

# Revenge of Dinah: A Feminist Seder on Rape Culture in the Jewish Community

By JUF Chicago / DePaul - Research Training Internship



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## Revenge of Dinah: Introduction

Contributed by [JUF Chicago / DePaul - Research Training Internship](#)

Source: Revenge of Dinah: A Feminist Seder on Rape Culture in the Jewish Community

This haggadah is brought to you by Cohort 3 of the Research Training Internship (RTI), which consists of 10 female identifying Jewish teens from the Chicagoland area. RTI was initially inspired by the New York based Jewish feminist and social justice group Ma'yan. After their initial success in New York, Ma'yan partnered with the Jewish United Fund and the Beck Research Initiative for Women, Gender & Community at DePaul University to bring the program to Chicago. Through intensive political education, open conversations around complicated yet important political and social issues, and ultimately the creation of a project, RTI hopes to give teens girls a space to become more aware and engaged members in their Jewish community. We spent the majority of our time learning about the various intersections of race, class, gender, and other aspects of one's identity, which all ultimately play a role in how rape culture affects each individual. In order to fully understand the implications of rape culture, we had to recognize that no person is affected in the same way. Rape culture does not affect any one community or one type of person, rather it impacts every one of us in different ways.

Throughout our research, we have found that rape culture is not talked about enough in the Jewish community. For this reason, we have chosen to target this haggadah towards an audience of primarily Jewish teens. Though not all those who read this haggadah may be religious (or even Jewish), we hope that they will find meaning and connection in the intersection of rape culture and Jewish rituals. We also would like to start a conversation about rape culture in our Jewish community, and dispel the myth that Jews aren't oppressed or that Jews are somehow exempt from experiences or perpetuating cultures of permissiveness around violence. In addition, we want to name that Jewish ritual can be done at any time. Traditionally, Seders are conducted in the spring during Passover. However, as young Jewish feminists, it is really powerful for us to imagine these rituals being used at any time of the year. Whether done "by the book" and in order, or selected piece-meal, the rituals we created can and should be used whenever our readers need to take up some space, heal, or just think through the complexities of rape culture and how they are implicated in it. Hopefully, it can be used as a part of our readers' life long learning and evolving commitment to social justice work in and out of the Jewish community.

Lastly, we want to give some attention to our decision to use "victim/survivor" to describe people who have been raped and/or experienced sexual or gender-based violence, whether physical, psychological, nancial, or social. We recognize that all such designations are inherently limiting and generalizing, and can never accurately capture the experiences or perspectives of everyone. We chose "victim/survivor" based on our own positionalities as young, feminist researchers who understand that some people do (understandably) feel victimized by sexual and gender-based violence, and some can reclaim power from it. We encourage our readers to replace "victim/survivor" with any language that fits your experiences and makes these rituals more authentic.

So if you have never heard the words 'rape culture' or you are new to the concept, our goal for this haggadah is simply to get you thinking. We urge you to take a good look at your lives and the lives of those around you and think critically about the ways in which rape culture leaves its mark. Rape culture impacts all of our lives differently, so it can be hard knowing where to start. Check out our 10 Commandments of Being An Accomplice, Fighting Patriarchy, and Shutting Down Rape Culture, and in the back of the book, we have provided a list of incredible local and national organizations you can get involved with, as well as some great media resources. While we hope these resources can help guide you in the right direction, they are by no means a comprehensive list. Enjoy, and selah.

-The RTI Chicago Cohort 3 Interns

Download the full haggadah here: <https://jufwebfiles.org/pdf/teens/RTI-Haggadah-Final.pdf>

*The statements made and views expressed herein are solely those of the (author) or Research Training Internship.*

## INTRODUCTION

### Revenge of Dinah: List of Seder Supplies

Contributed by [JUF Chicago / DePaul - Research Training Internship](#)

Source: Revenge of Dinah: A Feminist Seder on Rape Culture in the Jewish Community

An open seat at the table for Dinah

Votive candles

Matches

Kiddush cup

Cups

A large bowl for hand-washing

Pitcher of water

Hand towels

Broccoli

Seder plate

Salt water in a bowl

Matzah

Duct Tape/Masking tape

Plates for each guest

Un-sweetened baking chocolate

Charoset

Horseradish/bitter herbs

One hard-boiled egg for each guest

Grape Juice

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## What is Rape Culture?

Contributed by [JUF Chicago / DePaul - Research Training Internship](#)

Source: Revenge of Dinah: A Feminist Seder on Rape Culture in the Jewish Community

### Our definition

Rape culture is the combination of underlying themes and commonalities that normalize and perpetuate rape, sexual assault, and violence through: cultural norms, sexist media, victim-blaming, slut-shaming, objectification and commodification of queer people, people of color, and women's bodies. Rape culture trivializes sexist behaviors that are infrequently condemned by various institutions and people with privilege for fear of losing power. Rape culture exists independently of rape itself. The overwhelming majority of society acknowledges that rape is not acceptable, yet the majority of society is implicated in and perpetuates rape culture, whether benevolently or hostilely.

### Different Aspects of Rape Culture

**RAPE MYTHS** which contribute to victim blaming, are a key component of the larger rape culture. According to the article *It's Her Fault: Student Acceptance of Rape Myths On Two College Campuses*, "Rape myths are defined as attitudes and false beliefs held about rape that deny or minimize victim injury and/or blame the victims for their own victimization" (Hayes, Abbot, & Cook 2016). Furthermore, rape myths are falsehoods that contribute to the normalization and justification of rape. Rape myths are harmful because they discredit victims and excuse the behavior of the assailant. Rape myths can go so far to impact women's own beliefs, and can cause them to believe that they weren't really raped, or that even if they were, no one would believe them. This makes it extremely hard for survivors to gain the courage to come forward about their experiences of rape and assault.

**BENEVOLENT SEXISM** is the concept that seemingly polite or chivalrous attitudes men may have towards women are in reality sexist because these types of behaviors further the societal notions that women are weak or inferior to men. For example, the expectation that a man should always hold the door for a woman seems outwardly polite and chivalrous. But in reality, it is societal concepts like this that perpetuate rape culture by furthering the notion that women are the inferior gender and need men to care for and protect them. RTI Cohort 1 interns collected data on what Jewish girls in Chicago would like their male peers to know about their lived experiences of sexism, and that data remains totally relevant to us in Cohort 3 as we think through the perpetuation of rape culture in our community. Below are some of their responses:

*My body is not yours. it is not an object available for you to comment on or look at like a piece of meat.*

*Rape is not funny... It's not funny to joke about abusing us...Stop being ignorant.*

*Your approval does not define how much I value myself.*

*Just because I'm mad does not mean I'm on my period.*

*It's okay I'm not a stick and my big boobs don't belong to you.*

*I instantly feel objectified when their first comments are about my physical appearance.*

Another aspect of rape culture is the **NORMALIZATION OF VIOLENCE** and violent rhetoric. Rape and violence (especially against women, and even more especially against women of color) is an underlying theme in many advertisements, jokes, music, and popular culture. For example, the popular Robin Thicke song "Blurred Lines" has become notorious for promoting rape culture and suggesting that men have control over a woman's sexuality. When the song states "I know you want it" a message is being sent that it is to the man's discretion to decide what to do with a woman's body. Thus, this promotes rape culture by endorsing violence and normalizing the idea that men are sexually aggressive and predatory by nature. Additionally, 90% of mainstream porn features violence against women (Bisignani). This is a clear example of violence being normalized and has serious implications. The objectification of women's bodies, or viewing women simply as sexual objects (also known as "The Male Gaze") is not just present in mass media, but in the everyday lives of women. A 2008 study of 811

women revealed that 99% of women have experienced catcalling or other forms of street harassment. (Hairston). Street harassment reinforces the idea that women exist as sexual objects and for men's pleasure. Street harassment is also another example of benevolent sexism. As it may seem as though a random man on the street "complimenting" a teenage girl on her clothing choice is a harmless, in reality this action perpetuates permissiveness around harassment, reinforces unfair gender roles, and naturalizes unsafe public spaces.

Understanding **TOXIC MASCULINITY** is another critical part of thinking through rape culture. Toxic masculinity is a cultural perspective which emphasizes the ideology and importance of men maintaining a dominant, aggressive, unemotional and sexually aggressive attitude, both collectively and as individuals. Toxic masculinity contributes to rape culture by providing a cultural norm and phenomenon that men are supposed to or need to be aggressive and dominant. Therefore, toxic masculinity contributes to the idea that men are strong, and women are weak. This stereotype is unfair to men and makes violence acceptable toward all genders in our society.

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INTRODUCTION

## Rape Culture Collage

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Source: Revenge of Dinah: A Feminist Seder on Rape Culture in the Jewish Community



Collage by Jordana Bornstein, RTI Cohort 3 intern

## INTRODUCTION

### Rape Culture Is...

Contributed by [JUF Chicago / DePaul - Research Training Internship](#)

Source: Revenge of Dinah: A Feminist Seder on Rape Culture in the Jewish Community

when I am assaulted or harassed, I am asked what I am wearing or if I have been drinking.

when I am belittled to only be as important as the size of

my breasts.

when I am degraded for having multiple partners but a boy

is celebrated for "getting around."

that I can't wear form fitting clothing without it becoming

indicative of my character.

teaching our daughters to avoid being raped, instead of

teaching our sons not to rape.

watching my boyfriend laugh at sexually violent jokes.

when survivors and victims are told not to report rape

because they shouldn't "ruin their man's life".

being expected to be the "perfect Jewish girl" and not speak

unless spoken to.

"locker room talk" that's permitted and perpetuated by

elected officials.

when I am attacked because I "asked for it" with the

clothes I was wearing.

when men assume if I won't hook up with them I'm a "bitch"

## Why Study Rape Culture?

Contributed by [JUF Chicago / DePaul - Research Training Internship](#)

Source: Revenge of Dinah: A Feminist Seder on Rape Culture in the Jewish Community

Rape is "the most underreported violent crime in America" (National Victim Center). Although many programs are created with the intent of educating students about rape and rape prevention, these programs are more heavily aimed at teaching people how to avoid rape, rather than teaching not to rape. Although the intent may be to prevent sexual assault by instituting programs that teach women avoidance, in reality these programs are simply reinforcing benevolent sexism and permitting a culture of victim-blaming, which only serves to increase sexual assaults and under-reporting. As all of us will be college-bound soon, we feel particularly concerned about rape culture because statistically speaking, 5 out of 10 of us will experience sexual harassment or violence on a college campus (National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism). Sadly, many campuses won't offer much support, and the programs that do exist are uninformed and actually perpetuate permissiveness around sexual violence.

