

“It is GREAT To Enjoy Sex”: A Discourse Analysis of How Sexual Consent is Constructed in University Consent Campaigns

Rebecca Robinson¹

Leeds Beckett University, Leeds, UK

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Abstract

Hickman and Muehlenhard (1999) define consent as “free verbal and nonverbal communication of a feeling of willingness” with offences such as rape and sexual assault being areas in which the prosecution is to prove the absence of consent. Between 2009 and 2012, an average of 473,000 adults per year said they had been victims of sexual offences (Ministry of Justice, 2013: p.6). Previous research into consent campaigns has shown an over reliance on the victims role in preventing an attack (Bedera and Nordmayer, 2015), and a separation in understanding between negotiating sex and consent (Beres, 2014). This highlights the importance of positive understanding around consent, with an aim of lowering the frequency of sexual violence occurring against and by young adults. Adopting a social constructionist approach, this study aimed to examine how the language used in sexual consent campaigns within universities in the United Kingdom could influence the construction of knowledge and understandings of sexual consent. This was investigated using Foucauldian Discourse analysis to establish the dominant discursive patterns available to young adults. Overall, consent was constructed as a positive aspect of all sexual encounters, with the responsibility of its establishment being placed equally on both parties. The data suggested that the most beneficial way for sexual partners to negotiate sex and fully understand each other’s feelings of willingness or refusal is to encourage an open, on going and informed discussion.

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Introduction

The statutory definition of consent as provided by The Crown Prosecution Service is “If he agrees by choice, and has the freedom and capacity to make that choice” (“CPS Legal Guidance”, 2016). Broken down, this means a person has made the choice to engage in sexual activity without any sign of coercion or deception from another party, is over the age of 16, awake while not under the influence of alcohol or drugs, and has no mental disability that may render them unaware or incapable of making the decision (“CPS Legal Guidance”, 2016). As defined by the Sexual Offences Act (2003), offences such as rape and sexual assault are areas in which the prosecution is to prove the absence of consent in relation to the following areas: person A (the accused) acts intentionally; person B (the victim) does not consent; and person A does not reasonably believe that person B consents (“CPS Legal Guidance”, 2016). Victims of rape are predominantly female with males making up around 5-10%, (Hodge & Canter, 1998) with female’s aged 16 – 19 at the highest risk (8.2%) of being a victim of sexual assault (Ministry of Justice, 2013: p.14). Contrastingly, offenders are predominantly male with the majority aged 20-39 (47%) followed by 16-19 (29%) (Ministry of Justice, 2013: p.15). However, it is important to note that these statistics, particularly the prevalence rates of male victimisation, are recognised as significant underestimations the actual figures due to widely recognised under reporting (Doherty & Anderson, 2004). Based upon combined data from the Crime Survey for England and Wales, between 2009 and 2012, an average of 473,000 adults per year said they had been victims of sexual offences (Ministry of Justice, 2013: p.6). These statistics highlight the importance of an understanding around consensual sex for young adults, which will be the focus throughout this research.

Unfortunately, there is a shortage of psychological research into the notion of consent (Beres, 2014; Jozkowski and Peterson 2013). There is no universal definition of consent from a psychological standpoint however Hickman and Muehlenhard (1999) define consent to be “free verbal and nonverbal communication of a feeling of willingness” with ‘free’ representing the aforementioned capacity to make the choice. The emphasis on “verbal and nonverbal” in this definition is interesting when looking at how consent and rape prevention have been taught in the past, with previous research

finding that a common goal is to teach victims how to effectively refuse sexual advances by the idea that 'no means no' (Kitzinger & Frith, 1999; O'Byrne et al., 2006; Beres, 2014). This is problematic as it ignores the non verbal interactions that would normally take place showing a persons refusal and also places responsibility on the potential victim to ensure they clearly and simply state 'no', a notion highly unrealistic when considering to how refusals are usually communicated (Kitzinger & Frith, 1999; O'Byrne et al., 2006). As will be assessed in more detail, there has been numerous studies conducted into how the notion of consent is understood by young adults, however there is a shortage of research looking at what discourses are available for young people to influence their understanding of consent. This is an important literary gap that this current study will fit into. The following review will therefore explore how psychological knowledge regarding an understanding of sexual offending and consent has been affiliated by western culture and shown prevalence in general nonprofessional discourses (O'Byrne, Hansen and Rapley, 2008), what research has already been conducted and finally the implications of said research thus creating an informed rationale as to why this current study will be beneficial in the field of psychology and western culture.

1.1 Theories of Sexual Violence

This section will review existing research with an aim to understand how psychological research and theories of rape and sexual assault have linked to society's understanding of consent, an illusion of gender differences, and the wide spread acceptance of rape myths. A particular focus will be upon two main principles: firstly, that understandings from the past have influenced how individuals make sense of the world today, meaning historical contexts need to be considered; and secondly that gender oppression is rife and deep-rooted within our society and will therefore be evident within the research and understanding around sexual consent (Geisinger, 2011). In order to do this, the present exploration will first look at how approaches to sexual offending have created how society now views rape, sexual consent, and the characteristics of both victim and offender. However, purposely exclude are theories of sexual offending that have a particular focus on crimes against children in order to provide a review that is beneficial to the interests of this study.

One early and somewhat contested theory is the victim precipitation model, first introduced by Wolfgang (1957). Victim precipitation has been a constituent in various types of crime, predominantly homicide, robbery and rape (Smith and Bouffard, 2014) and suggests that through the interaction between offender and victim, the victim themselves are influential to the proceeding events that lead to the crime. This idea was, rather controversially, reviewed by Amir (1967) who suggested that through behaviours such as agreeing to a drink or not reacting strongly enough to sexual advances, the victim becomes a ‘complementary partner’ in the events leading to the crime. The findings of this study suggested that characteristics such as alcohol consumption by the victim (or victim *and* offender) or a “bad reputation” of the victim were significantly higher in ‘victim precipitated rape events’. This out-dated approach undoubtedly reinforced victim blaming, with Amir (1967) going as far as to suggest that, in these situations, the offender could be viewed as less guilty because the victim was also responsible for what had happened. Victim precipitation theory suggests that the victim encourages the attack due to an “unconscious desire to encourage the violence” (O’Byrne et al., 2006) and that “what the woman secretly desires in intercourse is rape and violence, or in the mental hemisphere, humiliation” (Horney, 1973: 22).

This notion somewhat connects with the ideas put forward by Thornhill & Palmer (2000) who from an evolutionary psychological perspective, suggests not only do women put themselves in such positions, situations arise because men are biologically hard-wired to rape. Thornhill & Palmer (2000) cite reasons such as men being “more eager to mate” (p.53) or “because males of their primate ancestors raped” (p.55) in order to explain why rape is an occurrence that has continued throughout the evolutionary process. They also suggest that rape is a result of males being in a position of uncertainty of the paternity of a child, so would attempt to increase their reproductive success by having sex with more and more women (Ward, Polaschek and Beech, 2006). Thornhill and Palmer do not consider power and control to be causal factors of rape, instead viewing it as a sexually motivated crime (Ward, Polaschek and Beech, 2006). Due to the need to reproduce, this theory puts further blame on the victim in situations where men are refused sex (a result of women being able to choose or refuse potential partners) as “if human females had been selected to be willing to mate with any male under any circumstances, rape would be far less frequent” (p. 84). This is another questionable proposal, with criticism from Hamilton (2008) who highlights that if rape

was a matter of reproduction rather than an act of violence, what factor accounts for the victims out of the reproductive age group, male victims, spousal rape (i.e. somebody with whom reproduction may already be a possibility, with consent being established for other encounters) and anal or oral rape?

Similar to Hamilton's views, further criticism derives from the feminist perspective, with feminist scholars suggesting rape is motivated by power and control as it is used by men to intimidate and control women (e.g. Brownmiller, 1975) and can be seen as a by product of power imbalances between men and women. Similarly, Los (1990) highlights how laws regarding rape have tended to strengthen the position of men as the more powerful sex (e.g. with marital rape not being a crime until 1991 in the UK, and only 52 UN states explicitly outlawing marital rape as of April 2011 (UN Women, 2011)). This is an idea backed up by Malamuth (1981) who used data from a number of studies addressing the likelihood of "normal" men (i.e. from the general population) to rape. He found that around 35% showed some likelihood of raping if they would not be caught and also found a higher reported likelihood to be associated with a higher level of aggression against women. This study however was conducted in a laboratory setting so could be criticised as lacking ecological validity.

