

**SEXUAL CONSENT IN HETEROSEXUAL DATING RELATIONSHIPS:
ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOURS OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS**

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ABSTRACT

SEXUAL CONSENT IN HETEROSEXUAL DATING RELATIONSHIPS: ATTITUDES OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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Although there has been extensive research describing date rape attitudes and experiences, there has been little exploration of sexual consent, a key component of definitions of rape. The objective of this study was to analyze women's and men's attitudes and behaviours regarding sexual consent. Using both focus groups (N=17) and a mail survey (N=514) at a Canadian university, three new scales of sexual consent were developed: (1) Attitudes Toward Antioch's Sexual Consent Policy Scale, (2) Sexual Consent Attitudes Scale, and (3) Sexual Consent Behaviours Scale. Small but significant gender differences were found. Women were more likely to stress the importance of consent in their attitudes and behaviours during sexual encounters than men. Additionally, students who had experienced sexual intercourse were less likely to stress the importance of consent than individuals who had not experienced sexual intercourse. The value of using both qualitative and quantitative measures to study the complexities of sexual consent is illustrated.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Sexual coercion is a major societal concern. The vast amount of research published on this topic over the last decade is a testimonial to its significance. Reports of the lifetime prevalence rate of sexual coercion for women in North America range between 22% and 83% (Craig, 1990; DeKeseredy & Kelly, 1993; Koss, Gidycz, & Wisniewski, 1987). The large variation in reported incidence rates is a result of definitional and methodological choices in the research (Koss, 1992; Muehlenhard, Powch, Phelps, & Giusti, 1992). Laumann, Gagnon, Michael, and Michaels (1994), in a United States national survey, reported that the overwhelming majority (96%) of forced sex experiences occurred between perpetrators and victims who knew each other as acquaintances, friends, lovers, or spouses. College and university students are an at-risk group for sexual coercion and assault that have been studied extensively. With new found freedoms away from home, the tendency to feel omnipotent, and peer pressure to be sexually active, the atmosphere creates a potentially volatile situation for both male and female students (Ellis, 1994).

In research dealing with sexual violence and coercion, the central criterion for definitions of sexual violation relates to the nonconsent of a partner or stranger. Curiously, sexual consent (or nonconsent) itself has remained an unarticulated concept in the literature on sexual coercion. Lonsway and Fitzgerald (1994) have questioned the content validity of much of the literature on rape-supportive attitudes because the

measures do not define key concepts such as consent or force. Although college and university policies and rape prevention campaigns stress the issue of consent among students, little is known about the meanings and behaviours university and college students attribute to sexual consent. It is the lack of knowledge surrounding sexual consent which is the primary impetus for this research.

Research Problem

The research problem which guides this dissertation involves exploring the attitudes and behaviours of university women and men with respect to sexual consent in heterosexual dating relationships. The objective is to understand the normative scripts for sexual consent in a Canadian university sample and to determine the influence of gender on these scripts. Research on sexual consent is very important for several reasons. Consent is the defining criteria for both legal and research definitions of what constitutes sexual assault, rape, and abuse. The interpretation of sexual consent in legal cases affects judgements about the guilt or innocence of the accused and the repercussions for the defendant. Research definitions of consent affect the design of assessment instruments and ultimately the prevalence estimates for sexual violence which researchers find in the population (Muehlenhard, et al., 1992). The lifetime prevalence rate for date rape generally accepted within the research community ranges from 14 to 25 percent (DeKeseredy & Kelly, 1993; Koss, Gidycz, & Wisniewski, 1987; Laumann, et al., 1994).

Concern about sexual coercion and date rape has led many universities to institute awareness campaigns and programs focussed on sexual communication and behaviour.

Campus programs are designed to educate students about issues of sexual violence but as in legal cases, they rely on the understanding of what it means to ask for or give sexual consent. Without a solid understanding of how sexual consent is negotiated and communicated, awareness programs may not be as effective as they could be. Unfortunately, there has been little research on how people perceive and communicate about sexual consent.

A clarification of the terms 'sexual coercion' and 'dating relationship' is important at the outset. There are many definitions of sexual coercion. For the purposes of this research, I have chosen the broad definition outlined by Byers and O'Sullivan (1996), "Sexual coercion is any form of pressure used in an attempt to make a nonconsenting other engage in some type of sexual activity" (p.3). Also, Byers and O'Sullivan (1996) defined a 'dating relationship' as including "all intimate relationships with a romantic or sexual basis, from the early, newly acquainted first date to the highly committed, well-established premarital forms" (p.3). The concept 'sexual consent' will be discussed in the next section.

Defining Sexual Consent

There have been very few studies on sexual consent, however, the topic of sexual consent is related to several other areas of research, including sexual communication and sexual coercion. These research topics provide useful insights into the nature of sexual consent issues.

Current conceptualizations of sexual consent are derived from three diverse areas

of research: (1) obtaining informed consent from participants involved in human studies, (2) sexual relations between people with developmental challenges and (3) relationships involving unequal power, such as therapists and clients or professors and students. The issue of sexual consent in the general population has only recently drawn research attention and theorizing efforts. In summarizing this research, Muehlenhard (1995/1996) has focussed on two emerging themes regarding sexual consent.

First, consent requires knowledge. In order to be able to give consent, a person must understand what he or she is consenting to. This requires, not only information about the sexual act requested, but also information about the social meaning of the act. Different cultures, however, have different meanings regarding sexual activities. In North America, for example, the acceptable level of coercion among dating partners is an issue that is in transition (Heise, Moore & Toubia, 1995/1996). Many societies have forms of sexual coercion or violence that are socially (and legally) condemned and others that are sanctioned by social customs and norms. "The social definition of acceptable behavior is culturally defined and therefore subject to change" (Heise, et al., 1995/1996). The "boys will be boys" mentality of 20 years ago is being replaced by the label "date rape" today.

It follows that sexual consent is also a socially constructed concept based on the perception of what is and is not tolerated in a given society. If the behavioural act of forcing penile-vaginal intercourse on a spouse is a tolerated social custom in a given society, then the issue of sexual consent is unlikely to be raised in association with this behaviour. What is and is not sexually consensual is a function of what a given culture

determines to be sexually coercive. What is socially tolerated is the knowledge that people use to assess consenting behaviour.

Second, sexual consent is meaningless unless it is given freely. Being free to say yes or no means being free of coercion or undue influence. This second point is important since the cultural scripts for women as *passive* and *limit-setters* and for men as *always ready* and *in charge* may prevent both from freely giving or withholding sexual consent (Muehlenhard, 1995/1996). Men may feel undue pressure to push for sex and women may feel undue pressure to resist. Some radical feminists have extended this argument to an extreme position by stating that consensual heterosexual relations are incongruent with our society because women can never truly be free to refuse men sexually if men possess more power physically, economically, and politically (Dworkin, 1987; MacKinnon, 1987). An adherence to a rigid cultural script of masculinity and femininity may result in relationships that possess inherent undue influence.

Another issue raised by Muehlenhard (1995/1996) is whether sexual consent is a mental or a verbal act. As a mental act, consent is problematic because one person can never know for sure if another person has consented (Muehlenhard, et al., 1992). It is problematic to infer sexual consent from nonverbal behaviours. While sexual consent as a verbal act may not seem problematic, most sexual encounters do not involve explicit verbal statements of any kind, much less a discussion of consent (Greer & Buss, 1994; O'Sullivan & Byers, 1992; Sawyer, Desmond & Lucke, 1993). What tends to occur is acquiescence (i.e., passive (tacitly) consent), not explicit consent (Muehlenhard,

1995/1996). It is apparent that research is needed into the meanings and methods that women and men attach to the concept of sexual consent.

Legal definitions of consent generally take into account what Muehlenhard (1995/1996) has outlined. In 1992, the Canadian Parliament amended the sexual assault section of the criminal code with Bill C-49 which defined *consent* as “the voluntary agreement of the complainant to engage in the sexual activity in question”. The amendment describes five scenarios under which consent cannot be obtained: (1) the agreement is expressed by the words or conduct of someone other than the complainant, (2) the complainant is incapable of consenting to the activity, (3) the accused induces the complainant to engage in the activity by abusing a position of trust, power, or authority, (4) the complainant expresses, by words or conduct, a lack of agreement to engage in the activity and (5) the complainant, having consented to engage in sexual activity, expresses, by words or conduct, a lack of agreement to continue to engage in the activity (House of Commons, 1992). More recently, a controversial sexual assault case in Alberta lead the Supreme Court of Canada to clarify the issue of what constituted consent in sexual relations (Makin, 1999). The high court unanimously rejected the notion that “implied consent” is a defense in sexual assault cases, reinforcing the “no means no” interpretation of coercive sexual relations (Centre for Research in Public Law, 1999). Implied consent denotes a situation in which the accused believed consent was given based on ambiguous or tacit cues.

The California Penal Code (under section 261.1) defines *informed consent* as

“positive cooperation in act or attitude pursuant to an exercise of free will. The person must act freely and voluntarily and have knowledge of the nature of the act or transaction involved.” (Abramson, et al., 1988, as cited in Parker & Abramson, 1995, pp.257-8).

For this research, I have adopted Hickman and Muehlenhard’s (1999) definition of sexual consent as “the freely given verbal or nonverbal communication of a feeling of willingness [to engage in sexual activity]” (p.259). This definition keeps both the voluntary willingness and the physical (verbal or behavioural) communication of consent to others as dimensions of the concept.

Literature Review

Policy and Underlying Assumptions about Consent

Concern over issues of sexual coercion and date rape have led some universities to institute policies and campus awareness programs aimed at helping students improve their sexual communication skills. The basic assumption of these policies is that discussing sexual issues such as desire, interest, and sexual boundaries *before* students engage in sexual activity would reduce the sexual misinterpretations and coercion between students in a dating relationship. In 1990, in response to rapes on campus, students and administrators at Antioch College in Yellow Springs Ohio, drafted such a policy that became part of their official Sexual Offenses Policy at the College (Guskin, 1994) (see Appendix A).

The central premise of Antioch’s sexual consent policy requires that all members of the Antioch community obtain consent from their sexual partners prior to engaging in

any sexual activity and, once sexually engaged, at “each new level of physical and/or sexual behavior in any given interaction, regardless of who initiates it. Asking ‘Do you want to have sex with me?’ is not enough. The request must be specific to each act” (Antioch College, 1996, p.3). Consent was defined as “the act of willingly and verbally agreeing to engage in specific sexual behavior” (Antioch College, 1996, p.2).

Controversy erupted over the policy when the United States national media brought Antioch’s policy to public attention in 1993. The policy was covered on the front page of many national, and some international, newspapers, magazines, television reports and opinion columns. The media debate over the policy was far more critical than praising, stating that the policy was unrealistic and unenforceable.

In a response to the public’s reaction, Alan Guskin (1994), President of Antioch College at the time, discussed Antioch’s rationale for developing a sexual consent policy. Touting Antioch’s “free spirit[ed]” student population and history of cutting-edge policies, Guskin (1994) suggested that the goal of the policy was to get students actually talking about sex and thereby reduce sexual misinterpretations and possibly sexual coercion. They emphasized that in sexual situations students should assume a “no” until they have heard a clearly articulated, verbal, “yes”.

Antioch College has portrayed itself as a possible role-model for other Colleges and Universities to follow (Guskin, 1994). However, the key question remains, “Does the policy actually work?” Has it improved communication between women and men? Has there been a reduction in their sexual assault complaints? How meaningful do students at

Antioch find the policy? How have they integrated it into their sexual repertoires? Has it become the sexual script norm on campus? For a policy to be effective, it must be consistent with the conditions it is designed to influence. Guskin (1994) has suggested that the policy is “widely accepted at Antioch College” (p.4); however, no follow-up research has been conducted at Antioch that can substantiate this claim (K. Pauly, Antioch College, personal communication, November 18, 1996). Hall’s (1995) contact with Antioch University Psychology Department also revealed no studies on which the policy was based or studies of its effectiveness.

Theoretical Perspectives on Sexual Consent

What little research is available on sexual consent has developed out of the sexual violence literature, particularly date and acquaintance rape. To provide a theoretical foundation for the study of sexual consent it is necessary to extrapolate from theory in the area of sexual coercion and date rape. Most of the date rape literature focuses on three main theories: (1) socialization theory, specifically script theory, (2) feminist theory, and (3) psychopathology. Psychopathology will not be discussed here because the nature of the proposed study is one of identifying the attitudes and behaviours that occur in the “day-to-day” negotiation of sexual consent between heterosexual couples, not those involving psychologically maladjusted individuals. In addition to socialization and feminist theory, there is also the miscommunication hypothesis (Abbey, 1982) which relates to gender differences in communication patterns and misinterpretations of sexual consent.

Feminist Theory

The analysis of power is a central focus of the feminist discourse on female / male sexual relations. However, feminism does not offer a unified approach to this issue.

There are two dominant groups within feminism, namely, Radical Feminists and Liberal Feminists (McCormick, 1994). Radical Feminists emphasize the dangers inherent in heterosexual relations and the extent to which girls and women are sexual victims in need of protection from coercive men. Liberal Feminists advocate greater sexual autonomy and pleasure for women by removing the barriers imposed by our patriarchal society (McCormick, 1994).

Radical and Liberal Feminists both agree that the problem of sexual coercion is fundamentally rooted in an unequal power distribution in society that favours men (McCormick, 1994). Historically, our culture has enforced rigid sex roles, accepted interpersonal violence, and viewed women as male property. Many of these beliefs are still firmly entrenched today, although somewhat less overt than in the past. This patriarchal system of beliefs and institutions has created a rape-supportive culture (Check & Malamuth, 1983). Societies, such as our own, tolerate and even glorify masculine violence, encouraging men and boys to be aggressive and competitive. Women in these societies tend to have less power in economic and political arenas (Sanday, 1981). Some Radical Feminists have extended the patriarchal argument to an extreme position, stating that consensual heterosexual relations are incongruent with our society because women can never truly be free to refuse men sexually if they possess more power physically,

economically, and politically (Dworkin, 1987; MacKinnon, 1987). For Dworkin this argument culminates in the suggestion that there is essentially no difference between consensual sexual intercourse and nonconsensual intercourse (i.e., sexual assault). However, Liberal Feminists, in response to these extremist statements, believe that equating rape with all heterosexual sex is misleading and an exaggeration of feminist views (McCormick, 1994). In an attempt to relate a Liberal Feminist perspective to the issues of heterosexual consent negotiations a power analysis would recognize the patriarchal system that we are socialized into. This system affords men a dominant position or role with respect to initiating sexual encounters, negotiating desired sexual activities and deciding the start and end of such encounters. In other words, men have the culturally scripted responsibility for orchestrating sexual encounters. Although women have been ascribed the prerogative of refusal, it is unclear whether male power overrides this cultural script for women. For many feminists, "sex is socially constructed as something men do to women, not something that belongs to women" (McCormick, 1994, p. 176). However, similar to socialization theory, it is not clear what situations would lead men to use their position of power to initiate sexual encounters by asking for consent and in what situations men would simply exert pressure or sometimes force on reluctant women to engage in sexual activity.

Socialization Theory

With its roots in social-psychology, socialization theory suggests that beginning at birth we continuously undergo a process which socializes us to our environment. This

process is both individual and social. Through socialization we acquire an individual identity (self-concept, attitudes, and dispositions) and the dominant values and beliefs of society are transmitted to individuals to maintain social continuity. Socializing agents responsible for the transmission of values include political, legal, religious, and educational institutions. Through interaction with others, children learn how to be social creatures and this involves learning how to think, what to think, and the language of the culture (Richardson, 1988). The socialization process is one of both deliberate transmission of information by socializing agents, such as parents and teachers, and the unconscious or incidental process through which children absorb daily occurrences.

Traditionally, socialization theory has been discussed as a unidirectional flow of influence from culture or socializing agent to the developing individual. Socialization theory has been expanded to emphasize the bidirectional nature of the socialization experience (Maccoby, 1992; Maccoby & Martin, 1983). People are active participants in the socialization process, not only shaped by, but actively shaping the social world that they live in. A person does not merely absorb social stimuli but also decides whether to pay attention to, cognitively process, reinterpret, and/or react to such stimuli. This results in reciprocal processes by which socializing agents and individuals influence each other continuously (Hartup & Rubin, 1986; Hinde, 1987; Youniss, 1983).

The differential socialization of the genders has been connected to the patriarchal system and the unequal sexual division of labour (Gecas, 1981; Hite, 1994). Within the family context, parents teach children gender appropriate conduct, drawn from their own

understanding of their culture and experiences (Richardson, 1988). Therefore, children are "taught to think, feel and act in ways considered natural, morally appropriate and desirable for a person of a particular sex" (Richardson, 1988, p. 7).

Socialization theory has been used to explain why sexual assault occurs. In general, males in our society are socialized to be aggressive and dominant. They often learn that aggression and power over others are legitimate means of getting what is wanted including sexual access to women (Clark & Lewis, 1977; Hite, 1994). Many adolescent males are socialized to view sexual access, through force (if necessary) as more justified if, for example, they paid for all dating expenses, the couple went to the man's apartment, and/or the women asked the man out (Muehlenhard, Friedman, & Thomas, 1985). Under these circumstances, men may feel that obtaining sexual consent from a dating partner is inconsequential because, from their perspective, the situational cues have already provided consent. Behaviours of women that are "suggestive" of a sexual interest or nontraditional tend to influence how justifiable men rate sexual coercion against women (Muehlenhard, Friedman, & Thomas, 1985). Gestures suggestive of sexual interest may be interpreted by men as the granting of sexual consent.

Sex role socialization processes promote a rape-prone culture wherein sexual coercion in dating or more committed relationships is seen as normal and acceptable 'in-role' behaviour (Burt, 1980). The belief that men ought to push for sexual intimacy and that women must set the limits is deeply ingrained in many cultural traditions (Allgeier & Allgeier, 1995; Hite, 1994). Since men who sexually assault their dates tend

to follow traditional societal norms and beliefs with respect to dating, ambiguity may result about whether sexual assault has actually occurred, for both the man and woman involved. This ambiguity seems to contribute to the underreporting of sexual assaults committed by dating partners or acquaintances (Koss, 1992).

The difference in the socialization of women and men suggests that the issue of sexual consent is more important to women than to men. If women are socialized to be the limit-setters of relationships, then part of that role would be the giving or not giving of consent to engage in sexual activity. It is expected that women, more than men, should *decide* whether sexual activity will proceed. Men, on the other hand, have been socialized to seek sexual involvement at every opportunity which suggests that men are more likely to take on the role of *asking* for consent. However, it is not clear that this is what men do, given the fact that they are also socialized to dominate (sometimes aggressively) women to attain what they desire. Given these mixed socialization messages, men may ask for consent in one instance, under specific situational variables and not ask for consent with different situational variables.

How does the socialization process in North America promote negative beliefs about women and relationships? Sex role stereotypes have contributed to biased cultural beliefs about dating (e.g., a woman is not to be believed when she says no to sexual advances). These stereotypes can contribute to misunderstandings regarding sexual intent in a dating situation (Check & Malamuth, 1983). This is supported by the finding that many men and women accept statements such as, "A woman who goes to the home or

apartment of a man on the first date implies she is willing to have sex" and "any healthy woman can successfully resist a rapist if she really wants to" (Burt, 1980; Gilmartin-Zena, 1988). Sex role stereotypes also have direct implications for sexual consent since for some people, the situational variables themselves communicate implicit assumptions about the couple's consent to sexual involvement. The sex role double standard for women places them in a bind with respect to giving or not giving sexual consent.

Sexual Script Theory

Based on a socialization perspective, sexual script theory was developed by Gagnon and Simon (1973) and later revised by Gagnon (1990). These researchers presented one of the earliest conceptualizations of a social constructionist middle-range theory on sexuality. Sexual scripts are cognitive frameworks, learned through socialization, that delineate how people are expected to behave (as well as the expected sequence of behaviours) in sexual situations (Byers, 1996). Their choice of "sexual scripts" or "dramatic scripts" as a metaphor for discussing sexuality directed attention toward the view that sexual behaviour is learned through social interactions. The major assumptions of this theory are: (a) that sexual conduct as well as the study of it are culturally and historically determined, (b) that meanings are assigned to sexual behaviours by the people involved, and (c) that both gender and sexuality are learned forms of social interaction organized by culture. Gagnon's (1990) expansion of the original conceptualization of sexual scripts included contextual elements. There are three distinct levels on which scripting occurs: cultural, interpersonal, and intrapsychic.

Cultural. The cultural level contains those scripts that are commonly understood among members of a society, community or group. They are instructional guides on the cultural level dictating how persons should and should not behave sexually (Gagnon, 1990). These scripts are embedded in the organization and everyday practice of social institutions and are conveyed through beliefs, stories, and media. Danger stories about sexuality and gender are common. Thus, the woman who dresses seductively and walks down poorly lit streets at night is portrayed as raped by a lurking stranger as punishment for violating appropriate gender/sexuality scenarios of chastity and male prerogative.

Confusion regarding whether sexual assault can occur between dating partners is perpetuated by the way youth are socialized about courtship behaviour. According to our cultural scripts, women are supposed to conceal their genuine interest in sexual contact for fear of being labelled promiscuous (Muehlenhard & Hollabaugh, 1988). This belief is historically based on the assumption that women are less interested in sexual activity than men (Muehlenhard, 1988). Men are supposed to be constantly interested in sexual matters and initiate such activity every chance they get. Men are also taught to pursue sexual activity with reluctant women because in many cases, women's 'no' response is just a token resulting from the script mentioned above (Muehlenhard & Hollabaugh, 1988). Again, it appears as though nonconsent is problematic only for women; however, nonconsent is also problematic for men. Since men are always supposed to be interested in sexual activity, there is no flexibility in the male cultural sexual script for being disinterested in sexual involvement.

Byers (1996) review of research on the traditional sexual script (TSS) found only partial support for the script's ability to predict behaviour. She concluded that, while the TSS remains a major script commonly used in intimate relationships, it does not provide the complete script for dating behaviour in North American culture. For example, researchers have found some dating situations in which men were reluctant to engage in sexual activities (O'Sullivan & Byers, 1993, 1996), but were sexually coerced by their female partners (Muehlenhard & Cook, 1988; Struckman-Johnson, 1988; Struckman-Johnson & Struckman-Johnson, 1994). Also, a majority of men have been found to *accept* a women's refusal to sexual activity without question when disagreements have arose over the desired level of sexual intimacy (Byers & Lewis, 1988). In addition, Byers (1996) suggested that the length of an intimate relationship may affect the predictive validity of the TSS and its relationship to sexual behaviour or coercion. For example, sexual initiations by women occurred more often within steady dating relationships, than within casual relationships (O'Sullivan & Byers, 1992) and women were less likely to give an unqualified verbal refusal (i.e., less verbally definite) to unwanted sexual advances when the perceived level of romantic interest in a dating partner was increased (Byers, Giles, & Price, 1987). In addition, women were less verbally definite in scenarios in which non-coital sexual activities, such as breast fondling, were being role-played than in scenarios depicting more intimate activities, such as genital fondling and undressing (Byers, et al., 1987).

Interpersonal. The second level of scripting is the interpersonal. Here, the

individual improvises by modifying and adapting cultural and intrapsychic scripts to meet the expectations of others during social interactions. In other words, the situation influences behaviour. The acceptance and continued use of such scripts perpetuates structured patterns of sexual behaviour (Gagnon, 1990). Interpersonal scripting in dating situations occurs during the interpretation of sexual cues. Women's subtle or symbolic ways of communicating sexual interest or consent, such as the way they stare or smile at men they are interested in (Check & Malamuth, 1983), results in men's attempts at guessing their meaning. Even if a male correctly interprets the hints, a woman is not to engage in sex readily, for fear of appearing promiscuous (Muehlenhard & Hollabaugh, 1988). A man is supposed to wade through these subtle cues and make the correct assumption despite seemingly uninterpretable signs. Sexual consent is an implicit assumption throughout this process unless one or the other partners express their consent (or nonconsent) more directly through verbal communication.

Intrapsychic. Intrapsychic scripting represents an individual's private mental life. This level of scripting is composed of incoming cultural scenarios and the practical demands of actual interaction, but is also, in part, independent of these other two levels of scripting. Gagnon (1990) indicates that the intrapsychic domain is where individuals problem-solve the connection between meaning (culture) and action (social interaction). The struggle to integrate these diverse scripts leads to revised scripts which are unique to every individual. For example, some women may not perceive forced sex with a committed partner as sexual assault because of the definition that has socially been

ascribed to rape (i.e., the lurking stranger in the alley) or the traditional definition socially ascribed to a committed relationships or marriage (i.e., male right to female sexuality). Similarly, men who force sex on women may not view their actions as violent or may justify their behaviour on the basis of their socialization pattern which interprets sexual force as 'normal' courting behaviour.

