



CONTINUING EDUCATION SESSION

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SESSION	CE HOURS	DATE/TIME	
CE15	1.0	Saturday, November 5th	11:00am-12:00pm
TITLE			
Sexual Violence & Sexual Communication: Examining Risk Factors for Violence With Diverse Samples			
AUTHORS			
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AASECT - Core Knowledge Areas and Training:		J; L	
APA - Curriculum Content Criteria:		1.3	
NCHEC - Areas of Responsibility:		1.3.3; 4.4.2; 4.4.3; 4.4.4; 4.4.5; 8.1.4	
ABSTRACT			
<p>Summary: The proposed symposium will include four presentations focused on different forms of sexual violence and sexual communication. The first talk will focus on examining correlates of sexual violence among a diverse groups of college students enrolled in a unique college setting (e.g., no Greek organization or athletic teams, cannabis is legalized). The second talk will discuss a newly identified form of sexual violence called orgasm coercion and its associations with perpetrating coercion and other forms of intimate partner violence among cisgender women, men, and gender/sex minorities. The third talk will examine the relationship between sexual rejection and responding aggressively to a sexual partner across a diverse group of US adults. The final talk will focus on the relationship between men’s perceptions of how women communicate consent and their association with sexual aggression across a sample of college and community men. Across all talks, implications for sexual violence prevention—with an emphasis on communication and substance use will be discussed. Abstract 1: Background: Many micro- and macro-level factors of a college climate (e.g., Greek system, Division I athletics, substance use, university size) contribute to SA prevalence, particularly among women and LGBTQ+ students. This study examined SA experiences of students at a mid-sized public university without a Greek system or major athletic presence in a state with legalized recreational marijuana. Method: A large convenience sample (N = 924) of college students participated in an online survey from October 2020 to January 2021. Participants were majority women (68%; compared with 22% men and 10% gender-expansive students) and identified as a variety of sexual orientations: heterosexual (52%), bisexual (24%), LGQ+ (24%). Participants responded to questions about unwanted sexual experiences by behavior and incidence of SA before and during college under five circumstances (e.g., force, coercion, ignoring refusals) and described factors (e.g., location, substance use) of their most recent incident during college. Results: Almost half of the sample (47.5%; N=439) reported SA experience during their lifetime. Of those students, over half (53.8%) experienced SA before coming to college only; 22.5% experienced SA during college only; 23.7% experienced SA both before and during college. Incidence varied by sexual orientation and gender. Notably, of the 175 bisexual women in the total sample, 65% (N=114) reported SA experience (50.8% before college only, 22% during college only, and 27% both before and during college). During participants’ most recent incident since coming to college, 42% occurred because “someone ignored their refusal(s) (whether verbal or nonverbal),” and 45.9% of perpetrators were using substances</p>			



(24.3% involved marijuana and other drugs). Conclusion: Though universities may share similar structural SA contributors and SA rates remain unchanged for over 50 years, each university is different. Yet, many mandate the same programming (e.g., online learning programs like Haven). These data serve to pinpoint areas where students would benefit from more tailored prevention and intervention efforts (e.g., role of marijuana in sexual negotiation). Implications for university staff, faculty, and administration will be discussed.

Abstract 2: Background: Orgasm coercion occurs when someone pressures a sexual partner to orgasm by implying that not orgasming will have negative consequences. It is unclear whether orgasm coercion is linked to abuse within relationships. As such, the present study examined associations between orgasm coercion perpetration and perpetrating psychological aggression, sexual coercion, and physical assault and injury. Method: 951 participants (cisgender women, $n = 333$; cisgender men, $n = 314$; gender/sex minorities, $n = 304$) in committed relationships indicated via an online checklist if they had ever insisted on making their partner orgasm, repetitively asked if their partner orgasmed, suggested that their partner seek medical care for orgasm absence, become disappointed, angry, cried, or expressed feelings of failure when their partner did not orgasm, commented that orgasm makes sex more enjoyable, expressed concerns about the relationship or asked their partner if they were still attractive after orgasm absence, told their partner to orgasm, or asked their partner to orgasm to end sex. Participants also completed the revised Conflict Tactics Scale-2 short form (CTS2), which assessed whether participants ever perpetrated psychological aggression, sexual coercion, and physical assault and injury against their partner. We calculated Phi coefficients with Benjamini-Hochberg corrected p-values to test associations between perpetrating orgasm coercion items and CTS2 subscales. Results: Most orgasm coercion perpetration items were significantly associated with perpetrating at least one of the following towards one's partner: psychological aggression, sexual coercion, and physical assault, $\phi s = .08-.26$, BH $ps < .025$. Exceptions included telling a partner that their orgasm makes more sex enjoyable and asking a partner to orgasm to end sex. Perpetrating injury was significantly associated with getting angry when a partner's orgasm did not occur, $\phi = .21$, BH $p < .001$. Conclusions: Findings provide novel evidence that orgasm coercion is connected to patterns of abuse within relationships.

