

# victim blaming

**1 IN 8 AUSTRALIANS** believes if a woman is sexually assaulted while affected by alcohol or drugs, she is partly responsible.



# THIS IS AN EXAMPLE OF **victim blaming**

the idea that a woman is responsible for her own safety

**But, she was drinking ...**

**Why didn't she fight back?**

**What did she expect going out dressed like that? She was asking for it**

**She shouldn't have gone home with him**

**She shouldn't have put herself in that risky situation - she should have known better**

**She shouldn't be walking after dark**





**victim blaming**  
**FORMS PART OF**  
**RAPE**  
**CULTURE**



The environment where **SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IS NORMALISED AND EXCUSED** in the media and pop culture.



**WITHIN RAPE CULTURE**, women who disclose experiences of sexual violence are often:

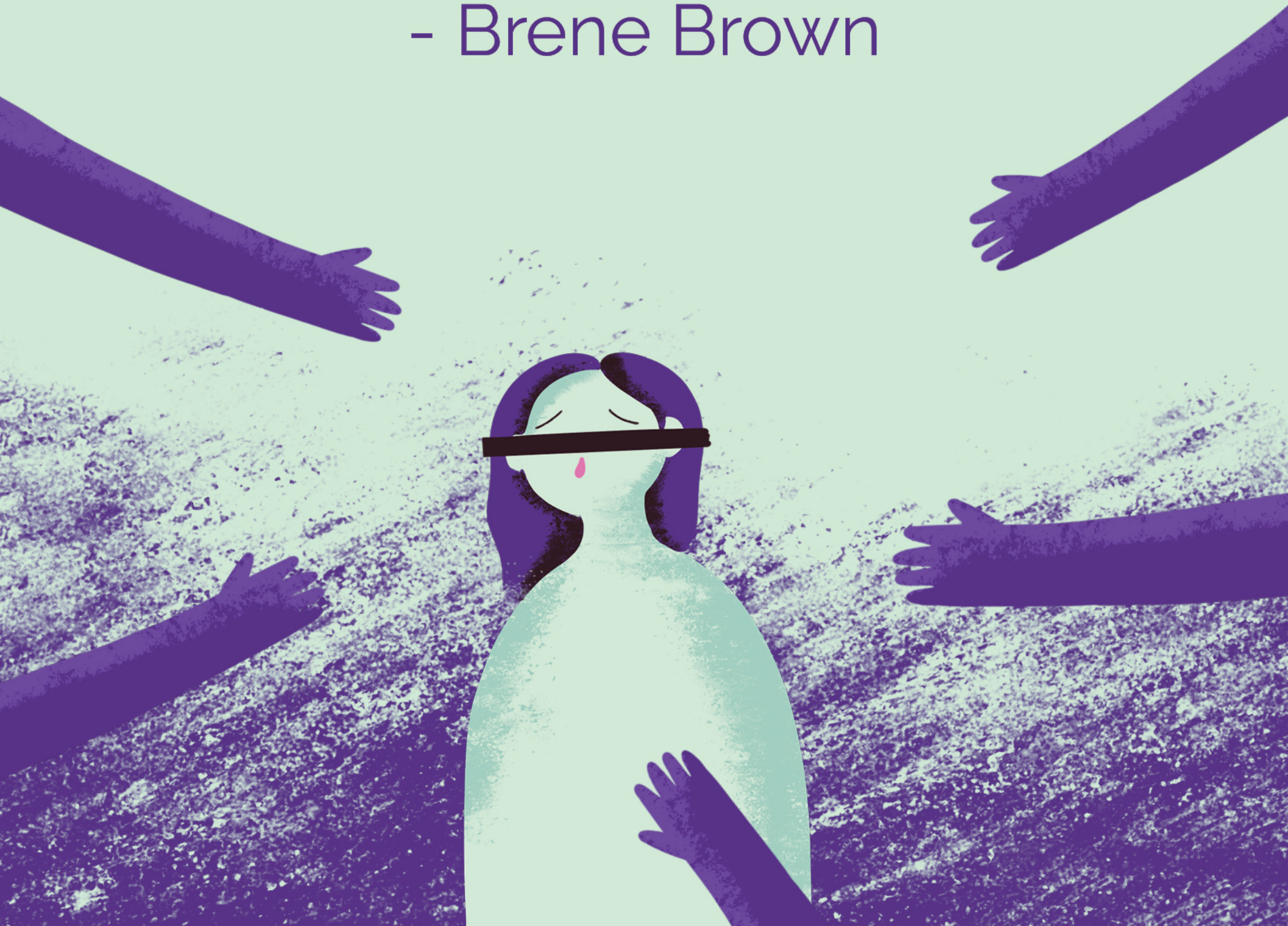
- Scrutinized meticulously: their dress, behaviour, history, “morals”
- Expected to meet all kinds of “model victim” criteria
- Not believed

**RAPE CULTURE CREATES BARRIERS** to reporting and negative responses to disclosure reinforce the women's experience of **SHAME**





**“Shame needs three things to grow exponentially in our lives: secrecy, silence and judgement”**  
- Brene Brown





# SHAME & SELF-BLAME

OFTEN FOLLOW FOR WOMEN  
WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED  
SEXUAL VIOLENCE.



SHAME MESSAGES FOLLOWING SEXUAL  
VIOLENCE CAN SOUND LIKE THIS:

I was so stupid to trust him

This doesn't happen to good people

This is what I deserve

It's all my fault



# shame

is a normal emotion but **it is problematic in large doses** as it can make us **believe that we are inherently bad**. Shame can make us want to hide under a veil of secrecy.







Sharing stories help provide a face to suffering and remind survivors that they are not alone.

As a society, we have a collective responsibility to create safe spaces that help build a culture of acceptance rather than a culture of shame.

**“Shame derives its power from being unspeakable”**

- Brene Brown





Backing our sisters & building a culture of acceptance starts with **BELIEVING**

**RAPE CULTURE** inflates ideas of false disclosure, leading to women not being believed.

It is important for sexual violence survivors **TO BE SEEN, HEARD, BELIEVED** and to understand it was **NOT** their fault.

If we believe women, we break the silence.

**“The antidote to shame is disclosure.”**

- Brene Brown



Strengthening our sisterhood with

# SOLIDARITY

Supporting our sisters begins with listening, believing and the gift of holding space.

How can I help you to feel safe?

This should not have happened to you

You did nothing to deserve this

You are not alone.  
I am here with you