Sexual script theory, therefore, allows for personal agency in creating sexual attitudes and behaviours, thus explaining unique responses to sexual situations. The metaphor of sexual scripts carries with it the potential for continual change on all three levels of scripting through a reorganization of meanings. Plummer (1982) suggested that this metaphor views sexuality as emergent in relationships and situations rather than as a universal; as constructed not controlled, and as an evolving force in influencing conduct.

Although Gagnon and Simon (1973) have conceptually separated these three levels of scripting, in practice they are dynamically interactive, acting as one process in the continuous reinterpretation of messages and actions from self and other. The individual can be audience, actor, critic, interpreter, revisor, or creator of scripts separately or, more likely, interactively (Gagnon, 1990).

The Sexual Miscommunication Hypothesis

Given different sexual scripts for women and men, sexual communication between the genders is critical to our understanding of consent in sexual encounters. Using sex role socialization theory, many researchers have concluded that women and men frequently interpret sexual situations very differently.

Many studies have shown that men impute more sexual meaning to heterosexual interactions than do women (Abbey, 1982; Abbey & Harnish, 1995; Abbey & Melby, 1986; Johnson, Stockdale & Saal, 1991; Muehlenhard, 1988). For example, Abbey (1982) conducted a laboratory experiment in which a male and female participated in a five minute conversation while a hidden male and female observed the interaction. The actors rated each other while the observers rated both actors' behaviours. Ratings were made with respect to how sexually flirtatious, seductive, and promiscuous the actors were 'trying to behave'. Other dependent variables included asking the observers if they thought each of the actors was sexually attracted to, and would like to date, his or her partner. The results suggested that male actors and observers rated the female actor as more promiscuous and seductive than did the female actors and observers. Also, males were more sexually attracted to the opposite-sex actor than females were. Males seemed unable to distinguish females' friendly behaviour from their seductive behaviour, and interpreted any friendliness on the part of a woman as an indication of sexual interest (Abbey, 1982). Kanin (1969) has argued that "the typical male enters into heterosexual interactions as an eager recipient of any subtle signs of sexual receptivity broadcast by his female companion" (p. 18). In such an encounter, the male tendency toward interpreting many male-female encounters as sexual can lead to discrepancies between the intent of cues by women and their reception by men. Men may be more inclined to interpret ambiguous or tentative signals by women as evidence of consenting behaviour lending support to their own cultural script (Hickman & Muehlenhard, 1999).

Sexual Communication Research

In order to fully comprehend the nature of sexual consent, it is important to understand what the normative script is for sexual activity when heterosexual dating partners attempt to negotiate sexual encounters.

Researchers examining the sexual communication patterns of heterosexual dating partners have observed one consistent finding. Heterosexual dating partners do not usually discuss with each other their wants, needs, or desires before or during sexual situations (Greer & Buss, 1994; Sawyer, et al., 1993). Curiously, there is a large discrepancy between what men and women know they ought to be doing and what they actually do. Sawyer, Desmond, and Lucke (1993) used a questionnaire format with items intended to measure student perceptions regarding a number of communication issues (eg. boundary issues, gender stereotypes, and nonverbal communication issues). They found that, although men and women agreed that talking about sex did not destroy the romantic moment, many of them were not communicating their sexual intentions before engaging in sexual intercourse. On a five-point Likert scale, both men and women reported little confidence in their ability to determine the sexual intentions of someone they had just met, moderate certainty regarding how far they would go sexually with a new partner, and only moderate certainty about the boundaries they had set for themselves regarding what they would or would not do sexually. Gender differences were found in these responses, with women being more certain than men. When asked if there were times when “in the heat of the moment, [they had] gone further sexually than [they] had

intended", 64% of men and 79% of women agreed they had (Sawyer, et al., 1993, p.15).

This suggests that although they believe themselves as being somewhat certain of their personal ethics, many men and women tend to ignore these ethics when sexually aroused.

If many women and men are uncertain about how far they will go sexually with a new partner, effective sexual communication is bound to be difficult.

In addition to not having firm personal guidelines before an intimate encounter, many people use indirect tactics to communicate interest in sexual activity. Greer and Buss (1994) found that although men and women stated the best tactic to promote a sexual encounter was to ask directly, their most frequent behaviours included very indirect, and in some cases very ambiguous, acts such as practising good hygiene, sitting next to the person, acting well mannered, and smiling warmly. University students were asked to indicate how often they performed each of 122 acts in order to promote a sexual encounter. Within the top 20 most frequently performed acts for both women and men, the only reference to verbal communication was ranked fifteenth (only for men), consisting of telling jokes to make the women laugh (Greer & Buss, 1994).

O'Sullivan and Byers (1992) also found that nonverbal responses to a sexual initiation were more common than verbal responses. Female and male participants recorded aspects of their sexual interactions in dating situations over a two-week period, including responses to sexual initiations. Positive nonverbal responses (91% of women; 83% of men) were used more often than positive verbal responses (56% of women; 50% of men) to a sexual initiation. Although O'Sullivan and Byers (1992) did not explicitly

study consent behaviour, “positive responses to sexual initiation”, as described in their study, could be defined as giving consent (Hickman, 1996). The reliance on nonverbal signals is not surprising given that both men and women tend to believe that nonverbal cues are more accurate predictors of an individual’s sexual interest than are verbal cues (Sawyer, et al., 1993).

The “decide as you go” mentality of many women and men during sexual encounters is not problematic in itself. In fact, given a new dating partner and new situational variables, it seems reasonable that the assessment of the situation would be an ongoing process and that this would extend to sexual possibilities as well. However, this uncertainty, coupled with the lack of clear verbal messages about that evolving decision process, results in considerable guessing of partners’ nonverbal cues as well as the possibility of misinterpreting each other’s sexual intentions.

Why is it that many women and men don’t use direct verbal communication to negotiate their sexual wants with their dating partners? Indirect methods of communication tend to be more popular because they are nonconfrontational, allowing partners to avoid awkward situations and the risk of rejection. It seems that men and women avoid precoital discussion because they believe it decreases the likelihood that a sexual interaction will take place (Haffner, 1995/1996). Waldby, Kippax, and Crawford (1993) found that the men they interviewed disliked ‘sex talk’ because they equated talking during sex with failure. They felt that if their partner was talking to them during sexual activity, then their expectations about the “normal” sequence of sexual events was

disrupted. In other words, talking and sex were antithetical to one another.

More generally, sexuality is not readily discussed because we live in a culture that has an ambivalent attitude toward sexuality. Sexuality has overtones of shame and guilt attached to it. This has generally been the result of a traditional religious orthodoxy that viewed sex as “sinful” if performed outside of marriage or for any reason other than procreation (Tannahill, 1980). At the same time as our society has become more sexually sophisticated through mass media exposure to sexual images and ideas, we remain sexually ignorant because this exposure tends to perpetuate myths and half-truths about our sexual selves (Reinisch, 1990; Tiefer, 1994; Wolf, 1991).

Finally, as a society we tend to believe that sex is perfectly natural so we will automatically know what to do given a sexual situation (Guldner, 1995). This widely held attitude about sex leads to the assumption that the best sexual experiences require little communication. The encounters should be spontaneous and the partners should be swept away by passion (Haffner, 1995/1996). The media certainly perpetuate this myth with their notions of romance and physical lust being an uncontrollable, biological urge.

Sexual Consent Signals

There have been only two studies in the literature which have focussed specifically on sexual consent (Hall, 1995; Hickman & Muehlenhard, 1999). Hall (1995) was the first researcher to investigate sexual consent behaviour for non-coital and coital sexual behaviours. His research on routine consent giving in day-to-day sexual interactions supported the assumption that consent is more often an issue when the

behaviour being considered is intercourse. His sample consisted of 310 heterosexual college students, who had experienced consensual sexual behaviour. Most (67%) were of European American background. Hall (1995) used a survey questionnaire to investigate three main issues: (1) the sequencing of participant's most recent sexual experience, (2) whether explicit consent was given for each sexual activity, and (3) how consent was given. He found that most often sexual behaviours occurred without overt consent being given, although participants did report giving verbal and nonverbal consent to each of 12 sexual activities some of the time. For participants who had engaged in particular behaviours, consent giving was reported most frequently for penile-vaginal intercourse (79%) and anal intercourse (73%). The rate of consent giving for other sexual behaviours was markedly lower. Of the 10 other sexual activities (e.g., "she/he touched his/her genitals", "she/he gave him/her oral sex", "kissed") the average percentage of participants who gave verbal or nonverbal permission was 50%. When given, most consent was granted nonverbally. Behaviours that indicated nonverbal consent included "kissing", "getting closer", "intimately touching", "smiling" and non-behaviours such as "not moving away". Rates of verbal consent rarely exceeded 20%. Similar rates were found for women and men (Hall, 1995).

Interestingly, the nonverbal behaviours used to indicate how consent was granted in Hall's (1995) study overlap significantly with those used to measure the communication of sexual interest in the study by O'Sullivan and Byers (1992). The concepts of indicating consent and indicating sexual interest do not seem to be

distinguishable on the basis of reported behaviours. O'Sullivan and Byers (1992) found the most frequently reported initiations used nonverbal signs of interest, including kissing (40%), suggestive actions or nonsexual touch (34%), and sexual fondling (26%). If the communication of sexual interest is demonstrated nonverbally through kissing, touching and/or fondling, then how is it possible to first achieve consent for these non-coital sexual activities? For example, if a man asks consent to engage in sexual intercourse by touching his female partner's breast, how could he have obtained prior consent for fondling? It seems that, in some instances, the process used to ask consent for sexual intercourse involves first engaging in non-coital activities for which consent has not been obtained.

Unfortunately, Hall did not examine how participants indicated their verbal consent, so it is not clear how respondents interpreted these items on the questionnaire. In addition, his findings regarding prior sexual experience and consent giving behaviour shed little light on the issue of sexual consent precedence. Based on his categorization of "not yet" (intercourse [or intimate sexual behaviour] has not yet occurred) "still new" (intercourse has occurred but is still new) and "experienced" (intercourse has occurred many times) relationships, Hall (1995) found that with increased experience, female subjects tended to give less formal permission for all sexual activities, while for men, permission giving was slightly lower in the "still new" relationship category but fairly consistent across relationship experience levels. Hall (1995) did not indicate whether these differences were significant and does not give any interpretation of these findings

beyond stating that they did not support his hypothesis. However, the trend for women does indicate that more permission giving would occur on dates early in a relationship, in comparison with dates later in a relationship.

Hall's research is based on *permission giving*, however, it may be more useful to determine the *asking* of consent and how it fluctuates with experience. For example, if sexual precedence has been established for a particular activity, individuals may be more inclined to stop asking for consent because it has been given so many times it becomes assumed. Sexual precedence is an important determinant of consent behaviour and is discussed in detail in the next section.

Hickman and Muehlenhard's (1999) exploratory study investigated how young women and men inferred and conveyed sexual consent. Their mid-western university sample consisted of 378 heterosexual undergraduates with a mean age of 19. Most (85%) were of European American background. Participants were presented with scenarios in which sex was initiated either verbally or nonverbally along with a list of 34 possible responses to the initiation. Participants rated how representative each response was of how they would give sexual consent and how their date would give sexual consent as well as how frequently participants used each response in actual situations.

Their findings indicated that consent is more complex than simply saying "yes". There was a wide diversity of behaviours or signals individuals used to communicate sexual consent. Factor analysis revealed sexual consent to be comprised of four categories of signals: direct, indirect, verbal, and nonverbal. Direct consent signals were

defined as straightforward and unambiguous signals (e.g., stating “I want to have sex with you”) while indirect consent signals were roundabout and ambiguous (e.g., “she/he touches and kisses you” or “she/he asks if you have a condom”). Hickman and Muehlenhard (1999) found that the majority of consent signals could be organized using the categories from the factor analysis to form a matrix with direct/indirect as one axis and verbal/nonverbal as the other axis. This research is the first attempt at organizing sexual consent signals into a coherent framework.

Hickman and Muehlenhard (1999) found significant but small gender differences in the interpretation of opposite-sex consent signals. Men tended to perceive all consent signals, except a direct refusal, as more representative of their own sexual consent than did women. The implication was that if sexual signals are interpreted more often as consent giving by men than by women, gender-based misinterpretations could result. This is not surprising, given that numerous studies have found that men rate women, other men, and even themselves as being more sexual than women do (Abbey, 1982; 1987; Abbey & Harnish, 1995; Johnson et al., 1991; Muehlenhard, 1988; Shotland & Craig, 1988). According to Hickman and Muehlenhard (1999), the male tendency to see the world in more sexual terms than women results in the (mis)interpretation of their own sexual consent signals as representative of others. If men expect that their date would signal consent in the same way they themselves would, then men may mistakenly assume their date is signalling consent when they may not be. The one very important exception is a direct refusal. Both women and men rated “saying no” as a signal that did not

represent the giving of sexual consent (Hickman & Muehlenhard, 1999). It appears that 'no' really is understood as 'no'.

This study was important in developing a framework of direct/indirect and verbal/nonverbal continuums for consent signals and for indicating gender differences in the perception of consent. Hickman and Muehlenhard (1999), however, did not examine consent for sexual activities other than penile-vaginal intercourse. It is possible that consent signals occur several times throughout a sexual encounter from foreplay to intercourse, signifying the *asking for* and *giving of* permission to proceed to the next "level" of sexual behaviour. By focusing exclusively on intercourse, the process of consent is obscured. In addition, their study did not examine whether consent is situationally specific. It is possible that the perception of sexual consent on a first date is very different from that in a long-term relationship. For example, a smile in response to being asked "do you have a condom?" could signal sexual consent in an established relationship, but indicate tentative/apprehensive denial on a first date. The context of the relationship and the behaviour requiring consent need to be taken into consideration when assessing consent signals.

Is Consent Important For Anything But Intercourse?

The Antioch policy stipulates that sexual consent needs to be asked for and received at every "level" of sexual involvement. Unfortunately, the policy does not indicate what a level is. This oversight raises a significant question. Do students consider sexual consent to be an important consideration for sexual activities other than

intercourse? Is consent for intercourse perceived differently than consent for other sexual behaviours? With the cultural emphasis on penile-vaginal intercourse being the end point of sexual relations and everything else being foreplay, is consent a one-time event or a continuous process throughout a sexual encounter from the first kiss to the last caress?

Margolin and colleagues (1989, 1990) examined the violation of a partner's sexual consent in kissing behaviour by giving college students vignettes in which one dating partner states that he/she does not want to be kissed, but the other partner does not comply, and kisses him/her anyway. Results of both studies indicated that male participants were more supportive of the man "stealing" a kiss from the woman in the vignette than were female participants. Although, male and female means were significantly different, it should be noted that the differences were small and that neither group was extreme in their perception of the consent violation being acceptable or unacceptable. On a 7-point scale, with higher numbers representing the unacceptability of the behaviour, means did not rise above 5.4 or drop below 3. The most interesting observation of Margolin, Miller, and Moran's (1989) study and a similar follow-up study by Semonsky and Rosenfeld (1994), however, was the participants explanations of their quantitative responses. Several participants downplayed the seriousness of the male's violation by suggesting that the behaviour was relatively unimportant. Specific examples from participants included "a kiss isn't a matter of life or death" and "a measly kiss is no big deal". These findings suggest that asking for sexual consent may be perceived as necessary only at more "serious" levels of sexual activity/involvement for both men and

women.

Research on consent has provided some important insights but still leaves numerous questions unanswered. For example, we do not know: (1) the meaning that young women and men attach to sexual consent; (2) whether they perceive it as an important issue in dating relationships; and (3) whether women and men perceive a gender difference in sexual consent behaviour. Additionally, it is unclear exactly how sexual precedence based on relationship status or type of sexual activity affects sexual consent behaviour. However, research has suggested the possibility that asking for consent declines as a relationship develops over time and that verbal consent is more likely to be obtained for coital than for non-coital behaviours.

Setting Sexual Precedence

Another important assumption regarding sexual consent concerns sexual precedence. Shotland and Goodstein (1992) found that once sexual relations have been established, there are expectations on the part of both women and men that those relations will continue. Disruptions in the expected chain of sexual events such as refusals are not perceived favourably. Research on the expectations regarding sexual activity indicate that men and women are more likely to perceive a resisting woman as obligated to have sex if the couple has had sexual intercourse 10 times before versus once or never before the event (Shotland & Goodstein, 1992). Participants are also more likely to label the encounter rape when the resisting woman has only had sex once or never before with the male versus 10 times before the event (Shotland & Goodstein, 1992). Other research has

supported the precedence theory suggesting that different forms of courtship rape are the result of context variables such as the stage and type of relationship. Specifically, contextual variables include whether or not sexual ground rules have been established, the length of the relationship and whether the couple has engaged in prior sexual activity (Shotland, 1992).

Similar to Shotland and Goodstein (1992), Margolin et al. (1989) found that the male's right of sexual access to his partner increased the longer the partners were together and the more formal their commitment to each other had become. Participants reported that the male in the vignette was increasingly entitled to kiss his partner against her will and she was increasingly obligated to give in as the relationship progressed from first date, to long-term dating, to marriage. Even within seemingly noncoercive situations, precedence seems to affect the need to ask for sexual consent. In a follow-up study Margolin (1990) replicated these results across gender indicating that "the longer the partners were said to go out with each other, the less support they had to refuse each other's sexual advances and the more support they had to ignore their partner's sexual wishes" (p.289-290).

Socialization theory would support the notion that sexual consent dynamics change as the length and/or quality of the relationship changes. The bidirectional flow of influence between active participants results in continuous and mutual influence which allows dating partners to not only shape each other but also the social world that they live in. The longer a couple date each other, the more likely it is that the sexual relationship

(assuming there is one) will evolve in directions that require less verbal consent, both asking and giving and more nonverbal cues or signals that are more likely to be interpreted accurately.

Contextual variables influence expectations in both men and women with respect to the anticipated sequencing of sexual events (i.e., the interpersonal level of sexual scripting), and thus have direct implications for sexual consent. Consent, whether actively or passively established, may also be assumed once sexual activity has taken place. Therefore, intuitively it follows that consent is also expected to continue for (at least) those sexual activities involved. As a result, sexual consent is not sought again - it is simply assumed. If couples follow a precedence assumption for sexual consent, then contextual variables, such as the stage of a relationship, become important in determining the level and type of consent negotiations that will be involved in any given encounter. Other support for context specificity is found by researchers demonstrating that women are more likely to initiate sexual activity within a steady dating relationship than a casual relationship (O'Sullivan & Byers, 1992).

Two questions arising from this line of inquiry into sexual precedence include:

- (1) Do partners ask for sexual consent for each individual act or is consent a discreet event assumed under a generalized agreement to *have sex*?
- (2) Do partners who have had sexual intercourse with each other stop asking for consent to engage in sexual relations, and if so, at what stage in the relationship?

Attitudes and Behaviours

Inquiry into heterosexual attitudes and behaviours regarding sexual consent is very recent. As previously discussed, there is a large discrepancy between people's beliefs regarding good sexual communication and what they are actually doing (Greer & Buss, 1994; Sawyer, et al., 1993). If sexual consent follows a similar pattern, it is likely that young women and men will agree that intentional asking and responding to questions of consent are necessary but rarely performed in most people's lived experiences.

A number of attitudes and beliefs have been found to be related to sexually coercive behaviours that may shed some predictive light on sexual consent. Researchers have reported a relationship between such diverse attitudinal variables as attitudes toward rape and sex roles (Burt, 1980; Feild, 1978) and the predisposition to engage in coercive behaviour (Patton & Mannison, 1995). Byers and Eno (1991) found that traditional gender role and rape supportive attitudes were associated with the use of physical force, use of verbal coercion, and perceived uncontrollable arousal. Malamuth and Check (1981) have demonstrated that the acceptance of interpersonal violence and the belief that heterosexual relations are inherently adversarial are predictive of self-reported likelihood of raping. Researchers have also shown that acceptance of rape myths and holding traditional attitudes toward women are related to the acceptance of aggressive male behaviour (Kanin, 1985; Muehlenhard, Friedman, & Thomas, 1985; Rapaport & Burkhardt, 1984).

Measuring both attitudes and behaviours is crucial in developing our understanding of sexual consent because although people believe that obtaining sexual consent is important, in practise, many are not explicitly asking for or giving consent. In developing or evaluating sexuality education programs, it is also critical that the apparent discrepancy between attitudes and behaviours be recognized. The current emphasis within campus date rape prevention programs on improving sexual communication could be vastly improved if we understood sexual consent behaviours and attitudes from the perspective of the target group, namely, the sexually active heterosexual university student population.

Summary

The current study was based upon the two key studies conducted on sexual consent: Hall's (1995) study on sexual consent behaviour and Hickman and Muehlenhard's (1999) study on the interpretation and conveying of sexual consent signals. As in those studies, this study was designed to investigate heterosexual student's perceptions of sexual consent and possible gender differences in those perceptions. In addition, the meaning and importance which students attach to consent behaviour was examined. How students understand sexual consent may directly affect their intentions during dating and sexual encounters. Unlike Hickman and Muehlenhard (1999), who only investigated intercourse behaviours, the current study examined non-coital activities and the relative importance of asking for and giving consent for different types of sexual behaviour. This study also expanded research on consent by examining whether

situational variables such as the length of an intimate relationship affects if or how consent is negotiated. In addition, this study obtained student reactions to the Antioch sexual consent policy to assess the potential of that policy for improving sexual relations between women and men on college and university campuses.

Objectives

The major objective of this research was to analyze university women's and men's beliefs, attitudes and behaviours regarding sexual consent. To facilitate these objectives, new measures regarding sexual consent were constructed. Secondary objectives included determining:

1. student attitudes toward the consent policy of Antioch College
2. the relationship between relationship status and sexual consent attitudes and behaviours
3. the use of verbal and nonverbal behaviours in both obtaining and giving consent
4. the necessity of consent for non-coital sexual behaviours versus coital behaviours
5. the relationship between sexual victimization in women and sexual aggressiveness in men to attitudes and behaviours regarding sexual consent

Based on Hickman and Muehlenhard's (1999), finding that gender is an important determinant of consent attitudes, the following hypothesis regarding gender was developed:

1. Attitudes and behaviours about sexual consent will differ by gender, with women stressing the importance of sexual consent more than men.

Based on the precedence theory of Shotland and Goodstein (1992), it was hypothesized that:

2. Attitudes and behaviours about sexual consent will differ by current relationship status, such that, as the commitment in a relationship increases, the perceived necessity of obtaining explicit consent will decrease.
3. Individuals who have not experienced sexual intercourse will stress the importance of sexual consent more than individuals who have experienced sexual intercourse.

Based on previous literature on sexual coercion and date rape, it was hypothesized that:

4. Women who have experienced sexual coercion will stress the importance of sexual consent more than women who have not experienced coercion.
5. Men who have engaged in sexually aggression will be less likely to stress the importance of sexual consent than men who have not engaged in sexual aggression.

CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Given that this is a relatively new area of research, both qualitative and quantitative techniques were used to obtain data on sexual consent. Data collection and analysis occurred in three stages: (1) brainstorming sessions, (2) focus groups with university undergraduate students, and (3) a survey distributed to a stratified random sample of undergraduate students at the University of Guelph.

Brainstorming Sessions

The questions for the focus group study were developed from the literature review and two brainstorming sessions. Ideas and issues from the literature review were brought to a brainstorming group session held with faculty, graduate students, and individuals from the University of Guelph's Human Rights and Equity Committee and the Sexual and Gender Harassment office ($N=25$). A fourth year undergraduate class in Human Sexuality ($N=27$) at the University of Guelph also provided initial qualitative data used to generate questions for the focus group study. The following questions regarding the issue of sexual consent were derived from these group discussions:

- What are people's reactions to the Antioch College sexual consent policy?
- How do people believe consent should be obtained?
- How is the "should" different from how people actually obtain or not obtain consent?

- Is consent needed for every sexual activity or is one generalized request enough for an entire sexual encounter?
- How is obtaining sexual consent similar and/or different at the beginning of a sexual relationship, compared to after a couple has had several sexual encounters?
- Do men and women have different perceptions of how sexual consent is asked for and given?