Abstract 3: Background: Interpersonal rejection is often painful and threatening to one's sense of self-worth, and people respond to rejection in a variety of ways. Anger and aggression are common responses to sexual/romantic forms of interpersonal rejection, which can include sexual assault. However, there is limited research that investigates risk factors for aggressive responses to sexual rejection. The goal of the current study is to explore patterns of responses to sexual rejection and identify risk factors for aggressive responses. We examine responses across a range of gender and sexual identities and relationship contexts. Method: Participants between the ages of 18-40 years living in the US were recruited via CloudResearch. Data collection is in progress; the preliminary sample includes 121 heterosexual women, 92 sexual minority women, 135 heterosexual men, and 28 sexual minority men. Participants reflected upon an experience of sexual rejection and described what happened and how they felt. They then responded to questions about incident characteristics, and completed several self-report measures to assess experiences such as past sexual assault perpetration and problem alcohol use. Results: Men experienced more frequent sexual rejection than women ($p < .05$) but there were no differences by sexual identity. In response to sexual rejection, 25.6% expressed anger towards the other person, and 17.7% repeatedly tried to convince the other person to have sex. There were no differences in these responses across sexual identity, but women were more likely to sexually pressure their partner compared to men. Participants who expressed anger and sexually pressured their partner felt more sexual entitlement, were more intoxicated, engaged in more problem alcohol use, and were more likely to have a history of sexual assault perpetration ($p < .05$). Participants who expressed anger also rated the rejection as more unfair and had lower emotion regulation ($p < .05$). Conclusions: Findings provide insight into patterns of



responses to sexual rejection and how this varies across identity groups, and identifies risk factors that increase aggressive responses. This work has implications for preventing sexual violence.

Abstract 4: Introduction: Men's perceptions of how women consent to sex is related to their engagement in sexual aggression (SA). Yet, researchers have only broadly examined perceptions that consent is communicated actively or passive related to men's SA—despite there being nuance ways people communicate consent. Additionally, consent research often includes samples of college students; there is need to examine risk factors for SA in community samples. The goal of this study was to assess if men's perceptions of the ways women communicate consent, using a more nuanced assessment of consent, was related to their engagement in SA in a sample of college and community men. Method: Young adult men (460 college; 492 community) completed a web-administered questionnaire assessing sexual consent perceptions and SA. Men were asked how strongly they agreed women consented: 1) explicitly, 2) implicitly, 3) nonverbally, 4) verbally, and 5) no response (let the sexual activity happen without saying no). Men's SA history was dichotomized. We conducted two logistic regressions examining if consent perceptions predicted SA. Results: College and community men differed in their perceptions of how women communicated consent. College men perceived women communicated consent verbally more and community men perceived women communicated consent nonverbally, implicitly, and through no response more. For college ($OR = 1.38$, $p = .008$) and community men ($OR = 1.29$, $p = .003$), as their perceptions that women consented through no response increased, so did their odds of perpetrating SA. Discussion: We found that men's perceptions of women consenting through no response was associated with their SA history. Men who perceive women consent via no response may be at greater risk of assaulting someone because they expect that if women do not say no, they are consenting. However, during assaultive experiences women may not respond; lack of response to sexual initiation can also be a refusal cue. Affirmative consent initiatives should continue to emphasize that no response cues do not equate to consent.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To describe how different perceptions or patterns of sexual communication may be associated with sexual violence
- To describe how certain forms of sexual violence may relate to other forms of intimate partner violence
- To describe the risk factors and characteristics for sexual violence among diverse samples