Unwanted but Consensual Sexual Contact

by Reagan Leibovitz, Abigail Devine, and Kylie Hazen Title IX for a New Generation December 7, 2020

Our Question

How does unwanted but consensual sexual contact complicate traditional conceptualizations of consent?



The Multiple Definitions of Consent

Dictionary

"Noun. permission, approval, or agreement; compliance; acquiescence"

Legal

"A voluntary agreement to another's propostition or to voluntarily agree to an act or proposal of another, which may range from contracts to sexual relations"

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"'Consent' means words or overt actions indicating a freely given agreement to the sexual act or sexual contact in question."

What do these existing definitions of consent NOT cover? Why does unwanted but consensual contact continue to occur?



Gender Norms

The Breakdown

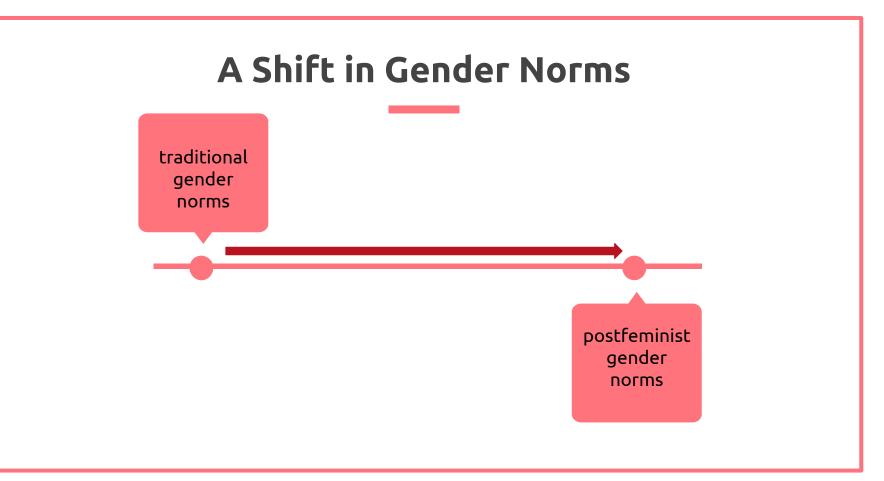


Power Dynamics



Contextual Influences





What Does This Look Like?

Avoidance of the victim title

It feels easier to say Yes than No.

Takeaways From Student Interviews

"Why did you give consent when you didn't want to?"



Interviews: female college-aged students

Power Dynamics

Power Dynamics



Intersectional

The interplay of multiple identities, when taken together, can contribute to unwanted but consensual sexual contact

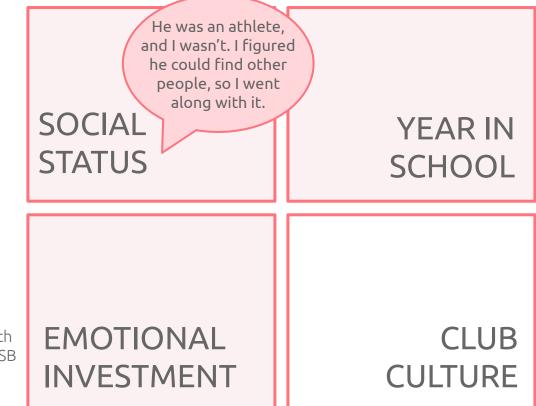


Socially Fluid

A given identity or set of identities may have a different impact on a situation as the context changes

Interview & Survey Findings

Interview: Carol Day, director of Health Education Services; female junior in MSB **Survey**: online questionnaire with 5 female student respondents





Factors of Focus

Social/Sexual Scripts

URGIS SEXUAL SCRIPT PROJECT (2008)

Men's Sexual Scripts

- Have a physical approach to sex
- Are always ready for sex
- o Initiate sex
- Should be knowledgeable about sex/skilled sexually
- Men who appear/act sexually are tolerated

Women's Sexual Scripts

- Have an emotional/relational approach to sex
- Refuse sex/are gatekeepers
- Women who appear/act sexually are judged
- o Have equal sex drive
- o Should be sexually skilled

Verbal/Non-verbal Cues

- Gender/Credibility Gap
 - using verbal/non-verbal cues



Non-verbal

- facial expressions
- body movement-postures
- eye contact
- tone of voice

Verbal

- yes/no
- im sure/im not sure
- i know/ i don't know
- i want to do this right now/ I don't know how to feel about this

Where To Go From Here?



Contact Us

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns... feel free to contact the creators! <u>kah348@georgetown.edu</u> <u>rel76@georgetown.edu</u> <u>ad1563@georgetown.edu</u>

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