Focus Groups

Applied social science researchers including sexuality researchers have increasingly made use of focus groups in the last decade (Bertrand, Brown & Ward, 1992; Krueger, 1994; Zeller, 1990). The value of using a qualitative approach such as focus groups is in its ability to allow for new and unexpected findings to emerge. Focus groups are especially suited for clarifying the perceived meanings and interpretations of social and behavioural issues where little is known about the beliefs, behaviours and meanings of a specific population. Sexual consent is one such phenomenon. The qualitative data obtained through focus groups emphasize the meanings and complexities of people's lived experiences (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Well designed qualitative studies can help fill the gaps in knowledge accrued through quantitative methods. Survey studies dealing with sexual consent and sexual signalling have provided some information but they have also left some questions unanswered. In part, comments from the focus groups in this study were used to present the meanings, interpretations and variations of the students.

The qualitative analysis of consent can also be a basis for developing better

quantitative measures. Knowledge of the target populations' contextual meanings and behavioural processes obtained through focus groups can be used to ask new questions as well as refine survey measures that seek to quantify attitudes and behaviours. This was a key objective of using focus groups in this research.

The focus group data were used to help construct the quantitative survey instrument in order to measure beliefs, attitudes and behaviours regarding sexual consent. Use of the focus group prior to developing the survey instrument improved the phrasing and relevance of questions and increased the researcher's confidence that the important issues regarding sexual consent were being measured.

Sample

Recommendations for the ideal size of focus groups have ranged from 4 to 12 (Krueger, 1994; Zeller, 1990). Groups of six same sex participants are optimal since larger groups may be more difficult to manage. In addition, the sensitive nature of sexuality issues suggests fewer participants should be in each group.

The control characteristics (characteristics common to all group members) used to specify the participants were that they be heterosexual and unfamiliar with each other. The break characteristic (characteristic unique to members within a group but not between groups) was gender. Holding separate sessions with women and men improves homogeneity within sessions and increases the depth of information obtained because it is easier for participants, sharing key characteristics, to identify with each other's experiences (Knodel, 1993). In addition, given the potentially sensitive nature of sexual

consent issues, this separation helped avoid mixing individuals with sharp differences of opinion or behaviour and reduced social desirability factors that a discussion of sexuality between men and women may induce. For the same reasons the focus groups were led by a same-sex facilitator.

Two female groups and one male group of heterosexual individuals participated in the focus group interviews. In one female group there were seven participants while in the other there were five. There were six participants in the male group. Participants ranged in age from 19 to 43 ($M=23.7$, $Mode=21$). A monetary incentive of \$10 per student was offered to encourage participation.

Materials

Materials for the focus groups can be found in Appendix B which includes a study information sheet explaining the nature of the study, a consent form, participation information sheet for demographics, and a topic outline guide used by the moderator to facilitate discussion. The focus group discussions were audiotaped and later transcribed verbatim.

Procedure

Focus group participants were recruited through announcements made in undergraduate classes at the University of Guelph (see Figure B-1 for the advertisement). The groups were run between August 1 and August 7 1997 in a meeting room, conducive to informal discussions at the University of Guelph. Food was provided.

Survey Pre-Test

The questionnaire was pre-tested on two groups of undergraduate students. The first group was comprised of 33 students in a fourth year sexuality course. The second group consisted of 20 students in a second year family relations course. These classes were used to assess the comprehension and readability of the survey. The pre-testing of the survey took place in January 1998.

Main Survey

Mail surveys have numerous possible advantages such as being customizable, flexible and efficient; however, they are also hampered by high rates of non-response (Burchell & Marsh, 1992; Dunne, 1998; Futrell & Lamb, 1981). Numerous techniques have been used in past research to increase response rates. Short questionnaires are better than long. Typically, questionnaires longer than 100 questions or 10 pages result in significant reductions in response rates (Burchell & Marsh, 1992). Follow-up mailing of reminder cards and monetary incentives have also been shown to increase response rates (Fox, Crask, & Kim, 1988; Kanuk & Berenson, 1975).

Sexuality questionnaires in particular have their own set of advantages and limitations. The social sensitivity of the topic can raise questions of volunteer and social desirability bias. Clement (1990) has proposed a sexual-secret continuum model in which issues of volunteer bias and invalid answers (due in part to social desirability), are combined. Any given individual resides on a continuum between sexual safe-guarding of secrets and a sexual willingness to pass on information.

High participation rates imply an overt or latent social pressure to participate and thus lose in terms of validity. On the other hand, studies with very low participation rates are only of interest to subjects with distinct motivation and these are then hardly representative. Therefore, if a high participation rate influences the validity and a low participation rate raises the volunteer bias, then studies with an average participation rate should produce the most useful results (Clement, 1990, pp. 51-52).

Compared with interview methods of investigating sexuality topics, questionnaire are much less intrusive and more anonymous which help reduce issues of volunteer bias and social desirability (Clement, 1990).

Sample

The female to male ratio at the University of Guelph is about two to one. Males were over-sampled in anticipation of a lower response rate from them. A stratified random sample of 1200 students from the undergraduate population at the University of Guelph was mailed the questionnaire using the campus mail. Participants were selected for inclusion in the random sample based on the following criteria, (a) 18 to 26 years old; and (b) full-time student. These criteria were chosen in order to generalize the findings to a “traditional” undergraduate population. Any returned questionnaires that did not fulfill the above criteria and indicate a heterosexual orientation, were excluded from the analysis.

Measures

Demographics measures. Demographic measures included gender, age, degree program, semester level, and relationship status. Current relationship status was measured by asking students to check one of the following categories: (1) “Not dating or

seeing anyone”, (2) “Dating or seeing more than one person”, (3) “Casually dating or seeing one person”, (4) “Steady relationship with one person only”, and (5) “Engaged or living with partner”. For comparison purposes, relationship status was collapsed into two levels of dating: casual (not dating, dating or seeing more than one person, and casually dating or seeing one person) and committed (steady relationship with one person and engaged or living with partner).

Sexual behaviours. Sexual experience was measured by asking: (1) “Have you ever willingly engaged in mild forms of sexual activity such as petting or sexual touching with a member of the opposite sex?”, (2) “Have you ever willingly engaged in sexual intercourse (that is, penile-vaginal intercourse)?”, (3) “If yes, with how many partners have you had penile-vaginal sexual intercourse?”, and (4) “Please indicate when your most recent sexual encounter was.” Responses were: (a) “this week”, (b) “within the last month”, (c) “within the last six months”, (d) “within the last year”, and (e) “more than one year ago”.

Attitudes Toward Antioch’s Sexual Consent Policy Scale. Ten items measured students attitudes toward the Sexual Consent Policy established at Antioch College in Yellow Springs, Ohio: (a) “This policy is a good way to require sexual communication and discussion between dating partners prior to engaging in sexual activity,” (b) “This policy is NOT realistic,” (c) “This policy could easily be incorporated into my own sexual interactions,” (d) “I WOULD endorse a similar policy on the University of Guelph campus,” (e) “This policy will NOT reduce the incidence of sexual assault or rape

because rapists know what they are doing (i.e., they do not misinterpret signals)", (f) "I WOULD comply fully with this policy", (g) "This policy is NOT enforceable," (h) "It is NOT the university's role to institute this type of policy," (i) "Antioch's sexual consent policy should ONLY be used as an educational awareness tool and not as a university regulation," (j) "This policy makes good sense but it would be very difficult to implement effectively." Responses ranged from (1) Strongly agree to (7) Strongly disagree.

Sexual Consent Attitudes Scale. A twenty-three item scale was constructed to measure attitudes toward sexual consent: (a) "Nonverbal behaviours are as effective as verbal communication to indicate sexual consent," (b) "Deciding how far a sexual encounter will proceed is often decided "during the moment", rather than ahead of time," (c) "When initiating sexual activity, it is okay to assume consent and proceed sexually until the partner indicates 'no'," (d) "If a sexual request is made and the partner indicates "no", it is okay to continue negotiating the request," (e) "Obtaining sexual consent is MORE necessary in a new relationship than in a committed relationship," (f) "It is enough to ask for consent at the beginning of a sexual encounter. You don't need to ask at every step along the way," (g) "More campus programs are needed to make students aware of sexual consent issues," (h) "If a couple has a long history of consenting sexual activity with each other, they no longer need to ask for consent during each sexual encounter," (i) "Too few couples openly discuss the issue of sexual consent," (j) "The necessity of asking for sexual consent DECREASES as the length of an intimate relationship INCREASES," (k) "Verbally asking for sexual consent is awkward," (l)

“Sexual consent should always be obtained BEFORE the start of any sexual activity,” (m)
 “Partners are LESS likely to ask for sexual consent the longer they are in a relationship,”
 (n) “It is equally important to obtain sexual consent in ALL relationships regardless of the
 length or prior sexual involvement,” (o) “When initiating sexual activity, one should
 assume no sexual consent and verbally ask for it before proceeding with any sexual
 activity,” (p) “Verbally asking for sexual consent reduces the pleasure of the encounter
 (i.e., it destroys the mood),” (q) “If your partner wants to engage in sexual activity it is
 okay to proceed, even if she/he is drunk,” (r) “Obtaining sexual consent is MORE
 necessary in a casual sexual encounter than in a committed relationship,” (s) “Consent to
 begin a sexual encounter implies consent up to and including sexual intercourse,” (t)
 “Sexual intercourse is the only sexual activity that requires explicit verbal consent,” (u)
 “Consent should be asked before ANY kind of sexual behaviour, including necking or
 petting,” (v) “It is just as necessary to obtain consent for genital fondling as it is for
 sexual intercourse,” (w) “If sexual consent for intercourse is already established, then
 consent for petting and fondling can be assumed.” Responses for items 1 through 23
 ranged from (1) Strongly agree to (7) Strongly disagree.

Sexual consent forced choice item. A single forced choice question was also used
 to measure preference for one of two types of sexual consent negotiating styles. The
 question instructed students to “Check which of these two statements you agree with
 more.” The two choices were: (a) “In making sexual advances, it is okay to continue until
 a partner indicates otherwise (i.e., assume ‘yes’ until you hear a ‘no’),” and (b) “BEFORE

making sexual advances, one should always ask for and obtain a verbal 'yes' to engage in any sexual activities (i.e., assume 'no' until you get a 'yes')."

Consent and context. A multiple response question was used to measure attitudes toward obtaining consent in differing contexts. Students were asked to indicate with a check mark which types of sexual behaviours and relationships (new dating relationship versus committed dating relationship) they believed required a clear and explicit indication of consent. There were nine sexual behaviours listed: hugging, kissing, touching partner's breasts/chest, touching partner's genitals, removing partner's clothes, masturbating partner, penile/vaginal intercourse, oral sex, and anal intercourse.

Sexual Consent Behaviours Scale. A twelve item scale measured student's sexual consent behaviours: (a) "I have NOT given much thought to the topic of sexual consent," (b) "I have discussed sexual consent issues with a friend," (c) "I have heard sexual consent issues being discussed by other students on campus," (d) "I have discussed sexual consent issues with my current (or most recent) partner at times OTHER THAN during sexual encounters," (e) "Sexual consent is NOT something my current (or most recent) partner and I discuss before we start having sex," (f) "It is easy to accurately "read" my current (or most recent) partner's nonverbal signals as indicating consent or non-consent to sexual activity," (g) "I ask for sexual consent from my current (or most recent) partner MORE than my partner asks it of me," (h) "Typically, I ask for consent by making a sexual advance and waiting for a reaction, so I know whether or not to continue," (i) "I always ask (either verbally or nonverbally) for consent BEFORE I initiate a sexual

encounter,” (j) “During a sexual encounter, I typically only ASK for consent once,” (k) “During a sexual encounter, I typically only GIVE my consent once,” (l) “I tend NOT to decide ahead of time what I will and will not consent to sexually. I wait till I am ‘in the moment’ to decide.” Responses for items 1 through 12 ranged from (1) Strongly agree to (7) Strongly disagree.

Use of verbal and nonverbal behaviours to obtain consent. A multiple response question measured the use of verbal and nonverbal behaviours as indicators of consent. Students were asked to indicate which verbal and non-verbal behaviours they used in their most recent sexual encounter to specifically (1) ask for their partner’s consent and (2) give their own consent. Examples of behaviours included: (a) “you kissed your partner,” (b) “you undressed yourself,” (c) “you did not say no,” and (d) “you asked ‘Do you want to have sex?’” The verbal and nonverbal behaviours used in this question were taken from Hickman and Muehlenhard (1999).

Sexual Experiences Scale (SES). The Sexual Experiences Scale (SES; Koss, Gidycz, & Wisniewski, 1987) was used to measure past victimization or perpetration, since this has been identified as influencing sexual consent behaviour (Shotland & Hunter, 1995). The SES is a self-report instrument designed to measure, on a continuum, an individual’s sexual aggression or sexual victimization history (Koss, Gidycz, & Wisniewski, 1987; Koss & Gidycz, 1985). The questions refer specifically to sexual activities associated with varying degrees of coercion, threat and force. Examples of items included: “Have you given in to sex play (fondling, kissing or petting, but not intercourse)

when you didn't want to because of an opposite sex person's continual arguments and pressure?" and "Have you engaged in sexual intercourse when you didn't want to because a member of the opposite sex threatened or used some degree of force (twisting your arm, holding you down, etc.) to make you?" Parallel forms of the SES were designed for men and women. Males were asked about their aggressive behaviour while women were asked about their victimization. Responses to these items were (1) yes and (2) no.

The survey's internal consistency reliability (Cronbach alpha) has been reported at .74 for women and .89 for men. Test-retest reliability (one week interval) indicated 93% item agreement between testing times (Koss & Gidycz, 1985). Koss and Gidycz (1985) have also reported correlations for the SES with interview data of .73 ($p < .001$) for women and .61 ($p < .001$) for men, demonstrating a moderate degree of validity.

The original SES was modified slightly in the current study to exclude two original questions in which the wording has been cited as problematic (Fillion, 1996).

Procedure

The questionnaire was mailed to a stratified random sample of 1200 students, with equal numbers of women and men selected for the mailing. Prior to the mailing, the response rate was estimated to be between 30% to 50% given that (a) the questionnaire was less than 10 pages (Burchell & Marsh, 1992), (b) the topic would be of intrinsic interest to students, (c) the researcher would appear to have credibility, and (d) subjects would be provided with an incentive to participate (Aaker & Day, 1990).

Data collection began February 23, 1998 and ended March 31, 1998.

Questionnaires were delivered by campus mail services to students' on-campus mail boxes. A reminder card (Figure C-3) was sent to the survey participants two weeks following initial mailing to thank those who had responded and to encourage others to do so. Reminders have been shown to increase the response rate by up to ten per cent (Moss, 1981).

Participants were offered an incentive of the chance to win \$100 cash. Participants completed a draw ballot and returned it (sealed in a separate envelope) with their completed questionnaire. The winner was drawn from all eligible responses received by the deadline date of March 31, 1998.

Qualitative Data Analysis

The focus of the qualitative portions of this study was to illuminate the major themes in the negotiation of sexual consent. These themes were then used to inform the process of questionnaire development. Qualitative data were also used to provide illustrative comments.

Transcripts were examined separately for each question. A sentence-by-sentence, line-by-line analysis was performed in which margin notes were used to keep track of key words and ideas that were illuminated from each sentence or complete thought. A summary sheet that included the ideas from the margin notes was drafted for each question. The summary sheets acted as a guide for noting patterns in the data. These patterns lead to the development of major and minor themes for each question. Themes were counted to assess their relative frequency within the sample. The summary sheets

also included key phrases from the participants that highlighted possible themes.

The descriptive themes from the qualitative data were subsequently used in the development of the survey. Themes were translated into one or more Likert-type questions which represented the core aspects of that theme. For example, many focus group participants claimed that Antioch's policy statement was "unrealistic". The use of this word prompted the development of survey items dealing with the practicalities of implementing the policy. Sample items developed from the student's comments include: "this policy is not realistic", "this policy is not enforceable", and "this policy makes good sense but it would be very difficult to implement effectively." In addition, when asked about how often verbal consent is obtained during a typical encounter, focus group participants frequently talked about the length or stage of a relationship as being a determining factor. This theme of relationship context lead to the development of survey questions such as "Obtaining sexual consent is MORE necessary in a new relationship than in a committed relationship" and "The necessity of asking for sexual consent DECREASES as the length of an intimate relationship INCREASES." In addition, discussion regarding the general issue of context led to the exploration of how consent may vary depending on which sexual behaviours were the focus. Accordingly, questions were developed to assess how consent was negotiated for different sexual behaviours. For example, survey questions such as "sexual intercourse is the only sexual activity that requires explicit verbal consent" and "consent should be asked before ANY kind of sexual behaviour, including necking and petting " were developed to explore this theme.

Quantitative Data Analysis

The questionnaire data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS for Windows, version 9). Descriptive statistics were used to summarize sample characteristics such as demographics and participant's sexual experiences.

Principal components analysis was performed on the three main scales (Attitudes Toward Antioch's Sexual Consent Policy Scale, Sexual Consent Attitudes Scale, and Sexual Consent Behaviours Scale) to reduce the number of items to a smaller set of more meaningful dimensions. Principal components analysis is an exploratory technique designed to reduce a larger number of variables to a smaller number of dimensions (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1989) and is a common procedure used for scale development in the Social Sciences (Roberts & Clifton, 1992). A separate principal components analysis was conducted for each of the three scales.

In each principal components analysis, the correlation matrix was examined to check for fulfilment of conditions required for principal components analysis. In order for a matrix to undergo principal components analysis, there should be numerous correlations between variables of .30 or greater and Kaiser's measure of sampling adequacy should be .60 or more (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1989).

In the principal components analysis, the factors were rotated to improve the interpretability of the solution. An orthogonal (varimax) rotation was selected because the goal of this analysis was to produce a set of uncorrelated components (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1989). In order to determine the ideal number of components to be extracted, the

researcher utilized two guidelines: only components having eigenvalues of greater than one were considered to be significant (Hair, Anderson, & Tatham, 1987) and the scree plot was examined for the point at which the curve began to straighten out. Where the results indicated a need to do so, alternative solutions were tested in order to enhance the strength of the overall component solution. The conceptual fit of the variables loading onto each component was considered. Labels were assigned to each composite variable to reflect, to the greatest extent possible, what the items loading onto each represented (Hair, et al., 1987). The reliability of each composite variable was assessed via the calculation of Cronbach's alpha coefficient. If all items comprising a summated scale are indeed measuring the same underlying dimension, survey answers to those items should be highly correlated among themselves. Smith and Glass (1987, as cited in Roberts & Clifton, 1992, p.131) suggest that moderate reliability coefficients, those over .50, are sufficient for research purposes.

Composite variables were used to run discriminant analysis to test for the ability of the composite variables to distinguish between different groups of students.

Discriminant analysis is a multivariate technique used to predict the likelihood that an individual will belong to a particular group (dependent variable) based on several predictors (independent variables) (Hair, et al, 1987; Tabacknick & Fidell, 1986).

Discriminant analysis was performed to test the ability of the 6 variables resulting from the principal components analyses to differentiate students based on gender, relationship status, sexual experience, victimization in women and aggression in men. With 6

predictor variables and a sample size of 514, the data set met the suggested ratio of 20 observations for each predictor variable (Hair, et al., 1987).

Standard (direct) discriminant function analysis was used because the researcher was not testing hypotheses about the proportion of variance attributable to some independent variables after variance due to others had been accounted for (Tabacknick & Fidell, 1986). The researcher was simply interested in finding the dimensions along which groups differed. Univariate statistics employed in interpreting the discriminant function solutions included means, standard deviations and F values indicating equality of group means. A significance level of $p \leq 0.05$ was used to determine the acceptability of the discriminant function and independent variables. Group means were then examined to determine the direction of influence of each independent variable.

The split sample method was used to test the stability of the discriminant function. For each analysis, a random sample of 50% of cases eligible for analysis was withheld from the initial analysis and later used to check the classification accuracy. The split sample method helps avoid upward bias in the prediction accuracy which results when cases used in developing the classification matrix are the same as those used in computing the function (Hair, et al., 1987). As a rule of thumb, Hair et al. (1987) suggest that classification accuracy of the discriminant function should be approximately 25% greater than that achieved by chance. Because sample sizes were unequal, the proportional chance criterion was used to assess the predictive accuracy of the discriminant function.

Ethical Considerations

Prior to the start of the focus groups an explanation of the study was given orally and individuals were informed of their rights as research participants. Written consent was obtained from those who agreed to participate (Figure B-2). Every effort was made to assure the confidentiality of the information obtained. Focus group responses were anonymous and participants were not identified by name in any reports of the study. Focus group respondents were not asked personal questions about their own behaviour. As well, participants were not identified from any quotes or descriptive data used in conjunction with quotations. Transcriptions and tapes were kept in a locked file with access available only to the researchers involved with the project. Results of the study were provided to participants at their request.

Participants in the questionnaire study were informed of the purpose of the study and their rights in the cover letter that accompanied the questionnaire. Consent to participate was assumed if the questionnaire was completed and returned. Participants were specifically instructed not to personally identify themselves on the questionnaire to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of responses. All questionnaires were kept in a locked file with access only to the researchers involved with the project. Results of the study will be provided to participants at their request (see Figure C-2: Incentive Ballot) and more widely disseminated through the campus newspaper.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

In this chapter, the focus group and survey results and analyses are presented. The survey analyses include descriptive statistics of the sample, and a principal components analysis of the sexual consent scale items. A discriminant function analysis and multivariate analysis of variance using the composite variables derived from the principal components analysis are also presented.

Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

Of the 1200 questionnaires mailed out to the non-married undergraduate population ($N=10,760$), 529 were returned, giving an overall response rate of 44.1%. The response rate for females was 330 of 600 (55%), whereas, the rate for males was 184 of 600 (31%). Fifteen of the returned questionnaires were discarded for not meeting the heterosexual ($n=14$) or single relationship status ($n=1$) criteria for inclusion. The remaining 514 surveys were used in the subsequent analyses.

The gender distribution of the sample was 64.2% female and 35.8% male. This is similar to the overall University of Guelph undergraduate gender distribution of 62.3% females and 37.7% males. The age of the sample ranged from 18 to 27 ($M = 20.8$, $SD = 1.58$). The majority of respondents (86.6%) were in the “traditional” undergraduate age category of 18 to 22 years of age. In comparison, the University of Guelph undergraduate population, ages 18 to 27, has a mean age of 21.9.

With respect to academic program (see Table 1), the majority of students in the

sample were enrolled in either a Bachelor of Science (36.2%) or a Bachelor of Arts (28.2%) degree program. As shown in Table 1, the proportion of the sample enrolled in each of the programs is similar to that of the total undergraduate population. The mean semester level for the sample was 4.3 ($SD=2.3$) compared with a mean of 4.7 for the University of Guelph undergraduate population. Ninety-eight percent of the sample was enrolled on a full-time basis.

Table 1

Percentage of Students by Academic Program

Program	Total Sample	Females	Males	Undergraduate Population
Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.)	36.2	38.5	32.1	36.4
Bachelor of Arts (B.A.)	28.2	30.3	24.5	29.9
Bachelor of Commerce (B.Comm.)	9.3	7.0	13.6	10.9
Bachelor of Applied Science (B.A.Sc.)	6.0	8.5	1.6	5.4
Bachelor in Science in Agriculture (B.Sc.Agr.)	5.8	3.6	9.8	4.5
Bachelor in Science in Engineering (B.Sc.Eng.)	4.7	3.0	7.6	4.5
Bachelor in Landscape Architecture (BLA)	0.8	0.9	0.5	1.1
Other	9.0	8.2	10.3	7.1
Total	<u>N=514</u>			<u>N=10,760</u>

Table 2

Percentage of Students by Semester Level

Semester Level	Total Sample	Females	Males	Undergraduate Population
One or Two	38.3	42.7	31.5	29.3
Three or Four	22.2	19.5	27.6	24.8
Five or Six	21.2	20.5	23.2	21.0
Seven or Eight	15.6	15.5	16.1	21.4
Nine or more	1.8	1.8	1.7	3.6
Total	<u>N=514</u>			<u>N=10,760</u>

Findings regarding respondents' dating relationship status are presented in Table

3. The two most common relationship categories were "not dating" (41.4%) or "steady relationship with only one person" (38.5%).

Table 3

Percentage of Students by Current Relationship Status

	Total Sample	Females	Males
Not dating or seeing anyone	41.4	44.8	35.3
Casually dating or seeing one or more persons	14.4	11.5	19.6
Steady relationship with one person only	38.5	36.7	41.8
Engaged or living with partner	5.6	7.0	3.3
Total	<u>N=514</u>		

The percentage findings of the sexual consent scales (Attitudes Toward Antioch Sexual Consent Policy Scale; Sexual Consent Attitudes Scale; Sexual Consent Behaviour Scale) by gender are in Appendix D (Tables D1 through D3).

