



In 2017, #MeToo went viral as millions of people shared their personal stories of sexual harassment and assault via social media.

According to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), sexual harassment is a form of discrimination that includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct that affects an individual’s employment, unreasonably interferes with work performance, or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

According to the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN), sexual assault refers to sexual contact or behavior that occurs without explicit consent of the victim and includes attempted rape, fondling or unwanted sexual touching, forcing a victim to perform sexual acts, or penetration of the victim’s body.

RAINN estimates that 1 American is sexually assaulted every 98 seconds, and EEOC surveys show that at least 25% of women report having experienced sexual harassment in the workplace. However, women are not the only victims of sexual harassment and assault.

CONSIDER THIS

Consider the following questions. Challenge yourself to think of answers from multiple perspectives, & to understand what might bias your response. Discuss these topics with someone else in your class.

Why do victims of sexual assault or harassment keep silent, rather than telling family members, friends, or authorities?

Why might they be unwilling to press charges?

Why might the #MeToo movement prompt people who have been silent to tell their

Many people believe that sex in a relationship can never be considered assault or abuse. Where might they have learned this idea? When does sex in a relationship become abusive?

How does society “blame the victim”?



“For any woman especially, with the kind of rape culture and things that are going on, I know like on campuses, even just in life, I know women are scared. They don’t want to come forward. Or if they do, they’re afraid to do it alone. But I would tell them, ‘Do it anyway.’ It’s gonna hurt. It’s gonna be the scariest however many years of your life, and the person may very well get away with it. It’s like one of those things where you have to build a case, you have to show, and if you say this happened, and they sadly get away with it, they’re gonna probably do it again. And that’s something that’s gonna follow them. And that’s gonna be something that can be used against them eventually ... I mean, it’s even to the point, I thought about advertising and putting it out there - If there’s any woman that needs someone to go with them to court, to fight it, if they’re scared, it’s like, ‘I’m here.’ I know what that’s like, to go through it alone. But I don’t want someone to think that’s the reason they can’t come forward and say something. Cause it has to stop.” — KC

CALL TO ACTION

“I’ve never talked to anyone, male or female who was molested as a child who wasn’t affected by it one way or another. One girl I know has the best attitude I’ve ever seen. She said ‘yeah it happened but it’s not part of me.’ And she learned about bullying from it, because that kind of abuse is not- it’s physically sexual but it isn’t sexual from the standpoint of what the person wants to do. It’s violent and it’s punishing and it is a form of bullying and she’s pretty much put it behind her and she recognizes that all the good things in her life have happened because of that, because she was working to overcome what damage was done, and had a lot of good things come out of it. And I think we all have to look at it that way.” — Alice