However damaging the viewpoints of victim precipitation and evolutionary psychologists appear to be to wider society, these ideas are still prevalent today and influential to the maintenance of rape myth acceptance. Rape myths, as defined by Burt (1980) are "prejudicial, stereotyped, or false beliefs about rape, rape victims, and rapists". In lay terms, rape myths are beliefs that lead to the downplaying of apparent injury, alleviate the role of the rapist, or allege blame on the victim in their own attack. Examples would be the belief that only women with a 'promiscuous' sexual history get raped, or that if they actually wanted to, all healthy women could fight off an attacker. Burt (1980) examined how certain attitudes, personality characteristics and background characteristics could be shown to influence rape myth acceptance. This research used interviews to look at rape related attitudes and beliefs of the general public (the first research of its kind (Burt, 1980)) and found that acceptance of rape myths to be positively related to higher sex role stereotyping, adversarial sexual beliefs (distrust, expectations of manipulation and cheating in a sexual relationship) and an acceptance of interpersonal violence (acceptance of coercion as a means to get what they want). Interestingly, she also found that well educated, younger people were lower in the

attitudes investigated, and showed less rape myth acceptance than people of other background characteristics. There was an obvious trend towards victim blaming in the results, with over half of the respondents agreeing that “If a girl engages in necking or petting and she lets things get out of hand, it is her own fault if her partner forces sex on her” and “A woman who goes to the home or apartment of a man on their first date implies that she is willing to have sex”. It is hard to fathom why victim blaming has been so widely accepted when it comes to rape and sexual assault. If this is applied to other crimes, it is clear that it is not admissible reasoning. A person who does not carry around a testing kit would not be blamed for having their drink spiked, just as a person who was robbed at gun point would not be blamed for complying and handing over their belongings, or a victim of arson would not be blamed for having flammable home furnishings. It could be suggested that, particularly when looking at the re-occurrences of victim blaming, it is easier for the general population to propose that the victim willingly engaged in the activity or risk behaviours (that they themselves would avoid) that resulted in the attack, rather than accept that the victim was not at fault meaning they themselves are at risk as anybody can be the victim of rape. This is comparable to the ‘just world’ hypothesis whereby there is an assumption that the world is fair, meaning good things happen to ‘good’ people and therefore ‘bad’ people are somehow responsible for the bad things happening to them (Hogg and Vaughan, 2009). This allows people to feel less vulnerable to the likelihood of negative actions towards themselves, as they do not believe they deserve it.

As previously touched upon, there has been a trend in “no means no” as a slogan on consent and rape prevention campaigns. This idea could be traced back to perhaps the most popular theory of why rape happens (particularly acquaintance rape), the miscommunication model (Tannen, 1990). This proposes that men and women learn language differently, often underlined by power inequalities, and will therefore try to interpret the communication of the other through how they understand language. Within the book, Tannen (1990) positions men as the more powerful sex: “Granted, women have lower status than men in our society” (p.225). She highlights how this power imbalance is evident in communication styles with women’s styles being viewed more negatively (for example, how men will ask outright if they have a request, whereas a women would ask more covertly which is viewed negatively as it is “sneaky” (p.225)). Lakoff (1975) reinforces this idea by suggesting that communication by women is not

as effective as it is hesitant and too polite. Again this could link to an imbalance of power, with women feeling they are less deserved to express a request or hesitant to express views that may not be deemed as important as those from a man. On the contrary, it is suggested that when men adopt the more negatively viewed communication styles it does not have the same effect. This is supported by research by Bradley (1981), which suggested that women were viewed as less intelligent when giving an argument without providing support, but in the same scenario men were not. Tannen (1990) suggests that the interpretation of communication between the sexes is influenced by pre-existing attitudes towards men and women (p.228) Similar to the ideas given by the popular book, *Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus* (Gray, 1992) the miscommunication model suggests that gender differences in communication styles make miscommunication inevitable. Likewise, the idea of “no means no” implies that other forms of refusal are not acceptable if a person wishes to avoid miscommunication.

1.2 A Background Into Sexual Consent Campaigns

As this model has been accepted into lay discourse around the notion of consent, the prospect of miscommunication has come to position women as ineffective communicators, which results in men being simply confused and mishearing rather than to blame (Hansen, O’Byrne and Rapley, 2010). Taking this into account, the model has received criticism from numerous scholars. One reason is it provides an excuse that allows the attacker to avoid responsibility (Hickman and Muehlenhard 1999), especially in relation to the third aspect needed for a jury to return a guilty verdict (person A does not reasonably believe that person B consents) (Sexual Offences Act, 2003). This is of importance because unlike other serious crimes like homicide or robbery where physical evidence can more readily display a person’s guilt, rape cases often consist of both parties agreeing that sexual intercourse occurred, however the accused claims it was consensual while the victim claims it was rape. In this scenario, it becomes one person’s word against the other and when the notion of miscommunication between the sexes is so widely accepted, it becomes difficult for the victim to undoubtedly prove that the accused did not believe they had gained consent. It has been suggested that the insistence on “no means no” being a main message and slogan in many sexual consent campaigns (e.g. campaigns produced and ran by Guelph

Student Union (Ontario) ("No Means No at Central Student Association", 2016) and even the Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust ("No Means No Campaign, 2016) is in fact putting too much emphasis on the victims role in avoiding rape. This again promotes victim blaming as according to this message, if a clear no is not stated, they have left their feelings open to misinterpretation by the other party. To emphasise the importance of moving on from the counterproductive message of 'no means no' in consent and rape prevention campaigns, the present examination will highlight numerous studies that have questioned and/or disproved the idea of miscommunication between the sexes, particularly in regards to sexual consent.

Kitzinger and Frith (1999) used conversation analysis to investigate young women's understanding around the structure of refusals. They suggest refusals are complex interactions in which both listener and speaker are experienced and knowledgeable on the delays, hesitations and similar small details present in refusals in everyday conversation, which seldom include a person just saying no. This study found that the women in their focus group had an explicit understanding of the negative implications that accompany a refusal, and highlighted the feelings of rudeness and arrogance that came from specifically using a direct no as it went against cultural norms. The authors summarise that sexual consent and refusal skill programmes that emphasise the importance of 'just say no' are disadvantageous as they imply that other ways of refusal are open to misinterpretation. They further underline that for men to claim a misunderstanding of other forms of refusal is to claim an incomprehensible unfamiliarity with normative patterns of conversation. However, while accepting this research, it is beneficial to highlight an interesting counter argument. In fitting with the social constructionist approach, it could be suggested that although males do understand the normative patterns of refusal, it is in fact pre-existing constructs of knowledge around consent that lead to the assumption that refusals of a sexual nature take on a different dynamic to standard refusals. In support of such a notion, Johnson & Hoover (2015) discuss token resistance, in that women will often say no before consenting as a way to avoid coming across as too sexually available. These mixed messages suggest that the blame should not solely be on the male for using the miscommunication model as an 'excuse' but rather situations influenced by the participants past experiences with negotiating sex.

However, to supplement the findings of Kitzinger & Frith (1999), O'Byrne, Rapley and Hansen (2006) added to the research using focus groups involving young men. As extension to Kitzinger and Frith's work, the authors found that young men were extremely capable of hearing and understanding non-verbal refusals and also verbal refusals that did not simply state 'no'. They suggest that as a result, in relation to the teachings of sexual consent and rape prevention, miscommunication cannot be portrayed as a key aspect influencing the likelihood of rape and rather there should be less focus on the role of women in their own victimisation and a higher focus on the people creating the problem – the offender. Further to this, the use of “no means no” as advice seemingly aimed at young men, has been met with a number of controversial responses. For example, in 1989 Queens University in Canada was confronted with a number of male students who presented posters in response to a “no means no” campaign with slogans such as “no means more beer” and “no means on your knees bitch” (Kitzinger & Frith, 1999). More recently, the Yale University Delta Kappa Epsilon fraternity were put on suspension for 5 years for a stunt in 2010 in which they marched chanting “no means yes” “yes means anal” (“Yale suspends Bushes' fraternity after sexist 'no means yes' chants”, 2011). This clearly belittles the message, trivialises the idea of rape, and mocks the idea that women can choose to refuse sex. Taking this at face value, it shows differing positions of power that place men's pleasure above women's right to refusal in regards to sexual activity (Jozkowski & Peterson, 2013).

There has been evidence to show that many campaigns still fail to have the potential offender as the intended audience, instead focussing on the would-be victim or even their friends. Bedera and Nordmayer (2015) recently conducted a study looking at the rape prevention tips available at any given time (rather than in a specific campaign) on 40 college websites and found that most often the intended audience would be the victim. Through their analysis they found four main messages “there are no safe places for women”, “women can't trust anyone”, “women should never be alone”, and “women are vulnerable” from the tips available such as “don't use drugs or alcohol” “be alert where you live” or “avoid being alone”. This offers a clear contradiction as the tips provided suggest women are constantly exposed to the risk of violence but at the same time are expected to stop or avoid their own assault. This is effectively summarised with the statement; “Women still bear the burden of sexual assault prevention, as well as the constant fear that accompanies it.” (Bedera and

Nordmayer, 2015). In relation to tips that were aimed at men, it was only suggested that they should stop when their partner has verbally said no (again strengthening the misconception that anything else is open to misinterpretation). To show the effects of this, there have been numerous campaigns ran in the UK that have received criticism for their focus on the victims role. A campaign ran (and subsequently dropped) by Sussex Police used slogans such as “Which one of your mates is the most vulnerable on a night out? The one you leave behind” (“Sussex Police drop 'victim-blaming' poster after complaints - BBC News”, 2016). Similarly, the NHS chose to run a poster campaign stating, “One in three reported rapes happen when the victim has been drinking” (“Anger over government alcohol poster”, 2014). These messages being given out to society, along with ideas from the victim precipitation model, evolutionary psychology, and the miscommunication model, suggest that it is the victims responsibility to avoid being attacked, while the offender is kept safe with the claim of a simple misunderstanding, which could be irrefutably damaging for the victim if the case was to go to court.