Sexual Experience

The majority of students (93%) had experienced consensual forms of sexual activity such as petting or sexual touching with a member of the opposite sex (93% female; 92% male). The majority (75%) had also experienced consensual sexual intercourse (73% female; 77% male). The reported number of sexual intercourse partners ranged between 0 and 35 with a mean of 2.8, a median of 2.0 ($SD=4.2$) (for females, range 0-22, $M=2.7$, $SD=3.7$; for males, range 0-35, $M=3.3$, $SD=5.2$). Among those students who had experienced sexual activity, 44% reported their most recent sexual encounter had occurred within the last week, 21% within the last month, 20% within the last 6 months, 8% within the last year, and 7% more than a year ago.

Sexual Victimization / Aggression

The response frequencies for each question pertaining to sexual victimization (for females) and aggression (for males) are presented in Appendix E. Forty-four percent of female respondents reported some form of sexual victimization. Only 12% of males reported engaging in some form of sexual aggression.

Sixty-two percent of females and 46% of males, reported having had a member of the other sex misinterpret the level of sexual activity they desired. When asked about sexually coercive experiences, 38% of females reported unwanted sexual contact because

of a male's arguments and pressure, whereas only 8% of males admitted to using arguments and pressure to obtain sexual contact. Nineteen percent of females reported unwanted intercourse because of a male's arguments and pressure, whereas seven percent of males admitted to using arguments and pressure to obtain intercourse. Four percent of females reported engaging in sexual intercourse because a male threatened or used some degree of force to make them, whereas two percent of males reported engaging in this type of aggression.

General Findings from Focus Groups and Main Survey

In this section comments from the focus groups will be presented along with some of the main percentage findings from the survey. The comments will be used to provide additional insight regarding attitudes toward sexual consent.

Definition of Sexual Consent

When asked about their own definition of sexual consent the students gave a diversity of responses. Generally, they focussed on the theme of mutual understanding and a willingness between partners to engage in agreed upon sexual behaviours. There were differences of opinion regarding the extent to which sexual consent needed to be verbal in nature. In particular, the students emphasized that the process of obtaining consent depended on relationship factors, such as the length of the relationship and/or the familiarity between partners. Female students tended to focus on sexual consent as a process in which negotiation is ongoing and renegotiation can occur at anytime during a sexual encounter. As one female student commented it was,

How I communicate, negotiate and state what my level of comfort and permission-giving is to another person. That has to be both non-verbal and verbal in a combination that included negotiation and communication. ... I would want to see it in a tier system. I would need to have verbal consent initially, then to talk about my non-verbal. I may say to my partner “you know when you touch me on the arm and go up towards my breast - but that’s negotiated. Yet I would have to renegotiate all the time (F1-03)¹.

Some females also defined consent according to the traditional female role of “gatekeeper” in sexual relationships. As one female student indicated: “[It is] how much you allow another person to do sexually” (F1-02). In line with the sexual script for women as the passive recipients of sexual advances from men, some female students also indicated that their definition of sexual consent implied an acquiescence to men, as indicated by the following female student’s comment; “Not resisting or something like that. Not only in the physical sense but in the emotional sense as well” (F3-40).

Males, similarly, supported a definition of consent which emphasized mutually agreed upon sexual activity but they were more divided on whether sexual consent was a singular event or a process of negotiation. When discussing how often consent needs to be communicated during a one night stand, one male indicated specific guidelines about when consent should happen, namely, beginning with a brief invitation to go to one’s

¹ A coding system was established for tracking focus group comments, where: F=female, M=male, 1,2,3 represent the first, second and third focus groups respectively, and the number after the dash (-) represents the page number reference in the focus group transcript.

place and then just prior to intercourse:

I think if intercourse is kind of the intention, what both parties see it leading to, then I think there is one [consent] before it starts, especially if you are somewhere and you say “Do you want to go back to my place?”, and then there is one more just before intercourse occurs, almost like a safety net, like “are you sure?”. You don’t want to dwell on it because it takes away from it [the experience] (M2-31).

However, not all males agreed with this analogy. Some indicated that while verbal consent may be used only once or twice, that there are many nonverbal signals that happen throughout the encounter as a “feeling out process” of knowing whether they can continue with their current behaviour and/or escalate the sexual activity. When asked whether the act of sexual intercourse was the only situation needing consent, one male responded:

I think it’s the only one that requires verbal [consent]. I think as far as the other stuff goes, as far as I am concerned I think that those are mostly nonverbal and waiting to see if there is a reaction. You can, pardon me, grope your way through the situation. I see sex as being a major step that requires a little more special [attention], but the other stuff, not as much (M2-32).

The finding that women view consent more as a process and men more as a single event is supported by the quantitative survey questions. Men, more than women, agreed with the following: (1) asking for consent at the beginning of a sexual encounter is enough, $\chi^2(1, N=511) = 29.1, p=.001$ (52% vs. 30%), (2) consent to begin a sexual

encounter implies consent throughout the encounter, $\chi^2 (1, N=508) = 9.96, p=.007$ (35% vs. 22%), (3) established consent for intercourse, implies consent for petting and fondling, $\chi^2 (1, N=513) = 16.68, p=.001$ (78% vs. 62%), and (4) that their own behaviour typically involves asking for consent only once during a sexual encounter, $\chi^2 (1, N=505) = 10.16, p=.006$ (50% vs. 35%).

Finally, student definitions of sexual consent also took into account the state of mind of the individuals engaged in sexual activity. In order for consent to be negotiated in good faith they stated that both individuals need to be fully aware of their actions. Students acknowledged that alcohol or drugs could seriously affect their decision making abilities during sexual negotiations. As one male stated,

Something else [that] comes into play here a little bit is the state of mind that these people are in. Like if a person isn't in the right state of mind and wouldn't have the same answer the next day, then hopefully the other person understands that and doesn't take advantage. ...like a girl who has had 15 beers saying 'yeah take me home'. When the next day she is like 'oh my God, what have I done' (M2-23).

When students were asked if consent was an issue that was discussed and talked about between friends or partners, many indicated it was not. The students felt that it didn't seem natural to discuss consent and it could not easily be included in everyday conversation with friends. The male group joked about how it might possibly come up in conversation between male friends: "It's not a question that comes up. Like, you are

talking with your friends ‘had a good night last night, eh? Was there consent?’

[laughter]. I don’t think it really comes up.” (M2-24). Students were quite aware of sexual consent as a public education issue having seen campus awareness posters on date rape; however, these campus campaigns had not translated into conversations with acquaintances, friends or partners. Generally, it was only when media attention was given to a dramatic event that students talked briefly about the issue of sexual assault, but not consent per se. As one female stated:

“Usually only when something comes up [media attention]. But generally speaking, it’s not a topic of conversation with my peers.” (F1-04). One female pointed out that even with an intimate partner, communication about consent seemed foreign: “I just started my first long relationship this summer and it’s really going well but we never discuss consent.” (F1-06).

In discussing why consent may not be talked about between intimate partners, one of the female groups raised the issue of discomfort, acknowledging that as a society we don’t talk during sexual encounters and that we may not want to because doing so may spoil the mood:

I think again it goes back to [the fact] that we’re really uncomfortable with talk ... we don’t talk about sex and when you say “it kind of just happens”, I think it’s cultural. I like the element of surprise, I don’t like discussing everything I’m going to do ... how romantic is that? (F1-06)

In the survey data, 65% of both men and women either agreed or strongly agreed that

verbally asking for sexual consent is awkward. The limited discussions on the topic of sexual consent were supported by the quantitative data with only about one-half of students indicating any discussion of this topic. Specifically, 56% had 'discussed sexual consent with a friend' and 43% reported that they had 'not given the topic of sexual consent much thought'.

Antioch College

When presented with the Antioch sexual consent policy statement (see Appendix B, p.145), the majority of both males and females responded that they were against the rigidity of a formal policy which dictated personal sexual behaviour and did not want to see this implemented on their own campus. They were more in favour of it being used as an educational tool. Students in the focus groups gave a diversity of arguments in opposition to the implementation of this policy. Several commented that while they agreed with the premise behind the policy, they did not believe that it was practical to try to regulate sexual consent behaviour through the use of a formal document. A major concern was over enforcement of the policy. Many believed that this policy would not be effective because of the difficulty in enforcing it. One woman expressed puzzlement about the practicalities of the policy: "I am a little unclear on how you actually make it a policy. Do you punish men on each sexual act that [they] violate? It seems totally unclear how you would be able to enforce it." (F1-08). Similarly, another woman asked, "Who is there to make sure that the questions are asked and [that] the appropriate responses are given?" (F3-10).

Stemming from their concerns about enforcement, some students raised issues of personal freedom and questioned the university's role in prescribing appropriate sexual behaviour. As one female stated, "I think it sets a precedent for institutional regulation of individual's private lives. The university does not belong in the bedroom of their students, faculty, and staff." (F1-02). Or as one male student bluntly stated,

There is no way in hell a university can tell me what I can and cannot do, whether it is right or wrong, especially in a situation like this cause if it goes to a judiciary it would be my word against their word. (M2-24)

Some students also commented that the required verbal negotiation dictated by the policy would reduce the intrinsic pleasure of sexual interaction and result in behaviours that were regimented, mechanical, and/or irritating. As one female commented,

That's [Antioch policy] the most ridiculous thing I have ever heard. That's annoying. If someone [said] 'can I touch your breast?', 'can I do this?', and 'can I do that?' I'd [say] 'get lost'. It would get on your nerves. (F3-42).

When discussing the "natural" progression of sexual encounters many students stressed the excitement involved in not knowing what the next move from a partner may be or how the progression of sexual events will play out on any given night. The Antioch policy of discussing and consenting to every sexual activity is contrary to the students' perception of sexual encounters as needing to be impulsive and uninhibited. A thoughtfully organized and planned sexual encounter was not perceived as exciting or romantic. One female student commented on her understanding of the conflict between

ideal relationship progression and the Antioch policy;

Personally I think that the spontaneity of a first kiss is one of the most wonderful things in a blossoming relationship. There's no way that I would like to be denied of that 'tingly' feeling by having to practically sign a contract before having my first kiss with someone. ...What a way to ruin the mood. The people [at] Antioch College must all suffer from sexual dysfunctions by now, due to all of the pressure to ask for consent every two minutes. (F3-35)

One male stated it much more bluntly, "So much for romance! Do you have to bring a clipboard with you?" (M2-14).

An additional argument against the policy involves its possible misuse or abuse. Some students were particularly concerned about the possibility that a woman might have given her consent and yet might still raise a formal complaint against the male because the next day she decides she regretted the sexual encounter; "It just gives a method for someone to easily complain. ... they could complain about if they were unhappy about the situation. ... The next day when there is regret by someone, even if there was consent." (M2-25).

In the main campus survey, students also reacted negatively to the Antioch policy (see table 4). Slightly fewer than one-half of the students said they would endorse a similar policy on their campus (45%). The reasons given for the negative evaluation support the qualitative comments. Most students agreed that the policy was unrealistic (74%), unenforceable (80%), and would be very difficult to implement effectively (86%).

In addition, only 47% said it would be easy to incorporate such a policy into their own sexual interactions. A particular concern was that verbally asking for consent was viewed as awkward (65%). Despite those concerns, students were not totally negative and did endorse some aspects of the policy which they saw as being positive. Positive reactions to the Antioch policy focussed on the idealistic nature of the policy. Students agreed that the policy is a good way to get students communicating with their partners about sexual activity (69%), makes good sense but would be difficult to implement effectively (86%) and could serve a better function if it were redesigned as an educational awareness tool (67%).

Preferred Method of Consent Negotiation

Focus group participants were asked which of two methods for obtaining sexual consent from partners they preferred to use: (1) ask a partner for a verbal yes before starting any sexual activity, or (2) initiate sexual activity and continue until the partner indicates otherwise (i.e., assume consent). Both males and females indicated that while asking for consent first is an ideal approach to sexual negotiations, in practice it is difficult to implement. Some of the reasons given why individuals may not ask for consent first, included the fact that being 'in the heat of the moment' makes one less rational and that consent may change during the moment, so there is a need for continuous communication.

Some males noted that the approach in which an individual assumes consent and continues until the partner indicates otherwise also has problems. They mentioned that it

is frustrating to have certain expectations for an encounter only to be thwarted in midstream. It would be better to know ahead of time. As one male stated;

I think asking ahead of time should be followed, but that's not always realistic because the other way, I mean you get so far and then when you are told 'no' you're pretty frustrated and that can turn out to be a bad thing. That wouldn't happen if you always knew ahead of time where you were, instead of 'surprise, that's it' ... I agree, in a perfect idealized world that would be fine to do [asking first] and it would also prevent the girl from feeling bad that she has to make you stop because it's going too far, but it's not realistic. (M2-28)

The survey data revealed that more students preferred to ask for consent first (60%) than to assume it (39%) before engaging in sexual activity. Females (65%) were more likely than males (53%) to prefer the method of obtaining consent which involved asking first prior to engaging in any sexual activity, whereas males (47%) were more likely than females (35%) to prefer assuming consent and continuing with sexual activity until the partner indicates otherwise, $\chi^2(1, N=507) = 6.62, p=.01$.

Communicating Consent

Focus group participants were asked how they thought students actually communicated consent. Both males and females believed that most of the time consent negotiations are nonverbal, involving the use of body language. They also agreed that negotiation around consent involves more verbal communication in a new relationship and less as the familiarity and intimacy increases. As one student stated: "I think you just

move into non-verbal. Could you imagine a married couple every time you have to have sex [saying], 'are you ready for this?', 'do you want to do this?' ... you'd be there forever." (F1-20). Students view the relationship's length as having a significant impact on a couple's ability to accurately interpret each other's nonverbal signals, which negates the need for permission: "...even before kissing if that's your first or second date. ... I can't see too many people that have been in a relationship for a long time being that verbal, because they don't feel they have to. They can read each other." (F3-45).

Some students suggested that asking for consent may only occur the first time the couple engages in sexual activity, and then it can be assumed afterwards. The influence of relationship contexts is clearly demonstrated in the quantitative attitude questions. When asked idealistically whether 'consent is more necessary in a new relationship than a committed one' or whether 'a couple's long history of consenting relations reduces the need to ask for consent', 44% and 47% respectively did not agree. However, when asked the more practical question about everyday realities, 'that partners are less likely to ask for sexual consent the longer they are in a relationship', an overwhelming majority agreed (92%).

Some students suggested that a one-night stand would involve more nonverbal body language because the individuals involved would be too uncomfortable using verbal communication of a sexual nature with someone they did not know very well. For example:

In a situation like a one-night stand, something where there is not a lot of trust,

there's not a strong bond there, it would be more uncomfortable to use verbal communication so you would use physical, body language and I think that would be more the 'going to the point until someone said 'no' [method of consent negotiation]. Where if it is a long term relationship, or there is a lot of trust there, then the first time you say 'do you want to start sleeping together?' and then after that you would probably be comfortable just reading the person. (F3-45)

According to some of these students, the consent method used in one-night stands would assume consent is given and would continue until one of the partners said 'no'. One-night stands may represent a special case. Regardless of this contradiction, it appears that the method or process of negotiating consent is relationship specific.

The students indicated there were different ways in which verbal consent could be asked for, ranging from, very direct verbal questioning to somewhat evasive language, such as "do you want to make love?", "would you like to?" or "should we?". An explicit example of nonverbal behaviours, involved producing a condom. The giving of consent was generally understood as a direct 'yes' or 'no' answer to the questions posed or in some cases, a nonverbal nonresponse, such as not pushing away or just going along with the activity. One male student provided an example of passive consent from a partner:

Here's an easy one, you're going to kiss someone and they don't move their head back, that's pretty much consent for me. If you are moving your hand in some certain place and they aren't pulling away, then that's consent for me. (M2-29)

It was also suggested that both partners should have the responsibility to inform the other

if they feel uncomfortable in any specific situation. One male student expressed his personal philosophy about each partner's responsibility to speak up: "This is how I feel, that basically consent is always there and if my partner didn't want to have sex or anything then it would be a 'no I don't want to tonight'." (M2-34).

Gender Differences in Consent Negotiations

When focus group participants were asked whether they thought there were any gender differences in negotiating sexual consent, both males and females tended to agree that females were more verbal in their approach, whereas, men were more nonverbal. Males tend to use the body language of their partners to guide their behaviour more often than females do. In addition, students mentioned that the stereotypical sexual roles of males as initiators and females as gatekeepers were still prevalent. One male provided his perception of female expectations about the male's role in sexual encounters: "I still feel that there is a general [expectation] from women that men still initiate. ... There is the whole 'let the male make the move'." (M2-30). Female participants perceived men as always ready for sexual activity and therefore not the ones 'giving' their consent. In fact it was almost inconceivable that males need to give their consent. As one female student stated: "I've never been in the position where I thought well maybe I shouldn't do this because it might be going too far, like I've never thought that I should not touch him there because he may not be comfortable. I've just never felt that way." (F1-16).

On the other hand, females were seen as the ones setting boundaries on what they are willing to do and were therefore less often the initiator and more often the limit setter.

As one female indicated:

It also always seems that it's the man whose ready to do anything. We don't have to worry about when they are ready. Then it's up to us to say we are going onto this stage, it's not up to them. ... in general it just seems that it's the woman's place to have to decide what happens next. (F1-19).

The stereotypical sexual role of male as initiator was supported by the survey finding of a gender difference in asking behaviour. Whereas 39% of males reported they were more likely to ask for the sexual consent of their partners than their partner was of them, only 7% of females reported this ($\chi^2(2, N=503) = 119.30, p=.000$).

Principal Components Analysis

A separate principal components analysis with varimax rotation was performed on each of the three sexual consent scales: (1) Attitudes toward Antioch's Sexual Consent Policy Scale, 10 items; (2) Sexual Consent Attitude Scale, 23 items and; (3) Sexual Consent Behaviour Scale, 12 items).

The sample size of 514 met the recommended sample size of five times as many cases as there were observed variables (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1989), required to provide reliable correlations.

The frequencies for each of the questionnaire items were inspected for nonrandom missing data or missing data of 10% or more. No items were found that met these criteria. In fact, all of the items had fewer than five percent missing data, with the majority of items having less than two percent missing data. Therefore, missing values

were replaced with the mean response for the item (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1986).

Appendix D (Tables D-1 through D-3) lists the questionnaire items for each scale.

Responses to negatively worded items were reverse scored before being entered into the principal components analysis.

Antioch's Sexual Consent Policy

Correlations, Kaiser's Measure of Sampling Adequacy and Initial Statistics

Inspection of the correlation matrix (Table F-1) revealed numerous correlations of 0.3 or higher and Kaiser's measure of sampling adequacy was calculated to be 0.83, supporting the suitability of the matrix to undergo principal components analysis (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1986).

In the principal components analysis of the 10 items measuring attitudes toward Antioch's Sexual Consent Policy, three components with eigenvalues of greater than one accounted for 65% of the variance; however, conceptual analysis suggested that a smaller number of components might produce a stronger solution. Some cross-loadings in the three component solution shed doubt on the uniqueness of variance accounted for by each component. Examination of the slope of the scree plot revealed a large discontinuity between the first component and the remaining components, indicating that only the first component should be retained. This one component solution accounted for 49% of the variance.

Structure of the Composite Variable

The analysis of the 10 items in the Attitudes Toward Antioch's Sexual Consent

Policy Scale resulted in one component (see Table G-1). It was comprised of the following eight items with the component loadings of each indicated in parentheses: *I WOULD endorse a similar policy on the University of Guelph campus (.84), I WOULD comply fully with this policy (.78), This policy could easily be incorporated into my own sexual interactions (.75), It is NOT the university's role to institute this type of policy (.72), Antioch's sexual consent policy should ONLY be used as an educational awareness tool and not as a university regulation (.69), This policy is a good way to require sexual communication and discussion between dating partners prior to engaging in sexual activity (.66), This policy is NOT realistic (.62), This policy is NOT enforceable (.50).* Two items having factor loadings less than 0.3 were removed from this component: *This policy will NOT reduce the incidence of sexual assault or rape because rapists know what they are doing,* and *This policy makes good sense but it would be very difficult to implement effectively.* Because principal components analysis extracted only one component (i.e., unidimensional structure), rotation of the solution was not possible; therefore, the given loadings are from the initial component matrix. Cronbach's alpha for the eight item component ***Evaluation of Antioch's Sexual Consent Policy*** was .85. The composite variable is summarized in Table 4.

Table 4

Final Composite Variable from Analysis of Items in the Attitudes Toward Antioch'sSexual Consent Policy Scale

Composite Variable Label	Individual Items	Composite Variable Loadings
Evaluation of Antioch's sexual consent policy	I WOULD endorse a similar policy on the University of Guelph campus.	.84
	I WOULD comply fully with this policy.	.78
	This policy could easily be incorporated into my own sexual interactions.	.75
	It is NOT the university's role to institute this type of policy.	.72
	Antioch's sexual consent policy should ONLY be used as an educational awareness tool and not as a university regulation.	.69
	This policy is a good way to require sexual communication and discussion between dating partners prior to engaging in sexual activity.	.66
	This policy is NOT realistic.	.62
	This policy is NOT enforceable.	.50

Sexual Consent AttitudesCorrelations, Kaiser's Measure of Sampling Adequacy and Initial Statistics

Inspection of the correlation matrix (Table F-2) revealed numerous correlations of 0.3 or higher and Kaiser's measure of sampling adequacy was 0.87, supporting the suitability of the matrix to undergo principal components analysis (Tabachnick and Fidell, 1986). The principal components analysis of the 23 items measuring sexual consent attitudes resulted in seven components with eigenvalues greater than one, accounting for 59% of the variance. The seven component solution was considered

inappropriate because of numerous cross-loadings. In addition, four of the seven components consisted of only 2 or 3 items. Examination of the slope of the scree plot indicated that a three component solution, accounting for 45% of the variance was more appropriate. The three composite variables are described below.

Structure of the Composite Variables

The three composite variables resulting from the principal components analysis of the 23 variables measuring sexual consent attitudes are listed in Table 5 and described below. The complete factor matrix is found in Table G-2.

The first component labelled ***Establishing Consent Prior to Sexual Activity*** explained 20% of the variance. It included the following eleven items with the component loadings of each indicated in parentheses: *When initiating sexual activity, one should assume no sexual consent and verbally ask for it before proceeding with any sexual activity* (.70), *Consent should be asked for before ANY kind of sexual behaviour, including necking or petting* (.68), *It is just as necessary to obtain consent for genital fondling as it is for sexual intercourse* (.64), *If your partner wants to engage in sexual activity it is okay to proceed, even if she/he is drunk* (.62), *Sexual consent should always be obtained BEFORE the start of any sexual activity* (.60), *It is enough to ask for consent at the beginning of a sexual encounter. You don't need to ask at every step along the way* (.58), *Sexual intercourse is the only sexual activity that requires explicit verbal consent* (.53), *When initiating sexual activity, it is okay to assume consent and proceed sexually until the partner indicates 'no'* (.47), *If sexual consent for intercourse is already*

established, then consent for petting and fondling can be assumed (.42), Nonverbal behaviours are as effective as verbal communication to indicate sexual consent (.35), and If a sexual request is made and the partner indicates 'no', it is okay to continue negotiating the request (.34).

The items *More campus programs are needed to make students aware of sexual consent issues (.53)* and *Too few couples openly discuss the issue of sexual consent (.43)* loaded on component one but did not conceptually fit with it, as component one focused on the importance and timing of sexual consent. These two items were thus removed from component one. The Cronbach alpha score of the resulting eleven item component ***Establishing Consent Prior to Sexual Activity*** was .80.

Component 2, which explained 16% of the variance was labelled ***Relationship Length and Need for Consent***. It included the following six items with the component loadings of each indicated in parentheses: *The necessity of asking for sexual consent DECREASES as the length of an intimate relationship INCREASES (.81), If a couple has a long history of consenting sexual activity with each other, they no longer need to ask for consent during each sexual encounter (.75), Obtaining sexual consent is MORE necessary in a casual sexual encounter than in a committed relationship (.74), Obtaining sexual consent is MORE necessary in a new relationship than in a committed relationship (.70), Partners are LESS likely to ask for sexual consent the longer they are in a relationship (.51), and It is equally important to obtain sexual consent in ALL relationships regardless of the length or prior sexual involvement (.48).* The item *It is*

equally important to obtain sexual consent in ALL relationships regardless of the length or prior sexual involvement cross loaded on both component one (.44) and two (.48) but conceptually belonged with component two, because of its relevance to issues of relationship length. This item was therefore included in component two. The Cronbach alpha score of the resulting six item component ***Relationship Length and Need for Consent*** was .79.

