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2018 ATSA Conference | Thursday October 18 | POSTER

### **Consent Endorsement and Peer Norms Supporting Sexual Violence Among Students**

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Roughly one in four women and one in fifteen men experience sexual violence during their time as a college or university student (Cantor et al., 2015). The impact of this problem, both on individual and systemic levels, is substantially harmful (Borja, Callahan, & Long, 2006; DeGue, Holt, Massetti, Matjasko, Tharp, & Valle, 2012; Senn et al., 2013). Research has indicated that college and university students' consent-seeking behaviors may be adversely impacted by adherence to traditional sexual scripts, as described in sexual script theory (Jozkowski & Peterson, 2013; Jozkowski, Peterson, Sanders, Dennis, & Reece, 2014). These highly influential socially constructed scripts cast men as sexual aggressors, encouraged and allowed to use force and deception to obtain sex. Conversely, women are expected to act as responsible gatekeepers, tasked with resisting these advances and blamed if that resistance fails (Wiederman, 2015). Widespread acceptance of and adherence to these scripts can lead to coercive sexual encounters that may be perceived as normative, and contribute to sexual harassment and assault on campuses across the country (Fantasia, 2011). Finding and supporting ways in which students can overcome the influence of these scripts is a promising avenue for future sexual violence prevention efforts.

However, some college and university students cannot adhere to these traditional sexual scripts due to aspects of their identities or bodies that precludes them from the roles described in the traditional sexual script. Among these are lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) students, as well as students with disabilities. LGBT students are much more likely to have been in same-gender sexual relationships where these predefined scripts do not apply. Further, transgender students may have especially unique experiences. Students with disabilities are also likely to be excluded from the traditional sexual script. Moreover, people with disabilities are seen as non-sexual in cultural scripts (Gill, 2010) and some element of any disability may not be conducive to adhering to the rigid roles prescribed by the traditional sexual script. These students may have unique experiences in developing their sexual identities outside of the traditional sexual script, leading to more positive and communicative consent attitudes and behaviors. Research has also indicated that gender may impact the way that individuals interact with the traditional sexual script, so gender differences are worth examining as well (Jozkowski et al., 2014).

The current study examined differences in the likelihood of reporting low affirmative consent endorsement based on gender, LGBT status, and disability status. These variables served as proxy variables for traditional sexual script exclusion. Given the socially constructed nature of the traditional sexual script, peer norms supporting sexual violence were investigated as well. Findings reflected differences in the likelihood of reporting low

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affirmative consent endorsement based on gender, LGBT status, and disability status. Results revealed that women, LGBT students, and students with disabilities were significantly less likely to indicate problematic low affirmative consent endorsement than men, cisgender straight students, and students without disabilities, respectively. Further, women and most LGBT students were significantly less likely than men and cisgender straight students, respectively, to indicate that they perceive their peers as supporting sexually violent attitudes. Findings provide insight to support future research on consent attitudes, behavior, and traditional sexual script exclusion. Implications for campus prevention and intervention are discussed.

**Alyssa Glace** is a second year student at Portland State University in the Applied Community Psychology doctoral program. She earned her B.S. in Psychology at Virginia Commonwealth University. Her interests include sexual violence prevention on college campuses, and strengths-based approaches that examine the experiences of LGBT students and students with disabilities. She is currently a member of Dr. Keith Kaufman's lab, working on the development of a Campus Situational Prevention Approach

**Erin McConnell** is a third year doctoral student in Applied Community Psychology at Portland State University, and holds a B.S. in Psychology from Purdue University. Her research interests include sexual abuse and sexual violence prevention, college campus and community climate, and community mental health and well-being. Currently, her research is looking at factors affecting bystander intervention behavior on college campuses. As a member of Dr. Keith Kaufman's research lab, Erin is also involved in a project applying the Situational Prevention Approach to campus safety.

**Dr. Kaufman** is a Clinical Community Psychologist and a Professor of Psychology at Portland State University in Portland, Oregon. He is a member of the National Sexual Violence Resource Center's advisory board, the National Coalition to Prevent Child Sexual Abuse & Exploitation, Boys & Girls Clubs of America's National Safety Task Force, and Big Brothers Big Sisters Nation Safety Committee. He is Past President of ATSA and recently received that organization's Significant Lifetime Achievement Award. Dr. Kaufman has provided assessment and treatment to both child sexual abuse victims and juvenile sexual offenders as well as their families. He has authored two books, a variety of book chapters, and numerous research articles addressing sexual violence and sexual violence prevention. His most recent edited book is *Preventing Sexual Violence: A Practitioner's Sourcebook* (NEARI Press, 2010). Dr. Kaufman is currently working on a \$1 million U.S. Department of Justice grant to develop a Campus Situational Prevention Approach to address campus sexual assault.