“Not just a simple yes or no”: How College Students Define and Communicate Sexual Consent

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The promotion of affirmative consent is a key aspect of sexual violence prevention programming on American college campuses. However, research on college students and sexual consent is limited. The current study aims to better understand how students define, think about, and communicate consent. Undergraduate students were recruited for semi-structured interviews about their views on consent and an online survey which measured attitudes about sexual consent and sexual anxiety. Participant observation was conducted during a bystander intervention training program. Findings suggest that students accept the importance of affirmative consent but that they do not typically apply the concept to their personal sexual encounters. Data revealed that student consent beliefs and behaviors are influenced by gendered norms, interpersonal relationships, media representations of consent, and discomfort surrounding sex.

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1.0 Introduction

“They make it seem like you’re like about to hook up with someone and you say, ‘Are you okay with this?’ and then you ask each other and it’s a yes or a no but there’s so much more to it … it’s not just a simple yes or no.” This is a quote from Diana, an undergraduate student whom I interviewed for this study. Here, she expresses several of the central motivations for my project. Colleges are increasingly adopting affirmative consent policies in an effort to prevent sexual violence (Napolitano, 2015). Their education programs promote this ‘yes means yes’ approach to consent communication such as asking, “Are you okay with this?” However, consent is “not just a simple yes or no.” We, students and researchers, lack a clear understanding of how consent is communicated and how it should be communicated.

This project draws on in-depth interviews and a survey to better understand how undergraduate college students define and communicate sexual consent. This project contributes to a broader understanding of sexual violence on college campuses and how to prevent it. This research was conducted over the course of the spring, summer, and fall terms of 2019 on the campus of an urban university in the Northeastern United States (hereafter referred to as the University). The specific aims of this study are to examine how students articulate their definitions of consent, how they understand and discuss consent and sexual violence, and how they report communicating and interpreting consent. My data reveal that students’ consent definitions and reported beliefs about ‘proper’ consent communication align with what students disclose they are taught in prevention education programs. However, there is a disconnect between these beliefs and norms about consent communication. During interviews, students discussed norms that are gendered and related to norms about sexual violence perpetration.

1.1 Background

Sexual assault is widely acknowledged to be a pervasive issue on college campuses in the United States. The victimization rate for college women is estimated to be between one in five and one in four (Koss, Gidycz, & Wisniewski, 1987; Muehlenhard, Peterson, Humphreys, & Jozkowski, 2017). A 2019 AAU Campus Climate Survey (CCS) of this university found that over 26 percent of undergraduate women and over 6 percent of undergraduate men reported nonconsensual sexual contact since arriving on campus (Cantor et al., 2019). This includes multiple forms of sexual assault, including acquaintance rape and interpartner violence (IPV).

For undergraduate women, CCS results show a statistically significant increase between 2015 and 2019 of reports of nonconsensual sexual contact due to force or inability to consent. The rate increased from 21.0 percent in 2015 to 26.9 percent in 2019. There was no statistically significant difference between 2015 and 2019 for undergraduate men. It is important to note that an increased rate of reported assault does not necessarily indicate that sexual violence is occurring at an increased rate. Students of color and non-heterosexual students reported higher rates of victimization than their white and heterosexual peers. In 2019, 7.7 percent of undergraduate women and 1.4 percent of undergraduate men reported being the victim of penetration by physical force compared to 5.6 percent of undergraduate women and 1.3 percent of men who reported nonconsensual penetration due to the inability to consent (being asleep, unconscious, or incapacitated due to drugs or alcohol). In reports of nonconsensual sexual touching outside of penetration, 15.5 percent of undergraduate women and 3.3 percent of undergraduate men reported the use of physical force. Five point seven percent of undergraduate women and 1.6 percent of undergraduate men reported sexual touching due to an inability to

Table 1: Campus Climate Survey Results

	Women	Men
2015:		
Nonconsensual sexual contact	21.0%	6.2%
2019:		
Nonconsensual sexual contact	26.9%	6.6%
Penetration:		
Use of force	7.7%	1.4%
Inability to consent	5.6%	1.3%
Other forms of touching:		
Use of force	15.5%	3.3%
Inability to consent	5.7%	1.6%

*Data from Cantor et al. 2019

consent (Cantor et al., 2019). To address this issue, the University requires that incoming students complete sexual assault prevention education consisting of two elements: an online training module that students complete before coming to campus and in-person presentations held during orientation week.

American colleges and universities are required to implement some form of sexual assault prevention programming in order to receive federal funds. However, universities rarely asses the efficacy of implemented programs (K. N. Jozkowski, 2015). Furthermore, there is no agreement on how success should be measured. Many programs have shown success in modifying behaviors and beliefs surrounding sexual assault, but, as Jozkowski (2013) states, there has not been a significant decrease in the frequency of assault over the past five decades. She suggests that this is partially because these programs are often short, rarely lasting longer than two hours. Borges (2008) wrote that rape prevention programs on college campuses tend to focus on risk reduction and self-defense when they should instead center on education to promote healthy relationships.

Bystander intervention training is a prevention method being increasingly adopted by universities, including my field site. Coker et al. explain that "the objective of bystander intervention is to involve both men and women to change the context or environment that may tacitly support violence against women" (2011, 779). Based on the concept of social diffusion, programs are often aimed at student leaders who can model active bystander behaviors for their peers. Evidence shows that bystander intervention programs have been effective at changing students' attitudes and behaviors regarding sexual violence (Banyard, Moynihan, & Plante, 2007; Coker et al., 2011). However, Hirsch and Kahn (2020) observed some issues with the bystander intervention method, including that it may support the heteronormative belief that women need men to protect them.

Previous research indicates that ongoing, discussion-based prevention programs may be more effective in changing students' understandings of sexual violence than one-off presentations like what is offered by the University (K. N. Jozkowski, 2015). Prevention programming must also extend beyond education. Hirsch et al (2018) published a thorough list of recommendations on how to promote consensual sex on campus, including alcohol policies and space planning in addition to education.

In previous studies, college students have reported using a variety of signals to communicate their consent, from verbally saying 'I want to have sex with you' to simply smiling at their partner (Hickman & Muehlenhard, 1999; K. N. Jozkowski, Peterson, Sanders, Dennis, & Reece, 2014). In one study, students reported communicating consent by not resisting their partners' actions (Hickman & Muehlenhard, 1999). Jozkowski's (2014) study on gender differences in the communication and interpretation of consent found that men often report asking for consent or stating their intentions while women report responding as to whether or not they

agree to the activity. Most participants reported giving verbal cues of consent or nonconsent but reported relying on nonverbal cues from their partner. This may mean that they think they clearly communicate consent verbally but in actual sexual situations, they send nonverbal cues or their verbal indications are unclear, meaning that their partners must also interpret nonverbal cues (K. N. Jozkowski et al., 2014). Hickman and Muelenhard's study also found that students frequently rely on indirect signals, meaning that they must examine all cues to determine whether their partner has actually consented.

In a study on how college students communicate and interpret sexual consent, Jozkowski and Peterson (2013) found that many students implied support of traditional sexual scripts. These included beliefs that it is the man's responsibility to "chase" the woman and her responsibility to offer consent only after being asked (K. N. Jozkowski & Peterson, 2013). Hirsch et al. (2018) reported that these gendered scripts lead to "the cultural illegibility of [men's] nonconsensual experiences" (30). By this, they mean that men may be less likely than women to identify an experience as nonconsensual due to norms about men "typically wanting sex" and being responsible for obtaining consent from women. Previous research also indicates that gendered norms about sexual violence may influence how survey questions are worded and lead to the underestimation of male sexual victimization (Forsman, 2017; Luetke, Giroux, Herbenick, Ludema, & Rosenberg, 2020). For example, questions may be phrased in a way that excludes experiences in which victims were forced to penetrate someone else.

Hirsch et al. (2018) conducted extensive ethnographic research about consent on the campuses of Barnard College and Columbia University. They identified three levels of influence on consent practices:

> We find that researchers must be more attentive (1) to students' intersectionally situated experiences (individual level); (2) to peer groups and the spatiotemporal contexts of interactions (interpersonal level); and (3) to drinking culture, sexual scripts, and gendered fears about consent (cultural level) (2).

Their analysis of the "spatiotemporal contexts" of consent revealed that time of day and the physical environment influenced students' understandings of consent. Their recommendations include "spatial prevention approaches" such as providing spaces on campus for students to socialize late at night as alternatives to going back to someone's dorm room. Armstrong et al. (2006) also argued that the structure of university housing is a contributing factor to sexual violence. They identified university housing and alcohol policies as "explicitly gender-neutral" policies that "can exacerbate gendered risks of [sexual assault] by increasing the appeal of fraternities as spaces to access alcohol" (2).

Alcohol-facilitated sexual assault represents a significant portion of sexual violence committed on college campuses (Abbey, 2011; Mellins et al., 2017). It is widely accepted that incapacitation due to alcohol makes one unable to consent to sex. Research has shown that intoxication of perpetrators may also contribute to instances of sexual assault (Abbey, 2011). Bystander intervention is often proposed as a way to prevent alcohol-facilitate sexual assault, particularly in the context of a party. However, students who are intoxicated may be less likely to detect a potential sexual assault and intervene to prevent it (Ham et al., 2019; Leone, Haikalis, Parrott, & DiLillo, 2018).

Fraternities are regularly identified as key facilitators and perpetrators of sexual violence on college campuses (Armstrong et al., 2006; Martin, 2016; Murnen & Kohlman, 2007; Sanday, 2007). Sanday's (2007) *Fraternity Gang Rape* centers around what she refers to as "the XYZ

Express," a horrifying incident in which a young woman was raped by five or six men at a fraternity party. Her book examines, in detail, how fraternities and universities as institutions cultivate a rape culture in which women are sexually victimized. Other research has shown that the connections between fraternities, hyper-masculinity, and sexual violence are important and widespread (Armstrong et al., 2006; Martin, 2016; Murnen & Kohlman, 2007).

As mentioned above, researchers interested in preventing campus sexual assault are increasingly focusing on consent practices among students (Borges et al., 2008; Collins Fantasia, Fontenot, Sutherland, & Lee-St John, 2015; Hirsch & Khan, 2020; Kristen N. Jozkowski, Marcantonio, & Hunt, 2017; K. N. Jozkowski & Peterson, 2013). Educators and researchers who want to change student consent beliefs and behaviors must first understand exactly what those beliefs and behaviors are.

Theoretically, this project was informed by literature on positionality and intersectionality in qualitative research. As an undergraduate student, I am in a unique position to gather data from my peers that they may not be as willing to share with the professional or graduate researchers I have cited (Beste, 2018; Cheney, 2011). Additionally, my position as a young, cis-gender, white woman further influences how interlocutors speak to me and how I understand the data I collect (Collins, 1986; Crenshaw, 2019; Hale & Calhoun, 2008).

Drawing on this theoretical literature and previous research on sexual violence, this project aims to answer the following questions: How do students define sexual consent? How do they communicate consent? How do they understand and discuss consent and sexual violence?

1.2 Methods

The majority of the data comes from eleven semi-structured interviews that I conducted with undergraduate students, participant observation at training events, and an anonymous on-line survey. Research was conducted at the University between January and November of 2019. Participants were all full-time undergraduate students between the ages of 18 and 24. This study was conducted with approval from the Institutional Review Board (STUDY1812006).

1.2.1 How do university programs address sexual violence?: Participant Observation

In interviews, students discussed the sexual health education programming they had completed since arriving on campus. In order to gain a better understanding of campus prevention education, I conducted participant observation at a bystander intervention training program. The program consisted of two three-hour sessions over the course of a weekend. Field notes were written and analyzed in Nvivo.

1.2.2 How do students define and report communicating consent?: Interviews

In the semi-structured interviews, I aimed to answer three questions: What do students know and believe about sexual violence on college campuses? How do students define sexual consent? How do students and their peers communicate consent? Seven of the interview respondents were women and four were men. All eleven respondents self-identified as white. Respondents were recruited by contacting student organizations, using snowball sampling, and through a recruitment message at the end of the online survey. Interviews were conducted in group

study rooms on campus. Each interview ranged from forty minutes to an hour and covered topics such as general campus culture, sexual violence on campus, how students define consent, and how they communicate it. During the interviews, I also spoke with students about their experiences with sexual health education before and after arriving at University. I audio-recorded and later transcribed each interview, then analyzed transcripts using Nvivo. The codebook consisted of both *a priori* codes such as gender and education and *in vivo* codes that were developed during data analysis. Respondents' names have been changed to protect their identity.

1.2.3 What influences students' consent beliefs and behaviors?: Online Survey

Data were also collected from an anonymous online survey which was distributed by student organizations on campus and instructors of introductory courses in several different departments. The survey included two scales that were designed and tested by previous researchers. These are Humphreys and Brousseau's (2010) Sexual Consent Scale – Revised and Fallis et al.'s Sexual Anxiety Scale (SAS) (2011). Permission to use the Sexual Consent Scale was granted by Humphreys via personal communication (2018). The survey began with several questions about students' sexual health education, followed by the 40-item Sexual Consent Scale – Revised (SCS-R), and finally 11 questions selected from the Sexual Anxiety Scale (SAS). In the original research, Humphreys and Brousseau (2010) identified six subscales: Positive Attitude Towards Establishing Consent, Lack of Perceived Behavioral Control, Relationship Length Norms, (Pro) Assuming Consent, Indirect Consent Behaviors, and Awareness of Consent. I conducted a factor analysis with varimax rotation to see if my data confirmed these subscales (see Table A1). Factor analysis revealed subscales that were roughly equivalent to those published by

Humphreys and Brousseau (2010). I followed the recommended scoring method. Subscale scores were calculated by finding the mean of each student's responses to items within the subscale.

