Changing Societal Attitudes about Gender Violence

Sharmili Majmudar, Rape Victim Advocates
The single story creates stereotypes, and the problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but that they are incomplete. **They make one story become the only story.**

The consequence of the single story is this: **It robs people of dignity.** It makes our recognition of our equal humanity difficult. It emphasizes how we are different rather than how we are similar.

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
The Archetype of the Real Rape Victim

A woman stabbed, beaten, and raped during a home invasion and robbery

OR

A woman who answers an ad to trade for sex for money and is raped at gunpoint
The College Story

Freshman girl drunk, assaulted by someone at a frat party

Half to three-quarters of students at each of the 27 institutions surveyed reported experiencing some form of sexual harassment, which can include acts ranging from rape through forced penetration to stalking. (AAU)
Stories Untold

Overall, three in four LGBT students reported experiencing sexual harassment.

Non-students, still “college-aged,” experienced sexual assault at a higher rate than students, at a 1.2 times greater rate.

48% percent of surveyed middle and high school students said they were sexually harassed ("unwelcome sexual behavior that takes place in person or electronically") at least once - American Association of University Women (AAUW)
Consequences of the Single Story

- Negative reactions to rape victims, such as blaming or disbelieving, harm their recovery.

- Jurors’ judgements in rape trials are influenced more by the attitudes, beliefs and biases about rape which jurors bring with them into the courtroom than by the objective facts presented.

- What would our policies and attitudes look like if we centered the multiplicity of experiences of survivors?
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