For example, The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign has implemented a sexual assault prevention program called ICARE, which, "helps people intervene in sexually disrespectful situations, and set a group norm in which sexually disrespectful behavior is recognized as a problem and active bystander behavior is promoted." Indiana University mandates bystander training in their new student orientation, "During New Student Orientation, each new Hoosier is introduced to the importance of creating a culture of care on campus... [and offers] bystander intervention, campus resources, and how to get consent for sexual activity." While both of these programs sound like they are on the right track, the common theme is teaching young adults to be able to recognize when violence is happening and ways to help intervene after it has already begun. The implied message is: ***You might get assaulted on campus, but we will help train your friends to help you afterward, assuming they are in the vicinity and also happen to give a shit about creating a culture of care at the moment.*** It's not good enough, and we don't believe any of this will actually prevent rape and assault from happening, never mind address the culture of permissiveness toward sexual violence it is caused by.

It is also important for us to acknowledge that our topic of "rape culture in the Jewish community" surfaced for us during the 2016 presidential election cycle. As a cohort, we spent significant time and energy processing the media storm that covered the overt, hostile sexism between candidates and pundits, the "locker room talk/pussy-grabbing" video recorded in 2005 and released during the campaign season, and the many allegations of sexual assault and violence surfaced before and after the election. **This haggadah is not about electoral politics, but the topic was motivated by the news we read, watched, and processed together this year.** Our research process, personal writing, and community-building helped us think through and make meaning of it all.

Another part of the reason that we are focusing on rape culture is because of the impact that it has on Jewish teen girls. Growing up in the Jewish community, **many girls feel the need to be the "Perfect Jewish Girl"** and to fit common beauty and gender roles set for them by societal pressures. Although the definition of the "Perfect Jewish Girl" may vary, there is a generalized, yet sometimes contradictory, commonality about what that girl looks like and does in regards to her Jewish identity. In a survey from RTI Cohort 1, many Jewish girls explained some stereotypes that they commonly experience in the Jewish community such as,

*Women aren't as smart or as tough as men.*

*In men's eyes a woman is either a prude or a whore,  
but can almost never be anything in between.*

*We're all expected to act in a feminine manner all the time.*

*All women who have children bear the responsibility of being their sole caretaker, and that none of that responsibility falls on the father.*

Pressures to be the “Perfect Jewish Girl” are present in daily life and perpetuate a society of rape culture within our community. **Some of our community members hear the message that women are “less than men” in Jewish religious and domestic spaces**, and this allows for rape culture to ingrain itself in our community. Jewish teen girls are clearly aware of the sexist rhetoric that is present in our community, but they often do not have the language or resources to help prevent it. Without a way to solve the issue of rape culture in the Jewish community, pressures to be the “Perfect Jewish Girl” will continue to harm girls and continue the extent to which rape culture is present. Furthermore, there is a disconnect between Jewish teen girls and their parents regarding these societal pressures. RTI Cohort 2 collected data from 103 teenage girls and 62 parents. **Their results suggested that almost all Jewish teens are aware of the idea of a “perfect Jewish girl”, but their parents were overwhelmingly oblivious to the idea, even though they were the ones largely perpetuating this paradigm.**

As such, we want this haggadah to spread to our peers, who are also questioning their safety on college campuses and processing the world around them. We think that there is a large disparity between what people know about rape culture and how it is dealt with, in contrast with how serious it actually is. Many teenagers are affected by rape culture, but do not understand to what extent they are being affected. We chose to focus our haggadah on rape culture because of how much it is integrated into our daily lives. Rape culture embodies many of the injustices that we have studied this year, and we feel that it is important to bring to light these societal injustices. The culture around unfair gender roles/expectations, sexual violence, and sexism in general is so integrated into our world, but our society, and our Jewish community institutions, are not doing enough to stop or address it. **This haggadah is not just a feminist analysis of our community. It is an invitation to those with privilege, resources, and power to join us in changing the rape culture around us.**

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## [INTRODUCTION](#)

# Toxic Masculinity

Contributed by [JUF Chicago / DePaul - Research Training Internship](#)

Source: Robert Jensen Quote

**Toxic masculinity hurts men,  
but there's a big difference between  
women dealing with the constant  
threat of being raped, beaten,  
and killed by the men in their lives,  
and men not being able to cry.**

**-ROBERT JENSEN  
PROFESSOR, WRITER, ORGANIZER**

## Take A Risk & Be An Accomplice

Contributed by [JUF Chicago / DePaul - Research Training Internship](#)

Source: Revenge of Dinah: A Feminist Seder on Rape Culture in the Jewish Community

As feminists and as Jews, language is one of the most important tools we have to address the social injustices around us. Though it can seem nit-picky, **it is crucial for us to be mindful and intentional about the words we use to describe ourselves, our work, and the people we collaborate with.** We cannot do good work or protect ourselves and our communities if we can't or won't.

**Currently, there is much debate in the wider social justice community about the term 'ally'** which has historically been used to describe someone who identifies with particular injustices and feels committed to the people affected by them. Many people, especially folks of color and other people oppressed by systematic injustice, feel frustrated by privileged, young, white people who claim to be "allies" to causes that have nothing to do with them by either not doing enough (i.e. posting on social media in faux "solidarity" but never actually showing up at organized events in-person) or doing too much (i.e. refusing to recognize how their privileges take up way too much space and undermine the work already being done by the same folks who are oppressed by the issues in the first place). **Although allies always mean well, their efforts to show solidarity may actually end up doing nothing to help the cause, and in some cases, may unknowingly result in harm and/or the perpetuation of oppression.**

As a result, some social justice workers make the distinction between "ally" and "accomplice" in their efforts. Specifically, the goal is for people to understand the benevolently-caused damages done by well-meaning allies, and help people to be more intentional about becoming "accomplices". The list on the next page (The RTI 10 Commandments of Being an Accomplice, Fighting Patriarchy, and Shutting down Rape Culture) is designed to help you, our readers, think through the ways in which you can use your power to **become accomplices, rather than allies, in the disruption of rape culture.** We want to acknowledge that being an accomplice is inherently risky because it sometimes necessitates using your own privileges and power in ways that might complicate your social status. We understand that everyone has various thresholds for this kind of emotional labor, and that some folks aren't able to risk their physical or psychological safety some or all of the time. **We would also like to give a special shout out, in particular, to the male-identified and cis-gender folks** who are reading this because of the tremendous potential they have to use their gender privileges to hold other male-identified and cis-gender people accountable for their words and actions.

**The RTI 10 commandments of being an accomplice, fighting patriarchy, and shutting down rape culture.**

I. **Hold others in your life accountable.** Don't make excuses for anyone- if they are making rape jokes, or bragging about non-consensual sex, do not enable them by laughing along because you are nervous about not fitting in. Hold abusers accountable for their actions: do not let them make excuses like blaming the victim, alcohol, or drugs for their behavior.

II. **Think more critically** about the messages that are perpetuated in media and popular culture. It is okay to question what you see and hear if it doesn't feel safe or respectful.

III. **Do your research, listen, and read.** The internet is a great tool for staying informed about actions you can take to demonstrate your solidarity, as well as communities to support who are already doing great work. You can also listen to the testimonies and experiences of survivors and victims of sexual violence, street harassment, and other gender-based oppressions. In addition, choose to believe people when they report being raped or experiencing sexual violence of any kind.

IV. **Use the knowledge you have gained to educate others with similar privileges as you.** Survivors and victims experience huge emotional labor when asked to educate others about how to shut down rape

culture. Help to relieve some of it by going out of your way to start conversations about it with your friends and family.

V. **Know when to step back and not take up too much space.**Your job is not to speak on behalf of others or decide what the agenda should be. Show up, but don't take over.

VI. **Don't let privilege shame get you down!**It's not always easy or comfortable to recognize our privileges, especially when we start to understand how they perpetuate systems of oppression. Process your feelings about this with people who share similar privileges, and allow it to motivate you to be a good accomplice. Privilege shame isn't helpful to anyone!

VII. **Avoid using language that objectifies or degrades women, trans people, and gender non- binary people.** Similarly, don't perpetuate toxic masculinity by telling boys to "man up" or encouraging "locker room talk".

VIII. **Think critically** about the media's message about women, men, relationships, and violence.

IX. **Always communicate** with sexual partners and do not assume consent, even if they are under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

X. **Define your own manhood, womanhood, or other gender expression**in ways that feel healthy and authentic, and encourage others to do the same. Do not let stereotypes shape your actions or whether "respect" is on the table. It's always on the table.

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## INTRODUCTION

### Joe Biden Quote

Contributed by [JUF Chicago / DePaul - Research Training Internship](#)

Source: Joe Biden - Interviewed in Teen Vogue, April 2017

*This is a cultural problem. A fundamentally cultural problem. What is built into the system? The assumption that you must have done something. You knew him. You must have led him on. There are laws all over the country that in fact contributed to this no on that there's no need to respect a woman's autonomy because it's just not that important...It is never, never, never her fault. She could be drop - dead drunk. She could walk across the campus naked. Nobody, nobody, has a right to touch her. Nobody. And it will be a success when no young man actually believes [it] when he says to himself, " Well, she deserved it " or " I had a right to do that. "*

## INTRODUCTION

### Who Is Dinah?

Contributed by [JUF Chicago / DePaul - Research Training Internship](#)

Source: Revenge of Dinah: A Feminist Seder on Rape Culture in the Jewish Community

**Rape culture isn't new.** One of the most prominent examples of a culture of permissiveness around sexual violence is in the Torah: the Rape of Dinah. Dinah, the daughter of Leah and Jacob, went out one day in search for the daughters of the land of Shechem. While she was walking, the prince of Shechem saw her, took and **lay with her by force**. He later asked his father to take the girl as his wife. When Jacob was told of his daughter being raped he kept silent until his son came in from the eld. When Jacob's sons heard the news of what happened to their sister they were distressed and outraged.