As previously stated, there has been limited research into how consent is understood by young adults as the desired target audience of sexual consent campaigns. To investigate this area, Beres (2014) used semi-structured interviews of 40 young adults and found that the explicit understanding of consent was separate from their understanding and ability to communicate willingness with a partner. In relation to negotiating sex, she found that participants were extremely knowledgeable of how to communicate and interpret their partner’s willingness to participate. However, when looking at the participant’s explicit understanding of consent, she found it to be explained in 3 main ways: as a minimum requirement (this can relate to the law, e.g. capacity, or seen as a lack of resistance, the girl removing her clothes, or the absence of a no); as a discrete event (this had differing viewpoints, e.g. the moment they decide on penetration, or the decision to go home together); and as something unrelated to their relationship. These definitions may at first seem concerning, but when taken into account with the participants understanding of a persons willingness to have sex, it simply highlights that the two are seen as different concepts. For instance, a person may say that consent is not something that is involved in their relationship, and on the surface this could appear to fit in with some out-dated views on marital rape being the right of the husband. However, when a person also shows full understanding of how to

interpret their partner's willingness, it becomes evident that if they understand the term consent to be a specific event, they may feel that they know and communicate with their partners well enough to not involve an explicit verbal exchange to gain and give consent before each individual encounter. This is supported by Humphreys and Herold (2007) who conducted research using focus groups and surveys and found that students suggested there was less need for explicit consent in committed relationships, as nonverbal interactions were clearly understood.

Further research has found that college students are more likely to communicate consent nonverbally. Hall (1995) looked at the consent signals given by college students and states that when participants were asked how they showed consent in their more recent sexual encounter, just 11% said they only used a verbal indication (with 60.9% showing verbal and nonverbal cues, and 28.2% using only nonverbal). Similarly, Hickman and Muehlenhard (1999) gave questionnaires to 378 undergraduate students regarding hypothetical scenarios for interpreting their own and others consent. They found that participants almost never used a direct refusal but often showed consent by 'not resisting'. They did however find slight gender differences. Firstly, they found men to rate their own behaviour as more indicative of consent than women rating their own behaviour. This could be problematic because it could suggest that men may read their partners behaviour as representative of consent, where a woman would not. They also found that men tended to use indirect nonverbal cues to indicate their own consent, suggesting that verbal consent was not needed as it was nonverbally implied (Johnson and Hoover, 2015) which again adds to the questionable nature of the insistence of refusals other than a direct no being open to misinterpretation. Jozkowski (2011) also found gender differences in that men and women seemed to adhere to traditional scripts (referring to how men and women are predicted to act based on normative cultural expectations) with men preferring nonverbal, and women showing verbal indications. This fits in with the interactions represented in general media, with men seen as the initiator and women as the 'gatekeeper' who accepts or declines (Jozkowski & Peterson, 2013). These traditional scripts were further highlighted with research conducted by Jozkowski, Peterson, Sanders, Dennis, & Reece (2013) that used surveys of 185 college students regarding their indication and interpretation of consent and found the main themes to be "endorsement of the traditional sexual script", "women are responsible for performing oral sex", "men's consent to sex can be aggressive", and

“men utilize deception to obtain consent to sex”. These themes place men’s pleasure as more important than women’s, and as mentioned, place women as the ‘gatekeepers’ to sex.

According to Johnson & Hoover (2015) there has only been one study looking at the effectiveness of a particular sexual consent programme in a college setting. This was conducted by Borges, Banyard & Moynihan (2008) who used 220 undergraduates split into three groups: no treatment (control); shorter treatment (presentation only); and longer treatment (presentation and group activity). The shorter treatment listened to information about four components of consent: seeking, receiving, expressed, and permission, and were given examples of how they can be applied to real life. The longer treatment looked at this, as well as a discussion about consent and alcohol consumption. Using a pre-test and post-tests to examine the participants understanding of consent, they found that the longer treatment group showed a greater gain in knowledge on consent from the study.

1.3 Aims and Objectives

As mentioned, although there have been a number of previous studies looking into how the notion of consent is understood (or misunderstood) by young adults, there is limited research available highlighting where this understanding originates. This current study aims to address this gap in the literature by looking at what discourses of sexual consent are available to young adults in the UK. The research problem is therefore to investigate how sexual consent is constructed within sexual consent campaigns run by UK universities using Foucauldian Discourse Analysis. Further to this, the study will take a Social Constructionist approach. This goes against the individualistic viewpoint of mainstream psychology by suggesting that the focus on the individual is damaging as it ignores the influence of wider society (which in turn means an inability to influence social change (Prilleltensky & Fox, 1997)), which could be attributed with the maintenance of power imbalances and social control. Instead of looking for one universal truth, the social constructionist approach aims to look at how understandings about the world and the society people live in are influenced by language and experiences.

When looking at previous research, it is evident that although young adults tend to have a clear understanding of how to negotiate sex and how they believe their sexual

partners show their willingness (Beres, 2014) there has been little academic consideration into what materials are available to young adults influencing their understanding of consent. As consent is a legal matter, with sexual assault or rape being defined as sex without consent (Jozkowski & Peterson, 2013) there is a great importance placed on the informed educating of young people in this area. This study hopes to investigate what information is available to young adults, and examine its effectiveness in relation to previous findings. With the intention of contributing to knowledge about the wider problem of consent and sexual assault, this study will use Foucauldian discourse analysis to further the understanding into how young adults are currently exposed to information about consent via sexual consent campaigns, with a long term aim of helping to improve the understanding of consent and reduce the frequency of sexual attacks.

In order to do this, the following research questions have been devised:

1. How is sexual consent constructed in current sexual consent campaigns in UK universities?
2. How is the responsibility to gain and/or give consent constructed within these campaigns?
3. How is gender constructed within these campaigns?
4. What are the implications of the discourses employed within these campaigns?

Method

2.1 Social Constructionist Approach

As highlighted, this research adopts a social constructionist approach. Burr (1995) suggests the surfacing of this approach can be dated back to Gergen (1973) with his claim that all knowledge is dependant on cultural and historical setting, and therefore social influences (rather than focussing on the individual) should be assessed for an accurate display of knowledge. A simple example of how meaning can be dependent on cultural and historical settings relates to gestures is a thumbs up sign which to a person from the UK would be received well as a sign of praise or good luck, whereas the same sign to a person in a Persian culture would be taken as an hostile “screw you” message (Archer, 1997). The ontological assumption of social

constructivism would show that the social world is created through human thought and discourse (Stainton-Rogers, 2011) rather than as a detached entity to the individual people existing within it.

Gergen (Sposini, 2014) later proposed that social constructionism does not belong to a singular person; rather it is (mirroring its ideas) the accumulation of different ideas that have been built upon through new conversation. It suggests that rather than universal truth, knowledge and meanings are made up through language and social interaction. Burr (1995) adds that a key assumption of the social constructionist approach is to be critical against information assumed to be truth, as it is simply dominant discourses around a topic that becomes widely accepted. Her useful example of this is the common belief that there are two separate categories of human beings, men and women. As I will talk about in more detail shortly, this can be used to maintain a power imbalance.

It has come to be accepted that research offered from traditional psychology, carries a merit of truthfulness due to the ‘scientific’ notions attributed to the field. However, one area in which social constructionism questions traditional psychology is the idea of objectivity in psychological research. Burr (1995) suggests that from a social constructionist viewpoint, contrary to the claims made by mainstream ‘scientific’ psychology, it is simply not possible to effectively study a phenomenon in a way that is completely free from bias. She states “each of us, of necessity, must encounter the world from some perspective or other (from where we stand) and the questions we come to ask about that world, our theories and hypotheses, must also of necessity arise from the assumptions that are embedded in our perspective” (p.110). Relatedly, if we were to view mainstream psychology as an objective search for definitive truth, social constructionism questions its usefulness. This is because, with the different positions of power evident between the researcher and the participants, it is the researchers voice that is assumed of higher value. This is problematic because it leaves the participants response open to interpretation to be assigned meaning by the researcher, perhaps to fit in with their agenda of study. The social constructionist approach would therefore suggest, highlighting the epistemological assumption, that instead of looking for absolute truth with a claim of objectivity in research, the focus should be on investigating how the language, interactions and experiences of people within the social world have lead to the construction of knowledge and understandings.

2.2 Foucauldian Discourse Analysis

Foucauldian discourse analysis is based on the ideas of French philosopher Michel Foucault (1926-1984) who addressed language in relation to power and knowledge. As briefly touched up, the claim of “truth” in traditional psychological research has been suggested to influence the maintenance of power imbalances (Richardson & Fowers, 1994). I will provide some examples to highlight this assertion. Stainton-Rogers (2011) suggests that from a critical standpoint, traditional psychology claims a reliance on objective research, while at the same time being a “mainly white, Western, able-bodied, male Establishment” which has been used to endorse the interests of the powerful, in turn enabling the oppression of those believed to have a lower status of power (p.8). A useful example is research into class. Although social class has often been seen as a concern of other fields, when it is the focus of psychological research there is a trend to accept middle class as ‘normal’ and working class as ‘classed’. For instance, Argyle (1994) belittled working class marriages claiming they are often the result of unplanned pregnancy; “The marriages which follow are more the result of chance encounters at dance halls and pubs than middle-class marriages made more carefully in colleges, churches and clubs.” (p. 80) ultimately suggesting that the working class need educating on how to behave more like the middle class. This is paralleled in research regarding race. There have been a number of studies claiming racial differences in IQ levels (e.g. Lynn, 1993;) however, Prilleltensky & Fox (1997) make the useful observation that when conducting research using intelligence tests designed for English speaking people, what may appear to be differences in IQ, is actually a result of language and cultural barriers.

