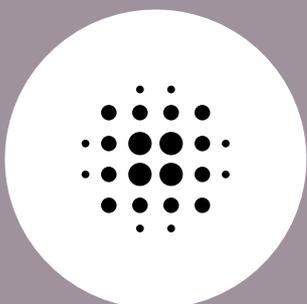


IS CONSENT GOOD FOR WOMEN?

A FEMINIST SYMPOSIUM ON CONSENT CULTURE



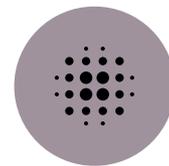
FRIDAY, JUNE 17

Birkbeck College, University of London
Torrington Square, Bloomsbury, WC1E 7HX

**ORGANISED BY DR SARAH CEFAL, DR ALEX DYMCK & DR
TANYA SERISIER**

With thanks to the Department of Media, Communications and Cultural Studies at Goldsmiths, University of London, whose Research Initiatives Fund made this event possible.

IS CONSENT GOOD FOR WOMEN?



A FEMINIST SYMPOSIUM ON CONSENT CULTURE

ORGANISERS



Sarah Cefai is Lecturer in Gender, Sexuality and Cultural Studies at Goldsmiths, University of London, UK. Her research addresses the conceptualisation of affect in the critical epistemologies of feminist, queer and cultural theory, with a focus on ethics and aesthetics of the everyday. Her research has been published in *New Media & Society*, *Cultural Studies* and *European Journal of Cultural Studies*. She is working on a monograph on *Aesthetics of Obligation: Essays on the Feeling of Being Obligated*.



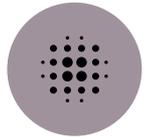
Alex Dymock is a Lecturer in Law at Goldsmiths, University of London. Her most recent research examines the intersection of sexuality and cultures of drug use. Her current project, funded by BA/Leverhulme Trust, investigates how and why people use psychedelics therapeutically outside of clinical settings to process sexual trauma, at a time in which the psychedelics community is experiencing its own #MeToo moment. Historically, she has written primarily on law and pornography, and on BDSM, and has published this work in journals such as *Sexualities*, *Theoretical Criminology*, and *Legal Studies*.



Tanya Serisier is Lecturer in Criminology at Birkbeck College, University of London. She writes and publishes on the cultural politics of sexuality and sexual violence. She has published widely on feminism, sexual assault and survivor politics, including in her critically acclaimed 2018 book, *Speaking Out: Feminism, Rape and Narrative Politics*. Her current research examines conceptions of sexual pleasure and danger under neoliberalism, with a particular focus on the cultural politics of sexual consent.

IS CONSENT GOOD FOR WOMEN?

A FEMINIST SYMPOSIUM ON CONSENT CULTURE



SCHEDULE

Friday, June 17, 09:30 – 18:30

09:30 - 09:50 - REGISTRATION

09:45 - 09:50 - WELCOME - SARAH CEFAL, ALEX DYMOCK, TANYA SERISIER

09:50 - 10:00 - IS CONSENT GOOD FOR WOMEN? OPENING REMARKS ON CONSENT AT THE CONVERGENCE OF LAW / MEDIA - SARAH CEFAL

10:00 - 11:30 - PANEL ONE

Sexual Ethics and the Feminist Possibilities and Critical Vocabularies of Consent

Chair: Tanya Serisier

Tina Sikka - Consent's political vocabularies (VP)

Tanya Horeck & Susan Berridge - Making sex professional: Consent, intimacy coordination, and contemporary television

Catherine M. Roach - "Why isn't sex as good as everyone hypes it up to be?" A student-based take on cliteracy and consent culture

Alexandra Fanghanel - She looked like she was having fun: Spectres of consent in the sex games gone wrong

11:30 - 11:45 - BREAK

11:45 - 13:15 - PANEL TWO

Gender, Sexual Justice, and the Epistemological Framing of Consent

Chair: Alex Dymock

Tanya Palmer - Consensual relations / relational consent?

Cecilia Cienfuegos - Unwanted desires, community, and innocence: Is consent enough to account for the injustices of sexual violence?

Lena Gunnarsson - Feminism and sexual consent: Tensions and contentions (VP)

Sigrid Wallaert - Hermeneutical Otherness: Why women don't always know what they want

13:15 - 14:00 - LUNCH

14:00 - 15:30 - PANEL THREE

Negotiation and Mediation of (Non-Consensual) Sexual and Social Agency

Chair: Tanya Serisier

Maria João Faustino and Nicola Gavey - The failed promise of sexual consent in women's experiences of coercive and unwanted anal sex with men (VP)

Simone Kreutz - The (re-)appropriation of sexual agency in the aftermath of sexual violation

Emily Setty and Jessica Ringrose - Digital sexual violence and the gendered constraints of consent in youth image sharing

Carolina Bandinelli - Dating apps and the platformisation of desire: Towards post-erotic romance?