The story goes on to explain that the king offered a deal with Jacob and his sons. They ultimately came to the deal that in exchange for Dinah, Jacob's people may take *(or, in other words, non-consensually have sex with)* the daughter's of Shechem for themselves if all the men in Shechem become circumcised. Yet, on the third day of systematic rape, two of Dinah's brothers killed every male in Shechem along with the king and his son. They took Dinah from Shechem's home and left, they exclaimed "Should our sister be treated like a whore?"

The ancient story of Dinah is representative of rape culture today. Dinah was not given a voice, her pain as a rape survivor was muddled by the notion that she soiled her family's name. Her father and brothers took control of her, and **she had no autonomy**. Her suffering, like the suffering of many victims and survivors of rape, is rarely shared. In an attempt at reclaiming Jewish ritual space for ourselves, a group of young, Jewish women, **we have decided to give Dinah a voice** and the most prominent seat at our Seder table. If you look to the head of the table, you will see there is an extra place setting. This is Dinah's place setting.

Additionally, all of you have been given a piece of duct tape with a name at your place setting **The duct tape signifies the silencing that victims of rape and rape culture often face**, for fear of not being taken seriously, for fear of being ostracized or shamed, and for fear of retaliation by perpetrators. Later on in this haggadah, we will be using this duct tape in a Jewish feminist ritual.

We hope that this ritual helps to give a voice to those affected by rape. A voice that Dinah did not have the privilege to use, and a voice that was **overlooked** by the authors of her story.

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Download the full haggadah here: <https://jufwebfiles.org/pdf/teens/RTI-Haggadah-Final.pdf>

[INTRODUCTION](#)

## Modesty & Respect

Contributed by [JUF Chicago / DePaul - Research Training Internship](#)

Source: Aly Raisman Quote

**Women do not  
have to be modest  
in order to be respected**

- ALY RAISMAN , OLYMPIC GOLD MEDALIST,  
IN RESPONSE TO BEING SHAMED AFTER POSING  
TOPLESS IN SPORTS ILLUSTRATED, APRIL 12, 2017

## INTRODUCTION

# Revenge of Dinah: Candle Lighting

Contributed by [JUF Chicago / DePaul - Research Training Internship](#)

Source: Revenge of Dinah: A Feminist Seder on Rape Culture in the Jewish Community

Shedding light on our culture of permissiveness toward sexual violence, illuminating the truth of its damaging consequences, and bringing it out of the shadows, we kindle the candles to create light where, for many survivors of rape and sexual violence, there is only darkness. We hope to light a path to healing with our candles. We also consider these candles as a *yahrzeit* (memorial) to remember those who have lost their lives to sexual violence and rape.

Every person sitting at the table may light one candle while reciting in either Hebrew or English the following:

**Together, we say:**

May these candles, lit on the Festival of Freedom, bring light into our hearts and minds. May they renew our courage to act for justice and freedom here and now. May they illuminate the path to truth, justice and peace. And so we repeat the ancient blessing:

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר שֶׁל יוֹם טוֹב

Baruch atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha-olam,  
asher kiddishanu b'mitzvotav, v'tzivanu lehadlik neir shel Yom Tov.

We praise God, spirit of everything, who has made us distinct through  
Your directives and has directed us to kindle the holiday lights.

[INTRODUCTION](#)

## Jewish Feminist & Feminist Jew

Contributed by [JUF Chicago / DePaul - Research Training Internship](#)

Source: Judith Plaskow Quote

**I am not a Jew in the synagogue  
and a feminist in the world.**

**I am a Jewish feminist  
and a feminist Jew  
in every moment of my life.**

**-JUDITH PLASKOW  
SCHOLAR, ACTIVIST, PROFESSOR**

## Feminism Isn't About Making Women Stronger

Contributed by [JUF Chicago / DePaul - Research Training Internship](#)

Source: G. D. Anderson Quote

**Feminism isn't about  
making women stronger.  
Women are already strong.  
It's about changing the way the  
world perceives that strength.**

-G.D. ANDERSON, AUTHOR AND POET

## Revenge of Dinah: Kadesh

Contributed by [JUF Chicago / DePaul - Research Training Internship](#)

Source: Revenge of Dinah: A Feminist Seder on Rape Culture in the Jewish Community

According to the National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, at least 5% of American women have been sexually assaulted in adolescence or adulthood and that 18% have been raped. Furthermore, at least 20% of American men report having perpetrated sexual assault and 5% report having committed rape. The same studies report that approximately 50% of college women have been sexually assaulted, and 27% have experienced rape or attempted rape; in contrast, 25% of college men have committed sexual assault, and 8% have committed rape or attempted rape. **At least one-half of all violent crimes involve alcohol consumption by the perpetrator, the victim, or both.** Researchers consistently find that approximately one-half of all sexual assaults are committed by men who have been drinking alcohol. Similarly, approximately one-half of all sexual assault victims report that they were drinking alcohol at the time of the assault, with estimates ranging from 30-79%

In recognition of the role alcohol plays in these devastating statistics, **we encourage the guests of this Seder to replace wine with grape juice (even if you are 21 years of age or older) in a demonstration of solidarity with survivors and victims.** We also want to emphasize that although one's alcohol consumption may place them at increased risk of sexual assault, they are in no way responsible for the assault. The perpetrators are legally and morally responsible for their behavior.

*Fill your first cup with grape juice.*

The name Kiddush comes from the verb **קִדְּשׁ** (*kiddush*) to be consecrated, hallowed or sanctified. One of the traditional purposes of Kiddush is to drink wine to proclaim holiness. But the unavoidable truth is that we, as human beings, are not

inherently holy. At least, not in the way we're used to thinking about holiness. We all have potential within us for committing acts of **sexist oppression, victimization, degradation, and even sexual violence**, whether benevolent or hostile. People who have done these things are not fundamentally different from everyone else, no matter how much we would like to believe otherwise. We are not holy, in the way that God is holy, or angels are holy. Instead, we have something that these 'holy' beings do not – free will, the power to choose between what's right and what's wrong. Or sometimes, what's right, and what everyone else is doing, what an entire society is routinely condoning without a thought. However, the Torah does consistently refer to Jews as holy, separate, "chosen". **As a table, share some thoughts on what it means to be holy and exercise free choice while living in a culture that permits and even reinforces slut-shaming, victim-blaming, trivialization of violence, and "locker room talk".**

*Lean to the left and recite the following. Then, drink your first cup of grape juice.*

Brukah et Adonai Eloheynu Melech ha'olam boray p'ri hagafen.

You are blessed, Our God, Spirit of the World, who creates the fruit of the vine.

## Dinah Illustration

Contributed by [JUF Chicago / DePaul - Research Training Internship](#)

Source: Revenge of Dinah: A Feminist Seder on Rape Culture in the Jewish Community



Religion does not tie her down; rather, she slowly unbinds herself from its oppressive restraints and lets her hair—water—flow over and cleanse healing wounds. The tallit's prayers, hugging her around the neck, are conjugated to the female tense. The brown lines in front of her are no longer bars that trap her from exercising her religious potential, but a prayer at the Western Wall. Red splashes are blood, bruises, strength, and healing. She stands to remember Dinah.

-Alana Chandler, Artist & RTI Cohort 3 Intern

## Revenge of Dinah: Urchatz

Contributed by [JUF Chicago / DePaul - Research Training Internship](#)

Source: Revenge of Dinah: A Feminist Seder on Rape Culture in the Jewish Community

**Leader:** Women in biblical times to modern day have been subject to harsh standards, subordination, and violence. Yet it is in the waters that Miriam and Batya find empowerment, the ability to purify their minds of old pains and memories. Tonight, not only do we clean our hands, but we also cleanse our spirits, following the steps left by these two women. In facing the dark truth of dismissed oppressions, Urchatz is a chance to take a mental pause in order to refresh before delving into a reality of discomfort and tragedy.

*We read together: Water flows.*

**Leader:** It is the current of the Nile, carrying a young Moses from the hands of his sister Miriam to those of Batya, Pharaoh's daughter. The two face opposite directions—one the enslaved and the other the enslaver—yet they stand together, connected by this omnipresent stream.

*Together: Water cleanses.*

**Leader:** The wounds of labor and fear, expectation and hardship are washed away in the Nile. Miriam is no longer only a sister; Batya is no longer simply a daughter. They are women of action, transgressing the decrees of patriarchy.

*Together: Water revives.*

**Leader:** Immersed in the essential simplicity of clear water, we, too, emerge with strength and renewal. From our palms and through our fingertips flow the waters of ancient Egypt; we are reminded that a world of equality cannot yet be held. It will take the hands of many to sustain.

*Together: One day, the sacred waters of our ancestors—powerful, brave, pulsing—will wash over the oppressions of the world.*

*Pass a pitcher and a bowl of water around the table, offering to wash the hands of a guest next to you. Remember to ask for consent. In Aramaic, the sister language of Hebrew, "urchatz" translates to "trust." Establishing trust through consent is an integral part of creating a stronger community.*

## Revenge of Dinah: Karpas

Contributed by [JUF Chicago / DePaul - Research Training Internship](#)

Source: Revenge of Dinah: A Feminist Seder on Rape Culture in the Jewish Community

“Until we are all free, we are none of us free”- Emma Lazarus, American Jewish Poet

Instead of the cleansing current of the Nile, we are now confronted with a slough of salty tears and scathing sweat. To whom do these stinging waters belong? Clear beads swelling on eyelashes, suddenly drooping, dropping, splashing skin with an invisible heaviness. Down the cheek, its damp path slowly drying, leaving only a dust of salt. **These tears shall not be forgotten.** Thousands of years ago, a tenor cry reverberated as whips cracked on the backs of enslaved Israelites; thousands of years later, the sound of the whip still echoes in the hearts of countless people. While our ancestors were liberated from ancient Egypt, who has yet to be free today? **What now enslaves our sisters and brothers and gender non-binary siblings?**

Like a spoonful of salt dissolved in clear water, micro-aggressions do not inflict physical pain, and they remain unseen to the uncaring eye. The single grain of salt is insignificant, unimportant, just a joke. But beyond the still surface is a collecting mound of salt which, once tasted, cannot be forgotten. Clear water is not always pure, and a smiling person is sometimes a hidden victim. Behind that shallow smile is the pain inflicted by that single grain of salt on a burning wound. As salt hits our tongues, we remember the pains of slaves in ancient times and today, but also consume it. **We have the power to overcome, to grow.**

On our Seder plate lies what appears to be a mundane piece of broccoli. Yet the simplicity of a vegetable reminds us that our potential to make change is not impossible to attain. Rather, the tree of life, our prospective growth, lies right in front of us.