As suggested, the type of data analysis used in this study was poststructuralist or Foucauldian discourse analysis. Sometimes referred to as ‘top-down’ discourse analysis, it is used to assess the social discourses available and specifically looks at how discourses can position people at imbalanced positions of power.

There are four research questions provided by Stainton-Rogers (2011) to help this type of analysis:

1. What discourses operate in relation to the topic?
2. Where do they come from?
3. How and why were they constructed?

4. How are they deployed and what can they be used to achieve?

2.3 Sample

Once I had received ethical approval [see appendix 2] from Leeds Beckett University, I progressed to a search for current sexual consent campaigns.

As the area of focus of this study is the construction of sexual consent, the data used were selected because they were sexual consent campaigns currently running within UK universities as of December 2015. This was found using a purposive sampling method, with a list of universities in the UK, in order of the number of students enrolled from 2013-2014 (Higher Education Statistics Agency, 2015). Starting with the institution with highest enrolment, a Google search was conducted to find both the university and its student unions websites. If a campaign section was offered on the webpages, it was searched for current campaigns regarding sexual consent. Further to this, the search bar provided was used to look for key words such as “consent”, “anti-rape”, and “harassment” in order to find relevant information on the campaigns. These steps were repeated for the top 100 UK universities (by enrolment). Overall, there were 6 campaigns found from this process:

- Campaign 1: The I Heart Consent campaign, developed by NUS Connect, had workshops being run at universities throughout the UK, such as the University of Huddersfield, the University of Sussex, and Warwick University
- Campaign 2: The University of Bristol and the Pause, Play, Stop campaign
- Campaign 3: The University of Cambridge and the Cambridge for Consent campaign
- Campaign 4: Nottingham Trent University and the Consent is Everything campaign
- Campaign 5: The University of Wolverhampton and the Consent is Sexy campaign
- Campaign 6: Edinburgh University Consent campaign

The data collected were the webpage providing information on the campaigns and any accompanying posters, leaflets and booklets [see appendix 1].

2.4 Analytic Procedure

The data were analysed using poststructuralist or Foucauldian discourse analysis, following the procedure outlined by Willott and Griffin (1997).

As the Consent is Everything campaign run by Nottingham Trent University included a video discussing consent, the first task was to transcribe the video. It was later analysed as a written text item. Of the final data, there were a small number of images, which is where I started with the analysis. After looking at the images, I assigned them with a relevant theme that summed up what they were expressing. I then moved on to the majority of the data, which were written text items. First I ‘chunked’ the data, meaning I separated the text into smaller sections that focussed on a particular issue. Each chunk was then labelled with either a word or phrase to highlight its theme (for example, ‘rape myth’ and ‘responsibility’). I then compiled the collection of themes and combined those that were similar which resulted in 5 overall themes: rape myths, consent, sexuality, responsibility, and rape & sexual assault (minor sections of text were dropped at this point if they did not fit in with other themes, e.g. bystander’s role in sexual harassment). The next step was to look at my grouped data and investigate the different ways they spoke about the specific theme, that is, what messages were being given from the extract? Were the messages representing the theme in a similar way, or offering a paradox? For example, the Cambridge campaign states:

“Our campaign is for everyone, regardless of sexuality, gender, race, class or ability”

Therefore the message being given would be that consent is an issue that concerns everybody, as anybody can be the victim of sexual assault or rape. Once all of the messages were drawn out they were again collated with others that were similar in order to identify the dominant discursive patterns. From here I developed a theoretical account of the findings.

Data Analysis

As a result of the previously stated process, two discursive patterns were shown to be dominant. The first constructed consent as a positive aspect of all sexual encounters and the second constructed consent in terms of an on-going discussion between both parties.

Before going further into the theoretical account of these discursive patterns, it is helpful to note that all of the data collected were gender neutral and open to all sexualities, as highlighted in Extract 1:

Extract 1:

"Our campaign is for everyone, regardless of sexuality, gender, race, class or ability" (Campaign 3)

"Consent is important...whether the encounter be between a woman and a man, two women, two men, or more than two participants" (Campaign 5)

The data identifies that sexual assault can happen to all genders, and that consent is a concept that is relevant in all sexual relationships, not just heterosexual. This construction is beneficial to the understandings of young adults for a number of reasons. Firstly, it goes against the ideas put forward by the evolutionary approach that rape is a sexually motivated crime driven by a need to reproduce (Thornhill & Palmer, 2000) by acknowledging that anybody can be the victim. Further to this, the inclusion of everybody as a potential victim helps to eradicate the reliance of victim blaming as a way of reassurance that a person is safe from attack because they themselves wouldn't act in a certain way (Hogg & Vaughan, 2009). Already this is positive in terms of power relations, as there is no difference in position for any gender. Similarly, it has been common for campaigns to separate the audience as females being potential victims and males being potential offenders. For example "Just because she's drinking...doesn't mean she wants sex...don't be that guy" and "Just because you help her home...doesn't mean you get to help yourself...don't be that guy" from the Don't Be That Guy campaign ("The Violence Stops Here", 2016) are slogans which, although in one sense are a step forward from putting the responsibility on the victims with prevention advice (cf. Bedera and Nordmayer, 2015), still position men and women as different components in a sexual encounter, with men as the perpetrator and women as the vulnerable victim. It could be suggested that these approaches might have the a detrimental effect on young adults understanding of consent, particularly young males

who do not view themselves as a potential offender, so feel the advice does not apply to them.

The gender-neutral approach to the campaigns is advantageous as it presents men and women on a level playing field, which will hopefully result in a more communicative model of consent, with each party participating equally. For this reason, the next section will also be gender neutral rather than the common perception of male as offender and female as victim (e.g. Amir, 1967; Bedera & Nordmayer, 2015).

3.1 “It is GREAT to enjoy sex”: A sex positive approach to sexual consent

The first prominent discursive pattern shown in the data was consent as a positive aspect of all sexual encounters. The campaigns present the advice as inclusive of everybody (“Our campaign is for everyone, regardless of sexuality, gender, race, class or ability” (Campaign 3)). Although the language used constructs consent as a legal requirement and necessity in all encounters (“Unless you both want it and are both capable of making a free choice, you are breaking the law” (Campaign 2)) at the same time it is promoted as a positive part of all healthy sexual relationships, as highlighted in Extract 2:

Extract 2:

“It is GREAT to enjoy sex as long as consent has been made clear” (Campaign 2)

“Sex is really fun and sexuality is empowering! University is a great time to have lots of fun and sex (if you want)” (Campaign 6)

“We want to empower students to better understand their own boundaries and to respect those of others. We want [to] educate students about consent and healthy relationships in all, and every, form.” (Campaign 3)

This is especially encouraging when compared to a finding shown in a report of young peoples understanding of consent from the Office of the Children’s Commissioner

(Coy, Kelly, Elvines, Garner & Kanyeredzi, 2013), which stated that sex education focussed on the negatives, with one year 11 girl highlighting “We only learn about the bad things about sex, like STI’s and things like that. We don’t learn about the good about sex. But then I guess they don’t want to make everyone want sex” (p.39). This negative view of sex could be criticised as adding to feelings of awkwardness around sexual consent for young adults as it helps to reinforce it as a taboo topic of conversation. This is problematic as if a young adult feels that the advice they are given is negative about sex, they may become unwilling to ask questions about sexual consent through a fear of being judged, which could obviously result in a serious lack of understanding. Instead this data shows consent as a positive aspect of all healthy sexual relationships, and actively encourages young adults to talk about it: “Cambridge for Consent is a university-wide campaign aimed at CELEBRATING + PROMOTING sexual consent” (Campaign 3).

One of the main messages throughout these campaigns is breaking down the idea of consent as a taboo subject (e.g. “Although it might feel awkward, finding out what they like and don’t like will make sex much better” (Campaign 2)). Expanding on this, there is a common message throughout the data that if the young adults feel confident engaging in sexual activity, they have a responsibility to be mature in the situation and ensure consent is established without claiming excuses of awkwardness or embarrassment (e.g. “If you think the mood can be ruined if you ask, It can’t have been that good to start with” (Campaign 3); “A lot of people are worried that checking for consent will be embarrassing. But if you think the mood could be ruined if you ask, then it can’t have been that good to start with” (Campaign 5)). By constructing consent as part of a conversation (“Ask your partner what they want, how they want it and where they want it...Listen to their answer” (Campaign 2)), it advises the intended audience that consent is not just a legal requirement, it is a key aspect of healthy sexual relationships and beneficial to both parties. The language used seems to go against the popular use of scare tactics insinuating how bad the situation would be if a person was to carry on without first establishing consent (again this is similar to a point raised in the report by Coy et al., (2013) by a young woman in year 10 who suggested the emotional and often positive side to sex is often ignored in advice programmes “It was “if you don’t use a condom you will get pregnant”... and they need to talk about the impact it has on you as well.” Pg.39), and instead advises both parties on the positives

of engaging in conversation beforehand therefore feeling more relaxed and as a result, having better sex.

Example:

“Sex is only good when it’s between people who have given their consent.”