During preliminary work for a class in research methods, I noted that shame and discomfort surrounding sex may influence how students communicate consent. Fallis et al. (2011) developed the SAS to measure erotophobia, or the tendency to negatively respond to sexual cues. The original scale consisted of 56 items. Respondents were asked to rate their discomfort on a scale from zero to 100 (extremely pleasurable to extremely discomforting). I was interested in collecting data on erotophobia but did not want to make my survey too long for students to complete in under twenty minutes. I selected 11 items from the SAS and asked respondents to rate each on a Likert scale from one to ten. I chose items that reflected themes that were uncovered during the pilot study, including discomfort talking to partners or friends about sex, and that were most relevant to my research questions. These selected SAS items showed internal consistency, with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.743. SAS scores were determined by summing item scores, as described in the original research (Fallis et al., 2011). In their research, factor analysis revealed three subscales: Solitary and Impersonal Sexual Expression (factor a), Exposure to Information (factor b), and Sexual Communication (factor c). Factor analysis with varimax rotation was conducted with the 11 SAS items included in my survey. Table A2 (in appendix) displays the rotated component matrix. This revealed factors that were roughly equivalent to those identified in the original research. Subscale scores were found by summing responses to each item. As I included only one item from factor b, Exposure to Information, this item was not treated like a subscale. Two items included in my survey were not associated with any of the three subscales in the original research (Fallis et al., 2011).

One hundred ninety-seven students completed the survey. Of these 197, 57 (28.9%) identified as male, 138 (70.1%) identified as female, one identified as nonbinary, and one selected "Other" and wrote in, "Trans man." Due to the small response rate of students who identified as nonbinary or a trans man, these responses were excluded from analyses of gender variation. Fifty-seven (28.9%) of survey respondents were freshmen, 68 (34.5%) were sophomores, 41 (20.8%) were juniors, and 31 (15.7%) were seniors (see Tables 2 and 3).

Data were analyzed using SPSS. Hypotheses about relationships within the data were based on previous research. Additional hypotheses were developed after analyzing interview data. These hypotheses were tested using t-tests for independence, analysis of variance (ANOVA), and linear regression.

Table 2: Survey Respondent Demographics

Year in school:

	Frequency	Percent
Freshman	57	28.9
Sophomore	68	34.5
Junior	41	20.8
Senior	31	15.7
Total	197	100.0

Gender:

	Frequency	Percent
Male	57	28.9
Female	138	70.1
Non-binary	1	0.5
Other	1	0.5
Total	197	100.0

Table 3: Survey Respondent Demographics (cont.)

		Year in school:				
		Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior	Total
Gender: - Selected Choice	Male	21	19	11	6	57
	Female	36	49	29	24	138
	Non-binary	0	0	1	0	1
	Other	0	0	0	1	1
Total		57	68	41	31	197

2.0 Prevention Programming at The University

In this chapter, I discuss the existing sexual violence prevention programming at the University. To gain an understanding of the programs offered to the students I interviewed and surveyed, I examined university publications about prevention education and conducted participant observation at a weekend-long training session that I will refer to as BIT (Bystander Intervention Training).

All incoming students to the University are required to complete an online course about sexual violence (University of Pittsburgh SHARE, 2019). Upon arrival on campus, they must also attend two one-to-two hour long programs that discuss sexual violence, consent, and bystander intervention (Division of Student Affairs, 2019). In interviews, students explained that these events are held in large venues such as the basketball arena and auditoriums. The University also offers optional peer education programs, including BIT, which I attended.

BIT took place over a weekend in February of 2019. I was one of nine students in attendance. As we introduced ourselves, most participants reported that they signed up for training due to personal interest in sexual violence prevention or because they were required to as a representative of an organization on campus. This reflects discussions of recruitment and program participation from literature that evaluates bystander intervention programs (Coker, et al. 2011). Many participants shared stories of times that they have practiced active bystander behaviors and expressed that they were interested in learning how to intervene more effectively.

Each three-hour session consisted largely of a slide presentation led by two undergraduate peer educators. These presentations included information about sexual violence on campus and how to detect and intervene in cases of sexual harassment or potential sexual assault. The peer

educators regularly paused their presentation and asked us questions or gave us time for small-group discussion. These discussions were often short, as group members rarely voiced disagreement with each other or the content of the presentations. This is likely due to the fact that many of us elected to be there out of an interest in sexual violence prevention.

The two main methods of intervention that we discussed were humor and distraction. These strategies focus more on diffusing a situation or removing a potential victim rather than confronting a perpetrator. BIT presenters emphasized the importance of considering your own safety before intervening. In general, they recommended that in cases of potential or completed sexual assault, we intervene by following up with the victim rather than the perpetrator. This recommendation points to an issue with the emphasis on bystander intervention as a key preventative measure: students may choose not to intervene to prevent sexual assault out of concern for their personal safety.

The vast majority of students at this university do not participate in BIT. Interview respondents reported that intervention is mentioned during orientation week programs but not to the extent that it is discussed during the training I attended. In addition to concern for their personal safety, students may hesitate to intervene due to a lack of confidence in what effective intervention looks like.

The data I collected do not allow me to evaluate the efficacy of BIT in altering participants' bystander behaviors, however attending these sessions provided insight on the values and priorities of the University's prevention efforts. Requiring certain students or student organizations to participate in BIT follows previous literature on the social diffusion of active bystander behaviors. Many students on campus do not complete BIT or the other peer education programs but they may be influenced by peers who model active bystander behaviors. However, as students express in the

following chapter, more mandatory, discussion-based programs may be necessary to effectively educate students on the nuances surrounding sexual violence and consent.

3.0 What Students Said About Consent

Eleven hour-long semi-structured interviews were conducted to answer the questions: What do students know and believe about sexual violence on college campuses? How do students define sexual consent? How do students report that they and their peers communicate consent? The topics discussed during each interview varied as a result of a diversity of experiences and apparent discomfort discussing sex between respondents. For example, Nick hesitated to discuss specific sexual partners or experiences and said, "I think that sex is something that's hard to talk about… even in this interview, it's a little bit awkward." On the other hand, when I asked Sarah if she would be comfortable describing a specific sexual experience, she laughingly responded, "I mean yeah, sure! It's all for academia right?" Even with this variation in openness of respondents, interviews revealed several themes that help answer the questions listed above.

3.1 "I'm sure it's happening"

Each student that I interviewed identified sexual violence on college campuses as an important issue. Henry, a fourth-year nursing student, said, "I know that there's a lot of sexual violence on college campuses." Beatrice, a junior, reported, "I think a majority of people I know have some sort of experience that falls along the spectrum of like inappropriate behavior to sexual assault to rape." Even students who were not aware of any specific cases at the University reported that it was still an issue. Hannah told me that she had not heard of anything happening at this

university. I asked if she thought that meant that it was not happening here and she responded, "Oh I'm sure it's happening, I just haven't heard anything about it."

Interview respondents expressed shared beliefs about who the perpetrators and victims of sexual assault are. These were gendered, with women as victims and men as perpetrators.

At one point in her interview, Hannah used the term "vice versa rape" to refer to rape perpetuated by women against men. She and several other interview respondents expressed that men can be sexually assaulted but that women are victimized at a higher rate. In reference to sexual assault on college campuses, Beatrice said, "It's not just women but it's definitely overwhelmingly women" and Nina agreed that "it happens more frequently to women." Gendered norms position women as the victims of sexual violence and men as the perpetrators.

Many of the women I interviewed discussed feeling fearful of sexual violence. Nina reported that women were more aware of sexual violence on campus because "it's just a fear that women have." I asked about this and she said, "It's in the back of your head. It's a conditioned fear, I think." Caroline referenced this fear of victimization while discussing gender differences in consent communication: "If I wanted to get away and you didn't want me to, maybe I wouldn't get away, you know? And that's a scary thought." Isabelle explained that "if you and [a partner] are on different pages, that can cause tension and confrontation that can be just unpleasant or it can be scary." The men I interviewed never mentioned feeling fearful of sexual violence.

3.2 "Frats are the main perpetrators"

In interviews, both men and women repeatedly identified a connection between Greek Life and sexual assault on campus. Henry said, "I think generally the people in fraternities are more

likely to be the ones committing sexually violent acts." Caroline suggested that sexual violence may not occur as frequently on this campus as others because fraternities here are less "scary, male driven" organizations. Max also compared the University to others that he believes have more severe sexual violence issues due to an increased presence of Greek Life and high populations of "dudes, spelled D-O-O-D."[1] I asked him if he was referencing a hypermasculine campus culture and he confirmed that he was. Beatrice, Nina, and Diana are all sorority members. Out of the three of them, only Beatrice identified fraternities as frequent perpetrators. She observed, "It's interesting because frats are the main perpetrators but I'm not sure that sororities are the main victims." Nina said that Greek Life is "over-stigmatized" and reported never feeling pressure related to drugs, alcohol, or sex due to her involvement in a sorority. More research is necessary to understand exactly how sorority women are impacted by sexual violence.

3.3 "Telling them things they already know"

When asked how they felt about university sexual violence education programs, students responded that the information presented and the topics discussed are important to address but that they and many of their peers felt the university was "telling them things they already know," as Max, a sophomore in the school of engineering, phrased it. He told me that the orientation week programming seemed unnecessary to him and his peers because they already knew that nonconsensual sex is wrong: "They would just tell us over and over like, don't do this stuff, and we were like, why would we?" This response was not shared by all of the students I spoke to.

[1] See Kiesling 2004 for a discussion of the use of "dude"

Sarah, a senior, went to Catholic school from kindergarten until she graduated high school and had "no sexual education whatsoever." While she acknowledged that her peers may have had more formal sexual health education prior to college, Sarah pointed out that they might not have been as familiar with the topics being discussed as they let on: "Everyone was like, 'Oh yeah, that was so stupid. You teach middle schoolers this,' but I don't actually know if that's how they felt or if they were just posturing to try to pretend they were sexually experienced because no one wants to be the virgin on the floor." Fear of seeming sexually unexperienced or uninformed may prevent students from asking questions or engaging in honest dialogue about consent and sexual violence.

When asked how existing university programming could be improved, Beatrice and Sarah recommended follow-up but did not specify what this should look like. Nina agreed, saying that "the frequency at which it is addressed needs to be increased." Sarah put it bluntly: "If the university did care about it that much, I think that they would talk about it more." Diana, a senior, suggested that gathering all incoming students for a presentation "wasn't super productive because there's no way to have a discussion about it." She expressed that it is important for students to have discussions about consent in order to understand intricacy and nuance.

Several students reported that many of their peers did not understand the nuances surrounding sexual violence and consent. These nuances or "gray areas" included sociocultural contexts, the specifics of consent communication, and the realities of sexual assault perpetration on campus. Beatrice said, "I feel like people talk about it enough, especially on a college campus that's relatively liberal, that people at least know, 'Is this good? Is this bad?' I'm not sure that they think about the intricacies." Diana agreed: "I think that people know the big things like if someone doesn't want to have sex with you, you can't have sex with them … but then smaller things, people aren't really as aware and conscious of them." Interview respondents felt that their peers

understand the importance of consent but they may not know or think about how consent is communicated or factors that influence consent communication.

3.4 You have to look out for your friends

According to Isabelle, the best way to prevent assault from happening at a party is to have friends who "are aware of what's happening and aware of how intoxicated you are" and can intervene. Her statement reflects the emphasis on bystander intervention in the university's prevention education. Beatrice, Nina, and Sarah each reflected positively on this aspect of their education, saying that it was important. Caroline reported regularly using the tactic with her friends:

> My roommate and I are very clear with each other. Like if she's with somebody, I'll always look at her and be like, 'You're good? Are you okay? Do you want to be removed from this situation?' And there have been times where she and I removed each other from whatever situation that we're in if we give any indication to the other that we're not interested.

As this quote illustrates, bystander intervention was often discussed by women as a way to protect themselves and their female friends from men.

While interviews seem to indicate gendered norms about bystander intervention, one man I spoke to reported intervening in response to harassment. Henry reported an incident in which he confronted a male friend of his about harassing a woman on the street.

> He said, 'Hey!' and the girl didn't turn around. So, he said, 'Hey!' louder and then we kept walking and I turned to him and I said, 'You know that's a cat-call, right? You're catcalling

that girl.' And he said, 'No, I'm not. I know her.' And I said, 'Do you know her name?' And he said, 'No.'

Henry reported not being sure if his friend "got it" but asserted that he continues to initiate these conversations because he does not want his friends "committing sexual harassment and not knowing that they're committing sexual harassment." This is a different form of bystander intervention from what Caroline discussed. Henry challenges the masculine norms that lead to the need for Caroline and her roommate to feel the need protect each other from men.