*Break off a branch of broccoli and dip it into the salt water twice. Say a blessing while leaning into discomfort, perhaps into the edge of your chair or into the shoulder of your peers. (Remember, consent!) If something doesn't sit right with you tonight, if you feel uncomfortable at any moment, if you want to object—that is when to think more, engage in conversation, and seek to stretch. Note those moments, and continue to explore them after this Seder. Together, we say the following blessing,*

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם, בורא פרי האדמה

Ba-ruch a-tah A-do-nai, E-lo-hey-nu Me-lech ha-o-lam, Bo-rey pe-ri ha-a-da-mah.

Praised are you, Adonai our God, Ruler of the universe, who creates the fruit of the earth.

## Revenge of Dinah: Yachatatz

Contributed by [JUF Chicago / DePaul - Research Training Internship](#)

Source: Revenge of Dinah: A Feminist Seder on Rape Culture in the Jewish Community

When the Jews were enslaved in Egypt, they suffered unimaginably, oppressed by systematic enslavement and brutality. And yet, when Moses arrived bearing the means to their salvation, the first real hope that was accessible to them for as long as anyone could remember, their first instincts were incredulosity and rejection. Even after the slaves were liberated, many of them ached for the predictability and relative stability of slavery (knowing where their food was coming from, understanding their role in the world, etc.), and felt scared of their new freedom because it lacked stability and routine.

A similar phenomenon can be observed in our society today. Sometimes those of us who attempt to stop oppression are met with resistance by others who are scared to change the status quo because *(together we read)*:

- 1) it either serves them in some way, or*
- 2) they are afraid of the unknown potential of liberation and what it means for them.*

People are not open to changing the systems that they perpetuate, including manifestations of sexism in our society, even when they themselves are being oppressed by these systems. What is this phenomenon, this self-sabotaging human tendency?

**Leader:** We put the smaller piece of matzah, the part symbolizing our irrational fear, between the other two whole matzot, where it is overshadowed and made insignificant.

**Together:** *As participants in this Seder, we stand against complacency.*

With a better world in mind, we break the matzah, just as we break away from the sexist attitudes, trivialized rape jokes, homophobia and transphobia, victim-blaming, sexist media, toxic masculinity, marginalization, and all oppression that people of all genders know so painfully well. We acknowledge the fear that's stopping us from taking that step away from the comfort of familiarity toward a better, if unpredictable future; and we break away from that as well.

*The leader should take the afikomen and hide it somewhere in the room.*

## Revenge of Dinah: The Four Questions

Contributed by [JUF Chicago / DePaul - Research Training Internship](#)

Source: Revenge of Dinah: A Feminist Seder on Rape Culture in the Jewish Community

The formal telling of the story of Passover is framed as a discussion with lots of questions and answers. The tradition is that the youngest person asks the questions because it reflects the centrality of involving everyone in the Seder. The rabbis who created the set format for the Seder gave us the Four Questions to help break the ice in case no one had their own questions. Asking questions is a core tradition in Jewish life. We would like to offer some questions of our own regarding the perpetuation of rape culture in the Jewish community. But this is just a jumping off point! What questions about rape culture are you curious about tonight?

### **1st Question: Why is rape culture hard to recognize sometimes?**

Why is it such a normalized part of our culture? Why don't people fully understand it? How can we change this?

Why does it sometimes feel like the Jewish community is absent or uninterested in addressing it?

### **2nd Question: Why do the media and pop culture continue to perpetuate the hyper-sexualization of women, the physical dominance of men, and invisibilize people who have non-binary genders?**

What are the negative stereotypes that the media perpetuate, and what are their consequences? What are examples of songs, ads, or other media that hypersexualize or invisibilize people based on gender?

How are young people particularly impacted by these negative messages?

### **3rd Question: Why, on this night, have we put bitter chocolate on the table?**

What other foods might you choose to represent rape culture in this ritual? Why?

### **4th Question: How is this conversation about rape culture relevant to me?**

How have I been implicated or impacted by rape culture?

What can I do to hold others in my life more accountable?

## Revenge of Dinah: Four Children

Contributed by [JUF Chicago / DePaul - Research Training Internship](#)

Source: Revenge of Dinah: A Feminist Seder on Rape Culture in the Jewish Community



As we tell the story, we think about it from all angles. Our tradition speaks of four different types of children who might react differently to the Passover Seder. It is our job to make our story accessible to all members of our community, so we think about how we might best reach each type of child. Since this Seder is focused on the theme of “rape culture”, we wanted to reimagine the traditional Four Children as real life people in our community, each responding to rape culture in different ways. As you read, consider the ways in which you identify with one, several, or all of these “children”:

**The Wise Child/The Accomplice Asks:** “What are the testimonies of people who are oppressed by rape culture? How can I listen openly and nonjudgmentally to them, and be witness to their voices? How am I personally implicated in the perpetuation of rape culture, and how can I use my privileges to help?”

**The Wicked Child/The Bystander Asks:** “Why did my friend get so upset at that rape joke she heard? Why can’t she lighten up?” The Bystander removes themselves from the problem and misses the point, misses the chance to step in, entirely. The Bystander doesn’t see themselves as a part of the larger, systemic problem.

**The Simple Child/The Un-“Woke” Asks:** “What is this ‘rape culture’ I keep hearing so much about?” with no actual intent to learn. Most likely, The Un-“Woke” feels personally threatened by the concept of rape culture, and puts their defenses up when confronted with it.

**The Child Who Doesn’t Know How to Ask/The Nice Person:** We all know these folks. Well-meaning community members who don’t even know enough about systematic gender and sex oppression to ask their own questions about it.

## Revenge of Dinah: Telling Our Stories

Contributed by [JUF Chicago / DePaul - Research Training Internship](#)

Source: Revenge of Dinah: A Feminist Seder on Rape Culture in the Jewish Community

For hundreds of years, the Israelites were slaves in Egypt. After the Ten Plagues, Moses led his people out of the suffering of Pharaoh's slavery, yet their march to freedom was strenuous. Oppression could not be escaped immediately, but rather took the steps of many down a long, arduous path. In modern times, we have not yet escaped the shackles of oppression: racism, classism, and what we are here to discuss today: rape culture. Sexism is just as real today as it was 50, 100, 500 years ago. However, it sometimes looks a little different, and it can be masked by our reluctance to talk about our experiences. The breaking of these chains, is not without strain, but in the act of addressing them, we literally move forward.

*This activity is meant to help the Seder participants think through and embody the ways in which they are affected by and perpetuate rape culture. Everyone should stand in a circle while the leader reads aloud the following instructions.*

**Leader:** All of us are affected by our culture of permissiveness around rape culture in different ways. Some of us are affected in obvious ways like experiencing street harassment, being shamed for what we wear or how we express our sexuality. Some of us are affected in more subtle ways, such as being told to "man up" or feeling pressured to laugh at sexist jokes, even when we don't find them funny. One way we can begin to shut down rape culture is to speak up when we experience it, and form bonds with people who can relate. In telling our stories, we reclaim the spaces and relationships that rape culture seeks to isolate us all away from by refusing to stay silent, ashamed, or lonely.

**Together:** We who stand in this circle are members of a radical community of witnesses. Our power lies in our willingness to witness each other, and see ourselves in experiences that aren't our own.

**Leader:** I am going to read a series of prompts. Please step forward into the circle if/when any of them describe personal experiences of the rape culture in which you live. After you step forward, pause in the middle of the circle and look into the eyes of everyone standing with you. Notice the people who are not standing with you. Notice how you feel. If you do not step in for a particular prompt, consider why not and notice how you feel. Should you feel uncomfortable stepping into the circle for any of the following prompts, there is absolutely no pressure to do so.

### Telling Our Stories: List of Prompts for Group Leader

My elected representatives are mostly people of my own gender.  
The more prestigious and powerful the elected position, the more this is true.

If I get excited about something frivolous, it won't be attributed to my gender or be understood as indicative of a general inability to deal with serious issues. I never have to worry about being called ditzy, shallow, or an 'airhead.'

If I'm shy, quiet, or too outspoken, I might be perceived as 'cold' or 'bitchy'

I worry about the message my wardrobe sends about my sexual availability.

If I am sexual in any way, there is a chance that I will be labeled a "slut."

People of my gender will almost certainly praise or valorize me for my promiscuity.

Complete strangers sometimes walk up to me on the street and tell me to "smile."

If I am in a dense crowd or a packed subway car, I don't worry about being groped or harassed.

Violence that happens to me or members of my gender is never put into diminutive special interest categories like "acquaintance rape" or "domestic violence."

I have been taught specific safety techniques like keeping my keys and cell phone in my hand while walking alone after dark in public spaces.

Every major religion in the world is primarily led by people of my gender. Even God, in major religions, is depicted or described as being of my gender.

I did not grow up thinking that I should be the head of my household, or that my spouse and children should be subservient to me.

I have told or laughed at sexist jokes, either because they were funny, or because I wanted to fit in.

## Ten Plagues of Rape Culture

Contributed by [JUF Chicago / DePaul - Research Training Internship](#)

Source: Revenge of Dinah: A Feminist Seder on Rape Culture in the Jewish Community

One of the most dramatic moments of the Passover Seder comes with the recitation of the 10 plagues that, the Bible says, God brought on the Egyptians to persuade Pharaoh to free the Israelites from slavery. In this Seder, we have reclaimed this ritual as a method of understanding rape culture. We purposely omitted actual rape from this list because we want to explore the many facets of our culture of permissiveness toward gender and sex-based violence that ultimately contribute to people's decisions to commit rape. As we recite each plague, we spill a drop of wine in recognition that these conversations can feel uncomfortable to us, especially those of us with gender, race, and class privilege.

**1. Toxic masculinity:** Cultural norms that stereotype men as unemotional, dominant, and aggressive, especially in a sexual context, both collectively and as individuals. The expectation that "real men" are stoic, that "boys will be boys", and that showing emotion is incompatible with strength. Relatedly, the idea that a Real Man cannot be a victim of abuse, or that talking about abuse is shameful. Toxic masculinity discourages men from becoming involved in the lives of their children, encourages household inequality, which is harmful to everyone involved, and perpetuates the idea of "emasculatation".