(Campaign 2)

“It should be a pleasurable, enjoyable experience for everyone involved. Make sure you check in with your partner throughout a sexual encounter. If they’re into it, they won’t hesitate to say so!” (Campaign 6)

Another way that the data were sex positive is through the use of humour. The main example of this is the “Consent is Everything” campaign run by Nottingham Trent University. This used an informal and humorous analogy, likening engaging in sexual activity to making a cup of tea. It highlights what is and isn’t classed as consent, and through the association to a nonsexual situation, it emphasises how refusals are constructed in every day life, questioning why in regards to sex, consent is ever up for misinterpretation (“They might say yes please that’s very kind of you but by the time the tea arrives they decide that actually they don’t want tea at all and sure you can be annoyed that you made the tea but they’re under no obligation to drink the tea” (Campaign 4)). The informal dialogue in this campaign could be viewed as more comforting for the audience, with the tea analogy implying that these situations, particularly the right to refuse, are simply common sense (“If someone said yes to tea round your house last Saturday that doesn’t mean they want you to make them tea all the time they don’t want you turning up unexpected at their place making them tea and forcing them to drink it saying but you wanted tea last weekend or waking up to you forcing tea down their throat saying but you wanted tea last night” (Campaign 4)) rather than a daunting situation that would make someone feel uncomfortable. The importance placed on the need to explicitly say “no” has been met with negative feelings of rudeness as it juxtaposes the normative formation of refusals (Kitzinger and Frith, 1999). However, the language used in this campaign focuses more on the importance of hearing and accepting your partner’s consent or refusal, which could lead to young

adults understanding that it is okay to refuse, regardless of events leading up to the encounter (“consent cannot be assumed even if you’re in a relationship, have been kissing or no matter who has paid for the date” (Campaign 5)). Again the importance of this positive message is highlighted with an extract from the Coy et al., (2013) report, “They aren’t taught that it’s okay to say no and that you don’t have to do it”. Not only is this positive for the young adults understanding of sexual consent, it is positive for their emotional wellbeing by helping to tackle anxieties about how to refuse sex and how the refusal should be handled by their partner.

Similarly, the language used in the campaign titles reinforced this positive message. “I Heart Consent”, “Cambridge for Consent”, “Consent is Sexy”, and “Consent is Everything” give positive connotations by linking the notion of consent to other concepts that could be representative of a happy relationship (e.g. love, sexiness, and support). This is especially relevant when compared to other programmes (e.g. We Can Stop It, from Scotland Police, 2016) that take the negative occurrence of rape as the expected result, offering prevention tips, rather than tackling the preceding issue of the understanding around consent.

Lastly the language used throughout the campaigns was positive about the victims/potential victims of sexual violence. Supporting O’Byrne et al. (2006) with their request for sexual consent campaigns to show a decrease in focus on the role of women in their own victimisation, the role of the victim was constructed in a way that was unrelated to the fault held by the attacker (“IT WAS NOT YOUR FAULT. YOU ARE NOT ALONE. YOU CAN FIND HELP” (Campaign 3); “Is someone chooses to assault, the consequences are their responsibility and their fault. It is not the fault of the person who is assaulted” (Campaign 5)). This is beneficial as it will encourage more people to be open to the conversation of consent and importantly, it could also reassure victims of sexual violence to seek the help they need.

3.2 “Informed...Mutual...Given...Communicated...Retractable...Willing”: Consent as part of an on going and informed discussion

Analysis of the data drew attention to the proposal of responsibility being with both parties when it comes to establishing consent (“Each person involved equally participates in the process and feels comfortable to make and communicate any choice

or feelings without feeling pressured, manipulated, or afraid” (Campaign 3)). As has been highlighted in previous research there has been wrongful attention placed on the role of the potential victim when educating on consent via advice on rape prevention. On the contrary, this data appears to omit the labelling of one party as ‘victim’ and the other as ‘offender’, instead opting to position each party on the same level, as simply equal participants in the discussion and subsequent understanding of consent. For example, when offering advice, the data used terms such as ‘they’, ‘someone’ or ‘you’, rather than ‘he’ or ‘she’ (e.g. “If it’s not your body, it’s not your decision. Make sure you get consent.” (Campaign 2) “An absence of a "no" does not mean "yes". If you're not sure, it's always best to ask” (Campaign 5). Expanding on this, the language used constructs consent as something to be sought rather than the common message found in previous research about the importance of giving consent, or ensuring your own refusal is heard. Again this was not aimed at one specific participant; rather it addressed the audience as ‘you’. This again reinforces the equal positions of power placed on each participant in the sexual encounter. Going further into the idea of responsibility being on both participants to gain consent, the language used appears to challenge the commonly accepted rape myth of the victim being responsible if they have been drinking alcohol (Burt, 1980; Geisinger, 2011). Instead, it is implied that when intoxicating substances have been consumed, even if their partner has agreed to sexual activity, it is still a persons responsibility to establish whether their partner has the capacity to make that choice, and if they are unsure, to not take the act any further: “If it’s not clear it’s not consent...mashed...drunk...pissed...tipsy...wasted” (Campaign 1).

Previous research (Carmody, 2005; Beres, 2014) has shown that although young adults may show an understanding in how to negotiate sex and interpret sexual advances/refusals, they have presented a deficit in understanding when it comes to the explicit understanding of consent. This could be because previously, particularly for young men (Humphreys, 2000), consent has been understood as a singular event with a person verbally giving consent, or refusing the advances (Beres, 2014). Contrastingly, this data presents consent as part an on going and informed discussion (“consent is...informed...mutual...given...communicated...retractable...willing” (Campaign 3)), which would be beneficial for young adults understanding. With the portrayal of consent as part of a comfortable conversation, the language used helps to remove some

of the stigma attached to consent, particularly any awkwardness somebody might feel if they understand consent to be a formal exchange of words.

In regards to how consent should be communicated between the parties, it is acknowledged that it does not always have to be verbal, as highlighted in Extract 3:

Extract 3:

“Pause to read your partner’s body language. Are they saying yes but their body is saying no?” (Campaign 2)

“Consent can be talked about directly or given through the actions, words and sounds of your partner.” (Campaign 2)

“Consent can be spoken, but it can also be expressed in action” (Campaign 5)

This supports numerous studies that have found non-verbal signals to be the preferred way to show consent or refuse sexual advances for both males and females (O’Byrne et al., 2006; Kitzinger & Frith, 1999). It also negates the popular claim of miscommunication between the sexes, as we see from research that both males and females are fully knowledgeable in interpreting non-verbal cues. However, the data offers somewhat of a contradiction in that while accepting that consent is often communicated through body language and non verbal signals, it is usually followed with advice implying that verbal interactions are the most effective if a person really wants to avoid miscommunication, shown in Extract 4:

Extract 4:

“Ask first, every time” (Campaign 1)

“If you're not sure, it's always best to ask” (Campaign 5)

“Ask your partner what they want, how they want it and where they want it. Make it part of your foreplay. You can say things like... Is this ok? Does this feel good? Can I touch you here? Tell me what you like” (Campaign 2)

“it’s always best to actively ask if it’s okay every time you take a new step” (Campaign 6)

As previously examined, the acceptance of miscommunication between the sexes can be problematic when it comes to a victim trying to prove their attacker acted with intent. Although there is no mention of a specific gender being responsible for asking to ensure that consent is established, we have seen from previous research that young adults often adhere to traditional scripts in their understanding of consent (Jozkowski, 2011). This contradiction in messages evident in the data could in theory, result in the audience reverting to the problematic acceptance of consent portrayed in popular media. For example, with a slogan such as “If it’s not your body, it’s not your decision. Make sure you get consent” (Campaign 2), based on the acceptance of sexual scripts, it could be argued that the message would be understood with the assumption that it is advice aimed at a man to gain consent, with pre-existing discourses (academically and culturally) telling us that men are the instigators of sex and women are the gatekeepers holding responsibility of acceptance or refusal (Jozkowski & Peterson, 2013). Similarly, based on preconceived discourses around sexual consent, “The way I dress is not a yes” (Campaign 6) encourages the idea of women as the victim of sexual violence. Again this can be explained by the discourses influenced by popular media. For instance, “Slut Walks” are protests that have dominated the media since 2011 when a Toronto police officer told students that to avoid victimisation they shouldn’t dress like sluts (Reger, 2015). The comment sparked outrage and led to protests in a hope to dissolve the prevalence of victim blaming and acceptance of rape culture. The reoccurrence of “Slut Walks” in the media has influenced the association between clothing and sexual violence as widely accepted in general discourse as an issue of negativity for women. Again, without specifying either gender, through pre-existing knowledge constructed through popular media, with data extracts such as “Whatever we wear, wherever we go, yes means yes and no means no” (Campaign 1) it could be suggested that the responsibility is placed on the woman to explicitly say

yes or no. As proposed by Jozkowski and Peterson (2013) there are a number of problems that come with the acceptance of traditional sexual scripts. To place women as the “gatekeeper” to sexual activity may result in a reduction of their sexual autonomy, if they feel that agreeing quickly or often will leave them with a ‘promiscuous’ and subsequently negative reputation. Similarly, positioning men as the instigators of sex may result in them engaging in unwanted sexual activity to avoid negative peer opinions.