3.5 "What girls can do to not be raped"

In addition to bystander intervention, women that I spoke to reported taking other steps at parties to protect themselves from victimization. Sarah described these tactics as "a code amongst women that you learn from other women." This code includes not accepting drinks from strangers and never leaving a drink unattended. Hannah added that she does not drink the punch or "jungle juice" that is served at parties and accepts only closed beers. She reported learning these tactics from her older sisters, her mom, and the university's education programming. Hannah told me that, in general, the orientation week programs were "centered around what girls can do to not be raped." I asked how she felt about that and she replied decisively, "I think that's so stupid because it's not our fault." The men I spoke to did not mention taking any steps to prevent themselves from being assaulted.

3.6 "It doesn't always happen at a party"

Beatrice criticized the university programming's focus on bystander intervention and staying safe at a party. She remembered that sexual violence prevention programming occurred alongside programs on alcohol safety: "it was combined with like the alcohol talk, which I didn't love because it doesn't always happen at a party, you know?" As she implies, this programming may reinforce the belief that sexual assault occurs only or primarily in a party setting. She was one of the only interview respondents to reject this belief.

Most of the students I interviewed identified a direct connection between party culture on campus and sexual violence. When asked to discuss what she knows about sexual violence on college campuses in general, Caroline replied, "I think a lot of it's mostly girls being too drunk or out of it in some way or the other." Even Beatrice identified "people who party a lot" as the most frequent victims of violence. The emphasis on sexual violence as something that occurs in a party setting may lead to a lack of awareness of intimate partner violence or acquaintance rape. Indeed, Isabelle reported that sexual assault within these contexts is "under wraps right now."

In interviews, students regularly expressed disbelief at the idea that the majority of sexual assaults are perpetrated through the use of force. Sarah said, "I can't think of anybody who would be with someone and they say, 'No don't do that,' and they just ignore it and keep going." Max asserted that the miscommunication of consent is likely at least part of the reason that sexual assault occurs:

> 'Cause that's the thing, if one hundred percent of sexual violence was just from people who were like plowing through and going ahead with stuff even when the other person says no, then like that's a lot of people who have a serious issue there.

This quote implies that perpetrators of other forms of sexual violence do not have "a serious issue" or that forced sex is more serious than other forms of assault. The students I spoke to did not view the use of physical force as a significant factor in the perpetration of sexual assault on campus. This relates to their assertion that everyone knows that rape is wrong. CCS data collected at this university indicate that these beliefs may not align with the realities of sexual assault on campus.

This is not to say that forced sex was not mentioned in interviews. Several respondents mentioned that students often make sex the goal of a night out. Peter explained one consequence of this mindset: "The object, the goal of having sex is more important than the comfortability of your partner." I asked what the implications of this were for the communication of consent and he replied:

> Maybe turning a blind eye to something like that or even if someone's mostly okay with a situation but not completely in, they'll be like, 'Yeah alright it's fine,' instead of making sure that someone else is a hundred percent online or on the same page, I'd say. Especially when alcohol is involved, cause you're really one-tracked at that point.

According to Peter, sexual assault may be the result of one partner ignoring the other's nonconsent signals. Nick reported that alcohol may also play a role in this dynamic: "It can really mess you up to the point where you're very goal-oriented or not listening or not paying attention." Peter also explained how the desire to achieve the "goal" of having sex can contribute to sexual assault through the use of force:

> I think it can be a lot to the fact that people don't care or they get frustrated and they're focused on themselves more than the other person in that interaction. That's not in their mind, it's more of 'this is what I want, I want it now, and if you're not gonna give it to me, I'm gonna get pissed.'

The discussion of sex as a goal was not exclusive to men. Hannah reported that her female friends sometimes make it a goal for a weekend to have sex or "at least make out or do something." Her discussion of her friends' sexual goals did not imply that they would get "pissed" or resort to violence if they were unsuccessful. As interview respondents pointed out, the focus on achieving this goal may prevent effective consent communication and lead to sexual assault.

3.7 How do students define sexual consent?

When asked to give their definition of consent, interview respondents provided the responses listed in the table below. While the specific wording of definitions varied across students, there were several recurring terms and concepts. Out of these 11 definitions, only three include a desire for sexual activity. Beatrice included "expressing desire" in her definition. Isabelle and Hannah said that consent involves wanting to do something. Rather than desire, most students discussed consent in terms of "willingness" or "permission." Henry, Sarah, Peter, Nick, and Diana included some variation of "being okay with" an activity in their definitions. There is an important difference in agency between wanting to do something sexually and being okay with it. "Expressing desire" is active and displays sexual agency. "Being okay with" is passive. These are both centrally important concepts to students' understandings of consent. However, for the students I spoke to, consent is primarily about the communication of willingness or desire to participate in sexual activity.

Henry, Nina, Nick, and Diana (4 out of 11 respondents) define consent as an "agreement" between partners. Some definitions, including Sarah's, Peter's, and Isabelle's, focus on getting a partner's consent while others, like Beatrice's, Caroline's, Hannah's, and Max's, focus on giving

Table 4: Student Definitions of Consent

Student	Definition of Consent
Henry	An agreement between two people that makes it clear what is going to happen and what both sides are okay with happening.
Beatrice	In a situation where people are engaging in sexual activities with one another, that you're giving active affirmative like permission or expressing desire to continue with what's occurring and that has to occur every time that behavior takes place.
Nina	A verbal or nonverbal agreement to engage in a certain activity.
Sarah	Making sure that the other person is okay with whatever is going on I feel like is the number one thing … looking out for the other person and trying to make sure that they're having a good, positive time.
Caroline	A clear indication of willingness to participate in any sexual act.
Peter	Making sure sexual or otherwise that the other person knows your full intentions and that they're okay with it … without any gray areas or whatnot.
Nick	Consent is when both parties … should verbally agree that whatever intimate act is about to follow is okay with both of them.
Diana	Agreement from anyone involved in any sort of like sexual or physical relationship or like event or activity … that what is going on is okay with both parties and that they have an understanding of what's happening and they're okay with it.
Isabelle	Sexual consent I would say is just like a verbal question like, "Do you want to have sex?"
Hannah	Consent is giving both vocal and body language type signals that you want to do something or be an active participant in the action.
Max	Consenting to something is voluntarily engaging in whatever the activity is.

one's own consent. Sarah's definition differed from others that focused on getting consent in that she defined this as an act of care, of "looking out for the other person." When examined together, these students' definitions indicate a framework for how consent functions in sexual encounters. In order to reach an "agreement," in which both partners are consenting to sexual activity, each party must give their consent and receive their partner's consent. As I demonstrate later in this chapter, the responsibility to either give or get consent is not always equitable between partners.

Respondents regularly expressed a sense of confusion when defining consent or explaining how it is communicated. Nina's immediate response when asked for a definition of consent was, "This is gonna be hard." Diana reported that "there is a lot of confusion around [consent] in general" and that "it's not a clear-cut concept." Three students attempted to address this confusion by including in their definitions that consent must be "clear" (Henry, Caroline) or "without any gray areas" (Peter). Even these students later expressed some difficulty explaining how exactly consent can be communicated clearly and without any gray areas.

Only four students included methods of consent communication in their definitions. Nick and Isabelle explicitly defined consent as verbal while Nina and Hannah included both verbal and nonverbal cues. The conversations I had with students during interviews revealed that their definitions of consent correspond to how they believe consent should be communicated but not necessarily how they and their peers communicate consent.

3.8 "In a perfect world, it would be verbal"

A disconnect between consent beliefs and consent behaviors is revealed by the way most interview respondents discussed verbal consent. In general, students told me that verbal consent is

clearer and more explicit than nonverbal consent. However, Isabelle and Nick were the only respondents who reported consistently verbally asking their partners for consent before engaging in sexual activity. Nick is a senior who splits his time between studying and playing on a club sports team. While reflecting on the variety of verbal and nonverbal cues used to communicate consent, he paused midsentence and said, "Now that I think about it, I ask a lot." I asked him to specify the questions he asked his partner and he responded:

> I have been known to ask, "Do you want to make out right now?" If I'm being honest. But, from there I think yeah, you ask: "Do you wanna go hookup? Do you wanna go up to my bedroom? Do you wanna do this? Do you wanna do that?" And then certainly once you start becoming a bit more intimate, it's, "Are you okay with–" I mean, I'm probably not asking if you're okay with me touching your butt but I'm certainly asking, "Are you okay if I take your pants off?" or, "Are you okay if I do this sex thing?" Like at that point, I personally feel like, I should be making sure that we're still all good.

There is an important distinction between asking, "Do you wanna?" and, "Are you okay with." The former asks about a person's desire while the latter asks about their willingness. As I discuss above, each question assigns a different level of agency to the person being asked.

Nick attributed his consent practices to the education he received from his family. He remembers his parents sitting him down and telling him that "You have to ask if you want to get more intimate and you have to make sure that at every point, she's comfortable." For Nick, asking is a way to get consent from a partner as well as a way to communicate his own consent.

Isabelle, a junior, expressed that verbal consent was important to her even if it is not the only way to properly communicate consent: "I don't necessarily think that that's the correct thing but for me and like people that I choose to have sexual interactions with, I want there to be verbal

consent." She attributed her consent beliefs and practices to the "weird-ish" non-traditional high school that she attended. She reported having open conversations about consent in health class. I asked what verbal consent looks like for her and she told me:

> I always am the person that asks. Like guys- especially guys do not ask if I want to have sex, like ever. I've never had a guy ask me if I want to have sex. So it's always me asking and I usually ask when other things may have happened but the act of sexual penetration has not yet occurred. So, transitioning from being naked and other forms of touching.

This dynamic is different from the way that she communicates consent when having sex with women. She reported that, with women, "there's been times where [I'm] like- 'Can I kiss you?' Things like that are more likely to happen and there's much more discussion of, 'Is this okay?'" I asked her why she thinks consent is communicated differently depending on the gender of her partner and she replied:

> [Men] kind of do the same thing- like, "Do you want to kiss me? Do you want to go somewhere?" and they just like sharply transition into kissing you and then like things will happen in different orders but generally, there's a way things progress that is like- like even with people I've never hooked up with before I can see where it's going and my interactions with girls that have been like much more limited, I'm like, "Ahhh I don't know what's gonna happen! I could just kiss you and that's what happens. We could be naked next to each other and then like-" and that's partially because of inexperience and partially I just think that women's sex is more nuanced.

In her experience, heterosexual encounters tend to follow traditional sexual scripts more than same-sex ones do. Her observation is supported by Nick's earlier quote, in which he reports asking similar questions ("Do you wanna make out? … Do you wanna go to my bedroom?"). Isabelle

was the only interview respondent who discussed same-sex sexual encounters with partners, so it is unclear if her experiences are shared by other women who have sex with women. However, her interview suggests that sexual encounters between two women may be influenced by fewer sexual scripts and involve more open consent discussions. Future research is necessary to fully understand how consent is communicated in same-sex relationships.

Both Isabelle and Nick expressed doubt that their peers are regularly asking for consent. When asked why she thinks this is the case, Isabelle replied that they may view verbal consent as awkward. She, on the other hand, laughingly told me:

> I feel no awkwardness about it and I think sometimes it's fun 'cause just like, "Hey… do you want to have sex with me?" and it's like, can be a cool thing to say out loud and like it's a different thing but I've had many people say, "You're the first person that's ever asked me out loud."

Nick has had similar experiences which have informed his belief that verbal consent is rare among his peers. When I asked him why he thinks that, he responded, "'Cause I get made fun of for asking people to make out with me… by everybody that finds out that's the line I used." He also explained that "people don't ask as explicitly for fear of looking like they don't know what they're doing in a sexual situation"

If students think that their peers are not asking for consent, they may be unlikely to ask for their partners' consent, even if they believe that verbal consent is important. Diana exemplifies this point by saying, "In a perfect world, it would be a verbal, 'Is this okay? Are you comfortable?' but that's kind of a weird thing to do in the middle of hooking up with someone." Other respondents echoed this sentiment, saying that verbal consent might "ruin the moment." Neither the awkwardness of asking nor beliefs about peer consent norms have dissuaded some students,

like Isabelle and Nick, from regularly asking for consent. Nevertheless, their responses illustrate potential reasons that other students hesitate to verbally ask for consent.

This is not to say that Isabelle and Nick are the only students communicating consent verbally. Seven out of nine of the other students I spoke to reported sometimes using verbal cues. Peter, a senior, explained: “Just coming out and asking someone, ‘Hey are you okay with this?’ is sometimes, I’ve found, the most straightforward way of doing it. Just, you know, clears up any doubt.” Other respondents also discussed asking for consent as a way to “clear up doubt” when it is difficult to understand a partner’s body language. Sarah explains, “If you notice some kind of hesitancy, be like, ‘Hey, are you alright?’ or, you know, ‘Is that okay?’” In these examples, nonverbal cues are the preferred method of consent communication but students recognize the potential for doubt or confusion regarding a partner’s body language. In Peter’s words, verbal consent “helps when you can’t understand body language or it’s troubling to understand body language.” Interviews revealed that it is often difficult or “troubling” to read a partner’s nonverbal cues.