**2. Toxic femininity:** Women's feelings of competition over issues rooted in gender inequalities, to the point where they're willing to put other women down to get ahead, socially or professionally. Examples include vying for a man's attention or turning against their lifelong friends in favor of gaining acceptance or perceived power from men.

**3. Rape jokes/trivialization of sexual violence:** Rape jokes aren't funny. They make rapists and sexual predators feel validated. When rapists and sexual predators hear people making light of rape, they feel reinforced in their decisions to rape and harass others. Many rapists don't think of themselves as rapists because they don't FEEL that they have done anything wrong by having sex with someone who is unconscious, or continuing to make passes at people who communicate that they don't want the attention. Trivializing sexual violence perpetuates and normalizes it. This plague also includes jokes about rape and sexual violence in prisons, and "locker room talk".

**4. The "Madonna/Whore" complex:** The idea that men and women codify women into two camps: saintly "Madonnas" and debased "whores". The good girls – the Madonnas – are virtuous, innocent, pure (typically blond and light skinned) and virginal, almost to the point of asexuality. The bad girls – the whores – are sexually voracious, typically brunette and/or women of color, and aggressive (traits that traditionally define male sexuality). This is based in historical fear of female sexuality. Men are frequently portrayed as being absolutely at the mercy of their own sexual desires, leaving women as the guardians of morality. Slut-shaming – bashing or insulting a woman for being a sexual being – and excusing men from sexually assaulting women as just "boys being boys" springs from this dichotomy, and results in school dress codes that prohibit young women from wearing mini skirts, for example, rather than punishing young men for being sexually predatory. The Whore is meant to be punished for acting "like a man", the Madonna is to be preserved and worshiped for "acting like a lady", though her personhood is disregarded. Either way, she loses respect.

**5. Victim/survivor-blaming:** One reason people blame a victim is to distance themselves from an unpleasant occurrence and thereby confirm their own invulnerability to the risk. By labeling or accusing the victim, others see the victim as different from themselves. Victim-blaming attitudes marginalize the victim/survivor and make it harder to come forward and report abuse. Victim-blaming attitudes also

reinforce what the abuser has been saying all along: that it is the victim's fault this is happening. It is NOT the victim's fault or responsibility to x the situation; it is the abuser's choice. By engaging in victim-blaming attitudes, society allows the abuser to perpetrate relationship abuse or sexual assault while avoiding accountability for their actions.

**6. Failure of the criminal justice system:** According to RAINN (the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network), perpetrators of sexual violence are less likely to go to jail or prison than any other criminal. Out of 1,000 rapes, 994 perpetrators will walk free. In addition, only 310 rapes out of 1,000 will be reported to the police for fear of: not being taken seriously by the police, mistreatment or further harassment by police, "messing up" the abuser's life, and that the abuser will eventually return and harm or kill the survivor.

**7. The Male Gaze/sexist media:** This theory was coined by film maker Laura Mulvey who argues that film audiences are forced to "view" characters from the perspective of heterosexual males, and that women exist as passive objects of male desire. As a result, women learn to identify personally with the male gaze, and then view other women through the male gaze as well. As a result, women not only learn to objectify other women, but they learn to uphold the male gaze in their own, real lives, and objectify themselves to the satisfaction of men.

**8. Heteronormativity/cis-normativity/white-normativity:** Rhetoric about sexism is often heteronormative and cis-normative. Further, the experiences of people of color are frequently ignored and/or misunderstood by white people in conversations about rape culture and sexual violence. Queer people, gender non-conforming people, and people of color experience rape culture and violence differently than straight, cis, white people, and this is often overlooked by healthcare professionals, policy-makers, social workers, and other people with power to help.

**9. "Benevolent" Sexism:** Because benevolently sexist attitudes appear positive (holding the door open for a woman, paying for a woman's meal, etc.), people often struggle to identify these beliefs as a form of gender-based prejudice. Furthermore, benevolent sexism may be seen by both men and women as reinforcing of the status quo, which some individuals may find comforting and familiar. While benevolent sexism may not appear to be harmful to women on the surface, these beliefs threaten gender equity and restrict women's personal, professional, political, and social opportunities. Both benevolent sexism AND hostile sexism reflect views of women as underdeveloped adults, providing justification for men to be authoritative and monitor, protect, and make decisions on women's behalf. Acts of chivalry AREN'T the problem. There is nothing inherently wrong with a man opening a door for you. What IS problematic is when neither party is able or willing to locate themselves in the histories and current realities of sexism. The result is that both parties end up perpetuating the attitudes and expectations associated with gendered expectations and social norms, and this feeds patriarchal oppression.

**10. Catcalling/street harassment/telling women to "smile more":** Street harassment (and the general expectation that women and girls should look pretty, be happy, and smile for men's enjoyment) reinforces the idea that women exist as sexual objects and for men's pleasure. It is another way for men to exert power over women.

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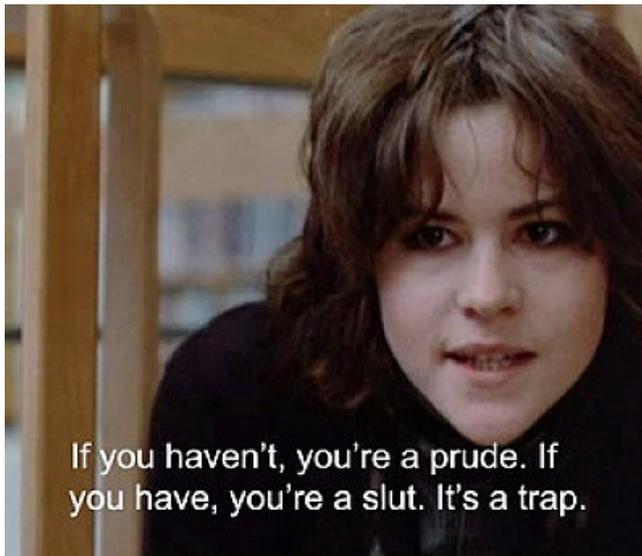
Download the full haggadah here: <https://jufwebfiles.org/pdf/teens/RTI-Haggadah-Final.pdf>

-- TEN PLAGUES

## "Madonna / Whore" Complex

Contributed by [JUF Chicago / DePaul - Research Training Internship](#)

Source: "The Breakfast Club"

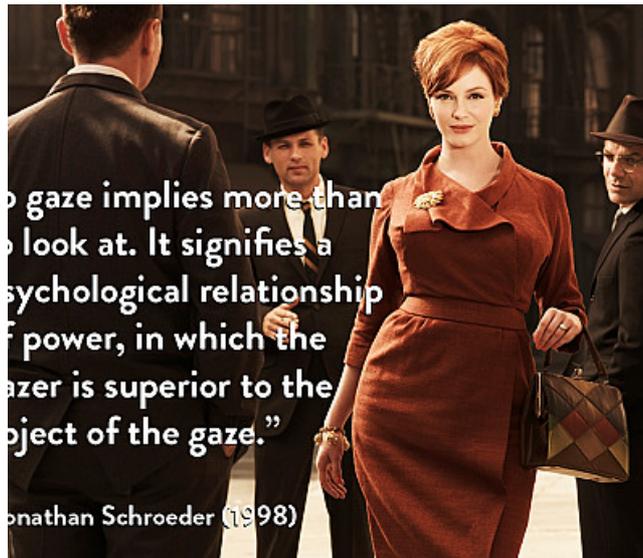


If you haven't, you're a prude. If you have, you're a slut. It's a trap.

## The Male Gaze

Contributed by [JUF Chicago / DePaul - Research Training Internship](#)

Source: Jonathan Schroeder Quote



## The Second Cup + Dinah's Voice

Contributed by [JUF Chicago / DePaul - Research Training Internship](#)

Source: Revenge of Dinah: A Feminist Seder on Rape Culture in the Jewish Community

Dinah, the daughter of Leah and Jacob, went out one day in search for the daughters of the land of Shechem. While she was walking, the prince of Shechem saw her, took and lay with her by force. When Jacob, Dinah's father, was told of his daughter being raped he kept silent. But when Jacob's sons heard the news of what happened to their sister they were distressed and outraged. The story goes on to explain that the king of Shechem offered a deal to Jacob and his sons. In exchange for Dinah, Jacob's people were offered the daughters of Shechem for themselves on the condition that all the men in Shechem got circumcised. However, during all of this negotiating over bodies, Dinah's brothers instead killed every male in Shechem along with the king and his son. They shamed Dinah's name and her experience as a rape victim by justifying their killing spree, exclaiming, "Should our sister be treated like a whore?"

The story of Dinah is representative of rape culture today. Dinah was not given a voice by the same people who shamed her for being raped, and her pain as a rape victim/survivor was muddled by the notion that she was soiling the family name. Her father and brothers took control of her, and then commodified the bodies of every single woman in Shechem. Dinah's suffering is rarely shared, which is why we have decided to give Dinah a voice during this Seder about liberation from cultures of sexual violence.

Traditionally, the second cup of wine during a Seder helps us to remember God's promise to save the Israelites from the forced labor of the Egyptian taskmasters. With this second cup, we turn our thoughts to those who have been forced to have sex against their will into sex by rapists and sexual predators.

Jewish tradition mandates us to remember human atrocities, and we embody this practice by reading and remembering names. Our names are precious because when they are stripped away, replaced with prison numbers, or forgotten after death, we lose pieces of our dignity and part of what makes us human. In honor of this practice, we present on the next page a list of names and a few details of a handful of people who lost their lives to sexual/gender-based violence in recent years. We hope to restore a small piece of the dignity that was ripped away from each of them by reading their names aloud, and lighting a candle for each person that will burn for the remainder of this Seder.

In addition, if you look to the head of the table, you will see there is an extra place setting. At our Seder, Dinah has a literal seat at the table. You will also notice that duct tape has been added to the Seder plate. The duct tape signifies the silencing that victims/survivors of rape and rape culture face. If you feel compelled, we encourage you to add a name you would like to remember or think about by ripping off a piece of duct tape and sticking it to Dinah's chair while you silently say the name to yourself. We hope that this ritual helps to give a voice to those affected by rape. A voice that Dinah, and many others, do not have.