The third component labelled ***Verbal Consent Difficulties***, explained eight percent of the variance. It included the following two items with the component loadings of each indicated in parentheses: *Verbally asking for sexual consent is awkward* (.86), and *Verbally asking for sexual consent reduces the pleasure of the encounter (i.e., it destroys the mood)* (.74). The item *Deciding how far a sexual encounter will proceed is often decided "during the moment", rather than ahead of time* loaded on component three (.63) but did not fit with the conceptualization of verbal sexual consent as being difficult. It was thus removed from the analysis. The Cronbach alpha score of the resulting two item component ***Verbal Consent Difficulties*** was .60. Although there were only two items in this component it is an important concept. Nevertheless, findings based on this component should be interpreted with caution.

The item *Consent to begin a sexual encounter implies consent up to and including sexual intercourse* was removed because it did not load on any component at 0.3 or higher.

Table 5

Final Composite Variables from Analysis of Items in the Sexual Consent Attitudes Scale

Composite Variable Label	Individual Items	Composite Variable Loadings
Establishing Consent Prior to Sexual Activity	When initiating sexual activity, one should assume no sexual consent and verbally ask for it before proceeding with any sexual activity.	.70
	Consent should be asked before ANY kind of sexual behaviour, including necking or petting.	.68
	It is just as necessary to obtain consent for genital fondling as it is for sexual intercourse.	.64
	If your partner wants to engage in sexual activity it is okay to proceed, even if she/he is drunk.	.62
	Sexual consent should always be obtained BEFORE the start of any sexual activity.	.60
	It is enough to ask for consent at the beginning of a sexual encounter. You don't need to ask at every step along the way.	.58
	Sexual intercourse is the only sexual activity that requires explicit verbal consent.	.53
	When initiating sexual activity, it is okay to assume consent and proceed sexually until the partner indicates 'no'.	.47
	If sexual consent for intercourse is already established, then consent for petting and fondling can be assumed.	.42
	Nonverbal behaviours are as effective as verbal communication to indicate sexual consent.	.35
	If a sexual request is made and the partner indicates "no", it is okay to continue negotiating the request.	.34
Relationship Length and Need for Consent	The necessity of asking for sexual consent DECREASES as the length of an intimate relationship INCREASES.	.81
	If a couple has a long history of consenting sexual activity with each other, they no longer need to ask for consent during each sexual encounter.	.75
	Obtaining sexual consent is MORE necessary in a casual sexual encounter than in a committed relationship.	.74
	Obtaining sexual consent is MORE necessary in a new relationship than in a committed relationship.	.70
	Partners are LESS likely to ask for sexual consent the longer they are in a relationship.	.51
	It is equally important to obtain sexual consent in ALL relationships regardless of the length or prior sexual involvement.	.48
Verbal Consent Difficulties	Verbally asking for sexual consent is awkward.	.86
	Verbally asking for sexual consent reduces the pleasure of the encounter (i.e., it destroys the mood).	.74

Sexual Consent Behaviours

Correlations, Kaiser's Measure of Sampling Adequacy and Initial Statistics

Inspection of the correlation matrix (Table F-3) revealed numerous correlations of 0.3 or higher and Kaiser's measure of sampling adequacy was calculated to be 0.65, supporting the suitability of the matrix to undergo principal components analysis (Tabachnick and Fidell, 1986). The principal components analysis of the 12 items measuring sexual consent behaviours resulted in four components with eigenvalues greater than one, accounting for 56% of the variance. The four component solution was considered inappropriate because of the small number of items comprising some of the components and low component reliabilities. Examination of the slope of the scree plot indicated that a two factor solution, accounting for 46% of the variance was more appropriate. Each of the composite variables is described below.

Structure of the Composite Variables

The two composite variables resulting from the principal components analysis of the 12 items related to sexual consent behaviours are presented in Table 6 and described below. The complete matrix is found in Table G-3.

The first component, ***General Discussion of Consent***, explained 28% of the variance. It included the following four items, with the component loadings of each indicated in parentheses: *I have not given much thought to the topic of sexual consent (.75), I have discussed sexual consent issues with a friend (.75), I have discussed sexual consent issues with my current (or most recent) partner at times OTHER THAN during*

sexual encounters (.66), and *I have heard sexual consent issues being discussed by other students on campus* (.64). The item *I always ask (either verbally or nonverbally) for consent BEFORE I initiate a sexual encounter* also loaded on component one (.40), but did not conceptually fit with the idea of general discussion and, therefore, was removed from the analysis. Cronbach's alpha for the four item composite variable ***General Discussion of Consent*** was .70.

The second component, labelled ***Timing of Consent Negotiation***, contained five items and explained 18% of the variance. The loadings for each item are indicated in parentheses: *During a sexual encounter, I typically only GIVE my consent once* (.82), *During a sexual encounter, I typically only ASK for consent once* (.76), *I tend NOT to decide ahead of time what I will and will not consent to sexually. I wait till I am 'in the moment' to decide* (.48), *Typically, I ask for consent by making a sexual advance and waiting for a reaction, so I know whether or not to continue* (.44), and *Sexual consent is NOT something my current (or most recent) partner and I discuss before we start having sex* (.37). Cronbach's alpha for the six item composite variable ***Timing of Consent Negotiation*** was .56. The item *Sexual consent is NOT something my current (or most recent) partner and I discuss before we start having sex* also loaded on component one (.42) but conceptually fits better with the timing of sexual consent and was kept in the second component. The item *It is easy to accurately "read" my current (or most recent) partner's nonverbal signals as indicating consent or non-consent to sexual activity* loaded on component two (.45), but did not conceptually fit with the idea of timing of

sexual consent and, therefore, was removed from the analysis.

The item *I ask for sexual consent from my current (or most recent) partner MORE than my partner asks it of me* did not load on either component at 0.3 or higher and was removed from the analysis.

Table 6

Final Composite Variables from Analysis of Items in the Sexual Consent Behaviours

Scale

Composite Variable Label	Individual Items	Composite Variable Loadings
General Discussion of Consent	I have NOT given much thought to the topic of sexual consent.	.75
	I have discussed sexual consent issues with a friend.	.75
	I have discussed sexual consent issues with my current (or most recent) partner at times OTHER THAN during sexual encounters	.66
	I have heard sexual consent issues being discussed by other students on campus.	.64
Timing of Consent Negotiation	During a sexual encounter, I typically only GIVE my consent once.	.82
	During a sexual encounter, I typically only ASK for consent once.	.76
	I tend NOT to decide ahead of time what I will and will not consent to sexually. I wait till I am 'in the moment' to decide.	.48
	Typically, I ask for consent by making a sexual advance and waiting for a reaction, so I know whether or not to continue.	.44
	Sexual consent is NOT something my current (or most recent) partner and I discuss before we start having sex.	.37

In summary, the three principal components analyses resulted in six composite

variables representing the major dimensions of sexual consent. Table 7 presents the reliability coefficients for each of the six composite variables.

Table 7

Final Composite Variables and Reliability Coefficients

	Reliability Coefficients
Attitudes Toward Antioch's Sexual Consent Policy Scale	
Component 1 : Evaluation of Antioch's Sexual Consent Policy	.85
Sexual Consent Attitudes Scale	
Component 1 : Establishing Consent Prior to Sexual Activity	.80
Component 2 : Relationship Length and Need for Consent	.79
Component 3 : Verbal Consent Difficulties	.60
Sexual Consent Behaviours Scale	
Component 1 : General Discussion of Consent	.70
Component 2 : Timing of Consent Negotiation	.56

Four of the six composite variables had moderate to high reliability. Those composite variables that produced lower alpha's, while being internally less consistent, are nevertheless conceptually very useful for subsequent analyses. Table 8 presents the correlation matrix of the composite variables.

Table 8

Correlation Matrix of Composite Variables

	Evaluation of Antioch's Sexual Consent Policy	Establishing Consent Prior to Sexual Activity	Relationship Length and Need for Consent	Verbal Consent Difficulties	General Discussion of Consent	Timing of Consent Negotiation
Evaluation of Antioch's Sexual Consent Policy	1.00					
Establishing Consent Prior to Sexual Activity	.51**	1.00				
Relationship Length and Need for Consent	.30**	.51**	1.00			
Verbal Consent Difficulties	.27**	.31**	.23**	1.00		
General Discussion of Consent	.21**	.30**	.19**	.23**	1.00	
Timing of Consent Negotiation	.24**	.43**	.34**	.28**	.25**	1.00

Note. ** $p \leq .01$ (2 tailed)

Discriminant Analyses

A direct discriminant function analysis was performed to test the ability of each of the 6 composite variables to differentiate students on the basis of gender (female or male), age (18-21 years of age or 22-27 years of age) relationship status (casual dating or

committed dating), sexual experience (sexual intercourse or not), and type of sexual consent preferred (obtain consent prior to engaging in sexual activity or initiate sexual activity and continue until otherwise indicated).

Comparison by Gender

For the comparison by gender, the variable had two levels: male (coded 1) and female (coded 2). Given that there was only one grouping variable with two levels, a single discriminant function was calculated with a significant χ^2 (5, $N=467$) of 60.31, $p \leq .001$.

Measures for interpreting the discriminant function included discriminant weights, discriminant loadings, and F values and significance tests for the equality of group means for each variable. These statistics are summarized in Table 9.

The discriminant loadings, representing the correlation between predictors and the discriminant function, indicated that the following variables discriminated between female and male students: *evaluation of Antioch's sexual consent policy, establishing consent prior to sexual activity, relationship length and need for consent, verbal consent difficulties, and timing of consent negotiation*. Examination of the means (Table 10) indicated that females were slightly more positive than males in their evaluation of the Antioch sexual consent policy. Females were more likely than males to agree that it is important to obtain consent prior to any sexual activity. Males were more likely than females to agree that longer or more committed relationships reduce the need to ask for sexual consent and that verbally asking for consent is difficult. Males were also more

likely than females to agree that their own style of negotiating consent is a one-time event that occurs during the moment rather than ahead of time. One variable, *general discussion of consent*, did not significantly discriminate between female and male students. Approximately one-half of both female and male students reported discussing consent with a friend or partner. The means for the five significant composite variables were all in the hypothesized direction lending support to the hypothesis of gender differences.

Table 9

Discriminant Analysis by Gender

Variable	Discriminant Weights	Discriminant Loadings		Univariate F Ratio	
	Value	Value	Rank	Value	Rank
Evaluation of Antioch's sexual consent policy	-0.31	0.26	5	4.22*	5
Establishing consent prior to sexual activity	1.05	0.91	1	54.03**	1
Relationship length and need for consent	0.16	-0.36	4	8.48*	4
Verbal consent difficulties	-0.21	-0.41	3	10.77**	3
General discussion of consent	-0.16	0.15		1.43	6
Timing of consent negotiation	-0.21	-0.54	2	18.71**	2

Note. * $p \leq .05$, ** $p \leq .001$.

Table 10

Means and Standard Deviations of Significant Consent Variables for Comparison byGender

Composite Variable	<u>Mean</u>		<u>Standard Deviation</u>	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
Evaluation of Antioch's sexual consent policy*	3.84	3.61	1.12	1.21
Establishing consent prior to sexual activity*	5.01	4.44	0.77	0.88
Relationship length and need for consent*	4.05	4.36	1.14	1.10
Verbal consent difficulties*	3.76	4.20	1.41	1.38
General discussion of consent	4.39	4.23	1.39	1.31
Timing of consent negotiation*	4.17	4.58	1.01	0.99

Note. * Composite variables are significant at the $p \leq .05$ level. Higher numbers indicate agreement.

The classification matrix for the female/male comparison is presented in Table 11.

The solution yielded a 68.5% correct classification, an improvement of 27% over proportional chance. The comparison of observed and expected scores further supports the robustness of the solution with a significant χ^2 (3, $N=514$) of 90.07, $p \leq .05$.

Table 11

Classification Matrix for Comparison by Gender

Actual Group	# of Cases	Male		Female	
		Correctly Classified	By Chance	Correctly Classified	By Chance
1=Male	184	68 (37%)	41	116	143
2=Female	330	46	73	284 (86%)	182
Total	514	114		400	
Per cent of cases correctly classified = 68.5%					
Proportional chance criterion = 67.5%					

The stability of the classification procedure was checked using a split sample method. Approximately 50% (258) of the 514 cases eligible for analysis were withheld from calculation of the discriminant function. For the 50% (307) of cases from which the function was derived, there was an overall correct classification rate of 71.3%, an improvement of 31% over proportional chance. For the remaining 50% of cases withheld, the solution yielded an overall correct classification rate of 71.3%, a 30% improvement over proportional chance.

Comparison by Relationship Status

For comparison by relationship status, the relationship variable was recoded as two levels: causal (which included not dating, dating more than one person and casually dating one person) N=261 (coded 1) and committed (which included steady relationship with one person and engaged or living with partner) N=206 (coded 2). Given only one grouping variable with two levels, a single discriminant function was calculated. The χ^2

was significant (χ^2 (5, $N=467$) of 18.04, $p < .05$) but was not stable when checked using the split sample method (χ^2 (5, $N=229$) of 11.58, $p > .05$). Those students who were not dating or in casual relationships did not differ from those students in committed relationships on any of the six sexual consent variables.

Comparison by Sexual Intercourse Experience

For the comparison by sexual intercourse experience, the variable "*Have you ever willingly engaged in sexual intercourse*" had two levels: yes (coded 1) and no (coded 0). A single discriminant function was calculated with a significant χ^2 (5, $N=466$) of 53.34, $p \leq .001$.

The discriminant loadings representing the correlation between predictors and the discriminant function indicated that the following four variables discriminated between those students who have and have not experienced sexual intercourse: *evaluation of Antioch's sexual consent policy, establishing consent prior to sexual activity, relationship length and need for consent, and timing of consent negotiation*. Examination of the means (Table 13) revealed that those students who had experienced sexual intercourse evaluated the Antioch sexual consent policy more negatively than students who had not experienced intercourse. Those who had not experienced intercourse were more likely than those who had experienced intercourse to agree that it is important to establish consent prior to sexual activity. Experienced students were also more likely than those students who had not experienced intercourse, to agree that longer or more committed relationships reduced the need to ask for sexual consent and that their own sexual consent

behaviour is typically a one-time event that occurs during the moment.

The two variables, *verbal consent difficulties* and *general discussion of consent*, did not significantly discriminate between students who have and have not experienced sexual intercourse. The means for the four significant composite variables were all in the hypothesized direction lending support to the hypothesis of differences due to sexual experience.

The classification matrix for the comparison of those who have and have not experienced sexual intercourse is presented in Table 14. The solution yielded a 76.8% correct classification, an improvement of 24% over proportional chance. The comparison of observed and expected scores further supports the robustness of the solution with a significant χ^2 (3, $N=513$) of 31.32, $p \leq .05$.

Table 12

Discriminant Analysis by Sexual Intercourse Experience

<u>Variable</u>	<u>Discriminant</u>	<u>Discriminant</u>		<u>Univariate F Ratio</u>	
	<u>Weights</u>	<u>Value</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Value</u>	<u>Rank</u>
Evaluation of Antioch's sexual consent policy	-0.09	-0.30	4	5.04*	4
Establishing consent prior to sexual activity	-0.36	-0.58	2	19.34**	2
Relationship length and need for consent	0.31	0.55	3	17.25**	3
Verbal consent difficulties	-0.48	-0.14		1.06	5
General discussion of consent	0.34	0.08		0.40	6
Timing of consent negotiation	0.69	0.72	1	29.82**	1

Note. * $p \leq .05$, ** $p \leq .001$.

Table 13

Means and Standard Deviations of Significant Consent Variables for Comparison by Sexual Intercourse Experience

Composite Variable	<u>Mean</u>		<u>Standard Deviation</u>	
	No	Yes	No	Yes
Evaluation of Antioch's sexual consent policy*	3.98	3.69	1.05	1.18
Establishing consent prior to sexual activity*	5.12	4.72	0.77	0.88
Relationship length and need for consent*	3.77	4.27	1.14	1.10
Verbal consent difficulties	4.04	3.88	1.22	1.47
General discussion of consent	4.26	4.35	1.41	1.35
Timing of consent negotiation*	3.86	4.46	1.01	0.99

Note. * Composite variables are significant at the $p \leq .05$ level. Higher numbers indicate agreement.

Table 14

Classification Matrix for Comparison by Sexual Intercourse Experience

Actual Group	# of Cases	<u>No Intercourse Experience</u>		<u>Intercourse Experience</u>	
		Correctly Classified	By Chance	Correctly Classified	By Chance
1=No Intercourse Experience	130	21 (16%)	8	109	122
2=Intercourse Experience	383	10	23	373 (97%)	360
Total	513	31		482	
Per cent of cases correctly classified = 76.8%					
Proportional chance criterion = 77.8%					

The stability of the classification procedure was checked using a split sample method. Approximately 50% (230) of the 514 cases eligible for analysis were withheld

from calculation of the discriminant function. For the 50% (243) of cases from which the function was derived, there was an overall correct classification rate of 77.4%, an improvement of 24% over proportional chance. For the remaining 50% of cases withheld, the solution yielded an overall correct classification rate of 78.5%, a 25% improvement over proportional chance.

Comparison by Sexual Victimization

For comparison by sexual victimization, the variable had two levels: nonvictim (which included all females who said no to all victimization questions) N=169 (coded 0) and victim (which included all females who said yes to any of the victimization questions) N=137 (coded 1). Given only one grouping variable with two levels, a single discriminant function was calculated. The χ^2 was nonsignificant (χ^2 (5, N=306) of 7.62, $p > .05$). Those females who had been sexually victimized did not differ from those females who had not been victimized on any of the six sexual consent variables.

Comparison by Sexual Aggression

Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was used to test for differences in the six sexual consent variables between males who did not report sexual aggressing against women in any form (which included all males who said no to all aggression questions) N=155 (coded 0) and aggressors (which included all males who said yes to any of the aggression questions) N=21 (coded 1). Fourteen cases were rejected because of missing data. The small number of aggressor cases did not meet the required number (25) to detect a medium effect size (Kirk, 1982), and therefore makes the power of the

analysis suspect (Hair, et al., 1995, p. 278). Although the MANOVA resulted in a significant Hotelling's T^2 test ($T^2 = .109$, $F = 3.07$, (6, 169 df), $p \leq .01$), the disproportionate sample sizes (21 aggressors; 155 nonaggressors) make it inappropriate to interpret the results beyond exploratory speculation. The following comments are offered as observations. The univariate F-tests confirmed that sexually aggressive and non-aggressive men differed on the following variables: *establishing consent prior to sexual activity, relationship length and need for consent, verbal consent difficulties, and timing of consent negotiation*. Examination of the means (Table 15) revealed that those males who had not aggressed against women were more likely than sexually aggressive males to agree that it is important to establish consent prior to sexual activity. Sexually aggressive males were more likely than non-aggressive males, to agree that longer or more committed relationships reduced the need to ask for sexual consent, that verbally asking for consent is difficult, and that their own sexual consent behaviour is typically a one-time event that occurs during the moment.

Table 15

Means and Standard Deviations of Significant Consent Variables for Comparison by Sexual Aggression in Males

Composite Variable	<u>Mean</u>		<u>Standard Deviation</u>	
	Non-aggressor	Aggressor	Non-aggressor	Aggressor
Establishing consent prior to sexual activity	4.51	3.93	0.86	0.94
Relationship length and need for consent	4.27	5.11	1.11	0.77
Verbal consent difficulties	4.14	4.83	1.37	1.31
Timing of consent negotiation	4.48	5.13	0.98	0.94

Note. Composite variables are significant at the $p \leq .05$ level. Higher numbers indicate agreement.

Percentage of Verbal and Nonverbal Behaviours Used to Signal Sexual Consent

As shown in Table 16, more students believed that for each of the sexual behaviours it was necessary to obtain explicit consent in a new dating relationship than in a committed dating relationship. As an example, the behaviour touching partner's breasts/chest in a new dating relationship required explicit consent by 81% of students compared with only 33% of students who indicated that explicit consent for this behaviour was necessary in a committed relationship.

Table 16

Percent Agreement that Explicit Consent for Specific Sexual Behaviours is Necessary for
New and Committed Relationships

Behaviours	New Dating Relationship			Committed Dating Relationship		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Hugging partner	14	13	15	4	5	3
Kissing partner	37	40	35	5	7	4
Touching partner's breasts / chest	81	82	80	33	33	33
Touching partner's genitals	94	90	96	50	47	52
Removing partner's clothes	94	91	95	57	55	58
Masturbating partner	95	93	97	72	71	73
Oral sex	97	94	99	80	73	84
Penile-vaginal intercourse	99	98	99	84	82	86
Anal intercourse	98	98	99	95	95	96

Tables 17 and 18 indicate the percentage of students who used verbal and nonverbal behaviours to specifically indicate that they were asking for (Table 17) or giving (Table 18) their sexual consent during their most recent sexual encounter. There were no gender differences. In both instances, nonverbal behaviours were being used with more frequency, than verbal behaviours. The only exception to this was regarding condom use.

Table 17

Percent of Selected Nonverbal and Verbal Behaviours Used to Ask for Partner's Consent

Nonverbal Behaviours	Total	Male	Female	<u>F</u>
you kissed your partner	69	71	68	1.34
you moved closer to your partner	65	65	65	0.44
you touched your partner sexually	62	63	62	0.56
you undressed your partner	40	42	39	1.12
you undressed yourself	28	20	32	9.74
you pulled out a condom	11	12	10	0.93
<hr/>				
Verbal Behaviours				
you said "I want to have sex with you (make love to you)"	33	29	36	2.46
you asked "Do you want to have sex? (make love?)"	33	37	31	1.98
you told your partner that you loved him/her	31	30	31	0.27
you suggested that the two of you go into the bedroom	29	35	26	5.12
you suggested one of you should get a condom	26	23	28	2.22
you talked about the importance of using birth control	16	12	18	3.40

Note. * $p < .05$

Table 18

Percent of Selected Nonverbal and Verbal Behaviours Used to Give Consent to a Partner

Nonverbal Behaviours	Total	Male	Female	F
you didn't stop your partner from kissing and touching you sexually	74	68	77	5.00
you kissed your partner	70	69	71	0.32
you moved closer to your partner	67	64	69	1.46
you touched your partner sexually	67	68	67	0.36
you did not say no	57	56	57	0.31
you smiled	55	55	54	0.31
you undressed your partner	44	47	42	1.86
you undressed yourself	39	35	41	2.15
you pulled out a condom	14	18	12	4.00
<hr/>				
Verbal Behaviours				
you said "yes"	43	34	48	9.48
you said "don't stop" or "please continue"	35	34	35	0.31
you said "I want to have sex with you (make love to you)"	30	27	31	1.32
you told your partner that you loved him/her	29	28	29	0.48
you suggested that the two of you go into the bedroom	24	27	23	1.47
you asked "Do you want to have sex? (make love?)"	24	28	21	3.14
you suggested one of you should get a condom	24	23	25	0.52
you talked about the importance of using birth control	14	11	15	1.66

Note. *p < .05

The majority of students reported using nonverbal behaviours such as kissing a partner (69%), moving closer (65%), or touching a partner (62%) as a way of asking for sexual consent. The most frequently reported verbal behaviours used to ask for consent were stating they wanted to have sex (33%), asking the partner if they wanted to have sex (33%) or stating that they loved their partner (31%).

When students were asked what behaviours they used to indicate they were giving their consent to a sexual partner, again, nonverbal behaviours were more frequently used than verbal. The most frequently reported nonverbal behaviours were not stopping a partner's advances (74%), kissing a partner (70%), moving closer (67%), and touching (67%) a partner. The most frequently reported verbal behaviours used to indicate the giving of consent were short verbal utterances such as saying "yes" (43%), "don't stop" (35%) or stating that you wanted to have sex (30%).

In all categories, the least reported form of nonverbal or verbal behaviour used to indicate the asking for or giving of consent was the negotiation of contraception. Pulling out a condom was used by 14% of the respondents and suggesting a condom be obtained was used by 24% of the respondents.

A comparison of students using any of the nonverbal and verbal behaviours showed that more students used nonverbal behaviours (86%) than verbal behaviours (74%) to ask for sexual consent. Similarly, more students used nonverbal (88%) than verbal behaviours (75%) to indicate the giving of consent.