3.9 “You kiss them and they kiss you back”

In interviews, students seemed to have trouble describing exactly what nonverbal consent looks like. The most specific nonverbal cues that were referenced were nodding (Beatrice, Nina) and removing clothing (Sarah, Isabelle). Respondents tended to discuss nonverbal consent in terms of initiation and reciprocation. When asked how she knows her partner is consenting, Caroline, a senior, explained: “Usually my indication of if they’re consenting is if they’re initiating things… I always take that as consent, if they’re initiating and pushing for certain things.” In turn, she

communicates her consent through "participation" or "not just laying there." Sarah elaborated on this definition of participation: "Just you know, receptiveness. You know, when you touch the person and they're not frozen. You know, they touch you back or you kiss them and they kiss you back." These definitions imply two roles in consent communication: the initiator and the reciprocator. Like the dichotomy between "giving" and "getting" consent, these roles each come with a different level of agency. Initiators act while reciprocators react; initiation is an expression of desire while reciprocation is an expression of willingness. While most respondents reported assuming each role at some point in their sexual history, there were gendered patterns and expectations that were frequently referenced.

3.10 "Men are allowed to be more sexually aggressive"

Isabelle discussed the initiation-participation dynamic in regards to nonverbal consent cues used for "other forms of touching" that occur prior to intercourse with men. Her description was distinctly gendered with men as the initiators:

> [With] guys, it's usually like, they're doing things to me and it's rare that I ever, and this is probably bad, but it's rare that I ever feel like I'm the person pursuing the sexual interaction. Where it's like, this guy is doing these things and I can either say, 'Stop' or I can give some physical and or verbal clue that like I'm okay with this and it can continue.

Sarah echoed Isabelle's perception of sex as something done to women by men: "Men are allowed to be more sexually aggressive because we see them as like- sex is a thing that a man does to a woman." For her, initiation is tied to sexual aggression, which she identifies as a traditionally

masculine trait. Beyond this, these responses indicate a gendered difference in sexual agency. Viewing sex as unidirectional defines men as active sexual subjects and women as passive objects.

Nina, a senior, also discussed the connection between initiation, aggression, and gender. She told me that she has had negative experiences with men who were "too aggressive," "big into alpha male tendencies," and "men who push your head down or like just move too quickly into things." Initially, Nina said that these actions did not necessarily represent violations of consent but later went on to say, "I guess thinking about it, it is a form of nonconsent because you're consenting to what's going on but not the pace at which it's occurring." Later, when defining nonverbal consent, she used the phrase, "a movement to continue to initiate." I asked her to explain the difference between initiation as an acceptable form of nonconsent and something that is too aggressive. She responded:

> It has to do with like the intent and also like the forcefulness with which it's initiated. I don't think it should be like forceful or aggressive because you're kind of asking without asking if it's okay but like expressing like a force with it, it's kind of taking that out of it. I guess that would be the main difference.

The idea of initiation as "asking without asking" implies that the other partner should be able to respond positively or negatively to the initiation. When an initiation is aggressive or forceful, it does not leave space for a partner to respond. Those who initiate aggressively may be less likely to notice hesitation in their partners unless nonconsent is verbalized. Additionally, if men are socialized to believe they should be initiating sex, their actions may be perceived as aggressive by their partner without them knowing.

3.11 "You have to be vocal about not consenting"

Interview respondents' definitions of nonconsent varied. Many explained that, like consent, nonconsent can be communicated through both verbal and nonverbal cues. Three students, Caroline, Hannah, and Max, emphasized the importance of verbally expressing nonconsent. In Caroline's words, "You have to be vocal about not consenting." Hannah, a sophomore, agreed and explained her reasoning: "If you just kind of like are participating and in your head you're really uncomfortable, the other person's not a mind reader so I feel like unless it's very black and white, like you are clearly not wanting it, it's really hard to tell who was at fault." Her response raises the question: how does one communicate that they are "clearly not wanting it"? Max's response to that question was: "If someone definitely absolutely does not want something to happen, I think they would say, 'Stop.'" Here, he emphasizes nonconsent as "definitely absolutely" not wanting to do something. Elsewhere, however, he discussed the importance of asking to confirm consent if a partner is hesitant or if they "don't seem like they're into it."

Appearing hesitant or uncomfortable were frequently described as indicators that someone might not be consenting. However, students reported that the appropriate response to these nonverbal cues of nonconsent was different from that for verbal nonconsent. According to interview respondents, sexual activity does not need to stop upon noticing discomfort. Max explains, "If you're doing something with someone else and they don't seem like they're into it, you should ask." Verbal cues are used to check in and, in Peter's words, "clear up any doubt" about nonverbal signals. This checking in occurs after sexual activity has been initiated and only if discomfort has been effectively communicated and interpreted. This dynamic relies on one partner

to clearly display indicators of nonconsent and the other noticing these cues and choosing to check in.

This emphasis on explicit nonconsent has serious implications. It becomes the responsibility of the nonconsenting partner to stop activity rather than the responsibility of the other partner to obtain consent before initiating. Effectively, consent is assumed until a clear 'No' is communicated. In Beatrice's words, "people just assume that not saying anything is also consent, like not saying, 'No.'" This dynamic contradicts the "Yes means yes" model of affirmative consent that is promoted by the university and supported by students, indicating that other influences are shaping the way that students communicate consent.

3.12 Media Portrayals of Consent

I asked interview respondents where they thought students learned these consent norms since they do not reflect what is taught in prevention programming. Media was the most frequently cited influence over consent practices. In response to a question about how she and her peers developed an understanding of how consent is "normally" communicated, Diana said, "I think it's a lot of times what is portrayed in the media. Like you never see people hooking up on TV and being like, 'Are you okay with this?'" Sarah said that "media portrayals of sex" contribute to gendered norms about consent and sexual violence. She specifically discussed the influence of pornography on consent communication norms:

> A lot of very male focused porn is violent. You see men slapping women, spitting on their faces and pulling their hair but of course at no point, because it's porn, do they ask the woman, 'Oh, is it okay if I pull your hair?' No, they just do it. And I think that men see

> that and they're just like okay this is how people have sex and then they do stuff like that without asking a woman and she's like, 'Whoa!' or she doesn't say anything at all.

She said that having seen these behaviors represented in porn at a "vulnerable age" may be the reason that her peers, particularly men, do not understand the importance of consent communication.

3.13 "It's always assumed that [guys] are into it"

As mentioned above, one of the consent practices identified by interview respondents was the assumption of consent until nonconsent is communicated. In interviews, gender was the most frequently identified factor that contributes to the assumption of consent. Specifically, it is assumed that men are always consenting to sex. Nick and Hannah appeared to agree with this assumption, saying, "Generally, you can be pretty confident that the guy's going to be okay with whatever intimate thing you do next," and, "I think, at least I'm pretty sure, the entire population would probably agree with me that we view guys as like pretty much the initiators and wanting to do it regardless," respectively. Caroline recognized and rejected these assumptions: "Guys I feel like it's always assumed that they're into it, no matter what, but that's definitely not true. Like some guys are too shy or they're afraid that their masculinity is being questioned if they aren't into it." Five out of 11 interview respondents either referenced or supported the belief that men always want sex.

Interview respondents described heterosexual sex as a source of masculine power and identity. Peter explained that, as a man, when you are more sexually active, "you're more of a person or you're more respected." Here, he draws a direct connection between sexual success and

not only masculinity but also personhood. Beatrice explains how this ideology can lead to sexual violence: "Men are socialized to be in power, to get what they want, you know, having women or a body count or sleeping with x amount of people is a social thing, so it's kinda like do it with whatever means necessary. They probably don't see wrong in it." Her use of the phrase "body count" makes the resulting violence more explicit. It identifies sexual partners as victims without differentiating between consensual and nonconsensual encounters. Peter's comment shows that for men, sex is about more than just getting "what they want." It is also about power, masculinity, and personhood.

The pressures that college men feel from these dynamics are both implicit and explicit. During her interview, Sarah told a story about a member of her boyfriend's fraternity that illustrated how men reinforce and react to the pressure to be sexually successful:

> The fraternity is based on the whole like masculine ideal of drinking and fucking and all that stuff and like they knew that some of the guys were virgins and they would make fun of them for it, you know? Or they would take the guy who had never had sex at a party and be like, 'Hey, here's this girl. She'll totally have sex with anyone. You should talk to her.' And then that guy, if he ends up not having sex with that girl, then he's a total failure because not only is he a virgin but he also didn't have sex with this girl who supposedly will have sex with anyone. So, I think there's a big role in societal pressure, you know what I mean? Like, that girl she might be drunk, she might be touching him, and he's like, 'Oh fuck, this is finally my chance. Like everyone will finally leave me alone.'

In this example, the fraternity member's virginity was seen by his brothers as a problem that needed to be solved. The woman is treated as an object to be used as a means to an end. By not having sex with a girl seen as willing to have sex with anyone, he is seen as a "total failure" who

lacks masculinity and, therefore, personhood. While Sarah's example may not be as shocking as what is described in *Fraternity Gang Rape,* it further illustrates Sanday's (2007) discussion of the ways in which fraternity men sexually objectify and belittle women in the name of brotherhood.

These conceptions of masculinity have important implications for the communication of consent. In addition to the assumption that men are always consenting, Max added that, "also it's assumed that they would have no problem saying 'No' if they didn't want to 'cause, you know, it's a guy." Therefore, people having sex with men may not feel a responsibility to look for nonverbal signs of nonconsent in their partners, much less ask for verbal consent. When I asked Nick what he does to express that he is not okay with something sexually, he replied, "I've never had anyone do something to me that I wasn't okay with, so I guess I'm lucky in that regard." I encouraged him to imagine what he might do, if the situation arose. He paused for a moment and responded slowly:

> I think I- I think depending on what it was, I'd probably say like, 'Slow down,' or 'No, no, no,' or- Like I think that, again, sex can be awkward and so the last thing I want to do is make them uncomfortable with something maybe they thought was gonna be cool, so I would try to do it kinda- not necessarily subtly but certainly not be harsh with it.

The difficulty he seemed to have in describing how he would respond to an unwanted sexual advance indicates several things. On the one hand, like Nick suggested, he might just be "lucky" that he has never been in this situation. On the other hand, the lack of confidence in his response may indicate a lack of confidence in his ability to communicate his nonconsent. If refusing sex makes one less of a man, there is no space for men to nonconsent. This lack of space in addition to the social pressures of to be sexually successful may contribute to sexual violence against men as well as the lack of reporting by and recognition of male survivors.

3.14 “Whenever you’re in a relationship, it’s just kind of assumed”

After gender, the most frequently mentioned factor that leads to the assumption of consent was relationship length. If partners have a history of consensual sex, they may not feel it is important to establish consent every time they have sex. Diana told me, “I just think like if it happens so often, you just assume that the other person’s okay with it. Like we do this all the time, why would all of the sudden they not be okay with it?” Interviews revealed support for relationship length norms related to consent, specifically that the need for explicit, verbal consent decreases as the length of a relationship increases.

These norms were sometimes expressed implicitly, through statements about the specific importance of verbalizing consent with new partners. In Beatrice’s words, “If it’s a new partner every time, you have to talk every time.” Sarah said that while not always necessary, verbal consent is important, “especially if it’s someone that you’re having sex with for the first time.” Nina explained that “if it’s with like, a significant other, then the explicit “yes” doesn’t always necessarily need to be there because you just know each other’s cues to a certain extent.” Other respondents agreed that the reason verbalization becomes less important is that partners become familiar with each other’s nonverbal cues. Peter told me, “If you’re hooking up with someone, it can be a lot more of setting a baseline as to what’s okay with that person. Then if you’re dating someone, that baseline most likely already exists and you’re both presumably on the same page.” I asked him what this “baseline” consisted of and he replied that it is knowledge about “their body language, what they’re comfortable with, and stuff like that.” These respondents felt that consent was still being effectively communicated in long-term relationships even if it was not being verbalized.

Caroline had a lot to say about consent in long-term relationships. When I asked her what comes to mind when she hears the word 'consent,' one of the first things she responded was, "assumed consent, like whenever you're in a relationship, it's kind of just assumed." She explained what this means for the communication of consent in a long-term relationship using the example of a past partner:

> Yeah, just assumed consent like having almost a routine or waking up and doing something because you know that they'll be appreciative of it because of history and routines, almost. I lived with my boyfriend and it was just kind of something like, in the mornings we would always usually do something and it wasn't like he woke me up and was like, 'You good? Do you want to do this?' It was just assumed because of history and if I didn't want something to progress, I would tell him to stop, usually.

She was responsible for verbalizing nonconsent rather than him being responsible for getting consent before initiating sex. The last sentence of the above quote illustrates the consequences of this dynamic. She did not always say, 'Stop' when she did not want something to progress. I asked if this meant that she was sometimes having sex that she did not want to have and she replied:

> Yeah, there was always that question mark about like, are you doing this because you really want to or are you doing it so he'll leave you the fuck alone? And I think I've done that a few times where I'm just like, he won't fucking stop bothering me until I give in so I'm just gonna do it and it's not something that burdened me too heavily and I think that if it's more of a, 'I'm tired,' or, 'I'm not entirely in the mood' more so than, 'I'm uncomfortable and I don't want you to touch me.' Like, if it was that situation, then I would stand my ground.