As the leader reads the names below, we invite you to close your eyes. Consider memorizing one name to meditate on as you say aloud after you leave this Seder. Light one candle for each name read aloud.

**Tiffany Brooke Thrasher:** Shamburg, IL; 33 years old;  
April, 2017 Death: Homicide  
daughter, sister, niece, cousin.

**Shirley Regina Morgan:** Bronzeville, Chicago, IL; 47 years old;  
November, 2007 Death: related to criminal sexual assault with a weapon

**Alisha N. Brom eld-Anicich:** Joilet, IL; 21 years old; August 2012 Death: Homicide  
Daughter, Sister, Mother to be (of Ava Lucille); granddaughter, student

**Sabrina Stauffenberg:** Olney, IL; 8 years old  
Death: Homicide  
Daughter.

**Hannah Graham:** Charlottesville, NC; 18 years old;  
September 2014 Death: Homicide  
Student, daughter, friend

**Victoria Martens:** Albuquerque, NM; 10 years old;  
August 2016 Death: Homicide  
Daughter

**Cherelle Jovanna Locklear:** Wayne, NJ; 21 years old;  
November 2015 Death: Suicide  
Student, daughter, friend.

**Lizzy Seeberg:** Northbrook, Illinois; 19 years old;  
September 2010 Death: Suicide  
Student, daughter, sister, friend.

**Shannon Jones:** Ithaca, NY; 22 years old;  
November 2015 Death: Homicide  
Student, Sister, daughter, friend.

**Nadia Ezaldein:** Chicago, IL; 22 years old;  
November 2014 Death: Homicide  
Student, Sister, Daughter, Friend.

**Haruka Weiser:** Austin, TX; 18 years old;  
April 2016 Death: Homicide  
Student, Daughter, Sister. Beloved.

**Cecilia Lam:** San Francisco, IL; 35 years old;  
October 2014 Death: Homicide  
Student, Sister, Friend.

**Diamoney Greene:** South Carolina; 20 years old;  
November 2014 Death: Homicide  
Mother, Daughter, Friend, Student.

**Un-named:** For those who's names don't appear on this list, but deserve to be remembered.

*After reading the list of names, each participant may take a moment to contribute their own names by adding duct tape to Dinah's chair. Then, pour, bless, and drink the second cup.*

*B'rukha atah Adonai Eloheynu ruach ha'olam boray p'ri hagafen.*  
Blessed are you, Our God, Spirit of the World, who creates the fruit of the vine.

## Revenge of Dinah: Rachtzah

Contributed by [JUF Chicago / DePaul - Research Training Internship](#)

Source: Revenge of Dinah: A Feminist Seder on Rape Culture in the Jewish Community

*Rachtzah* - the act of cleansing one's hands while reciting a blessing -- requires a willingness to acknowledge what needs cleaning or updating in one's life. Rape culture impacts everyone in our society - perpetrators, victims, and all of us, of all genders. Rachtzah enables us to confront rape culture through the act of cleaning and blessing ourselves from the impurities of gender norms, toxic masculinity, catcalling, hyper-sexualization, and a culture that permits and normalizes this conduct. Whether we wash hands in solidarity with survivors of rape, or symbolically clean ourselves from own toxic experiences of rape culture, Rachtzah challenges us to take ownership of the ways in which we are not only oppressed by rape culture, **but how we perpetrate it as well.** Without placing blame, Rachtzah enables us to build and sustain an environment where we can address the messages we've internalized.

A young boy who is told to "be a man," and a young girl who is catcalled on the street both share the experience and emotional burden of rape culture. The boy is told, "**Don't cry, be a man,**" because "**Superheroes don't cry,**" and because "**you're tougher than that.**" Such messages reinforce the idea that boys should not express emotion. Instead of asking why Superheroes shouldn't cry, the child believes he isn't normal. "I shouldn't be doing this," he thinks.

A young girl who is catcalled on the street is prey to an older man. She is taught to take safety measures. If she averts her eyes, he'll leave. **It's safer not to respond.** The women in her life are indifferent. She is told "it's a rite of passage into womanhood," like the first ear-piercing and the first time she wore her mother's makeup. The young girl repeats the mantra: take up less space, turn the corner, don't make eye contact. "Men are going to be like this," she thinks. A generation of boys, pounded like kneaded dough into Superman suits, and girls spoon-fed insincere apologies for their presence are bound to lose their identity. The ritual of *Rachtzah* provides a momentary cleansing and helps us imagine what the world would look like if all of us condemned the perpetuation and monetary capitalization of rape culture.

*Repeat the consensual hand-washing ritual in Urchatz.*

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ עַל גְּטִילַת יָדַיִם

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha'olam, asher kidshanu be- mitzvotav vitzivanu al ne lat yadayim.

Blessed are You ETERNAL our God, Master of me and space, who has sanctified us with commandments and instructed us regarding lifting up our hands.

## Toxic Masculinity Diagram

Contributed by [JUF Chicago / DePaul - Research Training Internship](#)

Source: [TheMightyPucks.com](#)



## Revenge of Dinah: Motzi-Matzah

Contributed by [JUF Chicago / DePaul - Research Training Internship](#)

Source: Revenge of Dinah: A Feminist Seder on Rape Culture in the Jewish Community

When looking at matzah, what appears to be a stale cracker, an outsider would ask, “Why can’t Jews get some tastier bread?! They aren’t slaves anymore!” The nature of how we talk about, think about, and process the culture of sexual violence in and out of the Jewish community has evolved in a similar way. One might question why rape is still a topic of discussion, especially in the spotlight of a Seder. “Haven’t we as a society grown out of such a problem? Anyone can call for help easily on their phone!”

Both matzah and discussions about rape culture cannot be forgotten. For centuries, Jews have been persecuted; similarly, rape culture has persisted throughout history. Jewish rituals can help us to reclaim what belongs to us. We as modern, largely upwardly mobile people aren’t reliant on matzah the way our ancestors once were, yet we still make the choice to embrace what our people needed to survive. In this practice, we reclaim space and our autonomy. Rape culture is everywhere, whether you’re shopping and you see a high fashion advertisement that commodifies women’s bodies, or when someone texts you an unrequested “dick pic.” To an outsider, matzah is something bland and easily forgotten, yet going forth, we must embrace such topics deemed tasteless and unwanted to ensure that we don’t perpetuate them.

The familiar hamotzi blessing marks the formal start of the meal. Because we are using matzah instead of bread, we add a blessing celebrating this mitzvah.

*Distribute and eat the top and middle matzah for everyone to eat.*

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם המוציא לחם מן הארץ

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, hamotzi lechem min ha-aretz.

We praise God, Ruler of Everything, who brings bread from the land.

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם, אשר קדשנו במצוותיו וצונו על אכילת מצה

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, asher kid’shanu b’mitzvotav v’tzivanu al achilat matzah.

We praise God, Ruler of Everything, who made us holy through obligations, commanding us to eat matzah.

## Bitter Chocolate Ritual

Contributed by [JUF Chicago / DePaul - Research Training Internship](#)

Source: Revenge of Dinah: A Feminist Seder on Rape Culture in the Jewish Community

A simple piece of Matzah serves to remind us of the immense suffering of ancient slavery. Now we take into account a second item, bitter chocolate, to remind us of modern suffering. One might question how chocolate is representative of hardship, for its purpose is to satisfy one's pleasures, to be eaten in times of love and craving. Simply put, it is expected to be sweet, but when it is not, the unwanted chocolate is automatically dismissed and rejected. The expectations of chocolate is to be sweet and readily available for one's satisfaction. Victims/survivors of rape culture can be seen in a similar light. A prize to be won by the hands of a pursuer, it softens, melts, drip, drip, drip. Their dignity mutilated down the wrist, almost ink, slowly hardening to etch suffering like blood. No longer a clean-cut square, the chocolate is transformed into a desired shape, sugar stuffed in to make it what it is not. Today, we embrace chocolate in its plain form, celebrating not its bitterness, but its strength.

*Everyone at the table should eat a piece of bitter chocolate and consider quietly the ways in which they feel pressured to take shapes that aren't natural to them.*

## Revenge of Dinah: Maror & Charoset

Contributed by [JUF Chicago / DePaul - Research Training Internship](#)

Source: Revenge of Dinah: A Feminist Seder on Rape Culture in the Jewish Community

Maror are bitter herbs eaten during a seder. There is no longer a biblical command to eat maror but we still do to remember our times as slaves in Egypt, the maror can also be used to remind everyone of the bitter reality of daily experiences living in a rape culture. Maror represents the bitterness of bondage. Why do we eat charoset (the sweet mixture of apples, nuts, and wine)? It symbolizes the mortar for the bricks our ancestors laid in Egypt. Though it represents slave labor, charoset is sweet, reminding us that sometimes constriction or enslavement can be masked in familiar sweetness. Eating the two together, we take the opportunity to be mindful of the sweetness of community that supports our emotional labor in healing from a culture of sexual violence.

Eat the bitter herbs together on a piece of matzah

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם, אשר קדשנו במצוותיו וצונו על אכילת מרור

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu al achilat maror.  
We praise God, Ruler of Everything, who made us holy through obligations, commanding us to eat bitter herbs.

## Revenge of Dinah: Koreich

Contributed by [JUF Chicago / DePaul - Research Training Internship](#)

Source: Revenge of Dinah: A Feminist Seder on Rape Culture in the Jewish Community

*Make a sandwich with the matzah, maror, and charoset, and eat.*

As we make our sandwich of maror, charoset, and matzah, let us reflect upon the words of Rabbi Hillel, the namesake of the aforementioned sandwich. "That which is hateful to you, do not do to another. That is the whole Law. The rest is commentary. Now go and learn." Essentially, this is the "Golden Rule," Rabbi Hillel preached empathy. What if every single person thought about how their actions would affect others and broadened their perspectives in order to better understand those around them? Would rape culture still be an issue?

## Revenge of Dinah: Shulchan Oreich

Contributed by [JUF Chicago / DePaul - Research Training Internship](#)

Source: Revenge of Dinah: A Feminist Seder on Rape Culture in the Jewish Community

*Dip the egg in salt water and eat.*

Before we begin our meal, it is customary to eat a hard boiled egg dipped in salt water. In different religions around the world, the hard boiled egg symbolizes renewal and the potential for life. Dipping the egg in saltwater helps us appreciate the work that has been done to disrupt rape culture in our communities, while also acknowledging that there is much more to be done. Just as this Seder is a call-to-action in the future, let us take a moment to appreciate a few social justice innovators from the past and present:

**Jane Addams** - a social activist who founded the Hull House, a settlement for newly arrived immigrants. Addams also co-founded the American Civil Liberties Union, was investigated for being a radical reformer by the FBI, and was the first woman to win the Nobel Peace Prize for her pioneering work in the social justice field.