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

In this chapter, the results are discussed and related to the major themes and findings in the literature. The discussion includes observations on sample representativeness, how students understand and prefer to negotiate consent, as well as reactions to Antioch College's sexual consent policy. This chapter includes discussion regarding the development of the sexual consent scales, and the hypotheses tested by comparing the composite variables to gender, relationship status, sexual intercourse status, victimization in women and sexual aggression in men. Limitations and implications are also addressed. Suggestions for future research are addressed in Chapter V.

The objective of this research was to explore male and female students' attitudes and behaviours regarding sexual consent. Prior to this study only limited empirical research focussing on the negotiation process for sexual consent and how it is understood by university students had been conducted. The majority of research and educational programs have emphasized consent issues as consisting only of simple expressions of "yes" or "no". The results of this study highlight the complexities involved in understanding sexual consent.

The two major studies that have been conducted on sexual consent have examined the types of behaviours used to indicate consent (Hall, 1995; Hickman & Muehlenhard, 1999). The present study represents the first attempt at assessing more general attitudes

and behaviours regarding sexual consent. The contributions of this study include: (1) developing sexual consent attitude and behaviour scales, (2) analyzing the relationship of contextual variables such as relationship length, experience with sexual intercourse, experience with coercion/aggression with sexual consent, and (3) the addition of qualitative data using focus groups. The focus groups also helped in the development of the survey.

Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

The demographic characteristics of the student sample were compared with the demographic profile of the University of Guelph student population. The similarity of the sample to the undergraduate population, from which respondents were selected, indicates that the respondents who completed the survey were representative of the population of undergraduate students at the University of Guelph. Comparable with other university samples (Siegel, Klein, & Roghmann, 1999), almost three-quarters of this sample reported ever having had sex, defined as penile-vaginal intercourse. The number of lifetime intercourse partners ($M=2.8$), for those who had ever had sex, was consistent with past research for this age group (Laumann, et al., 1994). The prevalence rates of reported sexual victimization for women and sexual aggression for men were consistent with past research (DeKeseredy & Kelly, 1993; Koss, et al, 1987). These rates also exhibit the same discrepancy between female reporting of victimization and male reporting of perpetration as found in prior studies (DeKeseredy & Kelly, 1993; Koss, et al, 1987; Laumann, et al., 1994). The similarity between other university data and this

survey provides confidence that students were honestly reporting their own sexual behaviour.

Perceptions of Sexual Consent

Student perceptions of sexual consent in this study were similar to the components of consent described by Muehlenhard (1995/1996) and Archard (1998). Mutuality, willingness and being free of undue influence were common themes in student definitions of consent. It is quite likely that date rape education, in particular, the “No means no!” awareness campaigns which students have been exposed to have influenced their understanding of sexual consent issues (Sawyer, Pinciaro, & Jessell, 1998). The main issue among the students in the current study was regarding whether the use of verbal communication is a necessary component of sexual consent. Although no one argued that verbal consent was unimportant, many believed the extensive use of verbal requests for consent or giving permission was not necessary. Other research has indicated that some individuals perceive discussion prior to sexual activity as a breakdown of the encounter (Haffner, 1995/1996; Waldby, et al., 1993) and some students believe that nonverbal signals are more accurate than verbal signals (Sawyer, et al., 1993). Thus, it is not surprising that students do not agree on the extent to which sexual consent should involve verbal rather than non-verbal behaviours.

Reactions to Antioch’s Consent Policy

Ten years after Antioch College institutionalized a sexual consent behaviour policy for all of its students, the debate continues. The policy requires that individuals

assume a “no” stance with regard to obtaining consent in sexual situations, until they hear a clearly articulated, verbal, “yes”. Although this policy was highly criticized by students in the current sample, it should be noted that most were favourable to the intentions behind it, namely, increasing sexual communication between partners, reducing sexual coercion, and educating the student population. In summary, the idealism of the policy was accepted by many students but they thought it would be much too difficult to regulate effectively and fairly. The issue of practicality was a significant focus of criticism which led students to an overall negative evaluation of the policy.

Negotiation of Sexual Consent

When given the choice of methods for negotiating sexual consent, more students preferred to ask verbally rather than assume consent until a ‘no’ was signalled. Females were more likely than males to prefer that a verbal “yes” be asked for prior to any sexual advances. Males reported themselves as more likely to be doing the asking than did females. Research shows that men still initiate sexual activity more frequently than do women (O’Sullivan & Byers, 1992). Based on the traditional sexual script which prescribes the male’s responsibility to initiate sexual encounters and the female’s responsibility to control the level of sexual intimacy, we might anticipate that gender would influence the preferred method of sexual negotiations. Scripts for a first date do indicate that these traditional stereotypes regarding gendered roles still persist (Rose & Frieze, 1989). In their discourse analysis of how sexual intimacy is negotiated in heterosexual dating, Walker, Gilbert, and Goss (1996) found support for unconscious

traditional assumptions about powerful male sexuality and female acquiescence and their influence on sexual negotiations. If it is true that female experiences do not include their asking men for consent, females may be more likely to insist that verbally asking by males should always occur prior to the start of sexual activity. This would allow women a better opportunity to play their traditional role as gatekeeper. Not surprisingly, gender differences were found in the perceived level of difficulty that men and women attributed to verbal consent. Males, more than females, perceived verbal consent as a more cumbersome endeavour, probably, because they have more experience at attempting the behaviour.

Development of Sexual Consent Scales

A major objective of this research was to develop sexual consent scales. Focus groups helped to develop the quantitative items and ensure that the key issues were being covered adequately while remaining relevant to the population under study. Principal components analysis was used to identify a core group of attitudinal and behavioural components of sexual consent. In essence, principle components analysis in this case was used to explore the dimensionality of sexual consent (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1986). The sexual consent scales were designed to measure several aspects of sexual consent. Principle components analysis confirmed the multidimensional of sexual consent, finding six different components of sexual consent across the three separate scales. The Attitudes Toward Antioch's Sexual Consent Policy Scale produced one component labelled *Evaluation of Antioch's sexual consent policy*, which assessed students' personal

endorsement and the practicalities of Antioch's policy statement on sexual consent. The Sexual Consent Attitudes Scale produced three components: (1) *Establishing consent prior to sexual activity*, assessed student attitudes toward a particular form of sexual negotiation that establishes consent before any sexual activity is initiated, (2) *Relationship length and need for consent* assessed student beliefs regarding the influence of committed and/or longer relationships as variables that reduced the need to ask for consent and (3) *Verbal consent difficulties* assessed how much students felt that consent negotiations were problematic in that they were awkward to perform or interrupted the intimacy of the moment. The Sexual Consent Behaviours Scale produced two components: (1) *General discussion of consent* assessed how much students were currently aware of issues of consent through campus media, friends or partners and, (2) *Timing of consent negotiation* assessed whether students' own consent behaviour, in their last sexual encounter, represented a one time event that occurred during the moment.

The construction of the scales and the delineation of the six component variables provides significant conceptual and methodological advancements with regard to furthering our understanding of the complexities surrounding the concept of sexual consent. Although it is a complex construct, the essence of sexual consent for university students is represented in the attitude and behaviour components described in this study. For students, the meaning of sexual consent was fairly straightforward and consistent with research definitions. However, the behaviours used to obtain consent varied in form depending on contextual issues, primarily relationship status.

The components demonstrated modest to high internal consistency. Given that the scales were refined through the use of brainstorming sessions with faculty, focus groups, and pilot testing of the scales with close attention being paid to the wording of the items, there is confidence that the face validity of the scales is high.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis 1: *Attitudes and behaviours about sexual consent will differ by gender, with women stressing the importance of sexual consent more than men.* The discriminant analysis by gender revealed that women did follow more stringent attitudes and behaviours. Women were more positive toward the Antioch policy, more agreeable to obtaining consent prior to sexual activity starting, less likely to differentiate the necessity of consent on the basis of relationship status, less likely to view verbal consent as problematic, and less likely to view their own consent negotiating behaviour as a singular event that occurs at the moment. The greater value that women attributed to sexual consent is consistent with socialization theory which specifies that women play the gatekeeping role in sexual relationships (Byers, 1996).

It should be noted that although statistically significant, the gender differences were relatively small. Small but significant gender differences are common in research on sexual communication and consent (Abbey, 1987; Hickman & Muehlenhard, 1999; Margolin et al, 1989). Given their consistency across studies, how should small but persistent gender differences in the current study be interpreted? On the surface, it appears that males and females do not differ greatly in their attitudes toward sexual

consent. Female and male students certainly have similar understandings of consent which include acceptance of mutual agreement, a willingness to proceed, and freedom from coercive influences. Women and men also have similar levels of awareness and discussions about consent with friends or partners. However, it is important to note that, taken together, the components in which gender differences appeared suggest a difference in the priority women and men place on consent in their sexual interactions. In comparison to men, women preferred a consent process that was more formal, discussed before sexual activity began, assessed numerous times during the encounter, and less influenced by the status of the relationship. These gender differences regarding the process of consent could lead to sexual misunderstandings; however, given the modest strength of the gender differences, it is unlikely that these findings could be used to explain sexual coercion.

Hypothesis 2: *Attitudes and behaviours about sexual consent will differ by current relationship status, such that, as the commitment in a relationship increases, the perceived necessity of obtaining explicit consent will decrease.* This hypothesis was not supported. Those who were not dating, or dating more than one person, or casually dating one person were coded as “casual daters”, while those who were in a steady relationship with one person, or engaged or living with a partner were coded as “committed daters”. It may be that regardless of the categorization there is no relationship between consent attitudes and behaviours and current relationship status. It is also possible that the self-reporting of relationship status may have obscured the true

nature of commitment in relationships. For example, those students who had just started dating one person exclusively were classified as in a 'steady relationship with one person' while the individual who may have just left a long term relationship would be classified as 'not dating'. This form of classification can result in some individuals in short-term serial relationships being classified as committed daters, and some individuals with committed dating experience (but currently single) being classified as casual daters. In addition, the difference between those categorizing themselves as casually dating one person (coded casual) and those who reported being in a steady relationship with one person (coded committed) may not be a difference in the actual length of the relationship, but rather in the individual's perceived commitment to their relationship.

Although there was no support for sexual consent attitudes and behaviours differing by relationship status, students still reported obtaining explicit consent as less necessary in a committed dating relationship than in a casual dating relationship. The finding that, as the relationship develops, students believe consent is less necessary, at least for non-coital sexual behaviours, supports Shotland and Goodstein's (1992) precedence argument. As relationships progress from casual dating to long-term committed, sexual activities develop particular patterns or routines which come to be expected. Engaging in any particular sexual behaviour often sets a precedent that may lead to less communication regarding whether or not the activity will occur again because it becomes expected. The current study suggests that students believe establishing consent for sexual behaviours early in a relationship will result in less need to ask for

consent as the relationship progresses.

Students in this study perceived the extent of the relationship as a variable that influenced when explicit consent was necessary. Numerous other studies have found that relationship length affects the perception of sexual violence (Carlson, 1996; Shotland & Goodstein, 1992; Margolin, et al., 1989). Given these findings it would be important to include relationship status in future research. An assessment of relationship status might be more accurately measured using the length of time spent together in the current or last relationship rather than the more subjective categorization used in the current study.

Hypothesis 3: Individuals who have not experienced sexual intercourse will stress the importance of sexual consent more than individuals who have experienced sexual intercourse. This hypothesis was partially supported. Sexually inexperienced students were more positive toward the Antioch sexual consent policy, more in favour of establishing consent before starting sexual activity, less likely to acknowledge that relationship commitment reduces the need to ask for consent, and less apt to state that their own consent behaviour is a one-time, in the moment, event. Perhaps experiencing sexual intercourse provides students with first-hand knowledge of how negotiations actually occur. Having had the experience, students are better able to understand the situational constraints and comprehend their own comfort level with discussions about sexual consent prior to starting sexual activity with a partner. For sexually experienced students, a formal policy on sexual consent may seem less appealing because it may not fit with their current interpersonal script for negotiating sexual consent. Sexual scripts

are, in part, made up of the practical demands of actual interaction (Gagnon, 1990).

Given that students without intercourse experience have not dealt with the influence of a context, they may be relying more on an idealistic perspective of human interaction.

Understanding the practical reality of the sexual situation may play a significant role in how sexually experienced students evaluate when and how consent should be negotiated.

Thus familiarity with their own personal sexual consent patterns may have influenced experienced students in their response to questions about sexual consent. Students who have yet to engage in sexual intercourse may be relying more on what they believe should happen. In general, individuals with more knowledge about an event have better developed scripts (Gagnon, 1990). Rose and Frieze's (1989) study on scripts for a first date found that participants with more dating experience were able to describe more elaborate scripts for a woman's date and placed more emphasis on planning in the man's script than did participants with less dating experience.

Hypothesis 4: Women who have experienced sexual coercion will stress the importance of sexual consent more than women who have not experienced coercion. This hypothesis was not supported. It was thought that women who had experienced sexual coercion would possess attitudes and behaviours about consent that differed from women who had not experienced coercion. However, there are two issues which may influence this relationship. First, the range of victimization experiences was considerable (ranging from sex play as a result of continual arguments to sexual assault). Second, the current study did not include a measure of how recent the victimization experience had been.

These two factors (severity and recency of victimization) could lead to a variety of responses to the victimization experienced by women that may influence their subsequent attitudes about consent. Kilpatrick, Veronen, & Resick (1979) found that rape victims had greater levels of fear related to the rape situation or cues of situations that could potentially lead to assault. Moscarello (1990) suggested that one belief strongly affected by sexual assault is personal vulnerability, the loss of which results “in the world no longer being seen as safe and benign, but as unsafe and dangerous” (p.25). This belief may lead to a hyper-vigilance regarding sexual consent in subsequent sexual encounters. In contrast, individuals who have been repeatedly victimized may desensitize themselves to the severity of the crime. As a result, their perceptions of sexual encounters may not differ from the general population of women. Students in the present study who have experienced multiple coercive encounters were not distinguished from those with a history of one specific episode. Meston, Heiman, and Trapnell (1999) found that early sexual abuse in women resulted in adult sexuality characterized by higher levels of sexual activity, fantasies, and liberal sexual attitudes, as well as the likelihood of engaging in unrestricted sexual behaviours and fantasies. It is possible that this riskier approach to sexuality includes a less diligent approach to sexual consent issues.

Another important consideration is the recency of the sexual assault. Victims vary in the severity of their post-traumatic stress response and their speed of recovery (Moscarello, 1990). During the time span between the sexual assault and the present, a victim’s thought processes could be comprised of different coping mechanisms used to

come to grips with the violence. The present study did not measure how long ago coercion took place. It is possible then, that while some female victims may be more emphatic about the need for consensual encounters, other female victims may be less concerned. Given the range of reactions to coercion that victims may experience, their divergent attitudes toward consent may cancel out, resulting in the nonsignificant influence of victim status found in this study. The assessment of when the last coercive episode occurred, frequency and severity of the coercion, as well as individual adjustment levels may help untangle the effect that victim status may have on attitudes toward consent.

Hypothesis 5: *Men who have engaged in sexual aggression will be less likely to stress the importance of sexual consent than men who have not engaged in sexual aggression.* This hypothesis was only tentatively supported. The findings that aggressive men were less in favour of obtaining consent before sexual activity, were more agreeable that longer relationships decreased the need for explicit consent, that verbal consent was difficult and that their own consent behaviour represented a one-time, in the moment, event, should be interpreted with caution given the low number of reported aggressors ($n=21$). However, this tentative result is consistent with research suggesting coercive men perceive relationships primarily in terms of sexual possibilities and are more willing, than noncoercive men, to use verbal and physical coercion to obtain sex (Craig, Kalichman, & Follingstad, 1989; Kanin, 1985). Given these tendencies, it is understandable why men who had used aggression in this study would view sexual

consent as a lower priority than nonaggressive men. The fact that aggressive men perceive verbal consent as difficult or awkward suggests the need to target educational efforts at men who have been coercive. Teaching aggressive men how to integrate consent behaviour into their sexual scripts may help to promote positive attitudinal and behaviour change regarding consent issues in sexual relations.

The Perception and Use of Verbal and Nonverbal Behaviours

Students reported using nonverbal behaviours more than verbal ones for both the asking for and giving of sexual consent. This finding is consistent with other studies that have found more permission giving behaviours were non-verbal than verbal (Hall, 1995; O'Sullivan & Byers, 1992). It indicates a significant discrepancy between student attitudes that explicit consent is important and their reported behaviour which demonstrated greater use of nonverbal than verbal approaches to consent asking and giving.

Students rated the different types of penetrative behaviour (vaginal, oral or anal) as more often requiring explicit consent than other sexual behaviours. Hall's (1995) examination of a similar sequence of individual sexual behaviours found that intercourse was seen as requiring the most permission giving. Researchers analyzing violations of consent in kissing behaviour (Margolin et al., 1989; Semonsky & Rosenfeld, 1994) add support to the premise that the perceived necessity of consent is hierarchical based on the level of sexual activity involved. Kissing behaviour was perceived by participants in their research as less intimate and thus requiring less formal permission.

Limitations

There are a number of limitations to this research. The newly created sexual consent scales were developed using a sample of undergraduate students at a midsize Canadian university. Generalizability is limited in this regard. Future researchers should administer the sexual consent scales to diverse samples in order to demonstrate the generalizability of the sexual consent scales with other populations. Another limitation may be the content of the items. In other words, did the items adequately operationalize the variable sexual consent? Although the author attempted to include all possible aspects of sexual consent, items may need to be added if important content areas have been omitted. The process of determining the reliability and validity of a newly developed instrument is a continuous process and future research should include further efforts to improve the sexual consent scales. If the sexual consent scales are valid, they should be related to other variables in ways expected by past theoretical and empirical work. For example, measures of sexual assertiveness or communication may be positively correlated with *establishing consent prior to sexual activity* and *general discussion of consent* and negatively related to *anticipating difficulties with verbal consent* due to the openness with which sexually assertive individuals communicate their needs and feelings.

In addition, there are a few items within the scales in which the wording is ambiguous. For example, the items "Obtaining sexual consent is more necessary in a new relationship than in a committed relationship" and "It is just as necessary to obtain

consent for genital fondling as it is for sexual intercourse” did not systematically establish whether it was verbal consent, nonverbal consent or both that students were responding to. It is possible that some students may have been interpreting consent in these instances as any form of consent, while others may have interpreted these questions to refer specifically to verbal consent. Caution should be used when interpreting these items.

The response rate for mailed questionnaires in this study was 44%. This study utilized some practical strategies that have been shown to improve the response rate of mail surveys including, the use of a follow-up reminder, no return postage necessary, a cash incentive, and a university affiliation (Fox, Crask, & Kim, 1988). While the response rate obtained is considered good (Alreck & Settle, 1985), it is still possible that a participation bias exists. Studies in sex research have demonstrated significant differences between volunteers and nonvolunteers. In their attitudes toward sex, volunteers, relative to nonvolunteers, tend to be more sexually liberal and curious and possess less sexual guilt and inhibitions (Catania, 1990; Catania, Binson, Van der Straten, & Stone, 1995; Dunne, 1998; Wiederman, 1999). Volunteers also tend to report higher levels of sexual experience and self-esteem (Wiederman, 1999). What is not known is whether behavioural differences represent true differences in sexual behaviour or simply differences in the willingness to disclose sexual information (Catania, 1990). If the sexual experience bias exists in the current study, it might actually be advantageous. Volunteers for this study, while not representative of all university students would have more and varied sexual experiences from which to draw upon regarding the consent

process. Given that the current study was exploratory, diverse perspectives on consent were important. It is more difficult to determine how being less traditional with regard to sexual attitudes would influence attitudes or behaviours regarding consent. It is possible that liberal attitudes lead individuals to perceive verbal consent as more important because of their less inhibited ability to communicate and self-disclose with a partner. It is also equally possible that liberal views regarding sexuality cause individuals to view verbal consent as less important because they feel more confident in their ability to read a partner's nonverbal cues. Weideman (1999) found that volunteers for sexual research, in comparison to nonvolunteers, tend to "evaluate themselves more highly as sexual partners and indicate a greater ability to manipulate others" (p. 64). This positive sexual image in combination with the confidence to get partners to do what they want may lead them to view issues of sexual consent as relatively less important than the general population of students. The amount of concern attributed to volunteer bias should not be overestimated. Bogaert (1996) has suggested that the type of research questions being investigated dictates how problematic volunteer bias is for any given study. Research examining *processes* should be less concerned than those attempting to indicate the scope of high-risk sexual behaviours. Paper-and-pencil sexuality studies, such as this one, probably have very small difference in variance attributable to volunteer bias.

Although the gender distribution of the sample (64% female and 36% male) closely matched the overall university gender distribution, approximately twice as many females as males volunteered for this study (55% female versus 31% male). This

difference was significant given that males were over-sampled to achieve sufficient numbers for statistical analyses. Overall sexuality research tends to attract more male than female volunteers (Catania, 1990) but this is topic specific. Survey studies on sexual coercion and violence typically suffer from fewer male volunteers. It is possible that sexually aggressive males were less likely to fill out a survey on sexual consent. This gender bias in volunteerism leaves the representativeness of male responses to this survey open to question.

The private nature of sociosexual behaviour and the context in which it occurs typically restrict the types of measures possible. Investigators typically rely on self-reports (Catania, 1990). The reliance on self-reports for assessing attitudes toward sexual topics can be problematic because the desire to be socially accepted and viewed positively by others may lead some people to modify their true attitudes. This tendency may be greater if a person's true attitude toward a sexual issue conflicts with societal norms. The current campus atmosphere regarding the importance of sexual consent might make it desirable for individuals to report 'politically correct' attitudes and behaviours with respect to sexual consent. A number of results from this study refute that claim. Students negatively evaluated Antioch's sexual consent policy and many preferred methods of negotiating sexual encounters that did not use verbal consent. In addition, the majority of seven-point item means and component variable means were near the mid-point of the scales. These results suggest a level of complexity in reported consent attitudes and behaviours that was not significantly influenced by social desirability. In addition, as

stated earlier, the similarity of the demographic data on experience with sexual intercourse, number of intercourse partners, and sexual victimization and aggression rates with other university samples (Siegel, et al., 1999; DeKeseredy & Kelly, 1993; Koss, et al., 1987) helps counter the possible influence of social desirability in student responses.

Relying on self reports for the recall of personal sexual behaviours can also be problematic. It may be difficult to recall minute nonverbal behavioural negotiations during a sexual encounter, such as exactly how and when they occurred and whether or not they represented the 'asking for' or 'giving of' consent. The saliency of day-to-day sexual experiences may not be great enough to elicit a clear and detailed account of these encounters. It may be that individual nonverbal, or even verbal, behaviours were reinterpreted based on the 'outcome' of the encounter as a positive or negative experience, but not interpreted on an individual behaviour-by-behaviour basis. In an attempt to minimize this potential difficulty, students were instructed to recall their most recent sexual encounter. When asked how long ago their most recent sexual encounter was, 61% indicated it was within the last month, while 80% indicated it was within the last six months. Catania (1990) found that estimates of sexual behaviour, using test-retest data, became less reliable at intervals of six months or more.

The recall of behaviours could also be improved if the questions asked were more directly linked to an individual's current relationship. Questions such as, "Does your asking for consent change with the type of relationship you have been in?" or "In your current relationship, is your consent behaviour different now from what it was at the

beginning of your relationship?” may have focussed participants’ responses more toward their specific behaviours as a guide to answering the survey questions.

Finally, other statistical approaches may have afforded additional power not provided by the discriminant analysis. The exploratory nature of the present study and its focus on scale development made the use discriminant analysis a logical choice.

However, logistic regression has the advantage of improvements in power as well as not being unduly influenced by unequal sample sizes. In addition, logistic regression can assess the relationship between variables such as gender, sexual intercourse experience, relationship status because they can all be entered into the same model. This procedure would allow the prediction of consent (dependent variable) based on several continuous or dichotomous independent variables.

Implications

The findings of this study have significant implications for future sexuality research and policy. One of the major research advances of this study is the development of the sexual consent scales and the delineation of the sexual consent components. Muehlenhard (1995/1996) and Archard (1998) suggested that the definition of consent was comprised of a number of elements, including knowledge, personal volition, freedom from undue influence, and mental capacity. The present study extended our understanding of sexual consent by delineating particular attitudes and behaviours that students reported were fundamental to their conceptualization of sexual consent. The use of focus groups in the early stages of this research was important given that this topic area

is relatively new. These groups provided insight into how contextual factors, such as the length of the relationship or the perceived practicality of verbal consent, influence the behaviours used to negotiate consent. In addition, the types of behaviours used to ask for and give consent were also detailed using focus groups. This approach provided a solid foundation on which to generate questions for the survey.

