

SEARCH

We are an independent information portal to strengthen sexual assault prevention efforts on college campuses. Together we can build a . . .

Culture of Respect

80%
of sexual assaults
are committed
by acquaintances.

Help for **you**

Help for **A FRIEND**

Help for **A PARENT**

Help for **COLLEGES
+ UNIVERSITIES**



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The Organization:

About Us/Our Team
Our Surveys + Analysis
Our Supporters
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The Issue:

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Presidential Task Force
Terms + Definitions

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Books + Articles
Experts in the Field
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Useful Apps

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Dear Friends and Colleagues,

This Sunday, March 8th, is International Women's Day, a time to reflect upon the work that women around the world have done to gain social acceptance in their communities and beyond. In light of this event, we would like to consider the myriad identities, some overt and others hidden, that influence how women move through the world and advocate for themselves. At a colloquium at Amherst College in 1980, Audre Lorde said, "refusing to recognize difference makes it impossible to see the different problems and pitfalls facing us as women." This statement remains pertinent 35 years later. Gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, race, class, disability, religion/spirituality, size and other aspects of one's identity are intimately connected to one's experience with womanhood, although often it is only the privileged voices that get heard.

Many marginalized groups not only experience higher rates of sexual violence but also face more difficulty when coming forward to report or share their experiences. In considering the issue of sexual violence, it is important to recognize the ways in which oppressive systems such as homophobia and racism contribute to the problem. Preventative measures and programs can only be effective when they recognize the needs of varying groups and strive to build accessible resources and response strategies for all members of their community.

Members of marginalized groups often experience high rates of sexual violence. [Recent studies indicate](#) that 13.2% of bisexual men and 11.6% of gay men were raped in adulthood, compared to 1.6% of heterosexual men; and nearly 50% of bisexual women have been raped, compared to 13% of lesbians and 17% of heterosexual women. Additionally, [nearly two-thirds of multiracial women](#) in the US experience sexual violence other than rape in their lifetime.

At Culture of Respect, we believe that all people have the basic right to feel safe and respected at their academic institutions, and we recognize that this path and the obstacles that must be surmounted are different for each and every person. Building a Culture of Respect requires the acknowledgement of intersecting identities and the inclusion of programs and resources to address the concerns and needs of historically marginalized groups. We strive to build accessible resources and blueprints for change to ensure that all students can thrive in a Culture of Respect.

Wishing you a happy International Women's Day,

Jocie Fifield
Allison Tombros Korman, Executive Director

Jocie Fifield is our guest writer this month. Jocie is a clinic assistant at Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts and a Culture of Respect researcher.

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[CULTURE OF RESPECT](#) is an independent, nonprofit organization that provides colleges and universities with a framework to assess and eliminate sexual assault from campuses. Culture of Respect is a 501c3 nonprofit organization. All donations are tax deductible.