**Ella Baker** – helped found the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, which inspired young black people to become activists. Baker also played a large role in the Freedom Rides.

**Charlotte Perkins Gilman** - the author of “The Yellow Wallpaper,” a short story that criticized women’s roles in society and the stigma of mental illness. It was instrumental in changing societal attitudes towards the “rest cure” and the detrimental effects that it can have.

**Gloria Steinem** - a women’s activist, feminist, and journalist, who still continues to travel internationally as a spokes-person for equality. She co-founded the Women’s Media Center and Ms. Magazine, and uses her platform as a journalist and media figure to speak out on issues such as same-sex marriage, Black Lives Matter, and feminist theory.

**Gloria Jean Watkins** - known by her pen name “bell hooks,” she is a writer, feminist, and activist who uses her platform as an author to discuss intersectionality and how different systems of privilege lead to oppression.

**Farina Khera** - founded Muslim Advocates, an organization that advocates for Muslim Americans who face religious and racial profiling.

**Reshma Saujani** - founder of Girls Who Code, an organization whose mission is to close the gender gap between women and men in STEM fields.

**YOU** - we all have the potential to make a positive difference in this world. So, as we eat this joyous meal and reflect on the accomplishments of others, let us think about our own accomplishments: what we have achieved so far in our lives and what potential the future holds.

## Revenge of Dinah: Tzafun

Contributed by [JUF Chicago / DePaul - Research Training Internship](#)

Source: Revenge of Dinah: A Feminist Seder on Rape Culture in the Jewish Community

We now collect the hidden afikomen and each take a piece. When thinking about hidden parts of our Passover Seder, we also think of the ways in which sexism is hidden throughout society, benevolently, almost undetectably. **Benevolent sexism** is represented when a man shows polite behavior towards women (such as, walking on the side of the sidewalk closest to the street, or paying for a woman's meal) but is not aware of how his actions are dehumanizing the woman. While chivalry can be considered polite, this tradition is founded in historical representations of women as weaker than men. In these types of circumstances, people may find it difficult to distinguish between kindness, tradition, and benevolent sexism. **Men and women often disagree on whether or not a specific incident should be considered sexist, and this can result in polarization between men and women, rather than unification against sexism.** Both benevolent sexism AND hostile sexism reflect views of women as underdeveloped adults, providing justification for men to be authoritative and monitor, protect, and make decisions on women's behalf. Additionally, benevolent sexism can also hurt men because it **leads to toxic masculinity where men must be tough.** By making a man feel that he must take control and "be a man," he may not show weaknesses and let needs to let his masculinity overpower his true emotions.

*Everyone at the table should go search for the a komen! After, everyone should eat a piece of it while reflecting on the ways in which benevolent sexism affects them in their daily lives.*

After each taking a piece of the afikomen, we become aware of how we can each contribute to perpetuating unfair gender roles when it comes to sexism, even if we do not mean to play a role in this toxic culture. Eating a komen makes us aware of our actions, especially those that are "hidden," how we benevolently contribute to unfair gender roles in perpetuation of rape culture, and the consequences this has for people of all genders.

## Revenge of Dinah: Barech & Third Cup

Contributed by [JUF Chicago / DePaul - Research Training Internship](#)

Source: Revenge of Dinah: A Feminist Seder on Rape Culture in the Jewish Community

*Oseh Shalom Bim-romav Hu Yaaseh Shalom Aleinu Ve-al Kol Yisrael Ve-Imru Amen*

With the third cup of wine we remember God's promise to redeem the Israelites with an outstretched arm. With this cup we turn our thoughts to those who offered a helping hand. We raise this glass of juice to those who use their privileges, status, power, and resources to stand against our culture of permissiveness around sexual violence.

*Fill your third cup of juice, and recite the acrostic below in praise of accomplices who risk their own privileges and sometimes safety to stand against rape culture. Refill your cup immediately.*

**Blessings-** We are grateful to have blessings and prayers to turn to when even our accomplices fail us. We are always able to connect to our source, and this is an internal power that is always accessible to us.

**Acceptance-** We are grateful for those who bring safety to our lives by accepting us for the person that we are. The people who bring safety and acceptance to our lives, also help us heal when we are suffering from pain.

**Relief-** We are grateful to have existing social justice organizations in our community that provide healing, justice, and community.

**Existence-** We are grateful to have the opportunity to exist in this space so that we can learn about rape culture and use our knowledge to try and eliminate it from society.

**Consent-** We are grateful for the partners that respect our space and listen to us when we give permission to touch us, and when we don't.

**Heart-** We are thankful for the love that exists in the world and for those who are willing to use their privileges to call out and call in those who perpetuate both benevolent and hostile violence.

*Raise your glass as you recite this blessing, and then enjoy your third cup of juice.*

## Revenge of Dinah: Elijah & Miriam's Cup + Fourth Cup

Contributed by [JUF Chicago / DePaul - Research Training Internship](#)

Source: Revenge of Dinah: A Feminist Seder on Rape Culture in the Jewish Community

At this point in the Seder we fill our third cup in honor of two prophets. The first is Elijah, the prophet whose tradition holds visits every Passover Seder and will one day usher in the messianic time of peace and coexistence. In addition to Elijah, we also celebrate the prophet, Miriam, at our Seder. Like most religions, Judaism developed within a patriarchal society. Men recorded and interpreted religious law and wrote the traditional prayers. Remembering the symbol of Miriam's Well, which was the source of water for the Israelites in the desert, help us to focus our attention on the missing female voices in the Passover story and forge a Jewish religious identity consistent with feminist values.

One tradition suggests that each person is responsible for helping to bring Elijah's idyllic vision to fruition. As we focus tonight on creating a culture free from sexual violence in the media, in our relationship, and in our institutions, let us each pour some of our juice into the cup of Elijah & Miriam on our table as a pledge to each do our part in building a more just society. Elijah and Miriam, a man and woman, were both strong leaders for the Israelites. Having one cup to honor them both shows the leadership potential of both men and women and breaks the gender stereotypes that men are more powerful than women.

*We now pass around Elijah & Miriam's Cup, and each person should pour two drops of their juice into it. As we do so, everyone can sing **Eliyahu Hanavi***

אֱלִיָּהוּ הַנָּבִיא, אֱלִיָּהוּ הַתִּשְׁבִּי  
אֱלִיָּהוּ הַגִּלְעָדִי  
בְּמַהְרָה בְּיָמֵינוּ יָבוֹא אֱלֵינוּ  
עִם מָשִׁיַח בֶּן דָּוִד

Eliyahu Hanavie, Eliyahu Hatishbi,  
Elyahu Hagiladi,  
Bimherah Yavo Elenu  
Im Mashiach Ben David.

Elijah the Prophet, Elijah the Tishbite,  
Elijah the Giladite,  
May he soon come to us,  
with Mashiach the son of David.

## Revenge of Dinah: Nirtzah

Contributed by [JUF Chicago / DePaul - Research Training Internship](#)

Source: Revenge of Dinah: A Feminist Seder on Rape Culture in the Jewish Community

The fourth cup is the cup of praise and restoration. In the past few hours, we have reflected upon our actions and the actions of others. We have supported one another, and we have held space for one another. Now is the time to go back into the world, armed with new knowledge about the culture of sexual violence we all live in. We are all capable of making a difference in our lifetime, whether that means continuing on our path or starting anew. Either way, now is the time to be thankful for the chance that we all have been given to do good, and now is the time to act upon it.

*Raise your glass as you recite this blessing, and then enjoy your fourth cup of juice.*

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הַגָּפֶן

Baruch Atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, borei p'ree hagafen.

We praise God, Ruler of Everything, who creates the fruit of the vine

## CONCLUSION

### Revenge of Dinah: Conclusion

Contributed by [JUF Chicago / DePaul - Research Training Internship](#)

Source: Revenge of Dinah: A Feminist Seder on Rape Culture in the Jewish Community

“God purposely leads the Hebrews to the seashore, where pharaoh will have reason to say, “The wilderness has shut them in!”, i.e., nature itself is on the side of the powerful, and the prevailing hierarchy, where slaves remain slaves, is ordained by the gods. The point of the splitting of the Red Sea is that the elements that seem most immutable and unstoppable—the all-powerful despot, the annihilating army and the impassable ocean— are precisely the ones we should see as the most transitory and changeable. The powers we tend to think we could never defeat, which maintain the terrible status quo, are the ones we have to believe will be defeated in the name of justice and other transcendent truths. If you believe in freedom, go to the impossible place that everyone says will never change. Go straight to the ocean and walk in.”

-Ezra Furman, queer musician and activist, Chicago, 2/10/17

## Revenge of Dinah: Rape Culture Glossary

Contributed by [JUF Chicago / DePaul - Research Training Internship](#)

Source: Revenge of Dinah: A Feminist Seder on Rape Culture in the Jewish Community

**Feminism** – Feminism strives to end the discrimination, exploitation, and oppression of people due to their gender, sexual orientation, race, class, and other differences and supports people in being free to determine their own lives for themselves. It supports us in questioning what we've been taught about forcing people into traditional roles and valuing some groups less than others. Feminism identifies discrimination, exploitation, and oppression – and not men (contrary to a wildly incorrect popular belief) – as the problem.

**Feminist Research** – Feminist research methodologies are varied, but tend to have a few common aims or characteristics. These common aims include seeking to overcome biases in research, bringing about social change, displaying human diversity, and acknowledging the position of the researcher.

**Intersectionality** – A theory from sociology that argues that oppression is rarely “either/or,” that an individual’s multiple social identities combine in different ways as “interlocking systems of oppression” (e.g., racism, sexism, religious discrimination, class privilege). For example, women and men experience racism differently because of the intersection between racism and sexism.

**Male Gaze** - A term used to describe how media audiences are forced to “view” characters from the perspective of heterosexual males, and that women exist as passive objects of male desire.