Caroline's tone implied that, while not ideal, this is just the way that consent functions in long-term relationships. This response continues to place the responsibility of preventing nonconsensual sex on her rather than on her boyfriend. It was up to her to "stand [her] ground" and stop sex if she did not want it to happen. Clear, verbal nonconsent was necessary because her consent was assumed due to the nature of their relationship. When she did not verbalize nonconsent, she did not feel "burdened," implying that she does not view these encounters as nonconsensual. This supports definitions of consent that emphasize willingness rather than desire.

3.15 "A handbrake on intimacy"

Sarah also discussed questions about willingness, desire, and consent within long-term relationships. She reasoned that consent communication changes over the course of a relationship because sex changes over the course of a relationship. At the beginning, "you're both like ready for it all the time because it's this exciting new person but there's also you know, you're like navigating that minefield of like, you're still getting to know that person's likes and dislikes." Like the students quoted above, she emphasized the importance of verbal consent to establish a baseline understanding of what a partner is and is not okay with. As a relationship goes on, partners are better able to read each other's nonverbal cues:

> But then as you're together more and more, you have sex less, like you get used to each other, and [sex] becomes different. It's like the scheduled kind and that's not necessarily bad, it's just different. So if I'm just hanging out there and I can tell my boyfriend is ready to have sex and I'm like, 'Eh it could go either way,' I'll let it go that way for him 'cause it's important. Like I still don't have sex with him when I'm like a hundred percent like no.

> But I think that like at that point, it kind of almost becomes transactional. Not like transactional like you're having sex with them to get something; it's like I'm doing this as a favor for you almost.

Sarah viewed having sex when she may not actively want to as an important favor to her partner. Unlike Caroline, she did not report that her boyfriend was "bothering" her about sex. However, her use of the phrase, "I'll let it go that way for him," still positions her as a sexual gatekeeper responsible for communicating consent or nonconsent in response to her boyfriend's advances.

For Sarah, this role of gatekeeper consisted of more than verbalizing nonconsent during sex. It also involved conversations with her boyfriend outside of sexual activity:

> I remember with my boyfriend when we first started dating, a lot of times I had to kind of be like, 'That's not cool. You kind of just made a grab for me out of nowhere. You went too fast.' And he was, thankfully, receptive to that and he was like, 'Oh, okay. I'll change my behavior.'

She describes these conversations as occurring in response to her boundaries being crossed. She mentioned feeling "manhandled" and her boyfriend trying to initiate penetration too quickly. I asked if he ever established boundaries of his own and she responded:

> I don't ever really remember him coming to me to be like, 'We need to slow down.' He was always in favor of being like, 'Let's do this, this, this, and this,' and I was always like, 'Whoa, dial it back a little bit.' So I do feel like I was kind of like the handbrake on intimacy.

Expectations of sexual activity and the pace at which it occurs in a relationship may have led Sarah's boyfriend to assume he had her consent. In asking him to slow down during individual sexual encounters, Sarah felt that she was acting as a "handbrake on intimacy" in their relationship.

She views herself as a barrier to rather than an active participant in their sexual relationship. Even though her boyfriend was not openly pressuring or coercing her, Sarah had reasons to consent to sex she may not have been comfortable with. While both Caroline and Sarah reported being okay with having sex that they did not expressly desire or pursue, their stories illustrate pressures that may discourage the verbalization of nonconsent to a long-term partner.

3.16 "The other person's not a mind reader"

Placing responsibility on the nonconsenting partner to clearly communicate their nonconsent has many serious implications. As her interview was coming to a close, Caroline added, "It's not okay for people to be put in situations they aren't comfortable in but it also sucks for maybe some guys who are like, 'I thought she was into it,' like and maybe he genuinely did." Here, she acknowledges two factors that contribute to sexual violence. She first recognizes the initiator's individual responsibility to obtain consent from their partner. She then illustrates that the norm of consent communication through nonverbal initiation and participation may lead one partner to be unaware of the other's nonconsent. In cases of sexual assault, the victim may thus be blamed for not effectively communicating nonconsent. The perpetrator may in turn be defended by saying that they, in Hannah's words, are "not a mind reader."

3.17 “People do things they regret when they’re drunk”

This reluctance to assign blame in cases of nonconsensual sex is also apparent when interview respondents discussed the influence of alcohol. Max, a sophomore, argued that alcohol makes it even harder to interpret nonconsent and that the initiator is not solely responsible for nonconsensual sex:

> From like the assaultee’s side of it, if you’re drunk and you do something, you might regret it later but it’s also a little bit hard to fault the other person for that ‘cause, I mean, even aside from sexual stuff, people do things that they regret when they’re drunk but it’s still kinda their fault like, you know.

Even though he identifies the involved parties as the “assaulter” and the “assaultee,” Max does not hold the perpetrator fully responsible for sexual assault. At several points in the interview he said that victims simply “regret” having had sex or “decide that [they] didn’t want it to happen” days after the fact:

> So if you’re drunk and you do something that you later regret, I don’t really know if you can come after the other person ‘cause like if in- at that time, you were like there for it, then how do they know if they did anything wrong?

Again, he hesitates to place blame on perpetrators of violence because they may not know what they are doing is wrong. He did add that it is “definitely assault” if one partner is drunk and the other “is not drunk and like can tell that the person’s just drunk and not really thinking straight.” However, he did not clarify exactly how to evaluate a partner’s level of intoxication.

The students I spoke to agreed that someone can be too drunk to give consent but expressed that it is difficult to know where to draw the line. According to Caroline, “whoever’s initiating [sex] should be the one to be sure that the other [is] aware, conscious, and totally into it.”

Respondents identified some observable cues that someone is too drunk to consent such as slurring words, losing consciousness, and being unable to stay upright or walk without help. Sarah includes these cues in what she calls a "reasonable person standard" for determining if someone is too intoxicated to consent. Even students who identified these signs of intoxication expressed the difficulty in gauging a partner's level of drunkenness. Caroline went as far as to say, "I feel like that's almost impossible to tell … and sometimes it's even hard to gauge yourself." The "reasonable person standard" may not always be effective, particularly when both partners are drunk.

Interview respondents agreed that initiating sex with someone who is too drunk to consent is assault but hesitated to place blame in situations where both partners are drunk or where the initiator is more intoxicated than their partner. Isabelle expressed difficulty in determining if consent was given in these situations: "when [drunk] people are willing and excited and into someone, even if it's someone they don't necessarily want to have sex with or they're in a situation where they don't want to be having sex, it's hard." She reported that consent becomes so difficult to communicate when alcohol is involved that "ideally, people shouldn't be having sex when they're intoxicated" but they are unlikely to stop because "sometimes it's really fun." Henry, a senior in the nursing program, suggested that fun may not be the only reason that drunk sex is normalized on campus:

> I think that a lot of the time they think that for somebody to hook up with them, that person needs to be drunk. Which, again, we discussed, is not consensual. I think a lot of the time, for them to hook up with somebody, they need to be intoxicated which could be a sign of an underlying mental illness or just a confidence issue.

His response indicates that prevention programming that focuses on discouraging drunk sex may be ineffective. As I discuss above, universities, including my field site, tend to emphasize bystander intervention in situations where one or both partners may be too drunk to communicate consent.

3.18 "A good, positive time"

As evidenced above, the students I spoke to recognized sexual assault as an important issue on their campus. Regardless of how they reported communicating consent, they viewed effective consent communication as important because it may reduce the frequency of sexual violence. Sarah and Caroline identified an additional motivation: pleasure. After defining consent, Sarah explained that paying attention to your partner's consent cues is a way of "looking out for the other person and trying to make sure that they're having a good, positive time." Caroline reported that having open discussions about consent with her former partner allowed them to "create a better experience for both of [them] in the end."

3.19 Conclusion

In interviews, respondents reported high levels of awareness about the issue of sexual violence on campus. They supported a series of norms about sexual assault perpetration. The students I spoke to indicated that university prevention education programs did little to alter their preexisting understandings of consent. Two respondents expressed frustration with the

programming's focus on bystander intervention and other party-related prevention methods. Overall, respondents agreed that consent can be defined as the communication of willingness to participate in sexual activity but they did not agree on how it should be communicated. Two students privileged verbal consent while the other nine reported relying mostly on a series of consent norms that include the nonverbal communication of consent through initiation and reciprocation and an emphasis on verbal nonconsent. Consent norms are gendered and relate to norms about masculinity. Respondents also supported relationship length norms such as the view that explicit consent becomes less important as a relationship goes on. Overall, interviews revealed a clear disconnect between how students believe consent should be communicated and how they report communicating consent with their partners. This disconnect likely results from a combination of factors, including discomfort surrounding sex and gendered pressures.

4.0 What Influences Reported Consent Beliefs and Behaviors?

One hundred and ninety-seven students completed the anonymous online survey. Using questions about education, consent, and erotophobia, the survey was designed to gain a broader understanding of students' reported consent beliefs and behaviors and what may influence them. Survey data revealed information about the extent to which other students support the norms discussed during interviews. Statistical analysis revealed evidence that gender and year in school may influence reported consent beliefs. Evidence was also found for significant relationships between certain SCS-R subscales and SAS scores.

4.1 Survey Results

The first portion of the survey asked respondents to report on their formal sexual health education (what they were taught in school). Respondents were asked to select all of the topics that were covered in their formal educations. They were given the option to write in anything else that was discussed. The most frequently selected topics were sexually transmitted infections (n=170, 86.29%), anatomy and physiology (n=160, 81.22%), and contraception (n=133, 67.51%). Fifty-five point thirty-three percent (n=106) of respondents reported having discussed healthy relationships and 48.73 percent (n=96) reported having discussed consent. Eleven respondents (5.58%) reported not receiving formal sex education. Five respondents wrote in topics that were not listed in the survey options. Four of these responses referenced abstinence training or

abstinence only education. The other response specified that their health class devoted only two weeks to discussing sexual health.

The table below shows descriptive statistics for SCS-R subscale scores of all complete responses. On average, respondents scored highest on scale 1, Positive Attitude Towards Establishing Consent, and scale 6, Awareness of Consent. They scored lowest on scale 2, (Lack of) Perceived Behavioral Control, and scale 4, (Pro) Assuming Consent.

Table 5: SCS-R Subscale Scores

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Positive attitude towards establishing consent	197	2.11	7.00	6.0316	0.77250
(Lack of) perceived behavioral control	197	1.00	5.78	2.4642	1.11181
Relationship length norms	197	1.40	6.80	4.1797	1.29788
(Pro) assuming consent	197	1.00	4.71	2.3285	0.84610
Indirect behavioral approach	197	1.00	6.67	3.7259	1.23541
Awareness of consent	197	2.00	7.00	5.3706	1.14553

Table 6 includes statistics on how survey respondents scored on the SAS. Descriptive statistics are listed for total SAS scores as well as SAS factors a and c. Scores were calculated by summing responses to SAS items. The minimum possible score for each scale was zero. The maximum possible total SAS score was 110. Maximum possible scores for SAS factors a and c were 50 and 30, respectively. Higher scores indicate increased reported discomfort.

Table 6: SAS Scores

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
SAS Score	197	15.00	106.00	57.7259	14.25375
Solitary and Impersonal Sexual Expression	197	6.00	50.00	28.3198	8.49515
Sexual Communication	197	3.00	30.00	12.5939	5.91156
Valid N (listwise)	197				

4.1.1 Gender

Based on previous research and interview data, I hypothesized that male and female respondents would score differently on both the SCS-R and the SAS. Table 7 displays descriptive statistics of SCS-R subscale scores for male and female respondents. A t-test for equality of means was performed to test differences in male and female respondents' mean SCS-R subscale scores (See Table A3 in appendix). Male and female respondents differed significantly on three subscales.

For scale 3, Relationship Length Norms, the mean score for male respondents was 4.49 compared to female respondents' mean score of 4.06. The p-value of 0.037 suggests that there is a strong likelihood that the differences observed between male and female respondents' reported support of relationship length norms were statistically significant. Male respondents tended to support these norms more than female respondents.

Table 7: SCS-R Scores by Gender

Gender:		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Positive attitude towards establishing consent	Male	57	5.8869	0.78609	0.10412
	Female	138	6.0894	0.76662	0.06526
(Lack of) perceived behavioral control	Male	57	2.5029	0.92179	0.12209
	Female	138	2.4525	1.18973	0.10128
Relationship length norms	Male	57	4.4877	1.17109	0.15511
	Female	138	4.0609	1.33730	0.11384
(Pro) assuming consent	Male	57	2.4311	0.94510	0.12518
	Female	138	2.2816	0.80682	0.06868
Indirect behavioral approach	Male	57	3.4503	1.15812	0.15340
	Female	138	3.8466	1.25920	0.10719
Awareness of consent	Male	57	5.0263	1.17895	0.15616
	Female	138	5.4964	1.10531	0.09409

For scale 5, Indirect Behavioral Approach, the p-value of 0.042 suggests that there is moderate evidence that there is a statistically significant difference in the ways in which male and female respondents responded to this scale. Female respondents reported more support for the indirect behavioral approach than male respondents.

