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*by* B J

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**Fantastic Lies: Season 3 Episode 6**

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### **Fantastic Lies: Season 3 Episode 6**

The episode has focused on reviewing the events that happened in the Duke Lacrosse case as well as the aftermath. Therefore, the episode has used critical new footage and interviews to provide the truth on the allegations presented, media coverage and legal proceedings concerning the issue. Therefore, although the case revolves around the three male Duke players comprising Collin Finnerty, David Evans and Reade Seligman as the defendant and a black dancer and stripper woman who was the accuser, the case made all the players, school faculty and the society feel it. Nevertheless, the episode portrays that the three accused Duke players were victims of media criticism and prosecutorial wrongdoing. The paper will focus on how episode is associated with intersectionality concerning maleness, manhood, toxic masculinity and rape culture.

The players in Duke Lacrosse were all men and therefore, the episode indicates how they presented their maleness. Gender plays a critical role in society, however, the concept continues to change based on the social variations in society. Females have been empowered more through being given the opportunity of trust more than males. As seen in episode, the three male players were victims of the media because the woman alleged that she was raped. Based on the episode, “Magnum had severe mental health problems and when she arrived in the player's party, she did not have interest in performing because she had already taken alcohol and other prescription drugs” (Fantastic Lies). Therefore, through allegation of being raped, she was trusted with all sources from duke faculty to the media because of the condition of the three suspects being male.

Gender exists in all facets of individuals' lives and can impact everyone without exception. Moreover, several factors enhance gender-based inequalities, such as gender-based violence, including sexual assault, making it difficult to realize without social structures and

values. At the same time, gender is defined by manhood, explained by Cornwall & Lindisfarne (2016), to comprise strength, freedom, confidence, and control. The episode indicated manhood when the players stood to defend themselves with courage regardless of the immense challenges surrounding their case. The episode indicates how the 88 Duke professors signed an advertisement in Duke's student magazine with the front page "What Does a Social Disaster Look Like" (Fantastic Lies). Also, it is confidence and strength that allowed the players to stay strong regardless of the allegations because the journalist was jumping to conclusions concerning the whole information.

The 88 Duke professors and the District Attorney and prosecutor Mike Nifong indicated signs of toxic masculinity. Masculinity is being honest with oneself concerning their feelings, wants and desires. Therefore, through healthy masculinity, one can handle others with respect they require. Nevertheless, Duke professors did not consider understanding if the allegations were correct. Also, Nifong was consumed by political aspirations that focused on the imprisonment of innocent players. This is presented by the episode "Nifong did not want to hear the truth presented Infront of him and went further to involve in dishonesty, deceit, fraud and misrepresentation of the DNA results" (Fantastic Lies).

In summation, the episode indicates magnificent information concerning the duke players' case and its aftermath. Similarly, the story revolves around how the media wrongly presumed guilt and falsely crucified the players. The concepts of maleness and manhood are presented with players in their game and respect women during entertainment. They stood with the truth. However, toxic masculinity is presented by Mike Nifong concerning the withholding of the DNA lab test that found no player was guilty because of his political aspirations.

### **References**

Cornwall, A., & Lindisfarne, N. (2016). Introduction: Dislocating masculinity. In *Dislocating Masculinity* (pp. 17-26). Routledge.

Fantastic Lies: An ESPN 30-for-30 documentary Season 3 Episode 6.

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