15:30 - 15:45 - BREAK

15:45 - 17:15 - PANEL FOUR

Labour, Commodification and the Evidence of Experience in Sexualised Data Cultures

Chair: Sarah Cefai

Sophie Whitehead - Everyone's Invited: To what extent can anonymity be a useful tool for pushing consent culture forwards?

Sarah Banet-Weiser - Commodifying Believability: The market for anti-sexual violence

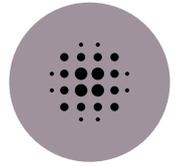
Laurel Rogers & Zarinah Agnew - (Para)sexual entrepreneurship: Agency, power, and prosumer labor on Bimbo TikTok

Rebecca Saunders - Consent culture, pornographic performativity and definitive data cultures

17:15 - 17:25 - CLOSING COMMENTS - ALEX DYMCK & TANYA SERISIER

17:30 - 19:00 - DRINKS AT THE COLLEGE ARMS

IS CONSENT GOOD FOR WOMEN?



A FEMINIST SYMPOSIUM ON CONSENT CULTURE

PANEL 1

10:30 – 11:00

Sexual Ethics and the Feminist Possibilities and Critical Vocabularies of Consent

TINA SIKKA

Consent's political vocabularies (VP)

In this talk, I present and build on the model of sexual ethics laid out in my book, *Sex, Consent, and Restorative Justice: A New Feminist Framework* which I call “a pleasure and care-centred ethic of embodied and relational sexual Otherness.” I begin by explicating its core tenets and assumptions as well discussing its implications for consent as the current sexual socio-cultural and legal norm. In doing so, I present the ethics of care, queering, communication, embodiment and Otherness as possible alternatives to the norms of transaction, transparent communication, and idealised contexts under consent. All of this is discussed in the context of #MeToo and, in particular, the ethics involved in student-teacher relationships in the college/university setting. The case of NYU Professor Avital Ronell will be taken up and situated vis-à-vis recent discussions about autonomy, choice, and sexual agency as it relates to graduate students in higher education.

Dr Tina Sikka (she/her) is currently Reader in Technoscience and Intersectional Justice at the University of Newcastle. Her current research interests include the ways in which gender and culture intersects with science and technology using health and environmental science as case studies. She also has expertise in sexuality studies in the areas of consent, gender based violence, and restorative justice. Her most recent book is *Sex, Consent and Justice: A New Feminist Framework* published by Edinburgh University Press (2021).

TANYA HORECK & SUSAN BERRIDGE

Making sex professional: Consent, intimacy coordination, and contemporary television

Following the rise of #MeToo, there has been a growing recognition of the pervasiveness of gendered abuses of power in the screen sector and issues of consent both on- and off-screen have become increasingly urgent to address. The role of the intimacy coordinator – a professional who works on film and TV productions to advocate for actors and to choreograph intimate scenes, including sex scenes and scenes of sexual violence – has

emerged as vital in this context. Drawing on a series of interviews conducted for our British Academy funded project on the role of intimacy coordination in contemporary UK television, this paper explores the sophisticated ways in which intimacy coordinators conceptualise consent in their working practices. We argue that the transparency and professionalism with which they handle actors' consent off-screen – where consent is figured as both verbal and embodied, and where “no means no”, but “maybe also means no” – opens up possibilities for the exploration of consent and desire on-screen. This is evidenced by Michaela Coel's dedication of her 2021 Leading Actress BAFTA to intimacy coordinator Ita O'Brien, thanking her “for making the space safe, for creating physical, emotional, and professional boundaries so that we can make work about exploitation, loss of respect, about abuse of power, without being exploited or abused in the process” (cited in Clarke, 2021). In reframing the routines and working practices of the screen industry, we argue that intimacy coordinators are engaging in the kind of “capacious” work on sex and sexual cultures called for by Joseph Fischel (2019) in his interrogation of consent. In ensuring professional safety and consent, intimacy coordinators are expanding the possibilities for a more creative exploration of alternative sexualities, desires, and pleasures.