However, it could also be suggested that the reliance on verbal interaction could be present as a means to avoid assumption and reinforce the notion of consent as a product of conversation, rather than the widely accepted notion of anything other than an explicit yes or no are open to misinterpretation (originating from Tannen, 1990). Here, the verbal interaction is constructed as an on going process throughout every encounter:

“Checking for consent needs to be an on going process, and is the responsibility of both partners.” (Campaign 3)

“You should pause to consider whether you have got consent every time you have sex.” (Campaign 2)

Again the language used in the data goes against popular misconceptions that are widely accepted within the understanding of consent. Here, consent is constructed as an on going process, in that consent to one act does not mean consent to all. This negates often accepted rape myths such as “If a girl engages in necking or petting and she lets things get out of hand, it is her own fault if her partner forces sex on her” and “A woman who goes to the home or apartment of a man on their first date implies that she is willing to have sex” (Burt, 1980) shown in Extract 5:

Extract 5:

“Consent cannot be assumed even if you're in a relationship, have been kissing or no matter who has paid for the date” (Campaign 5)

“Some people may not want to have penetrative sex, some people may be unable to move into different positions because of physical disabilities and some people's culture or religion may make them unwilling or unable to engage in certain sexual encounters. This must all be kept in mind when discussing consent with anyone. But, most importantly, it must be discussed with everyone!” (Campaign 5)

Further to this, the language used constructs consent as a decision that can be retracted (“They might say yes please that’s very kind of you but by the time the tea arrives they decide that actually they don’t want tea at all and sure you can be annoyed that you made the tea but they’re under no obligation to drink the tea” (Campaign 4)). This is positive for young peoples understanding of consent for a number of reasons. Firstly, it lets the audience know that it is okay to say no, even if they have already engaged in certain activities. This is extremely beneficial for the emotional wellbeing of a young adult, who may wrongly feel that because they have taken one step in the sexual encounter, they are obliged to see it through. Secondly, it reinforces the idea that gaining consent is not a singular event, but rather an on going process in which both parties are equally responsible. This would hopefully lead the audience to be more aware of their partner’s feelings throughout the encounter, and respect their decision if it is to stop.

3.3 Summary of Findings

Overall, consent was constructed as a positive aspect of all sexual encounters, with the responsibility of its establishment being placed equally on both parties. The data suggested that the most beneficial way for sexual partners to negotiate sex and fully understand each other’s feelings of willingness or refusal is to encourage an open, on going and informed discussion. The implications of this research are positive for the understandings of young adults as it places all genders in the same position of power, and through openly encouraging sex, suggests the campaigns are in no way trying to use scare tactics to deter young adults from engaging in whichever kind of sex life they choose, but rather promoting an active sex life, as long as the participants are mature, confident in their own choices, and respectful of their partners. This is particularly important when you take into account the reactions that sexual consent campaigns and

the workshops running within them have been met with recently. For example, Warwick University student George Lawlor publically shunned his invitation to an “I Heart Consent” session, stating “To be invited to such a waste of time was the biggest insult I’ve received in a good few years” and goes on to say “Next time you consider inviting me or anyone else to another bullshit event like this, have a little respect for the intelligence and decency of your peers. You might find that’s a more effective solution than accusing them of being vile rapists-in-waiting who can only be taught otherwise by a smug, righteous, self-congratulatory intervention” (Lawlor, 2015). It is evident from the findings of this research that what Mr Lawlor assumed to be the intention of the workshop, was significantly different from the messages that were actually given. This highlights the importance of effective programmes being run within universities, with an increased focus on positive communication. As a feminist attending university in a time where ‘lad culture’ is widely normative, I do not believe all young men to be “rapists-in-waiting”, rather I believe enough people have been the victim of sexual violence to make it a social problem that needs tackling.

Reflection

Traditional psychology, as underpinned by a realist epistemology, operates with the view of psychology as a science searching for truth. Repudiating this, the social constructionist approach adopted within this study assumes a relativist epistemology and therefore argues that there is no ultimate truth, instead there is an interest in how knowledge is socially created. For this reason, it is important to acknowledge the influence that certain values and expectations from myself as the researcher, and the use of a media text study from a social constructionist viewpoint, may have had on the interpretation of findings from the study. Consequently, I will provide three areas of reflection, as suggested by Wilkinson (1988): Personal, functional, and disciplinary.

Personal

Firstly I will look at aspects of my personal identity that have influenced this piece of research. As a working class female, with an interest in critical psychology, I brought numerous assumptions with me to the research. Primarily, through personal and academic experience, it could be suggested that because of pre existing knowledge

about how consent is understood and often misinterpreted, I would expect to find evidence of power differences particularly in relation to rape myth promotion and victim blaming. Further to this, as I have attended university between 2013 and 2016, aged 21 to 24, I have spent the majority of my time as a young adult in an environment that often openly accepts “lad culture” (Attwood, 2006) which has resulted in my specific interest in the apparent trivialisation of sexual violence, the remodelling of certain aggressive or deceiving behaviours as ‘banter’ and the problems that will follow when “lad culture” is accepted into society as an excuse for unlawful behaviour. However, opposing my assumptions, the data showed discursive patterns that disconfirmed my expectations.

Functional

There are certain aspects of the methodological approach that should also be acknowledged. For this research, I chose to specifically look at sexual consent campaigns running within UK universities because I feel this is an area where increased understanding is important due to statistics showing the prevalence of assaults happening to and by young adults. Further to this, students may feel that when they arrive at university they do not need to attend the campaigns as they ‘already know not to rape’ (e.g. George Lawlor, 2015). However the move from home to university can make a profound difference on a young adults life. It could be suggested that an increase in lad culture, acceptance of hook up and casual sex lifestyles, and often excessive drinking (Geisinger, 2011) are all reasons as to why a better understanding of consent (particularly as part of an informed conversation) would be beneficial to university aged people, rather than the general understanding that refusals are expressed by a simple and explicit “no”. I think it is also useful for university students to have a clear understanding of what legally constitutes rape, particularly in regards to capacity.

However, it is important to note that as the campaigns used were created for university students, they would undoubtedly be influenced by academic literature. As previous research into the topic of consent have shown the problems associated with adhering to traditional gender scripts, and ideas like ‘no means no’, the findings of this study clearly show a positive step forward from these to a more gender neutral, communicative model of consent. This said, the very specific target audience used in this research would mean that the findings should not be assumed to be the same as the

discourses available to wider society in nationwide campaigns. Further to this, as this was a media text study, there was a dense amount of text to analyse which meant that not all of the messages were highlighted in the findings. This has been acknowledged previously in that minor themes were dropped if they did not fit into the prominent discursive patterns. In theory, it could be suggested that this may result in the omission of important, informative material. However, I am confident that the non-inclusion of certain extracts did not hinder the overall discourses focused on within this data, as I purposely left out the small amount of data that related to third party responsibility (e.g. what to do if your friend is receiving unwanted attention in a nightclub) because it was not directly related to the construction of sexual consent.

Disciplinary

This research was informed by social constructionism, which is beneficial when analysing previous research in order to develop a genealogical map of how the understanding of sexual consent has developed from psychological research and how this has been accepted into lay discourse. With Foucauldian discourse analysis holding a particular interest in power relations, along with preconceived expectations of sexual consent campaigns, I expected to find signs of unbalanced power relations, specifically victim blaming and a sole focus on heterosexual, male to female abuse. However, the gender neutrality of the data presented a positive alternative and by offering the same advice to all genders, moved towards promoting communication between equal participants when establishing consent. This said, I think a useful way to expand on this research would be to use interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) and conduct interviews or focus groups before and after the young adults were exposed to the campaign. This is because, although discourse analysis provides discursive patterns and meaning in an effective way of examining how sexual consent as constructed within the campaigns, it fails to acknowledge people's experiences and how their understandings of sexual consent are informed by the dominant discursive patterns. Therefore for future research I think it would be beneficial to use IPA with focus groups and interviews to assess the effectiveness of the campaigns, perhaps followed with more longitudinal follow up interviews to investigate whether there was a long term influence on understanding and reduction in rape myth acceptance.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Appendix 1.1: Campaign 1

If it's **not clear**
it's not consent



consent is...
mutual active
respecting boundaries
comfortable
retractable
checking
willingly
given
♥

I ♥ CONSENT
Ask first, every time

I ♥ CONSENT
Ask first, every time

nus women


SEXPRESSION:UK

nus women



Appendix 1.2: Campaign 2

**SEXUAL
CONSENT:**

do you get it?

www.PausePlayStop.org.uk

Sexual Consent: What's It Got To Do With Me?

Well, if you have sex or want to have sex, it's got everything to do with you.

Making sure you get and give consent before having any kind of sex with another person really matters.

You don't need to have a sit-down chat about it if you don't want to – but consent should always be clear.

Sex is only good when it's between people who have given their consent. Unless you both want it and are both capable of making a free choice, you are breaking the law.

If it's not your body, it's not your decision. Make sure you **get** consent. Know when to Pause, Play and Stop.

How do I Get Consent?

When you fancy someone and want to have sex, always check they want it too. Although it might feel awkward, finding out what they like and don't like will make sex much better.

Even if someone is aroused, it doesn't always mean they want sex.

There are easy ways to get consent without killing the mood.

Ask your partner what they want, how they want it and where they want it. Make it part of your foreplay. You can say things like...

- || Is this OK?
- || Does this feel good?
- || Can I touch you here?
- || Tell me what you like.

Listen to their answer. Use your instinct and empathy to sense what your partner is feeling and how they are responding. Look for signs that they are enjoying what you are doing and want it to carry on. Only do what you both agree to.

When do I pause?

You should pause to consider whether you have got consent **every** time you have sex.

It doesn't matter if it is the first, the fifth or the hundredth time you're having sex, if you're in a relationship or you've just met – you must always have consent.

So before you get it on: make sure you get it.

- || Pause to read your partner's body language. Are they saying yes but their body is saying no?
- || Pause to ask if sex is what they want.
- || Pause to listen to what they say.
- || Pause to ask if it feels good.
- || Pause to check no one involved is under 16. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland this is the age of consent. It is illegal for any kind of sexual activity to take place when one or more participants are under 16.

