**RAPE CULTURE**

**POEMS** by Nayyirah Waheed. (2013). From poetry collection *Salt*. CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform.

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| what massacre happens  to my son between  him living within my skin. drinking my cells.  my water. my organs.  and his soft psyche turning cruel.  does he not remember he is half woman.  – from | if a man  can only show vulnerability  for what is between my legs.  can only be a heart during sex.  if an orgasm is the only way he can weep.  what is his life  but a cage.  -prison |

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| **DEFINITIONS**  **Rape culture** represents how society blames victims of sexual assault and normalizes male sexual violence. It is a complex set of beliefs that encourage male sexual aggression and supports violence against women. The term also refers to the emphasis on people being taught how not to be raped, rather than being taught NOT to rape. The term was coined by 1970’s feminists.  **Sexual Assault** is a sexual act in which a person is coerced or physically forced to engage against their will, or non-consensual sexual touching of a person.  **Consent**: Only YES means YES.  **Victim Blaming** occurs when the victim of a crime or any wrongful act is held entirely or partially responsible for the harm that befell them.  **Slut Shaming** is when women and girls are criticized for their sexual behavior, because they are perceived to violate certain traditional expectations for sexual behaviors.  **Misogyny** - ingrained prejudice against women  **Toxic Masculinity** - creates harmful stereotypes which promotes sexism and disregards non-conforming genders  **Gender Binarism** – belief that only 2 genders exist  **DOCUMENTARY**  *The Mask You Wear* (2015) Producer Jennifer Newson  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hc45-ptHMxo> | **STUDIES**  Amstadter, Ananda B., et al. "Self-Rated Health in Relation To Rape and Mental Health Disorders in a National Sample of Women." *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* 81.2 (2011): 202-210.  Researchers examined the mental and physical effects of 3,001 United States  women who have been sexually assaulted. Some of the specific consequences that  result are Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, suicidal thoughts/attempts, major  depression, alcohol/drug abuse, and obesity.  Banet-Weiser, Sarah and Kate M. Miltner. "#Masculinitysofragile: Culture, Structure, and Networked Misogyny." *Feminist Media Studies*, vol. 16, no. 1, Feb. 2016, pp. 171-174.  Scholars examine how prejudice against women manifests in online spaces. The reactions to #masculintysofragile hash tag shows how men violently lash out against women when heterosexual masculinity is threatened by anything associated with femininity.  Scully, Diana, and Joseph Marolla. "Convicted rapists' vocabulary of motive: Excuses and justifications." *Social problems* 31.5 (1984): 530-544.  **Abstract: “**This paper analyzes the excuses and justifications which a sample of convicted, incarcerated rapists used to explain themselves and their crimes. Excuses consisted of appeals to forces outside of their control which, the men argued, compelled them to rape. Justifications attempted to present their own behavior as situationally appropriate and, using a number of common rape stereotypes, to make their victims appear culpable. We demonstrate how these excuses and justifications allowed the majority of these rapists to view themselves as either non-rapists or “exrapists.” Finally, through their narrative accounts, we explore convicted rapists' own perceptions of their crime.”  **Quotes:** “We view rape as behavior learned socially through interaction with others; convicted rapists have learned the attitudes and actions consistent with sexual aggression against women. Learning also includes the acquisition of culturally derived vocabularies of motive, which can be used to diminish responsibility and to negotiate a non-deviant identity.” |