

The Prevalence and Identification of the Language Used in Coerced Hook Ups on College Campuses

Laura Whitehill

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ABSTRACT: Sexual victimization is associated with depression, eating disorders and risk taking behavior. (Gidycz. 2008) One form of sexual victimization that is not often addressed on its own is sexual coercion. Coercion is defined as the use of force or intimidation to obtain compliance. Sexual coercion has been found to occur at the same, if not higher rate as sexual assault on college campuses.(Adams-Curtis, 2004) Verbal coercion is the most common form of coercion, yet its definition in previous studies is vague, including anything from continuous pressure to guilt or fear. The high rate of sexual coercion is often attributed to its acceptance in hook up culture, the dominant culture on college campuses. (Littleton, 2009) Georgetown University defines consent as "means, words, or overt actions indicating a freely given agreement to the sexual act or contact in question." (Georgetown, 2015) By Georgetown's definition, consent gained by coercive tactics is not consent. "Coercion is a complicated construct that is not well captured by concepts of forced or nonforced, or the language of unwanted or non-voluntary." (Hamby, 2003).There is a gap between what is described in the literature and law and what college students experience everyday. This study aims to identify gaps between the language used by lawmakers and college students to define verbal sexual coercion. It will focus on three coercion scripts to better understand how students discuss sexual coercion in everyday life.

FACULTY MENTORS: Carol Day & Alex Theos