a change and fight the vile injustices, people have to come together, take a look at themselves, their community, and the world, and stand up for what they know is right—equality. Help is available for victims of rape and abuse at www.cassybayarea.org and www.plannedparenthood.org.



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OCTOBER 2013

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
	1 Girls Volleyball v. Monta Vista (LGHS Large Gym) Board Meeting-LG Town Council	2 School Site Council	3 Girls Volleyball Freshman Tutorial Meeting (House 2)	4 Football v. Santa Clara (Los Gatos) Freshman Tutorial (House 3)	5 Magical Pumpkin Patch (Front Lawn) Frosh Football v. Pioneer	6 Magical Pumpkin Patch
7 No School for Students - Staff Development Day	8 Girls Volleyball v. Gunn (LGHS) Freshman Tutorial Meeting (House 1)	9 UC Workshop	10 National Merit Breakfast CASA Meeting	11 Football v. Fremont (Fremont)	12 Frosh Football v. Lincoln (LGHS)	13
14	15 Board Meeting Los Gatos	16 Letter of Recommendation Envelope Workshop Lacrosse Player Meeting CSU Workshop	17 Girls Volleyball v. Mountain View Home and School Club Football Frosh-Soph v Mt. View (Mt. View)	18 Football v. Mt. View	19 PSAT Testing Frosh Football v. Aptos	20
21	22	23	24 Girls Volleyball v. Los Altos	25 Football v. Saratoga (Los Gatos)	26	27
28 Spirit Week	29 Spirit Week	30 Spirit Week	31 Spirit Week			



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