

The Issue

We live in a rape culture, which means sexual assault is not only prominent and common, but also tacitly sanctioned through widely promoted attitudes about gender, sexuality, and violence. Rape culture is perpetuated by misogynistic advertising and entertainment, as well as all media that sexualize violence, blame victims, and propagate myths about sexual assault.

“The transformation of a rape culture demands a revolution of values.”⁹

Demand Change

Everyday Actions

1. Interrupt jokes that are sexist, misogynistic, heterosexist, racist, or homophobic. Laughing or saying nothing when someone tells one of these jokes normalizes intolerance and hate against marginalized groups.
2. Write a letter to the editor if media coverage of sexual assault is disrespectful, objectifying, or victim-blaming.
3. E-mail complaints and concerns to media like advertising agencies, magazines, broadcasting companies, and newspapers who participate in the production of images that degrade minorities or glorify violence.
4. E-mail compliments to artists and public personalities who publicly take a stance against rape.
5. Refuse to buy products whose advertisements promote the notion that women should or do get sexual pleasure from being dominated or aggressed against.

6. Help dispel some commonly held rape myths: www.rapevictimadvocates.org.
7. Teach children to be respectful of one another and to celebrate perceived differences. Model for them that everyone has different skills and abilities.
8. Engage male allies. Explain that rape is not simply a women’s issue, and that men play a key role in stopping rape.

Keep Learning

9. Continue to educate yourself about rape culture by reading books, such as *Transforming a Rape Culture* by Emilie Buchwald, Pamela Fletcher, and Martha Roth or by watching documentaries such as *Rape Culture*, www.cambridgedocumentaryfilms.org.
10. Find more information by viewing the resources under the Rape Culture section in the index.

⁹Buchwald, E., Fletcher, P. & Roth, M. (eds 2005). *Transforming A Rape Culture*. Milkweed Editions.