

Revenge of Dinah: Rape Culture Glossary

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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.