For scale 6, Awareness of Consent, the p-value of 0.009 suggests that there is strong evidence that male and female respondents reported different levels of awareness. Female respondents, on average, reported higher levels of awareness than male respondents.

Table 8 displays descriptive statistics of male and female respondents SAS total scores and scores on SAS factors a and c. A t-test was performed to test for significant differences between male and female respondents SAS scores (See Table A4 in appendix). The test found no significant differences between total SAS scores for male and female respondents. It did reveal a difference between male and female respondents scores on factor a, Solitary and Impersonal Sexual Expression. The p-value of 0.007 indicates strong evidence that this difference is statistically significant. This result suggests that female respondents tended to report higher levels of discomfort surrounding solitary and impersonal sexual expression than male respondents.

Table 8: SAS Scores by Gender

Gender:		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
SAS Score	Male	57	56.9649	14.72967	1.95099
	Female	138	58.0145	14.14213	1.20386
Solitary and Impersonal Sexual Expression	Male	57	25.7895	8.40862	1.11375
	Female	138	29.3623	8.39094	0.71428
Sexual Communication	Male	57	12.9123	5.17991	0.68610
	Female	138	12.4855	6.22127	0.52959

Table 9: t-Test - Gender, Talking with Friends

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Talking with my friends about my sex life	Equal variances assumed	0.766	0.383	4.846	193	0.000	1.659	0.342
	Equal variances not assumed			4.526	90.923	0.000	1.659	0.366

Table 10: Mean Comparison - Gender, Talking with Friends

Gender:		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Talking with my friends about my sex life	Male	57	6.25	2.430	0.322
	Female	138	4.59	2.060	0.175

A t-test was also run to compare male and female respondents' mean responses for items not included in factors a and c. This test revealed a difference in male and female respondents' scores for the item "Talking with my friends about my sex life." Tables 9 and 10 display t-test results and descriptive statistics for this item, respectively. The p-value of <0.001 indicates strong evidence that this is a statistically significant difference. This result suggests that male respondents reported more discomfort than female respondents discussing their sex lives with their friends.

4.1.2 Year in School

I also hypothesized that respondents from different years in school would score differently on the SCS-R and the SAS. Table 11 displays descriptive statistics of SCS-R subscale scores broken down by respondent's year in school. ANOVA was conducted for each subscale to examine relationships between year in school and reported consent beliefs and behaviors (See Table A5 in appendix). This revealed an association between year in school and subscale 6, Awareness of Consent. The p-value of 0.001 indicates that this is a strong, statistically significant relationship. Multiple comparisons using Fisher's LSD method was conducted to understand which years in school had significantly different means (See Table A6 in appendix). Results suggest that on subscale 6, juniors scored significantly higher than freshmen and sophomores and that seniors scored significantly higher than freshmen.

Table 12 shows the mean and standard deviation of total SAS scores broken down by year in school. ANOVA revealed significant relationships between year in school and total SAS scores as well as factor A, Solitary and Impersonal Sexual Expression (See table 4.5 in appendix). Analysis did not reveal evidence significant relationships between year in school and any of the items not included in a factor.

Table 11: SCS-R Subscales by Year in School

Year in school:		Positive attitude towards establishing consent	(Lack of) perceived behavioral control	Relationship length norms	(Pro) assuming consent	Indirect behavioral approach	Awareness of consent
Freshman	Mean	5.9747	2.6218	4.1368	2.3434	3.5497	5.0000
	N	57	57	57	57	57	57
	Std. Dev.	0.83307	1.20146	1.26556	0.96848	1.34922	1.03402
Sophomore	Mean	5.9788	2.5278	4.3235	2.3761	3.8799	5.2684
	N	68	68	68	68	68	68
	Std. Dev.	0.86414	1.10318	1.33384	0.86383	1.31386	1.24762
Junior	Mean	6.1978	2.1843	3.9756	2.1847	3.5854	5.8598
	N	41	41	41	41	41	41
	Std. Dev.	0.64239	1.05369	1.31164	0.62126	0.94657	0.98433
Senior	Mean	6.0323	2.4050	4.2129	2.3871	3.8978	5.6290
	N	31	31	31	31	31	31
	Std. Dev.	0.57891	1.00801	1.28056	0.84128	1.16323	1.06237
Total	Mean	6.0316	2.4642	4.1797	2.3285	3.7259	5.3706
	N	197	197	197	197	197	197
	Std. Dev.	0.77250	1.11181	1.29788	0.84610	1.23541	1.14553

Table 12: SAS Scores by Year in School

Year in school:		SAS Score	Solitary and Impersonal Sexual Expression	Sexual Communication
Freshman	Mean	60.0000	28.8246	14.1053
	N	57	57	57
	Std. Deviation	12.88826	7.38996	5.23956
Sophomore	Mean	59.4412	30.1176	12.1176
	N	68	68	68
	Std. Deviation	13.86866	8.39604	6.04839
Junior	Mean	56.1707	27.5366	11.9024
	N	41	41	41
	Std. Deviation	17.29148	9.97020	6.29605
Senior	Mean	51.8387	24.4839	11.7742
	N	31	31	31
	Std. Deviation	11.55306	7.46490	6.02611
Total	Mean	57.7259	28.3198	12.5939
	N	197	197	197
	Std. Deviation	14.25375	8.49515	5.91156

The p-value of 0.041 indicates evidence that a statistically significant relationship existed between a respondent's year in school and their SAS score. Multiple comparisons using Fisher's LSD method indicated that seniors reported significantly less discomfort than freshmen and sophomores (See Table A8 in appendix). There was no conclusive evidence that freshmen, sophomores, or juniors differed from each other in reported erotophobia.

ANOVA indicated that a relationship also existed between year in school and scores for factor a, Solitary and Impersonal Sexual Expression. The p-value of 0.018 suggests that this is a statistically significant relationship. Multiple comparisons found, again, that seniors reported significantly less discomfort for this factor than freshmen and sophomores (Table A8).

4.1.3 Erotophobia and Consent

I hypothesized that erotophobia influences consent beliefs and behaviors. Linear regression revealed a relationship between SAS scores and three of the six SCS-R subscales: (Lack of) Perceived Behavioral Control, (Pro) Assuming Consent, and Awareness of Consent. Regression coefficients for relationships with p-values below 0.05 are listed in Tables 13, 14, and 15. For the first test, the p-value of 0.032 indicates evidence of a linear relationship between SAS scores and scores for (Lack of) Perceived Behavioral Control. This result suggests that reported lack of perceived behavioral control tends to increase as reported erotophobia increases.

Table 13: Regression - SAS Score, (Lack of) perceived behavioral control

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients B	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	1.777	0.328		5.416	0.000
	SAS Score	0.012	0.006	0.153	2.155	0.032

a. Dependent Variable: (Lack of) perceived behavioral control

Table 14: Regression - SAS Score, (Pro) assuming consent

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients B	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	2.819	0.250		11.273	0.000
	SAS Score	-0.009	0.004	-0.143	-2.022	0.045

a. Dependent Variable: (Pro) assuming consent

The p-value of 0.045 in Table 14 indicates evidence of a linear relationship between SAS scores and scores for (Pro) Assuming Consent. This result suggests that as reported erotophobia increases, reported agreement with items about assuming consent decreases. A 95% confidence interval was calculated for the slope of this relationship with a lower bound of -0.017 and an upper bound of 0.00. This indicates that, although the p-value was below 0.05, I did not find conclusive evidence of a relationship between reported erotophobia and reported support for assuming consent.

Table 15 displays regression coefficients for a test of the relationship between SAS scores and reported awareness of consent. The p-value of 0.009 indicates strong evidence that a significant linear relationship exists between these variables. After calculating a confidence interval, we are 95% confident that the true slope of the regression line is between -4.03 and -0.576. These results indicate that as reported erotophobia increases, reported awareness of consent decreases.

Table 15:Regression - SAS Score, Awareness of consent

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	6.229	0.336		18.526	0.000
	SAS Score	-0.015	0.006	-0.185	-2.630	0.009

a. Dependent Variable: Awareness of consent

4.1.4 Discomfort with Sexual Communication

Regression revealed significant relationships between SAS factor c, Sexual Communication and two SCS-R subscales: (Lack of) Perceived Behavioral Control and Awareness of Consent. My survey included three items from SAS factor c which each asked about discomfort communicating pleasure or desire to a partner.

Table 16 shows regression coefficients for the relationship between SAS factor c scores and SCS-R subscale 2 scores. The p-value of <0.001 indicates strong evidence that this relationship is statistically significant. This result suggests that increased reported discomfort with sexual communication relates to an increased reported lack of behavioral control in consent communication.

Table 16: Regression - Sexual Communication, (Lack of) perceived behavioral control

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	1.842	0.181		10.193	0.000
	Sexual Communication	0.049	0.013	0.263	3.801	0.000

a. Dependent Variable: (Lack of) perceived behavioral control

Regression also revealed a statistically significant relationship between SAS factor c and SCS-R subscale 6. Regression coefficients are listed in Table 17. The p-value of 0.007 indicates strong evidence that a relationship exists between reported discomfort with sexual communication and reported awareness of consent. This result suggests that increased discomfort with sexual communication is associated with decreased awareness of consent.

Table 17: Regression - Sexual Communication, Awareness of consent

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients B	Unstandardized Coefficients Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	5.840	0.189		30.840	0.000
	Sexual Communication	-0.037	0.014	-0.192	-2.738	0.007

a. Dependent Variable: Awareness of consent

4.1.5 Discomfort Watching Pornography

During her interview, Sarah suggested that pornography may influence students' consent beliefs and behaviors. Although there was no question on the survey that asked specifically about students' porn consumption, the SAS included the item that asked students to rate their level of discomfort "Watching a 'hardcore' or 'pornographic' film." A t-test for equality of means found evidence of a relationship between gender and reported discomfort on this item (p=0.003). The mean score was 6.44 (out of ten) for female respondents compared to a mean score of 5.02 for

male respondents. This suggests that female respondents tended to report more discomfort watching hardcore or pornographic films than male respondents. ANOVA did not reveal evidence of a relationship between year in school and reported discomfort viewing pornography. Linear regression revealed significant relationships between responses to this item and three of the six SCS-R subscales.

Table 18 displays regression coefficients for analysis of the relationship between reported discomfort watching porn and scores for SCS-R subscale 1, Positive Attitude Towards Establishing Consent. The p-value of 0.004 indicates that this relationship is statistically significant. This result suggests an association between increased reported discomfort watching pornography and increased reported positive attitude towards establishing consent.

Table 18: Regression - Watching pornography, Positive attitude towards consent

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	5.722	0.119		48.187	0.000
	Watching a "hardcore" or "pornographic" film.	0.052	0.018	0.205	2.931	0.004

a. Dependent Variable: Positive attitude towards establishing consent

Significant negative relationships were found between reported discomfort watching porn and scores for SCS-R subscales 4 and 5: (Pro) Assuming Consent and Indirect Behavioral Approach. Regression coefficients for these tests are displayed in tables 20 and 21. The p-value of 0.001 suggests that there is evidence that higher levels of reported discomfort watching porn is associated with lower reported support for assuming consent. The p-value of 0.005 indicates a statistically significant association between increased reported discomfort watching porn and decreased reported support for an indirect behavioral approach to consent communication.

Table 19: Regression - Watching pornography, (Pro) assuming consent

		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	2.703	0.129		20.888	0.000
	Watching a “hardcore” or “pornographic” film.	-0.062	0.019	-0.227	-3.252	0.001

a. Dependent Variable: (Pro) Assuming Consent

Table 20: Regression - Watching pornography, Indirect behavioral approach

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	4.204	0.190		22.104	0.000
	Watching a “hardcore” or “pornographic” film.	-0.079	0.028	-0.198	-2.821	0.005

a. Dependent Variable: Indirect behavioral approach

This item measured reported discomfort watching pornographic films, not rates of porn consumption. However, this data suggests that Sarah may have been right about a relationship between watching porn and consent beliefs and practices.

4.2 Conclusion

Survey data indicate that students are aware of consent and support several key themes of prevention education. Statistical analysis revealed a series of significant relationships within the data. Male and female respondents differed significantly in support of relationship length norms, the indirect behavioral approach to consent, and awareness of consent as well as in reported discomfort with solitary and impersonal sexual expression. ANOVA revealed that year in school was significantly related to awareness of consent, erotophobia, and discomfort with solitary and impersonal sexual expression. Regression found that as reported erotophobia increases, lack of

perceived behavioral control increases and awareness of consent decreases. Gender, year in school, and discomfort about sex all seem to play a role in students' reported consent beliefs and behaviors.

5.0 Discussion

This study aimed to answer the questions: How do students define sexual consent? How do they communicate consent? How do they understand and discuss consent and sexual violence? Data from participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and an online survey reveal a series of key themes that help answer these questions. These themes relate to student consent definitions, shared beliefs about consent, consent communication norms, and shared beliefs about sexual violence.

5.1 Definitions of Consent

Students generally agreed that consent is a communication of willingness to participate in sexual activity. This reflects what is taught by the University's prevention education programming. Students' definitions emphasized passive willingness rather than active desire. This indicates that for many students, establishing consent is not about pleasure. While it was a central component to most definitions, students did not equate willingness and consent. Consent is specifically the communication or the expression of willingness. Most definitions did not specify exactly what consent communication involves or looks like. Some implied that this is a confusing or complex process by stating that consent should be "clear" or "without any gray areas."

