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## Supreme Harm to Women

The nomination of Kavanaugh to the supreme court and its impact on women.

In Sociology it is important to remember to question authority. Right now we have to question the authority of the supreme court, one member in particular, Brett Kavanaugh. The nomination of Brett Kavanaugh to the supreme court is harmful to women, since he has been accused sexual assault; therefore it is, insulting, and inappropriate to have him on the supreme court. Kavanaugh continuously demonstrates that he is inappropriate for the role of a supreme court justice.

Who is Kavanaugh? According to the Washington Post he is the current Supreme Court justice replacing Anthony Kennedy. His nomination has caused major controversy because he has been accused of sexual assault by Dr.Christine Ford. According to the Washington Post, “Christine Blasey Ford alleges that sometime in 1982, at a friend’s house, Kavanaugh pinned her on a bed, drunkenly groped her, tried to take off her clothes and put his hand over her mouth when she tried to scream.”(Barnes 2018)

Another alleged assault was “Deborah Ramirez, a classmate of Kavanaugh’s at Yale, Ramirez, said he exposed himself at a party when they were both first-year students.”(Barnes 2018) According to the New York Times” September 23 that during the 1983-84 school year at Yale University, he exposed himself to her during a drinking game in a dorm suite. A small group of students sat in a circle and selected people who had to take a drink, she recalled, saying she was chosen frequently, and as a result became drunk. Suddenly, Ms. Ramirez said, she saw a penis in front of her face. One man told her to “kiss it, As she moved to push it away, she said, she saw Judge Kavanaugh standing, laughing and pulling up his pants. Raised a Catholic, Ms. Ramirez was “embarrassed, ashamed, and humiliated,” she confessed. (Hauser 2018)

Julie Swetnick was another victim, according to the New York Times “ Ms. Swetnick said she observed Judge Kavanaugh at parties where women were verbally abused,

inappropriately touched and “gang raped.” Swetnick also added, “ she witnessed Judge Kavanaugh participating in some of the misconduct, including lining up outside a bedroom where “numerous boys” were “waiting for their ‘turn’ with a girl inside the room.” Ms. Swetnick said she was raped at one of the parties, and she believed she had been drugged.”(Hauser 2018 ).

As we look at each of these allegations we must think about women. The numerous allegations of sexual assault are important to think about. The supreme court is the highest court in the country. The supreme court “Highest court in the national judiciary, with the authority to lay down the terms of its appellate jurisdiction. The offices of the Court are in Washington, D.C. The Supreme Court was established by Article III “ The supreme court is The Supreme Court has consisted since 1869 of nine members--eight associate justices and the chief justice, all appointed by the president with the consent of the Senate. Members of the Court are appointed for life terms and can be removed only by resignation or impeachment” (Infobase). Understanding these facts we must recognise the importance of the supreme court. The United States has chosen to nominate a man accused of sexual assault to the highest court in the nation.

How are women supposed to accept that a member of the supreme court, who can alter the political policy in the United States, is someone who has been accused of sexually assaulting several women. It is blatant disrespect and disregard to women and women's rights. It is also a metaphorical slap in the face to sexual assault survivors who struggle to cope daily, it is painful to all the women in the world who have to watch their daughters grow up in a society where rape culture is common and the government is not in check.

As I comprehend that this is harmful to women I must take in to account that there is a different side of the story and people who believe he is innocent. While some are outraged there are some who question his innocence. A common argument is that he was not proven guilty,

however there has not been enough time to do a thorough investigation as the allegations came to light the nomination was rushed and the allegations of sexual assault were not taken as seriously as they should have been. If the supreme court is desperate for another republican nominee they could have selected another republican nominee or chosen someone who would be better fit for the role. It is the idea of respect to sexual assault survivors and women who unfortunately find themselves victims of sexual assault and sexual harassment.

The following is an excerpt from Ted Cruz in response to the allegations of Brett Kavanaugh: “The American people were horrified by what they saw last week. Some in the media have characterized that women should necessarily oppose Judge Kavanaugh’s confirmation because they are women. I don’t think that is right because women, like men, want the Constitution followed faithfully, want the Bill of Rights protected, and want our fundamental liberties upheld. Women, like men, want a system of rule of law and a presumption of innocence that is fair. We want a fair system. We want a just system. We want a system that recognizes the rule of law. There are many countries that are ruled by mob, ruled by accusation, and ruled by insinuation. But we need a process. In this case, we have gone through a process that was designed to be fair. And given the evidence, the right decision, I believe, is the decision this body will make tomorrow to confirm Judge Kavanaugh as Justice Kavanaugh, the newest associate justice on the U.S. Supreme Court”(Ebscohost 2018). The argument is that under the law all people are innocent until proven guilty and that it is important to follow the law proces. I agree with that statement, but in this particular case I think it is unacceptable to nominate someone who is accused of major scandalous accusations against women to the highest court in the United States. At the very least there should have been more of an investigation and the nomination process should have been slowed to make sure there was a thorough and detailed investigation.

We must also look into other factors such as representation and public opinion in the country. The United States represents the values of equality opportunity and freedom. How can we represent these values when we can't even show respect to women?

Let us take a moment to relate this to sociology, "The answer lies in the privilege such institutions instill in their members, a privilege that suggests the rules that govern American society are for the common man, not the exceptional one"(Khan 2018). When we look at the concept of privilege in our country, we must factor in class privilege and wealth. Kavanaugh is someone who graduated from an elite college, who is wealthy and a white male. In our society we must understand that although he is a person he carries with him a lot of privileges that give him an advantage over people in this country.

In another relation to sociology we see that ,” Thus, at a young age, boys are taught that the way to be appropriately masculine is to dominate other men and all women — and young women are taught to be quiet when men try to dominate them. In this article we also see that Jokes, laughter and dismissal allow men to acknowledge how common rape and sexual assault are in our society without taking responsibility for it. This joking between men is a form of what sociologists CJ Pascoe and Jocelyn Hollander call “symbolic” sexual violence. Jokes, lewd discussions and laughter about rape and assault, as well as dismissal and blame of survivors of sexual violence, are hallmarks of rape culture” ( Diefendorf, 2018). This idea is that from a sociological perspective we have to take in to account about factors of socialization and how men and women are brought up differently.

In the next perspective I see the Anita Hill case “Twenty-seven years after Anita Hill testified in front of the Senate Judiciary Committee that Clarence Thomas sexually harassed her, and as Christine Blasey Ford prepares to testify that Brett Kavanaugh sexually assaulted her

when they were teenagers, we still have not learned our mistakes from that mess in 1991”(Crenshaw 2018). We see that there is a pattern of women accusing men who are in power of sexual assault and nothing being done about it.

Lastly, I would like to relate this case to the Conflict Theory of Sociology according to New World Encyclopedia, “Conflict theory states that society or an organization functions so that each individual participant and its groups struggle to maximize their benefits, which inevitably contributes to social change such as political changes and revolutions”(Conflict Theory). Women have always been a minority and a group of people that have struggled. Women are struggling to meet their needs in this society and will cause political change. In the feminist movement, we look at the idea of “respect our existence or expect our resistance.” Meaning that if women are being overlooked and disrespected then expect social change.

In conclusion, The nomination of Kavanaugh to the Supreme Court is harmful to women, since he has been accused of sexual assault. This is harmful to women in the way it overlooks them. It ignores women's rights and ignores sexual assault survivors while it continues to support rape culture in the United States. Sexual assault is something that is not acceptable and should never be accepted. In the end, when it comes to women, we must remember “Respect our existence or expect our resistance.” Thank You!

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