When you know the other person is happy to go ahead, you've got enthusiastic sex - fast forward to play.

When do I play?

It is GREAT to enjoy sex as long as consent has been made clear.

Consent can be talked about directly or given through the actions, words and sounds of your partner.

Know the signs that show they want it, such as...

- ▶ Looking at you, smiling and nodding
- ▶ Being relaxed and happy
- ▶ Being enthusiastic and responsive
- ▶ Telling you what they want
- ▶ Responding to you with their body, including touching you

They might also say or whisper things like:

- ▶ 'I like that'
- ▶ 'That feels good'
- ▶ 'Do that again'
- ▶ 'Do it this way'
- ▶ 'Touch me here'

These signs show that the person you are with is happy and gives their consent to what is happening at that moment. If you have any doubts at all, ask.

When do I stop?

If you have not got consent - or are in any doubt about having it - you should always stop.

Non-consensual sex is illegal. It is rape or sexual assault.

Sex is non-consensual if...

- Consent is assumed
- It is forced, pressured, unwanted or violent
- Your sexual partner is too drunk or too high to give consent
- Your sexual partner is asleep
- Your sexual partner doesn't understand what is happening

Always stop if you hear your partner say....

- 'No'
- 'I don't know'
- 'I'm not sure'
- 'Not now'
- 'I feel worried'
- 'Stop'
- 'Get off'
- 'F*** off'
- 'Don't do that'
- 'Ouch'
- 'Not again'
- 'Do I have to?'

Know the signs that mean you should stop, including...

<input type="checkbox"/> Stillness	<input type="checkbox"/> Flinching
<input type="checkbox"/> Silence	<input type="checkbox"/> Rigid or tense body
<input type="checkbox"/> Frozen or frightened expression	<input type="checkbox"/> Shaking
<input type="checkbox"/> Crying	<input type="checkbox"/> Confusion
<input type="checkbox"/> No eye contact	<input type="checkbox"/> Resistance
<input type="checkbox"/> Slurred speech	<input type="checkbox"/> Passing out
<input type="checkbox"/> Incoherent talking	<input type="checkbox"/> Sleeping

Get Involved

Find out more about active sexual consent on our website:
www.PausePlayStop.org.uk

Follow us on Twitter:
@PausePlayStopUK

Join the conversation:
#IGetConsent



This campaign is being run by SARSAS
 SARSAS is a registered charity (charity number: 1126682).
www.sarsas.org.uk

The Law

The law is clear: having any kind of sex without getting consent is illegal and is rape or sexual assault.

The law says:

'A person consents if they agree by choice, and have the freedom and capacity to make that choice.'

'A person commits rape if they intentionally penetrate the vagina, anus or mouth of another person with their penis without consent.'

'A person commits sexual assault if they intentionally touch another person, the touching is sexual and the person does not consent.'

The law recognises that a person might not have sufficient capacity because of their age or because of a mental disorder. The amount someone has had to drink can also affect their ability to consent.

If you repeatedly ask for consent and are refused, this can count as sexual harassment.

Appendix 1.3: Campaign 3

Our mission



Cambridge for Consent is a university-wide campaign aimed at
CELEBRATING + PROMOTING
sexual consent.

Our campaign is for everyone, regardless of sexuality, gender, race, class or ability.

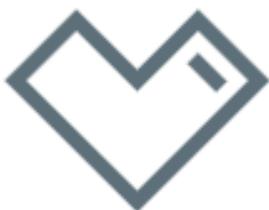
Sexual assault affects people of all genders; whether you define as a man, woman, gay, straight, bi, trans, cis, intersex or none of the above, you could be affected, and we want to be there to help.

We want to remind people about the basics of consent however simple they may seem.



We want to help those who have survived an assault, and those who are supporting survivors.

We are not a trained advice service, but we hope this site provides avenues for those affected to locate and benefit from the wealth of support services there are available.



0 0 0 4 9 5 1

Visits to Cambridge for Consent



IT WAS NOT YOUR FAULT. YOU ARE NOT ALONE. YOU CAN FIND HELP.

What is consent?



Much of what we learn about consent comes to us through sexual education classes in school, mass media and pornography. The central tenet of such lessons is "Guys, no means no! Listen to women".

This is problematic for several reasons. Firstly, it limits consent to a purely heterosexual issue, excluding same-sex partners and other queer people from the cultural and educational conversation about consent. In this way, it also ignores the presence of sexual violence in the queer community.

Secondly, it positions men as the gatekeepers of consent and sets up a power dynamic that undermines consent as an ongoing conversation between two partners. This ignores the vast history of experiences and micro-aggressions that individuals may have internalised.



CUSU Women's Campaign defines consent as the "active and willing participation in sexual activity. It means that both parties had the freedom and capacity to make the choice".

Consent applies in every sort of sexual encounter whether it is a one night stand, a long term partnership, a fling, a marriage, and no matter whether the encounter is between a woman and a man, two women, two men, gender non-conforming individuals, or more than two participants.

Everyone has different boundaries around sexual consent: some people may not want to have penetrative sex and some people's culture or religion may make them unwilling or unable to engage in certain sexual encounters. These boundaries must be discussed as part of an ongoing and informed discussion. It is important to remember that consent to one act does not mean consent to all.



True consent is enthusiastic consent—a deliberate and thoughtful process which shows "yes, I really want to do this". It is not something that can be interpreted. It cannot be assumed – regardless of whether you're in a relationship, if you've just been kissing, or no matter who has paid for the date. Checking for consent needs to be an ongoing process, and is the responsibility of both partners. Each person involved equally participates in the process and feels comfortable to make and communicate any choice or feelings without feeling pressured, manipulated, or afraid.

An absence of a "no" DOES NOT mean "yes". If you're not sure, it is always best to ask – it will not "kill the mood", rather, it demonstrates that you care about the person you're about to engage with.

A partner may give consent because they feel obligated to or because they don't feel confident enough to speak up. Consent cannot be considered consent if an intimidating and unspoken pressure or obligation exists.

Consent need not be verbal; there are many indications and signals that may be used as long as they are mutually agreed and understandable. However, it is always better to ask.

CONSENT IS:

Informed - both individuals agreeing to the single act in question

Mutual - there is a clear understanding of both individuals about what is being asked for and consented to

Given – freely and actively

Communicated – in words and or actions that are mutually understandable

Retractable – one sexual act does not mean all sexual acts

Willing – agreement does not count as consent if someone is forced

Click the below links to find out more:

<http://everydayfeminism.com/2013/01/navigating-consent-debunking-the-grey-area-myth/>

<http://www.womens.cusu.cam.ac.uk/consent/>



0 0 0 4 9 5 1

Visits to Cambridge for Consent



IT WAS NOT YOUR FAULT. YOU ARE NOT ALONE. YOU CAN FIND HELP.

Have we been flirting all night?



Am I dancing with you?



Am I kissing you?



Have I taken you home?



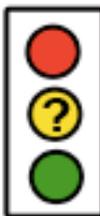
Are we in bed?



Do I want to have sex with you



Ask me
consent is sexy



www.womens.cusu.cam.ac.uk/consent

WOMEN'S
CAMPAIGN

Consent is enthusiastic, willing, participation in sexual activity.

If you think the mood can be ruined if you ask,
it can't have been that good to start with.

Appendix 1.4: Campaign 4

If you're still struggling with consent, then just imagine, instead of initiating sex, you're making a cup of tea, you say, hey would you like a cup of tea and they reply oh my god yes I would absolutely love a cup of tea thank you then you know that they want a cup of tea. If you say hey would you like a cup of tea and they say er not really I fancy one then you can still make someone a cup of tea or not but be aware that they might not drink it and if they don't drink it, and this is the important part, don't make them. If they say mm no thanks then don't make them tea at all don't make them drink tea don't get annoyed at them for not wanting tea they just don't want tea okay. They might say yes please that's very kind of you but by the time the tea arrives they decide that actually they don't want tea at all and sure you can be annoyed that you made the tea but they're under no obligation to drink the tea they wanted tea and now they don't and sometimes people change their mind by the time it takes to brew the kettle to brew the tea to add the milk but that's okay, people can change their mind okay so maybe they were conscious when you said do you want some tea and they said yes please but in the time it took to brew the kettle to brew the tea to add the milk they're now unconscious you should just put the tea down and make sure the unconscious person is safe and this is the important part don't make them drink it because unconscious people don't want tea if someone said yes to tea round your house last Saturday that doesn't mean they want you to make them tea all the time they don't want you turning up unexpected at their place making them tea and forcing them to drink it saying but you wanted tea last weekend or waking up to you forcing tea down their throat saying but you wanted tea last night now if you're thinking this is a silly analogy then yes you're right of course you wouldn't make somebody drink tea just because they agreed to it last week and of course you would never force tea down the throat of an unconscious person just because they agreed to tea five minutes ago when they were conscious but if you can imagine something as ludicrous as making someone drink tea when they don't want it then how hard can it be when it comes to sex whether it's tea or sex consent is everything and on that note I'm off to make myself a cup of tea

Appendix 1.5: Campaign 5

Lifestyle

News Just In...Consent is SEXY!!



By [ECollins](#) | 08 Sep 2015

The Facts:

- Consent is active & willing participation in sexual activity. That means that both parties had the freedom and capacity to make the choice.
- Consent cannot be assumed even if you're in a relationship, have been kissing or no matter who has paid for the date.
- An absence of a "no" doesn't mean "yes". If you're not sure, it's always best to ask.
- A lot of people are worried that checking for consent will be embarrassing. But if you think the mood could be ruined if you ask, then it can't have been that good to start with.