Some definitions were more concerned with giving consent while others were more concerned with getting consent. Interview data revealed that women often spoke about the former while men spoke about the latter. This showed that in heterosexual relationships, students tend to

understand consent as a unidirectional process in which a man gets consent from a woman. This may explain the gender difference in scores for SCS-R subscale 5: Indirect Behavioral Approach. Women may have reported more agreement with this subscale because they do not feel a responsibility to actively seek their partner's consent. Further, women may not feel empowered to exercise sexual agency or actively express desire.

5.2 Beliefs About Consent

Students expressed shared beliefs about how consent should be communicated that lines up with campus prevention education. Interview respondents expressed support for the use of explicit verbal consent as the best and most effective way to communicate consent. This implies an understanding of nonverbal consent communication and confusing and difficult. Mean SCS-R scores for survey respondents show that other students also support these consent belief norms. Survey respondents expressed high levels of support for positive attitudes towards establishing consent and low levels of support for assuming consent.

Interview and survey respondents also shared beliefs about relationship length consent norms. These included that the need for explicit or verbal consent decreases and the length of a sexual relationship increases. As Sarah's discussion of feeling like a "handbrake on intimacy" demonstrates, these norms may discourage students in serious relationships from expressing nonconsent to their partners. On the survey, male respondents reported higher levels of agreement with relationship length norms than female respondents. Together, this data suggests that women in straight relationships may consent to unwanted sex or even experience nonconsensual sex due to relationship length consent norms.

Students also expressed gendered beliefs about consent, primarily that men always want sex and that their consent can be assumed. Men are positioned as initiators who are always consenting to sex, so their partners are unlikely to ask for their consent or be attentive to nonverbal signals. These norms and gendered norms about sexual violence perpetration may invalidate the experiences of men who are victimized. Men may also be less likely to label these experiences as nonconsensual.

5.3 Consent Communication Norms

Consent communication norms include a strong emphasis on nonverbal cues and a dynamic in which one partner initiates sexual activity and the other reciprocates. Many interview respondents explicitly reported that this is how they and their peers communicate consent. While Nick and Isabelle reported relying heavily on verbal cues, they identified themselves as exceptions to consent communication norms. Support for this dynamic is also implicit in the language students used to discuss consent. Specifically, students often described that one partner gets consent and the other gives it. Getting consent is ideally done through asking, as mentioned above, but in practice is typically done through initiation or “asking without asking.” This understanding allows the initiating partner to feel that they are asking for consent even if they never actively do so.

These communication norms are identified by the SCS-R as the Indirect Behavioral Approach. Support for this approach is measured by subscale 5. The distribution of scores for this scale indicates some disagreement between survey respondents. This may be because students believe that verbal consent is better than the indirect behavioral approach and were hesitant to report relying on nonverbal cues. As Jozkowski (2014) notes, students may report that they are

communicating consent more explicitly than they actually are. Also, women tended to report mores support for this scale than men. As I mentioned above, this may relate to gendered norms about sexual agency.

Norms about consent communication emphasize that while consent is often nonverbal, nonconsent must be verbal. Nonconsenting partners are responsible for saying ‘No’ or clearly displaying discomfort and hoping that their partner stops and asks if everything is okay. This becomes problematic because partners in the reciprocating role, who are often women, are granted less agency in sexual activity. These partners then have a responsibility to nonconsent but may not feel a sense of agency to express this. Placing responsibility on the nonconsenting partner to stop sexual activity rather than on their partner to obtain consent before initiating is closely linked to victim blaming discourse. Hannah illustrated this connection by explaining that verbal nonconsent is important because “the other person’s not a mind reader.” These norms contradict the affirmative ‘Yes means yes’ model of consent and students’ stated beliefs about consent.

Consent communication norms are gendered with men positioned as initiators who “ask without asking” for consent and women as sexual gatekeepers who are responsible for clearly expressing nonconsent. Interview respondents identified a close link between this dynamic and norms about masculinity. Specifically, “men are allowed to be more sexually aggressive” and therefore can exercise more sexual agency. This relates to beliefs that men get consent and women give consent. While students expressed that men can and should actively seek consent from their partners, reports of consent practices continue to place responsibility for preventing nonconsensual sex on women. Perceptions of peer consent practices and discomfort talking about sex lead men to rarely verbally ask for consent.

Interview respondents suggested that the disconnect between consent beliefs and consent behaviors is heavily influence by the representation of sex in media. In particular, respondents mentioned the lack of representation of consent in movies and on TV. This likely contributes to respondents' belief that it is odd or abnormal to ask for consent. Sarah specifically identified pornography as a source of gendered norms about consent and sexual aggression. Analysis of survey data revealed a relationship between levels of discomfort watching porn and reported consent beliefs and behaviors. This suggested that students who reported being less comfortable watching porn also reported more support for subscales related to affirmative consent. As I mention above, this survey measured discomfort watching porn, not porn consumption. Further research is necessary to understand the strength and nature of this relationship.

5.4 Understandings of Consent and Sexual Violence

Each student I spoke to emphasized the importance of proper consent communication and related this to the prevalence of sexual violence on campus. Survey data supports that students display high levels of awareness about consent. ANOVA revealed that older students tended to report higher levels of consent awareness than younger students. This likely to the fact that seniors also reported less erotophobia than freshmen and sophomores. Students may be more open to discussions about consent as they mature and become more comfortable discussing sex or they may become more comfortable with the topic the more they are exposed to discussions about consent and sexual violence on campus. Even students who do not participate in BIT or other optional education programs may be influenced by student leaders or influential peers who completed the programs. As I discussed in an earlier chapter, I did not collect the necessary data

to fully evaluate the efficacy of BIT however this program may play a role in the increasing levels of awareness as students get older.

The increased level of consent awareness reported by female survey respondents may be influenced by more than education programs. Interview data indicate that female students feel a sense of fear of being sexually assaulted that men did not report. This indicates gendered norms about sexual violence perpetration which position women as victims and men as perpetrators. CCS data confirm that women report victimization at a higher rate than men but there is evidence that men's victimization is underreported (Cantor et al., 2019; Forsman, 2017; Luetke et al., 2020). In response to this fear of victimization, women identified steps that they take to protect themselves and their friends. Their knowledge about how to protect themselves comes from both their formal and informal sex educations. Gendered fears about sexual violence may lead women to pay more attention to consent education programs, thus leading them to report higher levels of consent awareness. This relationship may also go the other way. Discussions about consent that focus on the importance of men getting consent from women may reinforce gendered norms that limit their sexual agency and lead to their victimization. Additionally, if men do not see sexual violence as a threat, they may not see the value in prevention programming.

Men's lower reported level of consent awareness may also relate to survey data that indicates that men report more discomfort talking to their friends about their sex lives. This may, at first, seem to contradict interview respondents' discussions of the connection between masculinity and perceived sexual success. However, male interview respondents reported discussing consent and sexual violence primarily with their female friends. This suggests that conversations about sex among college men focus primarily on establishing oneself as sexually active rather than discussing complexities and nuances surrounding sex and sexual violence.

In addition to consent, interview respondents reported high level of awareness of sexual violence on campus and emphasized that this is a prevalent and important issue. This reflects CCS data which shows that in 2019, victimization was reported by over one quarter of undergraduate women and over six percent of undergraduate men (Cantor et al., 2019). In addition to the gendered norms discussed above, students expressed support for norms about where and how sexual violence occurs on campus.

In interviews, students tended to discuss sexual violence in the context of a party. This is reflected by the "smart party habits" related to alcohol consumption that women reported using to prevent their victimization. Beatrice argued that by focusing on these habits, University prevention education has reinforced the belief that sexual assault always happens at a party. Additionally, programming that emphasizes bystander intervention and good party habits like not accepting drinks from strangers may shift responsibility and blame for sexual assault from perpetrators to victims. This is reflected in victim blaming discourse such as Max's statement that victims "regret" having sex when they were drunk and "decide" that it was nonconsensual days after the fact. These discourses are supported by the normalization of drunk sex among students. These norms may lead to students not labeling experiences as nonconsensual if alcohol was involved. Students also regularly discussed the way that alcohol consumption may influence perpetrators of violence. This continues to shift blame away from perpetrators and supports norms about masculine sexuality as dangerous and difficult to control.

While alcohol-facilitated sexual assault is certainly a pressing issue at the University, data suggest that assault through the use of physical force may be more prevalent than students acknowledged in interviews. CCS data indicate that nonconsensual sexual contact through the use of physical force is more frequently reported than an inability to consent due to alcohol (Cantor et

al., 2019). Strong support for relationship length norms, as discussed above, may also indicate low levels of awareness of intimate partner violence (IPV). Indeed, Isabelle was the only interview respondent who mentioned IPV among college students. These data indicate that university consent education currently addresses only a portion of campus sexual assault.

5.5 Limitations

Because the on-line survey did not include questions about race or ethnicity, and all eleven interview respondents were white, this study does not address how race and ethnicity impact consent beliefs and behaviors. The ideas of masculinity and femininity, in particular, which I discuss may correspond specifically to white gender norms. The survey would also likely have benefited from a question about sexual orientation, as one interviewee indicates that consent is communicated differently between LGBTQ partners. The lack of representation in this study is likely due to several factors, including my personal biases as a white cisgender woman, flaws in my sampling method, and the demographic makeup of my field site.

6.0 Moving Forward

As I have demonstrated, student consent communication norms do not align with the affirmative consent model that is taught by the University. However, this does not appear to be due to a lack of awareness of consent nor a lack of support for the affirmative consent model. Consent practices of students are shaped by a number of influences including gendered norms, interpersonal relationships, and feelings of discomfort about sex.

Existing education programs at the University appear to have been effective in shaping students' consent beliefs but further intervention is necessary to change consent behaviors and reduce campus sexual violence. The increased rate of reported nonconsensual sexual contact represented in CCS data is troubling but it does not necessarily indicate that violence prevention programming on campus has been unsuccessful or that the rate of victimization has increased (Cantor et al., 2019). Students may be more likely to report sexual assault due to increased awareness of consent and sexual violence. Regardless of the reason for the increased rate, the frequency of reported victimization is unacceptable. The fact that the national rate of reported victimization has remained relatively unchanged for the past five decades indicates that there is still extensive work to be done (K. N. Jozkowski & Peterson, 2013).

Students' understandings of consent and sexual violence are informed by their educations and experiences prior to arriving on campus. Prevention of campus sexual violence requires intervention with younger students. Comprehensive K-12 sex education and open discussions with children and adolescents about body autonomy and consent are necessary to shift consent beliefs and behaviors. Program development and future research should be conducted with a focus on

students of color and LGBTQ students, as they report victimization at higher rates than white or heterosexual students (Cantor et al., 2019).

University-level consent education should be ongoing and give students an opportunity to discuss the sociocultural contexts of sexual violence on campus. As indicated by CCS data, it is unlikely that the majority of sexual assaults result from consent misunderstandings (Cantor et al., 2019). Therefore, consent education cannot be the only implemented prevention programming. My findings indicate that many of Hirsch et al.'s (2018) suggestions may be effective at this university, including revised alcohol policies and strengthened accountability measures for perpetrators. Consent education is important but evidence shows that additional prevention approaches are necessary to fully address the issue of sexual violence on campus.