The survey scales could be used to assess a student population's attitudes and behaviours regarding consent prior to presenting an educational lecture or developing educational programs for a university or college campus. Understanding a population's current level of comprehension regarding sexual consent is the first step in knowing how to educate them.

Lonsway and Fitzgerald (1994) have argued that the absence of a definition of consent in research on sexual coercion or rape has raised doubts about the content validity of those studies. Given the recent development of a definition of sexual consent in the literature (Muehlenhard, 1995/1996; Archard, 1998) and the current finding that students defined consent in a similar fashion, Hickman and Muehlenhard's (1999) definition could be used to improve the content validity of future studies on sexual coercion or rape.

The finding that students believe relationship status influences how consent is negotiated has clear implications for research. The behaviours used to negotiate consent on a first date may be very different from those used in a long-term committed relationship. Clear and explicit consent was perceived as less necessary, and less likely, in a committed versus casual relationships, at least for non-intercourse behaviours. Clear

and explicit consent negotiations early in a relationship, even if achieved through acquiescence, may be understood as establishing a precedent for future sexual relations. Shotland and Hunter (1995) found that 40% of women who had previously engaged in sex with their partners reported consenting to unwanted sex on a subsequent occasion because they felt their past sexual behaviour mitigated against refusal. Students may feel that clear and explicit consent is less necessary in more committed relationships because intimate communication patterns are already established and accepted. Future research needs to focus on the relationship context of consent negotiations.

In their most recent sexuality encounter, both women and men indicated that the most frequently used behaviour to signal the giving of consent was to not stop their partner from kissing or touching them. This finding replicated that of Hickman and Muehlenhard (1999) who concluded that “it could be dangerous to use not resisting as a signal of consent” (p.271). While the use of a non-response as an indicator of consent can lead to significant miscommunication and possibly unwanted sexual activity, it is not clear how often a non-response, such as not stopping a partner, is being used in conjunction with other signals throughout a sexual encounter and how often it would be used on its own. The partner initiating sexual activity could well be using a number of signals and situational cues to assess the consent of a partner. For example, a partner who does not resist, smiles and kisses their partner back while moving closer could easily be interpreted as giving consent. However, it remains distressing how frequently non-response behaviours are used to signal consent.

The fact that students have a fairly sophisticated understanding of sexual consent as a concept might also be an indication that educational efforts on university campuses are having a positive impact. Students seem well informed about consent as a definition; and their attitudes are quite favourable toward more communication and education regarding consent.

Universities would be wise to take note of the negative evaluation of the Antioch policy on sexual consent and the reasons provided. Although favourable to the idea of more awareness, the policy's practicality seems to be a major obstacle against its acceptance. The student appeal for more education, instead of policy, on sexual consent indicates a strategy that would be more agreeable to the student population.

To design and implement programs that will effectively reach student audiences, campus officials must understand how students themselves think about and negotiate sexual consent in intimate relationships. Several ideas about how to approach intervention with students are suggested by the findings. Targeted efforts can be made with awareness programs. Programs need to be conscious of the subtle differences that exist between females and males, sexually experienced and nonexperienced students and the contexts in which consent gets played out. It is clear that telling students to verbally state their consent or nonconsent to a partner ignores the contextual influences on consent and is bound to be ineffective for a significant proportion of them. The gender difference in the perceptions of consent in dating relationships suggests that targeted education may be necessary. Males have indicated that they prefer assuming consent, in part, because

they find asking for it an awkward process. Skills training could help men learn new ways to incorporate asking behaviours into their sexual repertoire that do not interrupt the perceived mood.

Conclusion

Antioch College seems to have been the inspiration for a small, but growing research interest into how individuals negotiate sexual consent. Sexual consent needs to be recognized by researchers, policy makers, and laypeople as a multifaceted *process* that can occur on numerous levels of expression but always within a specific, and influential, context. Attempts to reduce this ongoing process to simple 'yes' or 'no' responses, obscure the complexities and subtleties of sexual encounters.

CHAPTER V

DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Research on the process of sexual consent negotiation in noncoercive sexual encounters is an important and timely topic. Given the wide spread research into nonconsensual sexual activity and the importance given to the concept of sexual consent within the rape and sexual assault literature, the development of a reliable and valid instrument to assess sexual consent attitudes and behaviours offers numerous research possibilities. The sexual consent scales are a first step toward the development of an instrument that can be of use to researchers and administrators interested in sexual consent issues. The next step should be scale refinement and validity and reliability studies. Test-retest studies should assess the stability of the scales, while comparisons of these scales with related external measures would help establish criterion and construct validity.

The context in which consent negotiation occurs is an important avenue for future research. Preliminary results in this study suggest that both the level of intimacy associated with each sexual behaviour and the status of the relationship in question significantly influence the perceived necessity of explicit consent. Future research should examine how consent negotiations differ (i.e., types of verbal and nonverbal behaviours used) based on what sexual activity is being negotiated and the stage of the relationship.

Understanding consent negotiations within gay male and lesbian relationships is another possible research direction. A feminist analysis of sexual relations would

implicate the patriarchal structure of society and the imbalance of power between women and men as the main reasons why women are victimized, even in the face of their nonconsent. Without the imbalance of power based on gender, what form of consent negotiation occurs between partners of the same gender? Since gays and lesbians are subject to the same gender-role socialization as heterosexual men and women, it may be reasonable to expect that both may have less difficulty negotiating consent because of their symmetry in consent attitudes and behaviours. For example, gay male couples may be more likely to assume consent until they heard a 'no', while lesbian partners may be more likely to establish consent prior to the start of sexual activity. However, given the dynamics of having two initiators in gay male relationships or two non-initiators in lesbian relationships, the use of particular verbal and nonverbal behaviours to ask for or give consent may significantly differ from those used in heterosexual relationships.

University administrators should consider incorporating the voice of students when deciding on future policies that regulate sexual consent behaviours. The sexual consent scales developed here may be useful tools for assessing student opinion and current behaviours when making decisions regarding new university policies. In addition to policy decisions, targeted educational efforts by campus groups, such as residence life staff, health services, peer support groups, and the police, would benefit greatly from understanding the attitudes and behaviours of the student population.

CHAPTER VI

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

Excerpt from the Antioch College Sexual Offense Policy

1. For the purpose of this policy, "consent" shall be defined as follows:

the act of willingly and verbally agreeing to engage in specific sexual behavior.

See (4) below when sexual behavior is mutually and simultaneously initiated. Because of the importance of communication and the potential dangers when misunderstanding exists in a sexual situation, those involved in any sexual interaction need to share enough of a common understanding to be able to adequately communicate: 1) requests for consent; and, 2) when consent is given, denied or withdrawn.

Note: Recognized American and international sign languages are considered a form of verbal language for the purpose of this policy.

2. When sexual behavior is not mutually and simultaneously initiated, then the person who initiates sexual behavior is responsible for verbally asking for the consent of the other individual(s) involved.

3. The person with whom sexual contact/conduct is initiated shall verbally express his/her willingness or must verbally express consent, and/or express his/her lack of willingness by words, actions, gestures, or any other previously agreed upon communication.

Silence and/or non-communication must never be interpreted as consent.

4. When sexual behavior is mutually and simultaneously initiated, then the persons involved share responsibility for getting/giving or refusing/denying consent by words, actions, gestures or by any other previously agreed upon communication.

5. Obtaining consent is an on-going process in any sexual interaction. Verbal consent should be obtained with each new level of physical and/or sexual behavior in any given interaction, regardless of who initiates it. Asking "Do you want to have sex with me?" is not enough. The request for consent must be specific to each act.

6. If someone has initially consented but then stops consenting during a sexual interaction, she/he should communicate withdrawal of consent verbally (example: saying "no" or "stop") and/or through physical resistance (example: pushing away). The other individual(s) must stop immediately.

7. In order for consent to be meaningful and valid under this policy:

a) the person not initiating must have judgment and control unimpaired by any drug or intoxicant administered to prevent her/his resistance, and/or which has been administered surreptitiously, by force or threat of force, or by deception;

b) the person not initiating must have judgment and control unimpaired by mental dysfunction which is known to the person initiating;

c) the person not initiating must not be asleep or unconscious;

d) the person initiating must not have forced, threatened, coerced, or intimidated the other individual(s) into engaging in sexual behavior.

8. To knowingly take advantage of someone who is under the influence of alcohol, drugs, prescribed or over-the-counter medication is not acceptable behavior in the Antioch community.

APPENDIX B

Focus Group Study Instrument and Accompaniments

Figure B-1: Focus Group Study Advertisement

WOULD YOU LIKE TO PARTICIPATE IN A STUDY OF SEXUAL CONSENT ?

Hi,

I am Terry Humphreys, a graduate student in the Department of Family Studies at Guelph. I am conducting **focus group** discussions regarding **sexual consent**. I am interested in **your interpretations** of sexual consent, including your perceptions of how others initiate or respond to consent signals.

The focus groups will consist of about 6 men OR 6 women (same-sex groups only) and be facilitated by a same-sex leader. I am interested in your perceptions about sexual consent; however, you are not obligated *at any time* to reveal *personal* behaviours that you do not wish to share - that is entirely your choice. All members of the focus group will be asked to agree to strict confidentiality. This research is being conducted in accordance with the ethical standards and guidelines for research at the University of Guelph. This study will take approximately 2 to 2½ hours of your time (evenings are available) and all participants will receive \$10.00 as a thank you for their contribution to this project.

The only requirements for involvement in the project are that you are not married, heterosexual, between the ages of 18 and 26 and available here in Guelph this summer. You *do not* need to currently be in a relationship.

If you are interested in participating in this research project (focus group discussion), please sign the form below and place it in the box provided. If you would like some more time to think about participating in this project, you may take this form home with you - my contact numbers are at the bottom. Please encourage others that you think might be interested in this study to contact me. Thank you for your time and cooperation.

Your information:

Your name (please print): _____

Age: _____ Major: _____ Year: _____

Your *phone number* and *address* this summer: _____

To contact me:	University :	824-4120, ext. 8566, office FACS 123 (infrequent)
	Home :	823-8782 (answering machine)
	Email :	thumphre@uoguelph.ca (I'm always online!)

Sincerely,

Terry P. Humphreys, *PhD Candidate, Department of Family Studies*

Figure B-2 : Focus Group Study Instrument

Information and Consent Form for Focus Group Participants

Dear Participant,

I am a graduate student in the Department of Family Studies at Guelph. In partial fulfilment of my PhD dissertation, I am conducting an exploratory study on the attitudes and behaviours of university students regarding **sexual consent**. Specifically, I am interested in students' perceived meanings of consent, attitudes toward the use of verbal and nonverbal consent signals, and how students interpret these signals. I am interested in **your interpretations** of sexual consent, including your perceptions of how others initiate or respond to consent signals.

Information will be collected through **focus group** discussions with students such as yourself. The focus groups will consist of about 6 men OR 6 women (same gender groups only) and facilitated by a same gender leader. I am interested in your perceptions about sexual consent; however, you are not obligated *at any time* to reveal personal behaviours that you do not wish to share. If you do wish to share relevant personal information, that is entirely your choice. All members of the focus group will be asked to agree to strict confidentiality. That is, any personal information shared within the focus groups will remain confidential among the members. All participants will receive \$10.00 as a thank you for their contribution to this project.

The focus group discussions will be audiotaped and transcribed for analysis. Your name will **not** be on the typed transcripts. The tapes and transcripts will not contain any identifying information. This information is confidential and only the researchers involved in the project will have access to it. Audiotapes will be kept by the researcher until Dec 31, 1998, after which time they will be destroyed. Direct quotations from the discussion may be used in the final report, however, any identifying information will be deleted or changed.

This research is being conducted in accordance with the ethical standards and guidelines for research at the University of Guelph. You may withdraw from the study at any time. If you have any questions or concerns you may contact the study supervisor, Dr. Ed Herold at the University of Guelph, Department of Family Studies (824-4120, ext. 3006). You may also contact me personally at 824-4120, ext. 8566, office FACS 123.

If you are interested in participating in this research project (focus group discussion), please sign the attached form indicating your consent. Thank you for your time and cooperation. I hope you enjoy being involved in this interesting research!

Sincerely,

Terry P. Humphreys, *PhD Candidate*,
Principal Investigator
Department of Family Studies

**Sexual Consent Study: Focus Group
Consent Form**

I have read the study information sheet and understand that all information is confidential. I understand that verbatim quotations may be used in written publications, and that personal identifying information will be changed or deleted. I understand that I may withdraw from the study at any time. Furthermore, I have been supplied with a study information sheet and the telephone numbers of the principal investigators, should I have any questions or concerns.

SIGNATURE : _____

DATE : _____

Sexual Consent Study

Participant Information

This questionnaire is completely anonymous. Do NOT put your name anywhere on this questionnaire!

Part I

Below are some questions about yourself. Some questions are more personal than others. Please read each question carefully and answer honestly. Remember, your answers are anonymous. When you have completed this information, please place it into the manila envelope provide to ensure your anonymity.

SEX:

☐

Female

☐

Male

AGE:

DEGREE PROGRAM:

☐

BA

☐

BASc

☐

Bsc

☐

BComm

☐

BLA

☐

BscEng

☐

Unclassified/Other

SEMESTER YEAR:

SEXUAL ORIENTATION:

☐

Heterosexual (only interested in sexual activity with members of the other sex)

☐

Homosexual (only interested in sexual activity with members of the same sex as yourself)

☐

Bisexual (sexually interested in both women and men)

CURRENT RELATIONSHIP STATUS (check only one):

☐

Not dating or seeing anyone

☐

Dating or seeing more than one person

☐

Casually dating or seeing one person

☐

Steady relationship with one person only

☐

Engaged or living with partner

☐

Married

FOCUS GROUP TOPIC OUTLINE GUIDE

- A. Introduce myself.
- B. Purpose of the focus group.
- C. Tell about audio taping, food.

OPENING QUESTION

Please introduce yourself and tell us a little about yourself (i.e., major, year, etc.).

INTRODUCTORY QUESTION

We are meeting to hear from university students about sexual consent. To start off, I would like to know from each of you, your own understanding or definition of sexual consent. What does sexual consent mean to you?

Prompt: Are there any other components to sexual consent not yet mentioned?

TRANSITION QUESTION

A number of varied meanings have been mentioned. I would like to find out if sexual consent is “an issue”. Are students discussing the issue of sexual consent with friends? Partners? What do your friends think of the issue of sexual consent?

Prompt: Do people simply wait till there is a problem before communicating about consent?

Prompt: How do you think sexual consent should be obtained (asked for)?

Prompt: Do you think this is what people are actually doing in their dating relationships?

KEY QUESTIONS

I would like to move on now to some key questions regarding how students actually communicate consent.

Antioch College

Provide small excerpt (handout) of the Antioch sexual consent policy statement.

“All university members must obtain consent from their sexual partners prior to engaging in any sexual activity and, once sexually engaged, at each new level of physical and/or sexual behaviour in any given interaction, regardless of who initiates it. Asking 'Do you want to have sex with me?' is not enough. The request must be specific to each act.”

8. What is your reaction to Antioch College’s policy on sexual consent?

Prompt: How practical (realistic) is it? (What are the difficulties with it?)

Prompt: Any other problems anyone sees with this policy?

Prompt: Are there any benefits you can see from such a policy?

Prompt: Would you like to see this policy implemented at UofG? Why or why not?

Sexual Communication

1. What signals do students use to communicate to a dating partner that they are ASKING FOR sexual consent (these could be verbal, nonverbal, direct, indirect)?

Prompts: Would you interpret all of those actions as representing consent?

2. What signals do students use to communicate to a dating partner that they are GIVING sexual consent?

Prompt: Would you interpret all of those actions as giving permission to proceed?

3. Do men and women differ in their perceptions of sexual consent (either in the way they ask for or give sexual consent)?

If so, how?

Prompt: Are there any other ways in which women and men differ in their asking for or giving of sexual consent behaviour?

Prompt: It seems as though there are quite a few nonverbal or indirect signals here, why is it difficult to be more direct and say for example "I'm interested in having sex"?

4. How often in a typical sexual encounter would a person have to ask for or give consent to their partner before proceeding?

Prompt: Is sexual intercourse the only act for which consent is important to establish?

Prompt: Are there any other sexual activities for which you would need to first establish consent before you started the behaviour?

Prompt: Are there differences in how often men and women might think (and for what behaviours) consent needs to be asked during a typical sexual encounter?

5. Is asking for sexual consent and receiving a response a negotiated process?

Prompt: Why? (or why not?)

Sexual Precedence

Based on the length of a relationship or the amount of sexual experience a couple has together, consent may be negotiated differently.

6a) Let's take the situation of a causal sexual encounter, such as picking someone up at a bar.

How is consent asked for and given in this situation

... for petting behaviours?

... for sexual intercourse?

6b) Let's take the situation in which a couple have engaged in some fondling and petting behaviours but have not yet engaged in intercourse.

How is consent asked for and given in this situation?

... for further petting behaviours?

... for sexual intercourse?

6c) Okay, what about a situation in which a couple are in a long-term relationship and have had sexual intercourse numerous times? How is consent asked for and given in this situation?

Prompt: Is it the length of the relationship or previous sexual experience that changes how consent is asked for or given? How?

Prompt: Does it change the frequency of asking for consent? How so?

Prompt: How is consent negotiated for "non-intercourse" behaviours?

7. We have discussed how the stage of a sexual relationship could affect how sexual consent is communicated. Are there any other variables that might influence the communication of sexual consent?

Prompt: Does anyone have anything else to add?

ENDING QUESTIONS

Before we come to an end, I would like to try to summarize what we have discussed.

The moderator will give a brief, 2 minute summary of the responses to questions: on the meaning of sexual consent, how consent is communicated, whether the relationship affects how consent is communicated, any gender differences noted and general impressions about the Antioch College sexual consent policy.

Does this summary sound complete? Do you have any changes or additions?

Naturally the goal of these focus groups is to get a better understanding of if and how sexual consent is being communicated by dating partners. Have we missed anything?

What advice do you have for us?

What advice do you have for educators teaching about date rape prevention and sexual communication?

APPENDIX C

Survey Instrument and Accompaniments

Figure C-1 : Survey Instrument

Sexual Consent Questionnaire Information Form

Dear Student,

A major campus issue is that of sexual coercion. Universities are considering policy changes to aid students in their negotiations of sexual consent. However, most students have not had a voice in the possible changes being considered. For my PhD dissertation in the Department of Family Studies, I am studying the attitudes and behaviours of university students regarding **sexual consent**. Specifically, I am interested in students' attitudes and behaviours regarding the use of verbal and nonverbal consent signals in sexual decision-making. You are invited to participate in this study. Your name has been chosen on a random basis.

Your responses will be kept completely anonymous and confidential. No one will be able to identify you on the basis of your questionnaire and only the researcher will have access to the completed questionnaire. Please **DO NOT** write your name on your questionnaire. Given the sensitive nature of some of the questions I recommend that you complete this questionnaire alone, to keep your opinions confidential and anonymous.

Please be as honest as possible when answering this questionnaire. Some of the questions deal with issues that are controversial, and I am interested in finding out the many different opinions that people may have. Carefully consider each question. There are no right or wrong answers to these issues and no one will ever know how you responded to the questions. Therefore, feel comfortable in giving your true opinion. There are a few questions specifically aimed at heterosexuals; however, the majority of this questionnaire can be filled out by anyone, regardless of sexual orientation. Please fill out all of the questions that pertain to you.

The questionnaire takes about 20 minutes to complete. When you have completed the questionnaire, please place it in the envelope provided (marked "questionnaire") and return it to me via campus mail by **March 31**. **To thank you for taking the time to participate in this research, we offer you the opportunity to enter your name in a draw to win \$100. If you would like to be entered into the lottery for this CASH PRIZE, please fill out the lottery ballot and return it in the separate envelope provided (marked "ballot").**

This research is being conducted in accordance with the ethical standards and guidelines for research at the University of Guelph. You may withdraw from the study at any time. The supervisor for this study is Dr. Ed Herold, Department of Family Studies. If you have any questions or concerns you may contact the researchers either by telephone (Terry Humphreys at 824-4120 ext.8566 or Dr. Ed Herold at 824-4120 ext.3006) or by email (thumphre@uoguelph.ca or eherold@facs.uoguelph.ca). **This project is funded by the Women's Campus Safety Initiatives.**

Thank you for your time and cooperation. We hope you enjoy being involved in this interesting research!

Terry P. Humphreys, Ph.D. Candidate,
Department of Family Studies,
University of Guelph

SEXUAL CONSENT QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is completely **anonymous and confidential**. Please do NOT put your name anywhere on it.

As you fill out this questionnaire, please keep in mind that some questions ask about **SEXUAL ACTIVITY** (i.e., a range of sexual behaviours that could involve anything from kissing up to and including sexual intercourse), while others ask specifically about **SEXUAL INTERCOURSE**.

PART I

The following questions are demographic items that will enable me to compare opinions of different groups of students.

1. SEX: ☐ Female ☐ Male

2. AGE: _____

3. DEGREE PROGRAM: ☐ BA ☐ BASc ☐ BSc ☐ Bcomm
☐ BLA ☐ BScEng ☐ BScAgr ☐ Unclassified
☐ Other

4. SEMESTER LEVEL: _____

5. ENROLMENT STATUS: ☐ Full-time ☐ Part-time

6. SEXUAL ORIENTATION:
☐ Heterosexual (only interested in sexual activity with members of the other sex)
☐ Homosexual (only interested in sexual activity with members of the same sex as yourself)
☐ Bisexual (sexually interested in both women and men)

7. CURRENT RELATIONSHIP STATUS (check only one):
☐ Not dating or seeing anyone
☐ Dating or seeing more than one person
☐ Casually dating or seeing one person
☐ Steady relationship with one person only
☐ Engaged or living with partner
☐ Married

PART II

Please give your opinion of this sexual consent policy statement from Antioch College in Ohio :

"All university members must obtain consent from their sexual partners prior to engaging in any sexual activity and, once sexually engaged, at each new level of physical and/or sexual behaviour in any given interaction, regardless of who initiates it. Asking 'Do you want to have sex with me?' is not enough. The request must be specific to each act."

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

	SA						SD
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. This policy is a good way to require sexual communication and discussion between dating partners prior to engaging in sexual activity.							
2. This policy is NOT realistic.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. This policy could easily be incorporated into my own sexual interactions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. I WOULD endorse a similar policy on the University of Guelph campus.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. This policy will NOT reduce the incidence of sexual assault or rape because rapists know what they are doing (i.e., they do not misinterpret signals).	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. I WOULD comply fully with this policy.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. This policy is NOT enforceable.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. It is NOT the university's role to institute this type of policy.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. Antioch's sexual consent policy should ONLY be used as an educational awareness tool and not as a university regulation.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. This policy makes good sense but it would be very difficult to implement effectively.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

PART III

Students differ in terms of their thoughts and beliefs regarding sexual consent. Using the following scale, please circle the number that best describes how strongly YOU agree or disagree with each statement.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

- | | SA | | | | | | SD |
|---|----|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 1. Nonverbal behaviours are as effective as verbal communication to indicate sexual consent. | | | | | | | |
| 2. Deciding how far a sexual encounter will proceed is often decided "during the moment", rather than ahead of time. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 3. When initiating sexual activity, it is okay to assume consent and proceed sexually until the partner indicates "no". | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 4. If a sexual request is made and the partner indicates "no", it is okay to continue negotiating the request. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 5. Obtaining sexual consent is MORE necessary in a new relationship than in a committed relationship. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 6. It is enough to ask for consent at the beginning of a sexual encounter. You don't need to ask at every step along the way. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 7. More campus programs are needed to make students aware of sexual consent issues. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 8. If a couple has a long history of consenting sexual activity with each other, they no longer need to ask for consent during each sexual encounter. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 9. Too few couples openly discuss the issue of sexual consent. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 10. The necessity of asking for sexual consent DECREASES as the length of an intimate relationship INCREASES. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 11. Verbally asking for sexual consent is awkward. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 12. Sexual consent should always be obtained BEFORE the start of any sexual activity. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 13. Partners are LESS likely to ask for sexual consent the longer they are in a relationship. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 14. It is equally important to obtain sexual consent in ALL relationships regardless of the length or prior sexual involvement. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

- | | SA | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | SD |
|--|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| 15. When initiating sexual activity, one should assume no sexual consent and verbally ask for it before proceeding with any sexual activity. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | |
| 16. Verbally asking for sexual consent reduces the pleasure of the encounter (i.e., it destroys the mood). | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | |
| 17. If your partner wants to engage in sexual activity it is okay to proceed, even if she/he is drunk. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | |
| 18. Obtaining sexual consent is MORE necessary in a casual sexual encounter than in a committed relationship. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | |
| 18. Consent to begin a sexual encounter implies consent up to and including sexual intercourse. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | |
| 20. Sexual intercourse is the only sexual activity that requires explicit verbal consent. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | |
| 21. Consent should be asked before ANY kind of sexual behaviour, including necking or petting. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | |
| 22. It is just as necessary to obtain consent for genital fondling as it is for sexual intercourse. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | |
| 23. If sexual consent for intercourse is already established, then consent for petting and fondling can be assumed. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | |

24. Please check which of these two statements you agree with **MORE** :

- ☐ In making sexual advances, it is okay to continue until the partner indicates otherwise (i.e., assume "yes" until you hear a "no")
- ☐ **BEFORE** making sexual advances, one should always ask for and obtain a verbal "yes" to engage in any sexual activities (i.e., assume "no" until you get a "yes").
-

25. The following question refers to 2 different relationship types. The first (**new dating relationship**) refers to a couple who have dated 5 or 6 times (have not had sex) and plan to continue with the relationship. The second (**committed dating relationship**) refers to a couple who have been going out for 1 year (are having sex regularly). For each relationship type, please indicate with a check mark (✓) the following behaviours that you believe require **a clear and explicit indication** of consent to be obtained (either verbally or nonverbally). Check as many boxes as apply.