True or False:

- Consent isn't always important

False: Consent is important in every sort of sexual encounter whether it is a one night stand, a long term partnership, a fling, a marriage, and no matter whether the encounter is between a woman and a man, two women, two men, or more than two participants.

- Everyone has different boundaries around sexual consent

True: some people may not want to have penetrative sex, some people may be unable to move into different positions because of physical disabilities and some people's culture or religion may make them unwilling or unable to engage in certain sexual encounters. This must all be kept in mind when discussing consent with anyone. But, most importantly, it must be discussed with everyone!

- Silence Means No

True: No means no, but silence also means no. Many times people do not feel like they can say no due to power imbalances. People can also become unresponsive or not know what to say when they are in uncomfortable or frightening situations.

- You can't communicate consent due to the nature of sexual interaction

False: Consent can be spoken, but it can also be expressed in action. If in doubt, ask. It won't 'kill' the mood.

- If you kiss someone, you don't have to have sex with them

True: Consent to do one thing does not automatically imply you want things to go further. Sometimes you might just want things to stop at a kiss.

- If you wear sexy clothing or are 'that kind of person' i.e. walking alone at night, having multiple partners, or going out a lot – you're asking for it.

False: Nobody wants to be assaulted. You might be dressing sexily because you like to look attractive or because you want to attract someone's attention, but none of this means you want to experience assault. If someone chooses to assault, the consequences are their responsibility and their fault. It is not the fault of the person who is assaulted.

- Rape & sexual assault can happen to anyone

True: Rape and sexual assault can happen to anyone no matter their age, gender, class, culture, ability, sexuality, faith, race, or appearance. Rape and sexual assault can occur inside marriages and committed relationships, by trusted family or close family friends, or by community or religious leaders. There is not a stereotype for victims or perpetrators.

The Check List of Consent:

- Informed – both individuals agreeing to act
 - Mutual – clear understanding of both individuals about what is being asked for and consented to
 - Given – freely and actively
 - Communicated – in words and or actions that are mutually understandable
 - Retractable – one sexual act does not mean all sexual acts
 - Willing- agreement does not count as consent if someone is forced.
-

Appendix 1.6: Campaign 6

Consent



MAKE A STAND AGAINST HARASSMENT

In a survey by NUS, over a quarter of students have said they experience sexual harassment at university. We're launching our consent campaign to make people think twice about behaviour that is unacceptable and encourage a sex-positive atmosphere in all of our venues. This is a result of several years of increased campaigning around sexual harassment by students' unions and women's groups around the country, and statistics like the NUS survey highlighting that this is still very much an everyday problem.

SEXPRESSION

We're teaming up with volunteer group Sexpression to provide free safer sex products and sex-positive information at the Big Cheese. They'll also have other fun bits like badges and temporary tattoos with consent slogans on hand – we want to normalise a culture of consent at our events and make sure everyone is talking about it!

IF YOU ARE UNCOMFORTABLE, REPORT IT

You have the right to have fun and feel safe regardless of what you're wearing, what you've had to drink, or how much you flirted with someone earlier in the night. As a result of new internal policy put in place last year, all of our bars and house staff are trained in responding to complaints of harassment, and will treat any complaints with the utmost seriousness. If anyone makes you feel uncomfortable at any stage of the night, speak to a member of staff and the person in question will be escorted out immediately, no questions asked. You can also make an anonymous [complaint](#) on our website if you don't want to report it.

Too often, we brush off incidents of sexual harassment as a 'normal' part of a night out, because the sad reality is you've often seen or experienced them many times before. It is not normal for people you don't know to touch you on the dance floor or catcall you on the street. It's harassment, and we're calling it out.

WHEN HARASSMENT HAPPENS

Sexual harassment can come from strangers on a night out, but it can also often come from people you know. It's not always intended to be malicious – it can often be a product of people not realising the impact of their actions – but that doesn't make it any less harmful. Some examples of sexual harassment include inappropriate gestures or comments made to or about you, comments about your appearance, or being touched in any way you don't consent to.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

One thing you can do to stop this is to always point out to your friends that it's not funny to joke about other people's appearance, sexual conduct, or any non-consensual sexual gestures. You should also be aware of what's going on around you when you're out – if you see a situation where you think someone might be uncomfortable, ask them if they're okay. You can always use an inconspicuous question which gets them some space – "Do you want to get some fresh air? It's really hot in here!"

Urte Macikene



"Sex is really fun and sexuality is empowering! University is a great time to have lots of fun and sex (if you want). It should be a pleasurable, enjoyable experience for everyone involved. Make sure to check in with your partner throughout a sexual encounter. If they're into it, they won't hesitate to say so! If they're not saying anything, it's not the same as saying yes – it's always best to actively ask if it's okay every time you take a new step." Urte Macikene, EUSA VPS.

Appendix 2

STAGE 1 - RESEARCH ETHICS APPROVAL FORM (September 2014)



STAGE 1 - RESEARCH ETHICS APPROVAL FORM

Research by students and staff at the University must receive ethical approval before any data collection commences. Applications may be made on the Research Ethics Online system or via approval forms.

Applicants complete this Stage 1 - Research Ethics Approval Form which includes the Risk Checklist.

For student projects classified as Risk Category 1 (e.g., literature reviews), these can be approved on this Stage 1 - Research Ethics Approval Form by the Research Supervisor.

Applicants whose research studies are classified as Risk Category 2 or 3 must also complete and submit the separate Stage 2 - Research Ethics Approval Form.

Guidance for completion of this form and the application process is provided on pages 3 and 4.

APPLICANT DETAILS	
Your name (if a group project, include all names)	Rebecca Robinson
Faculty or Partner Organisation	Psychology
STATUS	
• Undergraduate student	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
• Taught Postgraduate student	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Research Postgraduate student	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Staff member	<input type="checkbox"/>
• Other (give details)	
IF THIS IS A STUDENT PROJECT	
• Student ID	C3407973
• Course title (eg. BA (Hons) History)	BSc (Hons) Psychology
• Student email	R.ROBINSON@3516.STUDENT.LEEDSBECKETT.AC.UK
• Research Supervisor's name Or Director of Studies' name	KATE MILNES
THE PROJECT/STUDY	
Project /study title	The construction of sexual consent in current
Start date of project	sexual consent campaigns 12/11/15
Expected completion date of project	04/05/2016
Project summary – please give a brief summary of your study (maximum 100 words)	
This project will involve a media text study looking at how the notion of sexual consent is constructed in current sexual consent campaigns running within UK universities.	
CONFIRMATION STATEMENTS	
The results of research should benefit society directly or by generally improving knowledge and understanding. Please tick this box to confirm that your research study has a potential benefit. If you cannot identify a benefit you must discuss your project with your Research Supervisor to help identify one or adapt your proposal so the study will have an identifiable benefit.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Please tick this box to confirm you have read the Research Ethics Policy and the relevant sections of the Research Ethics Procedures and will adhere to these in the conduct of this project.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

RISK CHECKLIST - Please answer ALL the questions in each of the sections below – tick YES or NO

WILL YOUR RESEARCH STUDY.....?		YES	NO
1	Involve direct and/or indirect contact with human participants?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2	Involve analysis of pre-existing data which contains personal or sensitive information not in the public domain?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3	Require permission or consent to conduct?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4	Require permission or consent to publish?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5	Have a risk of compromising confidentiality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6	Have a risk of compromising anonymity?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7	Collect / contain sensitive personal data?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
8	Contain elements which you OR your supervisor are NOT trained to conduct?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
9	Use any information OTHER than that which is freely available in the public domain?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
10	Involve respondents to the internet or other visual/vocal methods where participants may be identified?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
11	Include a financial incentive to participate in the research?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
12	Involve your own students, colleagues or employees?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
13	Take place outside of the country where you are enrolled as a student, or for staff, outside of the UK?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
14	Involve participants who are particularly vulnerable or at risk?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
15	Involve any participants who are unable to give informed consent?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
16	Involve data collection taking place BEFORE informed consent is given?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
17	Involve any deliberate deception or covert data collection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
18	Involve a risk to the researcher or participants beyond that experienced in everyday life?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
19	Cause (or could cause) physical or psychological harm or negative consequences?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
20	Use intrusive or invasive procedures?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
21	Involve a clinical trial?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
22	Involve the possibility of incidental findings related to health status?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

CLASSIFICATION	Tick the box which applies to your project
The following guidance will help classify the risk level of your study If you answered NO to all the above questions, your study is provisionally classified as Risk Category 1 (literature reviews will be Risk Category 1).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If you answered YES to any question from 1-13 and NO to all questions 14-22, your study is provisionally classified as Risk Category 2 .	<input type="checkbox"/>
If you answered YES to any question from 14-22, your study is provisionally classified as Risk Category 3 .	<input type="checkbox"/>

DECLARATION AND SIGNATURE/S	
<i>I confirm that I will undertake this project as detailed above. I understand that I must abide by the terms of the approval and that I may not make any substantial amendments to the project without further approval.</i>	
Signed 	Date 01/11/2015

FOR RISK CATEGORY 1 STUDENT PROJECTS			
Approval from the Research Supervisor or Director of Studies for a student project: <i>I have discussed the ethical issues arising from the project with the student. I approve this project.</i>			
Name 	Signed 	Date	12/11/15