**Madonna/Whore Complex** - The idea that men (and women) codify women into two camps: saintly “Madonnas” and debased “whores”. Slut-shaming and excusing men from sexually assaulting women as just “boys being boys” springs from this dichotomy.

**Oppression** – A) Prejudice + Power = Oppression. B) The subordination of a given group or social category by unjust use of force, authority, or social norms

**Patriarchy** – Institutionalized sexism; the social order that privileges men and oppresses women.

**Privilege** – Unearned advantages and beliefs that benefit some at the expense of others

**Rape Culture** - The underlying themes and commonalities in our society that normalize and perpetuate not only rape, but sexual assault and violence through: cultural norms, sexist media, victim-blaming/slut-shaming, objectification/commodification of women’s bodies and POC’s bodies, invisibilizing queer bodies, and trivialization of sexist behaviors that are infrequently condemned by various institutions and people with privilege for fear of losing power. Rape culture exists independently of rape itself.

**Sexism** – Prejudice, stereotyping, or discrimination, typically against women, on the basis of sex

**Slut-Shaming** - Stigmatizing someone for engaging in behavior judged to be promiscuous or sexually provocative.

**Toxic Masculinity** - cultural perspective which emphasizes the ideology and importance of men maintaining a dominant, aggressive, unemotional and sexually aggressive attitude, both collectively and as individuals.

**Victimization/Victim-Blaming** – Victim blaming is a devaluing act that occurs when the victim(s) /survivor(s) of an injustice are held responsible for the crimes that have been committed against them. This blame can appear in the form of negative social responses from legal, medical, and mental health professionals, as well as from the media and immediate family members and other acquaintances.



## Acknowledgements & About Us

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Source: Revenge of Dinah: A Feminist Seder on Rape Culture in the Jewish Community



We would like to acknowledge a few people, as well as our funders, who played a huge role in supporting us RTI interns this year. Without them, none of our work would be possible. First, we would like to thank the DePaul Faculty, Dr. Beth Catlett, Dr. Sonya Crabtree-Nelson, Dr. Amira Proweller, and Alex Conovay. Thank you to Stephanie Goldfarb and Rebecca Johnson for sharing their expertise and wisdom with us. They have guided us throughout this entire process, and shown us how powerful we can be as researchers, as feminists, and as Jewish women! Finally, we would like to thank the Jewish United Fund and DePaul University for hosting RTI, and to our funders (who's logos are below) for generously supporting the creation and implementation of the Research Training Internship. Without their funding and support, our research project would have been impossible to see through at the caliber we reached for, and we are incredibly grateful.

Please direct any questions and feedback to Stephanie Goldfarb, Director of Youth Philanthropy & Leadership at the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago ([stephanigoldfarb@juf.org](mailto:stephanigoldfarb@juf.org)) or Dr. Beth Catlett, Director of the Beck Research Initiative for Women, Gender, & Community at DePaul University ([bcatlett@depaul.edu](mailto:bcatlett@depaul.edu)).

*The statements made and views expressed herein are solely those of the (author) or Research Training Internship.*

### RTI Interns' Positionalities

As feminist writers, researchers, and ritual-makers, we acknowledge the responsibility we each have to our community members in our representations of them in this haggadah. As such, we have taken our own positions (regarding race, class, gender, culture, education, and other intersections) in relation to the research topic of rape culture in the Jewish community. Since "bias" is a naturally occurring human characteristic, framing our positionalities reflects our own placement within the many contexts, layers, power structures, identities, and subjectivities of experiences as Jewish teenagers living in a rape culture.

**Izzy Arbetter:** I am 18 and a senior at Highland Park High School. Being Jewish, white, and cis-gender is the norm in my community. I observe many of my peers from similar experiences grappling with how they can use their privileges to work for social justice. Much of the time, groups of boys at my school and in Jewish community will talk about girls in a way that disrespects us, and it's usually about our bodies. Comments will be made about our appearance and how "slutty" we are. Additionally, as I am about to

begin my first year in college in the fall, I will be exposed to the rape culture that Greek life brings to college campuses. After participating in RTI, I now realize how much rape culture has indirectly affected me from a social standpoint and will play a role in my life throughout college. As I continue my social justice and political education, I hope to share my knowledge of rape culture with people from similar backgrounds as me to help bring awareness about the consequences of perpetuating rape culture as people of privilege.

**Shira Baron:** I am 17 and a senior at Lane Tech College Prep in Chicago. I've been raised in an upper middle class, Jewish family and have privilege in the various travel abroad opportunities I've had. While I hold privilege as a white, cis female, the diversity of socio-economic, racial, and ethnic backgrounds in my community has offered me a stronger understanding of the justice spectrum. Rape culture has woven itself into my life through the relationships I have with my extended family. From a young age at family Seders or various other high holidays, the men and women in my extended family normalized "small talk" on a woman's appearance. This instilled the idea that a woman's worth corresponded with her physical features. This not only dehumanizes the woman but sends implicit messages that her nose, hair, and shape is more memorable and valuable of an asset than her character. I hope that my stance and experience with rape culture can shift the culture of female objectification that exists in a broader sense in the Jewish community.

**Jordana Bornstein:** I am 17, and a junior at Deerfield High School in Deerfield, IL. I identify as a white, cis, straight female, and come from an affluent background. I spend a lot of time in communities of privilege, especially my school, the extra-curriculars I am involved in, and the summer travel opportunities I have partaken in. Rape culture affects me personally by manifesting in stereotypes and expectations my community holds for me, the dialect and culture of my school, and the gender roles present in my community. I find that women and girls in my community are expected to be smart, obedient, conventionally beautiful, and confident. Yet, I find that these stereotypes and expectations feed into the objectification of women's bodies, victim-blaming, and other aspects of rape culture.

**Alana Chandler:** I am a Junior at Walter Payton High School in Chicago. I've grown up in two vastly different cultures. One is my life in Chicago. I was raised in an upper-middle class neighborhood for my whole life and attended a majority white, privileged Jewish middle school. The other culture I was raised in is Japanese. Spending summers in Japan, I was accustomed to the modest, rural lifestyle of my grandparents, living a walk away from rice paddies. Although I have experienced racial prejudice, I consider myself privileged due to the place I live, the food on my table, and the education I have received. Although I embrace my dual identity, both illustrate examples of rape culture. Growing up with Japanese culture, I have realized that it can be extremely misogynistic. Most women do not work and sexualized images of women for the purpose of male enjoyment are publicly displayed in bookstores and train stations. At my Jewish school, I was one of the only girls in my advanced math class. I question whether it was really math ability or cultural standards which caused the large number of males in my class.

**Becca Gadiel:** I am a junior at Jones College Prep. I was raised in a Jewish, upper middle class family. While I personally hold a lot of privilege, I have been exposed to many different types of people from a very young age which has helped me think through the ways in which I move through the world. As my friends and I use the CTA as our primary mode of transportation, many of us get cat-called and harassed pretty regularly. These experiences definitely sparked my interest in rape culture, and have made me more passionate about rape culture awareness and prevention. The more knowledge I have gained about rape culture, the more I have realized how we are all implicated by it, and I hope that this haggadah can be useful to my community members.

**Madison Hahamy:** I am a sophomore at the Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy in Aurora,

Illinois. This is my first year at this school and, coming from an area, predominantly white and Jewish area, being exposed to different communities has also exposed me to different, demeaning beliefs that I had not encountered before. I know what it feels like to be seen primarily as a “girl”, rather than a hard-working, accomplished student. However, I have also been exposed to empowering communities such as Girls in2 STEM, which prides itself on cultivating a future where the STEM gap is finally closed. Going to a school in which my accomplishments are constantly questioned has taught me to stand tall, instead of bow down. I hope that, through sharing my knowledge of rape culture, we can help create a society that stands tall.

**Alyssa Kendall:** I’m a sophomore at South Elgin High School and I was born and raised in the suburbs of Chicago. I live in an upper-middle class neighborhood and I’ve been fortunate enough to experience rich diversity at my school. I have a Christian father and a Jewish mother yet I have been raised 100% Jewish. My interest and passion in ending rape culture was first fueled when I was harassed on street by an older man when I was barely in my double digits.

**Meghan Kier:** I am a Junior at Schaumburg High School in the suburbs of Chicago. I come from middle class family. I attend a diverse high school. Because I live in the suburbs I do not get to take a train or walk to school, so I avoid a lot of street harassment. But I still see hints of sexism and rape culture in my everyday experience. I have seen girls get yelled at many times about wearing leggings or shorts to school. I personally had to change my outfit in 7th grade because my shorts were not at my knees. After seeing the Brock Turner case this summer it sparked my interest in rape culture and white privilege. Although this case was highly public, many other cases aren’t, and because of that, I’m moved me to use my privilege to support those who are silenced.

**Isabel Kucher:** I am fifteen, and a Freshman at Northside College Prep. I am white and cisgender, and I come from a middle class family. Up until I entered high school, I had been exposed to relatively little racial and cultural diversity, because I live in an Orthodox Jewish neighborhood and I had gone to a Jewish middle school. This gave me a good amount of power and privilege within my community, but not nearly as much as a man would have had, because from a very young age, there tends to be a rigid dichotomy between the opportunities offered to Orthodox girls and boys. In my experience, the aim of Orthodoxy is (speaking very generally) for the boys to become Torah scholars, and the girls mothers. While this is not exactly rape easily identifiable as “rape culture”, I think these socially-constructed gender roles contribute to cultures of permissiveness around sex/gender violence. I want to raise awareness around rape culture and promote the prevention of social attitudes that belittle and undermine women.

**Chloe Wagner:** I am a Junior at Francis. W Parker High School. I am relatively new to Chicago, having moved from the predominantly white suburbs of Detroit about two years ago. I am white, straight, cis-gender and come from an upper middle class family. Attending a private school in a wealthy area and living in a “good” neighborhood means that I spend a lot of my time around different kinds of privilege. Many of the communities that I am a part of are predominantly Jewish, white and straight. While living in Michigan, I was subjected to dress codes at both my middle and high school that were overwhelmingly focused on the girl students rather than the boys. My current school does not enforce a dress code, yet there are still expectations put on the female students to dress “appropriately” for the classroom. I also take public transportation to and from school, so catcalling is a frequent occurrence. Both of these things, as well as my strong passion for feminism, have sparked my interest in rape culture in hopes of dismantling the sexist structures that plague our society.