Behaviours	New Dating Relationship	Committed Dating Relationship
Kissing partner		
Hugging partner		
Touching partner's breasts / chest		
Touching partner's genitals		
Removing partner's clothes		
Masturbating partner		
Penile/vaginal intercourse		
Oral sex		
Anal intercourse		

PART IV

Students differ a great deal in the extent that sexual consent is a personally relevant issue. Using the following scale, please circle the number that best describes how strongly YOU agree or disagree with each statement.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

- | | SA | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | SD |
|--|--------------------------|-----|--------------------------|----|---|---|---|----|
| | 1 | | | | | | | 7 |
| 1. I have NOT given much thought to the topic of sexual consent. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | |
| 2. I have discussed sexual consent issues with a friend. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | |
| 3. I have heard sexual consent issues being discussed by other students on campus. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | |
| 4. I have discussed sexual consent issues with my current (or most recent) partner at times OTHER THAN during sexual encounters. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | |
| 5. Sexual consent is NOT something my current (or most recent) partner and I discuss before we start having sex. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | |
| 6. It is easy to accurately "read" my current (or most recent) partner's non-verbal signals as indicating consent or non-consent to sexual activity. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | |
| 7. I ask for sexual consent from my current (or most recent) partner MORE than my partner asks it of me. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | |
| 8. Typically, I ask for consent by making a sexual advance and waiting for a reaction, so I know whether or not to continue. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | |
| 9. I always ask (either verbally or nonverbally) for consent BEFORE I initiate a sexual encounter. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | |
| 10. During a sexual encounter, I typically only ASK for consent ONCE. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | |
| 11. During a sexual encounter, I typically only GIVE my consent ONCE. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | |
| 12. I tend NOT to decide ahead of time what I will and will not consent to sexually. I wait till I am 'in the moment' to decide. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | |
| 13. I have engaged in sexual activity while drunk. | | | | | | | | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | YES | <input type="checkbox"/> | NO | | | | |
| 14. I have engaged in sexual intercourse while drunk. | | | | | | | | |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> | YES | <input type="checkbox"/> | NO | | | | |

- 15a. Please think of your **MOST RECENT** sexual encounter in answering the following question. Check **ONLY** those verbal and nonverbal behaviours you used to **specifically ASK FOR YOUR PARTNER'S CONSENT**. NOT those that simply occurred as part of the encounter, but only those you used to indicate that you were **ASKING FOR** consent.

NON-VERBAL BEHAVIOURS		VERBAL BEHAVIOURS	
	you kissed your partner		you told your partner that you loved him/her
	you undressed your partner		you said "I want to have sex with you (make love to you)"
	you undressed yourself		you suggested one of you should get a condom
	you pulled out a condom		you suggested that the two of you go into the bedroom
	you moved closer to your partner		you talked about the importance of using birth control
	you touched your partner sexually		you asked "Do you want to have sex? (make love?)"

- 15b. Please think of your **MOST RECENT** sexual encounter in answering the following question. Check **ONLY** those verbal and nonverbal behaviours you used to **specifically GIVE YOUR OWN CONSENT**. NOT those that simply occurred as part of the encounter, but only those you used to indicate that you were **GIVING YOUR** consent.

NON-VERBAL BEHAVIOURS		VERBAL BEHAVIOURS	
	you kissed your partner		you said "yes"
	you undressed your partner		you told your partner that you loved him/her
	you didn't stop your partner from kissing and touching you sexually		you said "I want to have sex with you (make love to you)"
	you undressed yourself		you suggested one of you should get a condom
	you did not say no		you said "don't stop" or "please continue"
	you pulled out a condom		you suggested that the two of you go into the bedroom
	you smiled		you talked about the importance of using birth control
	you moved closer to your partner		you asked "Do you want to have sex? (make love?)"
	you touched your partner sexually		

15c. Please indicate when your **MOST RECENT** sexual encounter was:

- ☐ This week ☐ Within the last 6 months ☐ More than 1 year ago
☐ Within the last month ☐ Within the last year

PART V

The following questions deal with your sexual experiences from age 14 on. Please check the appropriate box with an "X" or a "✓".

1. Have you ever willingly engaged in mild forms of sexual activity such as petting or sexual touching with a member of the opposite sex? ☐ YES ☐ NO
2. Have you ever willingly engaged in sexual intercourse (that is, penile-vaginal intercourse)? ☐ YES ☐ NO
3. If yes, with how many partners have you had penile-vaginal sexual intercourse? _____ partners
4. Have you ever had a member of the opposite sex misinterpret the level of sexual activity you desired? ☐ YES ☐ NO
5. Have you given in to sex play (fondling, kissing or petting, but not intercourse) when you didn't want to because of an opposite sex person's continual arguments and pressure? ☐ YES ☐ NO
6. Have you engaged in sex play (fondling, kissing or petting, but not intercourse) when you didn't want to because a member of the opposite sex threatened or used some degree of force (twisting your arm, holding you down, etc.) to make you? ☐ YES ☐ NO
7. Have you had a member of the opposite sex attempt sexual intercourse (e.g., get on top of you) when you didn't want to by threatening or using some degree of force (twisting your arm, holding you down, etc.), but intercourse did *not* occur? ☐ YES ☐ NO
8. Have you given in to sexual intercourse when you didn't want to because of an opposite sex person's continual arguments and pressure? ☐ YES ☐ NO
9. Have you engaged in sexual intercourse when you didn't want to because a member of the opposite sex threatened or used some degree of force (twisting your arm, holding you down, etc.) to make you? ☐ YES ☐ NO
10. Have you engaged in sexual activity (oral or anal intercourse or penetration by objects such as fingers, etc.) when you didn't want to because a member of the opposite sex threatened or used some degree of force (twisting your arm, holding you down, etc.) to make you? ☐ YES ☐ NO
11. Have you ever been sexually assaulted? ☐ YES ☐ NO

We are interested in any additional comments you may have about sexual consent issues.

Please return the questionnaire in the envelope provided (marked "questionnaire"). Also, if you wish to enter the cash draw for **\$100**, return your ballot form in the **separate** envelope provided (marked "ballot"). Return both by campus mail (no postage necessary). To assist me in staying on track with my research, it is important that I receive your completed questionnaire on or before **March 31st, 1998**.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TIME AND PARTICIPATION.

Figure C-2 : Incentive Ballot

Thank you !!!

Thank you for agreeing to assist me with my research project. By returning this ballot and your completed questionnaire (sealed separately in the 2 envelopes provided), you will be eligible to win **\$100 cash**. The draw will take place April 03, 1998 from all eligible entries received. The winner will be notified by telephone.

Name: _____

Guelph telephone: _____ Alternate telephone: _____

Permanent Address: _____

Email: _____

☐

Please indicate if you are interested in receiving a summary of the results.

Figure C-3 : Reminder Card

16 March 1998

Two weeks ago, I sent you a questionnaire asking about issues of sexual consent. This questionnaire is part of my Ph.D. thesis research in the Department of Family Studies.

If you have already completed and returned the questionnaire, please accept my most sincere thanks. If you have not, and are interested in completing it, I encourage you to do so within the next week. Your response is important to ensure that the study's results draw on the full range of experiences of students at the University of Guelph.

If, by some chance, you did not receive the questionnaire or it got misplaced, please call me (ext. 8566) or email me (thumphre@uoguelph.ca) and I will get another one in the mail to you right away. Also, feel free to call me if you have any questions about this study.

Thank you again,

Terry Humphreys
Department of Family Studies

P.S. Be sure to return your ballot for the **\$100 draw** and your completed questionnaire (sealed separately in the 2 envelopes provided). Good luck!

APPENDIX D

Percent Distribution For Sexual Consent Scales by Gender

Table D-1

Percent Distribution for Attitudes Toward Antioch's Sexual Consent Policy Scale byGender

	Males (N=184) %			Females (N=330) %			E
	A	U	D	A	U	D	
This policy is a good way to require sexual communication and discussion between dating partners prior to engaging in sexual activity.	61	14	26	76	10	14	14.48*
This policy is NOT realistic.	72	8	21	75	6	19	.61
This policy could easily be incorporated into my own sexual interactions.	46	16	38	48	21	31	4.09
I WOULD endorse a similar policy on the University of Guelph campus.	38	18	44	52	24	24	21.55*
This policy will NOT reduce the incidence of sexual assault or rape because rapists know what they are doing (i.e., they do not misinterpret signals).	66	12	23	68	11	21	.26
I WOULD comply fully with this policy.	51	18	31	50	17	33	.45
This policy is NOT enforceable.	78	9	13	81	8	11	.57
It is NOT the university's role to institute this type of policy.	55	12	34	47	17	36	4.31
Antioch's sexual consent policy should ONLY be used as an educational awareness tool and not as a university regulation.	70	8	23	64	11	25	1.90
This policy makes good sense but it would be very difficult to implement effectively.	82	8	10	89	5	6	4.98

Note: A=Agree; U=Undecided; D=Disagree.

* $p < .05$ (Bonferroni correction)

Table D-2

Percent Distribution for Sexual Consent Attitudes Scale by Gender

	Males (N=184) %			Females (N=330) %			F
	A	U	D	A	U	D	
Nonverbal behaviours are as effective as verbal communication to indicate sexual consent.	63	5	33	52	4	44	6.47
Deciding how far a sexual encounter will proceed is often decided "during the moment", rather than ahead of time.	81	4	15	80	5	16	.21
When initiating sexual activity, it is okay to assume consent and proceed sexually until the partner indicates "no".	38	9	53	31	10	59	2.40
If a sexual request is made and the partner indicates "no", it is okay to continue negotiating the request.	7	6	87	4	2	94	7.41
Obtaining sexual consent is MORE necessary in a new relationship than in a committed relationship.	48	7	45	40	7	53	3.58
It is enough to ask for consent at the beginning of a sexual encounter. You don't need to ask at every step along the way.	52	13	35	30	13	58	29.09*
More campus programs are needed to make students aware of sexual consent issues.	45	28	27	69	23	35	40.31*
If a couple has a long history of consenting sexual activity with each other, they no longer need to ask for consent during each sexual encounter.	53	11	36	41	8	51	10.14
Too few couples openly discuss the issue of sexual consent.	58	34	8	79	19	2	26.59*
The necessity of asking for sexual consent DECREASES as the length of an intimate relationship INCREASES.	66	7	27	52	10	38	9.14
Verbally asking for sexual consent is awkward.	66	7	27	63	9	29	.72
Sexual consent should always be obtained BEFORE the start of any sexual activity.	66	17	17	76	12	12	6.05
Partners are LESS likely to ask for sexual consent the longer they are in a relationship.	90	5	5	93	3	4	1.62

	Males (N=184) %			Females (N=330) %			F
	A	U	D	A	U	D	
It is equally important to obtain sexual consent in ALL relationships regardless of the length or prior sexual involvement.	73	10	18	85	5	10	12.00*
When initiating sexual activity, one should assume no sexual consent and verbally ask for it before proceeding with any sexual activity.	62	14	24	72	14	14	8.51
Verbally asking for sexual consent reduces the pleasure of the encounter (i.e., it destroys the mood).	37	16	47	20	15	65	19.06*
If your partner wants to engage in sexual activity it is okay to proceed, even if she/he is drunk.	34	24	42	22	18	60	15.27*
Obtaining sexual consent is MORE necessary in a casual sexual encounter than in a committed relationship.	63	12	26	60	6	33	6.09
Consent to begin a sexual encounter implies consent up to and including sexual intercourse.	35	8	58	22	7	71	9.96
Sexual intercourse is the only sexual activity that requires explicit verbal consent.	13	4	84	5	1	95	17.11*
Consent should be asked before ANY kind of sexual behaviour, including necking or petting.	45	14	40	65	12	23	19.96*
It is just as necessary to obtain consent for genital fondling as it is for sexual intercourse.	78	9	13	89	7	5	13.53*
If sexual consent for intercourse is already established, then consent for petting and fondling can be assumed.	78	10	12	62	12	26	16.68*

Note. A=Agree; U=Undecided; D=Disagree.

* $p < .05$ (Bonferroni correction)

Table D-3

Percent Distribution for Sexual Consent Behaviour Scale by Gender

	Males (N=184) %			Females (N=330) %			E
	A	U	D	A	U	D	
I have NOT given much thought to the topic of sexual consent.	40	9	50	45	6	49	2.73
I have discussed sexual consent issues with a friend.	50	8	42	61	9	30	8.34
I have heard sexual consent issues being discussed by other students on campus.	45	10	45	46	13	41	1.76
I have discussed sexual consent issues with my current (or most recent) partner at times OTHER THAN during sexual encounters.	59	10	32	59	11	31	0.11
Sexual consent is NOT something my current (or most recent) partner and I discuss before we start having sex.	45	18	37	37	19	44	2.98
It is easy to accurately "read" my current (or most recent) partner's nonverbal signals as indicating consent or non-consent to sexual activity.	75	12	14	79	11	11	1.11
I ask for sexual consent from my current (or most recent) partner MORE than my partner asks it of me.	39	48	13	7	38	55	119.30*
Typically, I ask for consent by making a sexual advance and waiting for a reaction, so I know whether or not to continue.	70	13	17	71	15	14	0.93
I always ask (either verbally or nonverbally) for consent BEFORE I initiate a sexual encounter.	54	14	32	40	16	43	9.01
During a sexual encounter, I typically only ASK for consent once.	50	24	26	35	33	32	10.16
During a sexual encounter, I typically only GIVE my consent once.	51	29	20	45	21	34	11.02*
I tend NOT to decide ahead of time what I will and will not consent to sexually. I wait till I am 'in the moment' to decide.	61	16	24	43	9	48	30.24*

Note. A=Agree; U=Undecided; D=Disagree.

* $p < .05$ (Bonferroni correction)

APPENDIX E

Frequencies of Female Sexual Victimization and Male Sexual Aggression Since Age 14

(revised Sexual Experiences Survey, Koss, 1987)

	Females <u>N</u> =330	Males* <u>N</u> =184
Sexual Behaviour	%	%
Have you given in to sex play (fondling, kissing or petting, but not intercourse) when you didn't want to because of an opposite sex person's continual arguments and pressure?	38	8
Have you engaged in sex play (fondling, kissing or petting, but not intercourse) when you didn't want to because a member of the opposite sex threatened or used some degree of force (twisting your arm, holding you down, etc.) to make you?	9	1
Have you had a member of the opposite sex attempt sexual intercourse (e.g., get on top of you) when you didn't want to by threatening or using some degree of force (twisting your arm, holding you down, etc.), but intercourse did <i>not</i> occur?	9	2
Have you given in to sexual intercourse when you didn't want to because of an opposite sex person's continual arguments and pressure?	19	7
Have you engaged in sexual intercourse when you didn't want to because a member of the opposite sex threatened or used some degree of force (twisting your arm, holding you down, etc.) to make you?	4	2
Have you engaged in sexual activity (oral or anal intercourse or penetration by objects such as fingers, etc.) when you didn't want to because a member of the opposite sex threatened or used some degree of force (twisting your arm, holding you down, etc.) to make you?	6	2
Have you ever been sexually assaulted?	19	3

Note. Males responded to parallel questions asking whether they had ever aggressed against females using the above tactics.

APPENDIX F

Correlation Matrices for Principal Components Analysis

Table F-1

Correlation Matrix for Items in the Attitudes Toward Antioch's Sexual Consent Policy Scale

	ACPQ1	ACPQ2	ACPQ3	ACPQ4	ACPQ5	ACPQ6	ACPQ7	ACPQ8	ACPQ9	ACPQ10
ACPQ1	1.00									
ACPQ2	.35	1.00								
ACPQ3	.51	.43	1.00							
ACPQ4	.57	.44	.63	1.00						
ACPQ5	.13	.04	.07	.08	1.00					
ACPQ6	.47	.45	.65	.61	.02	1.00				
ACPQ7	.22	.31	.15	.29	.16	.30	1.00			
ACPQ8	.29	.28	.37	.54	.14	.40	.39	1.00		
ACPQ9	.27	.29	.33	.49	.21	.40	.39	.72	1.00	
ACPQ10	.24	-.03	.21	.24	.02	.21	-.20	.08	.01	1.00

Table F-2

Correlation Matrix for Items in Sexual Consent Attitudes Scale

	ATTQ1	ATTQ2	ATTQ3	ATTQ4	ATTQ5	ATTQ6	ATTQ7	ATTQ8	ATTQ9	ATTQ10	ATTQ11	ATTQ12	ATTQ13
ATTQ1	1.00												
ATTQ2	.21	1.00											
ATTQ3	.27	.24	1.00										
ATTQ4	.13	.10	.20	1.00									
ATTQ5	.20	.12	.24	.19	1.00								
ATTQ6	.22	.11	.42	.21	.30	1.00							
ATTQ7	.16	.14	.17	.20	.13	.29	1.00						
ATTQ8	.15	.11	.31	.18	.43	.42	.15	1.00					
ATTQ9	.10	.05	.16	-.01	.03	.22	.30	.16	1.00				
ATTQ10	.21	.17	.27	.17	.50	.30	.16	.66	.11	1.00			
ATTQ11	.04	.23	.16	.20	.07	.12	.05	.08	-.09	.10	1.00		
ATTQ12	.06	.10	.18	.16	.11	.24	.24	.21	.14	.10	.02	1.00	
ATTQ13	.06	.20	.18	-.05	.19	.12	.03	.30	-.05	.32	.08	.03	1.00
ATTQ14	.12	.01	.20	.22	.38	.35	.25	.49	.10	.40	.11	.32	.09
ATTQ15	.29	.09	.38	.18	.19	.37	.25	.31	.20	.23	.08	.42	.07
ATTQ16	.17	.17	.26	.17	.20	.26	.20	.19	.05	.19	.43	.15	.05
ATTQ17	.26	.20	.32	.26	.20	.40	.24	.22	.10	.20	.06	.25	.15

Sexual Consent

	ATTQ1	ATTQ2	ATTQ3	ATTQ4	ATTQ5	ATTQ6	ATTQ7	ATTQ8	ATTQ9	ATTQ10	ATTQ11	ATTQ12	ATTQ13
ATTQ18	.14	.09	.20	.12	.50	.28	.16	.44	.09	.52	.13	.10	.26
ATTQ19	-.09	-.05	-.11	-.08	-.09	-.14	-.13	-.08	-.04	-.10	-.04	.06	-.01
ATTQ20	.15	.07	.24	.22	.24	.32	.22	.22	.12	.22	.13	.16	.07
ATTQ21	.14	.04	.22	.11	.15	.32	.25	.22	.14	.18	.06	.34	.11
ATTQ22	.15	.08	.25	.16	.25	.31	.24	.24	.12	.22	.13	.27	.08
ATTQ23	.15	.06	.27	.11	.24	.37	.21	.29	.18	.28	.07	.16	.12

	ATTQ14	ATTQ15	ATTQ16	ATTQ17	ATTQ18	ATTQ19	ATTQ20	ATTQ21	ATTQ22	ATTQ23
ATTQ14	1.00									
ATTQ15	.38	1.00								
ATTQ16	.26	.25	1.00							
ATTQ17	.28	.41	.22	1.00						
ATTQ18	.38	.19	.21	.17	1.00					
ATTQ19	-.12	-.06	-.07	-.15	-.03	1.00				
ATTQ20	.24	.28	.22	.27	.20	-.24	1.00			
ATTQ21	.24	.37	.25	.30	.17	-.09	.33	1.00		
ATTQ22	.33	.30	.23	.30	.22	-.19	.44	.51	1.00	
ATTQ23	.26	.23	.23	.27	.28	-.14	.28	.27	.31	1.00

Table F-3

Correlation Matrix for Items in the Sexual Consent Behaviours Scale

	BEHQ1	BEHQ2	BEHQ3	BEHQ4	BEHQ5	BEHQ6	BEHQ7	BEHQ8	BEHQ9	BEHQ10	BEHQ11	BEHQ12
BEHQ1	1.00											
BEHQ2	.48	1.00										
BEHQ3	.33	.46	1.00									
BEHQ4	.36	.34	.25	1.00								
BEHQ5	.30	.20	.04	.30	1.00							
BEHQ6	.04	-.06	-.02	-.10	.26	1.00						
BEHQ7	.06	-.06	-.03	-.04	.00	.09	1.00					
BEHQ8	.17	.14	.10	.11	.18	.22	-.08	1.00				
BEHQ9	.26	.12	.11	.07	.14	.13	.14	.13	1.00			
BEHQ10	.07	.05	-.01	.03	.06	.02	-.11	.14	-.13	1.00		
BEHQ11	-.02	.08	.02	-.01	.19	.13	-.10	.15	.00	.55	1.00	
BEHQ12	.14	.10	.09	.12	.24	.12	-.07	.26	.09	.11	.19	1.00

APPENDIX G

Component Matrices for Principal Components Analysis

Table G-1

Component Matrix for Items in the Attitudes Toward Antioch's Sexual Consent Policy Scale

	Component 1
ACPQ4	0.84
ACPQ6	0.78
ACPQ3	0.75
ACPQ8	0.72
ACPQ9	0.69
ACPQ1	0.66
ACPQ2	0.62
ACPQ7	0.50

Note. Items in bold face represent the final items loading on each component.

Table G-2

Component Matrix for Items in the Sexual Consent Attitudes Scale

	Components		
	1	2	3
ATTQ15	0.70	0.13	0.04
ATTQ21	0.68	0.02	0.01
ATTQ22	0.64	0.11	0.10
ATTQ17	0.62	0.12	0.06
ATTQ12	0.60	0.02	-0.13
ATTQ6	0.58	-0.31	0.13
ATTQ20	0.53	0.13	0.19
ATTQ3	0.47	0.23	0.26
ATTQ23	0.42	0.29	0.13
ATTQ1	0.35	0.14	0.13
ATTQ4	0.34	0.10	0.19
ATTQ10	0.19	0.81	0.07
ATTQ8	-0.31	0.75	-0.02
ATTQ18	0.12	0.74	0.13
ATTQ5	0.18	0.70	0.08
ATTQ13	-0.03	0.51	0.02
ATTQ14	-0.44	0.48	0.04
ATTQ11	0.01	0.04	0.86
ATTQ16	0.29	0.10	0.74

Note. Items in bold face represent the final items loading on each component. Items in parentheses () represent complex items which cross-loaded. Their final loading is indicated in bold face.

Table G-3

Component Matrix for Items in the Sexual Consent Behaviours Scale

	Components	
	1	2
BEHQ1	0.75	0.09
BEHQ2	0.75	0.09
BEHQ4	0.66	0.07
BEHQ3	0.64	-0.03
BEHQ11	-0.11	0.82
BEHQ10	-0.11	0.76
BEHQ12	0.22	0.48
BEHQ8	0.24	0.44
BEHQ5	-0.42	0.37

Note. Items in bold face represent the final items loading on each component. Items in parentheses () represent complex items which were removed from the item on which they originally loaded. Their final loading is indicated in bold face.