Appendix A Additional Tables

Table A 1: SCS-R Rotated Component Matrix

	Component								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
I am worried that my partner might think I'm weird or strange if I asked for sexual consent before starting any sexual activity.	0.805	0.114	0.129	-0.120	0.096	0.106	-0.077	0.119	-0.004
I feel confident that I could ask for consent from a new sexual partner. (Reverse scored)	-0.716	-0.082	-0.058	0.126	-0.014	0.108	-0.221	-0.093	-0.106
I would have difficulty asking for consent because it would spoil the mood.	0.701	0.208	0.322	-0.238	0.117	0.143	0.050	0.106	-0.017
I think that verbally asking for sexual consent is awkward.	0.686	0.306	0.219	-0.160	0.237	0.175	0.102	-0.021	-0.008
I would worry that, if other people know I asked for sexual consent before starting sexual activity, they would think I was weird or strange.	0.684	0.132	0.201	-0.109	-0.118	0.242	-0.047	0.086	0.141
I would have a hard time verbalizing my consent in a sexual encounter because I am too shy.	0.653	0.042	-0.001	-0.056	0.023	-0.206	0.148	0.078	0.131
I would have difficulty asking for consent because it doesn't really fit with how I like to engage in sexual activity.	0.646	0.273	0.172	-0.178	0.031	0.301	-0.172	0.055	0.116
I believe that verbally asking for sexual consent reduces the pleasure of the encounter.	0.485	0.179	0.366	-0.121	0.248	0.332	0.166	0.006	0.068
It is easy to accurately read by current (or most recent) partner's non-verbal signals as indicating consent or non-consent to sexual activity.	0.045	0.729	0.023	-0.190	0.056	0.000	0.108	0.047	-0.084
I think nonverbal behaviors are as effective as verbal communication to indicate sexual consent.	0.115	0.729	-0.043	-0.214	-0.056	0.024	0.094	0.087	-0.030

Table A1 (continued)

Typically I communicate sexual consent to my partner using nonverbal signs and body language.	0.241	0.694	0.067	-0.031	-0.050	0.041	-0.070	0.138	-0.059
Typically I ask for consent by making a sexual advance and waiting for a reaction, so I know whether or not to continue.	0.051	0.656	0.221	-0.119	-0.010	0.047	0.054	0.009	0.113
I always verbally ask for consent before I initiate a sexual encounter. (Reverse scored)	-0.337	-0.646	-0.236	0.234	0.007	-0.103	-0.010	-0.057	0.048
I think it is okay to assume consent and proceed sexually until the partner indicates "no."	0.110	0.611	0.131	-0.239	0.097	0.338	0.063	0.097	0.299
I don't have to ask or give my partner sexual consent because I have a lot of trust in my partner to "do the right thing."	0.090	0.601	0.456	0.081	0.098	-0.059	0.029	-0.098	0.155
In making a sexual advance, I believe that it is okay to assume consent unless you hear a "no."	0.169	0.486	0.136	-0.226	0.151	0.479	0.197	0.072	0.319
I think that obtaining sexual consent is more necessary in a new relationship than in a committed relationship.	0.091	0.072	0.820	-0.134	0.114	0.093	0.028	0.016	0.025
I think that obtaining sexual consent is more necessary in a casual sexual encounter than in a committed relationship.	0.105	0.055	0.776	-0.150	-0.028	0.045	0.142	0.057	-0.083
If a couple has a long history of consenting sexual activity with each other, I do not believe that they need to ask for consent during each sexual encounter.	0.219	0.236	0.660	-0.207	0.152	0.045	0.074	0.145	0.179
I believe that the need for asking for sexual consent decreases as the length of an intimate relationship increases.	0.323	0.146	0.618	-0.088	0.144	0.157	0.123	0.134	0.081
I don't have to ask or give my partner consent because my partner knows me well enough.	0.203	0.520	0.583	-0.091	0.251	-0.083	0.033	-0.051	0.192
I believe that partners are less likely to ask for sexual consent the longer they are in a relationship.	0.302	0.094	0.385	0.121	-0.061	0.252	-0.116	0.352	0.074
I feel it is the responsibility of both partners to make sure sexual consent is established before sexual activity begins.	-0.116	-0.100	-0.087	0.670	-0.312	-0.030	-0.062	0.081	-0.235
I believe that asking for sexual consent is in my best interest because it reduces any misinterpretations that might arise.	-0.221	-0.314	-0.185	0.645	-0.030	0.037	-0.020	-0.038	-0.133

Table A1 (continued)

When initiating sexual activity, I believe that one should always assume they do not have sexual consent.	-0.096	-0.163	-0.017	0.641	0.080	-0.127	-0.044	-0.038	0.232
I believe that it is just as necessary to obtain consent for genital fondling as it is for sexual intercourse.	-0.242	-0.216	-0.237	0.545	0.015	-0.164	-0.356	-0.106	0.057
Before making sexual advances, I think that one should assume 'no' until there is clear indication to proceed.	-0.007	-0.092	-0.065	0.531	0.036	-0.065	0.021	-0.337	-0.474
I feel that sexual consent should always be obtained before the start of any sexual activity.	-0.230	-0.143	-0.368	0.507	-0.074	-0.115	-0.377	-0.022	-0.039
I think it is equally important to obtain sexual consent in all relationships regardless of whether or not they have had sex before.	-0.230	-0.224	-0.403	0.487	0.076	-0.152	0.141	-0.052	-0.113
I feel that verbally asking for sexual consent should occur before proceeding with any sexual activity.	-0.251	-0.429	-0.308	0.438	-0.164	-0.043	-0.189	0.096	0.047
I have heard sexual consent issues being discussed by other students on campus.	-0.057	0.021	-0.137	-0.048	-0.769	-0.065	-0.094	0.027	0.022
I have discussed sexual consent issues with a friend.	-0.071	-0.023	-0.045	0.143	-0.705	-0.041	0.008	-0.351	-0.072
I have not given much thought to the topic of sexual consent. (Reverse scored)	0.114	0.090	0.225	-0.131	0.516	0.133	0.023	0.493	-0.039
If a sexual request is made and the partner indicates "no," I feel that it is okay to continue negotiating the request.	0.080	-0.019	0.124	-0.093	0.055	0.722	0.263	0.018	-0.022
Not asking for sexual consent is not really a big deal.	0.232	0.256	0.074	-0.387	0.232	0.450	-0.017	-0.043	-0.028
I believe that sexual intercourse is the only sexual activity that requires explicit verbal consent.	0.075	0.100	0.118	-0.054	0.063	0.272	0.770	0.042	0.134
I think that consent should be asked for before any kind of sexual behavior, including kissing or petting.	-0.099	-0.234	-0.425	0.304	-0.149	-0.017	-0.487	-0.163	-0.013
I have discussed sexual consent issues with my current (or most recent) partner at times other than during sexual encounters.	-0.203	-0.049	-0.008	-0.019	-0.200	0.118	-0.067	0.705	0.014

Table A1 (continued)

I believe it is enough to ask for consent at the beginning of a sexual encounter.	0.094	0.261	0.365	-0.171	0.042	0.238	0.151	0.484	0.071
I would not want to ask a partner for consent because it would remind me that I'm sexually active.	0.310	0.026	0.113	-0.004	0.015	0.013	0.124	0.040	0.750

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.
Rotation converged in 9 iterations.

Table A 2: SAS Rotated Component Matrix

	Component				SAS Factor
	1	2	3	4	
Telling my partner what pleases me and does not please me sexually	0.888	0.074	-0.066	-0.069	c
Discussing my sexual fantasies with my partner	0.752	0.013	0.344	-0.236	c
Vocalizing my pleasure during sex with my partner.	0.732	-0.009	0.312	0.332	c
Being around others who are changing their clothes	-0.151	0.762	-0.073	0.012	
Watching a scene from a major box office movie in which people were engaging in sex	0.237	0.647	0.264	0.171	a
Seeing two people kissing or fondling each other	-0.048	0.637	0.194	-0.109	a
Talking with my friends about my sex life	0.392	0.587	0.088	0.158	
Watching a “hardcore” or “pornographic” film.	0.076	0.141	0.867	0.093	a
Masturbating	0.210	0.142	0.814	-0.031	a
Engaging in a casual sexual encounter (e.g., a one-night stand)	0.064	0.253	0.113	0.784	a
Completing questionnaires about my sexuality	0.176	0.437	0.109	-0.584	b

Table A 3: t-Test - SCS-R, Gender

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Positive attitude towards establishing consent	Equal variances assumed	0.112	0.738	-1.665	193	0.098	-0.20243	0.12160
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.647	102.193	0.103	-0.20243	0.12288
(Lack of) perceived behavioral control	Equal variances assumed	5.410	0.021	0.286	193	0.775	0.05043	0.17612
	Equal variances not assumed			0.318	133.701	0.751	0.05043	0.15863
Relationship length norms	Equal variances assumed	2.457	0.119	2.099	193	0.037	0.42685	0.20331
	Equal variances not assumed			2.218	118.516	0.028	0.42685	0.19241
(Pro) assuming consent	Equal variances assumed	2.365	0.126	1.118	193	0.265	0.14950	0.13372
	Equal variances not assumed			1.047	91.403	0.298	0.14950	0.14278
Indirect behavioral approach	Equal variances assumed	0.373	0.542	-2.045	193	0.042	-0.39633	0.19378
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.118	113.026	0.036	-0.39633	0.18714
Awareness of consent	Equal variances assumed	1.388	0.240	-2.649	193	0.009	-0.47006	0.17747
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.578	98.724	0.011	-0.47006	0.18231

Table A 4: t-Test - SAS Scores, Gender

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
SAS Score	Equal variances assumed	0.640	0.425	-0.466	193	0.642	-1.04958	2.25390
	Equal variances not assumed			-0.458	100.790	0.648	-1.04958	2.29252
Solitary and Impersonal Sexual Expression	Equal variances assumed	0.589	0.444	-2.703	193	0.007	-3.57285	1.32195
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.700	104.326	0.008	-3.57285	1.32312
Sexual Communication	Equal variances assumed	1.778	0.184	0.456	193	0.649	0.42677	0.93493
	Equal variances not assumed			0.492	124.539	0.623	0.42677	0.86671

Table A 5: ANOVA - SCS-R Scores, Year in School

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Positive attitude towards establishing consent	Between Groups	1.508	3	0.503	0.840	0.473
	Within Groups	115.456	193	0.598		
	Total	116.964	196			
(Lack of) perceived behavioral control	Between Groups	5.012	3	1.671	1.359	0.257
	Within Groups	237.269	193	1.229		
	Total	242.281	196			
Relationship length norms	Between Groups	3.253	3	1.084	0.640	0.590
	Within Groups	326.905	193	1.694		
	Total	330.159	196			
(Pro) assuming consent	Between Groups	1.121	3	0.374	0.518	0.670
	Within Groups	139.192	193	0.721		
	Total	140.313	196			
Indirect behavioral approach	Between Groups	5.109	3	1.703	1.118	0.343
	Within Groups	294.034	193	1.523		
	Total	299.142	196			
Awareness of consent	Between Groups	20.420	3	6.807	5.548	0.001
	Within Groups	236.779	193	1.227		
	Total	257.199	196			

Table A 6: Multiple Comparisons - SCS-R 6, Year in School

Dependent Variable: Awareness of consent

LSD

(I) Year in school:		Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Freshman	Sophomore	-0.26838	0.19891	0.179	-0.6607	0.1239
	Junior	-.85976*	0.22682	0.000	-1.3071	-0.4124
	Senior	-.62903*	0.24718	0.012	-1.1166	-0.1415
Sophomore	Freshman	0.26838	0.19891	0.179	-0.1239	0.6607
	Junior	-.59137*	0.21901	0.008	-1.0233	-0.1594
	Senior	-0.36065	0.24004	0.135	-0.8341	0.1128
Junior	Freshman	.85976*	0.22682	0.000	0.4124	1.3071
	Sophomore	.59137*	0.21901	0.008	0.1594	1.0233
	Senior	0.23072	0.26363	0.383	-0.2892	0.7507
Senior	Freshman	.62903*	0.24718	0.012	0.1415	1.1166
	Sophomore	0.36065	0.24004	0.135	-0.1128	0.8341
	Junior	-0.23072	0.26363	0.383	-0.7507	0.2892

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table A 7: ANOVA - SAS Scores, Year in School

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
SAS Score	Between Groups	1668.435	3	556.145	2.813	0.041
	Within Groups	38152.763	193	197.683		
	Total	39821.198	196			
Solitary and Impersonal Sexual Expression	Between Groups	715.611	3	238.537	3.428	0.018
	Within Groups	13429.241	193	69.582		
	Total	14144.853	196			
Sexual Communication	Between Groups	186.056	3	62.019	1.796	0.149
	Within Groups	6663.456	193	34.526		
	Total	6849.513	196			

Table A 8: Multiple Comparisons - SAS Scores, Year in School

LSD

Dependent Variable			Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
SAS Score	Freshman	Sophomore	0.55882	2.52492	0.825	-4.4212	5.5388
		Junior	3.82927	2.87917	0.185	-1.8494	9.5080
		Senior	8.16129*	3.13767	0.010	1.9728	14.3498
	Sophomore	Freshman	-0.55882	2.52492	0.825	-5.5388	4.4212
		Junior	3.27044	2.78004	0.241	-2.2127	8.7536
		Senior	7.60247*	3.04696	0.013	1.5929	13.6121
	Junior	Freshman	-3.82927	2.87917	0.185	-9.5080	1.8494
		Sophomore	-3.27044	2.78004	0.241	-8.7536	2.2127
		Senior	4.33202	3.34640	0.197	-2.2682	10.9322
	Senior	Freshman	-8.16129*	3.13767	0.010	-14.3498	-1.9728
		Sophomore	-7.60247*	3.04696	0.013	-13.6121	-1.5929
		Junior	-4.33202	3.34640	0.197	-10.9322	2.2682
Solitary and Impersonal Sexual Expression	Freshman	Sophomore	-1.29309	1.49799	0.389	-4.2476	1.6615
		Junior	1.28798	1.70817	0.452	-2.0811	4.6571
		Senior	4.34069*	1.86153	0.021	0.6691	8.0122
	Sophomore	Freshman	1.29309	1.49799	0.389	-1.6615	4.2476
		Junior	2.58106	1.64935	0.119	-0.6720	5.8341
		Senior	5.63378*	1.80771	0.002	2.0684	9.1992
	Junior	Freshman	-1.28798	1.70817	0.452	-4.6571	2.0811
		Sophomore	-2.58106	1.64935	0.119	-5.8341	0.6720
		Senior	3.05271	1.98537	0.126	-0.8631	6.9685
	Senior	Freshman	-4.34069*	1.86153	0.021	-8.0122	-0.6691
		Sophomore	-5.63378*	1.80771	0.002	-9.1992	-2.0684
		Junior	-3.05271	1.98537	0.126	-6.9685	0.8631

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

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