Susan Berridge is Senior Lecturer in Film and Media at the University of Stirling. Her current research is focused on representations of intimacy and consent in contemporary television. She has published in various journals including *Feminist Media Studies*, *European Journal of Cultural Studies* and *Journal of British Cinema and Television*.

Tanya Horeck is Associate Professor of Film & Media at Anglia Ruskin University. She is the author of *Public Rape and Justice on Demand: True Crime in the Digital Streaming Era*. In addition to researching intimacy coordination, she is the co-investigator of an AHRC project about online risks for young people during COVID-19.

CATHERINE M. ROACH

“Why isn't sex as good as everyone hypes it up to be?” A student-based take on cliteracy and consent culture

This presentation reports results from a six-year research project on the “new gender and sexual revolution” unfolding in America. Within the last decade, same-sex marriage became legal, the #MeToo movement exploded, the media learned to celebrate body positivity, and transgender visibility went mainstream. At the heart of this transformation—and the often virulent backlash it provokes—is a culture-wide conversation about sexual justice and consent.

The research reported here used a classroom-based participatory method involving undergraduates in my cross-university Sexuality & Society course. I've taught this course for six years at the University of Alabama (Tuscaloosa, USA), a large public university which, like many, has expanded its diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives and teaches consent-based sexual health, at the same time that it hosts an alcohol-fueled campus party scene often conducive to sexual assault. My students (of all genders) have a lot to say about consent. Full results are being published in *Good Sex: Transforming America through the New Gender and Sexual Revolution* (forthcoming September 2022 from Indiana University Press). This paper presents book findings focused on students' views about consent and under what conditions "consent is good for women."

First, I frame the conference concept of good as ethical and pleasurable, both at the same time, laying out an egalitarian, power-with sex-positivity in which sex can do good and feel good. Second, student responses demonstrate consent is only good for women if we expand the gender scripts: consent cannot be framed as horny men making sure that women as asexual-but-slutty gatekeepers are saying yes. Traditional gender norms limit and damage by making consent hard to ask for, hard to perceive, hard to give, and hard to withhold. Third, consent must be cliterate, grounded in literacy about women's sexual pleasure and able to close the heterosexual orgasm gap.

Professor Catherine M. Roach (she/her) works in gender and American cultural studies at New College, an innovative liberal arts program at the University of Alabama. Originally from Canada, she's held visiting research positions in England, Greece, Canada, and Scotland, including her present appointment as Research Fellow at the University of Edinburgh.

ALEXANDRA FANGHANEL

She looked like she was having fun: Spectres of consent in the sex games gone wrong

There is a contemporary tension within the criminal justice system's relationship with consensual sexual violence, risk, and criminality. Over the past 20 years, there has been a proliferation of criminal cases in England and Wales where women have been killed or injured by men as part of a so-called sex game gone wrong. By analysing a series of criminal cases from the past ten years, this paper will explore the approach that the courts take to policing non-normative, or deviant, sexualities alongside the imperative to act against gendered and sexualised violence. I will demonstrate how consent is figured in cases where sex games have allegedly gone wrong and critically interrogate how knowledges about consent are constructed in the socio-legal imaginary.

This paper will encourage us to consider how to walk the line between promoting (or at least respecting) minority sexual rights, whilst also preventing a) the mobilisation of a consent defence in bad faith and b) gendered and sexualised violence which emerges as part of rape culture.

Alexandra Fanghanel is an Associate Professor in Criminology at the University of Greenwich, UK. She specialises in research about consent, sexuality, security, and public space.

PANEL 2

11:45 – 13:15

Gender, Sexual Justice, and the Epistemological Framing of Consent

TANYA PALMER

Consensual relations / relational consent?

There is a paradox at the heart of the valorisation of sexual consent. Consent is meant to recognise sex as a relational encounter between two (or more) parties who all have a say over whether and how sex takes place. It counters an idea of sex as one-sided, that one person has a right to impose sexual activity on another. Yet, at least as it has been operationalised within sexual offences law, consent foregrounds individual – rather than relational – autonomy. It obfuscates the nested relations of power within which sexual encounters are negotiated.

This paper explores the implications of this individualisation of consent. For example, in the context of a rape investigation and trial it focuses attention on one party – the complainant (C). Did C consent and did C do anything that might have caused a reasonable person to think they were consenting? This is particularly pronounced in the so-called ‘rape-by-deception’ cases. Here, judicial and scholarly analyses focus on what facts C knew, what facts mattered to C, and what facts should matter to C. Meanwhile the operation of power between the complainant and defendant is sidelined. Thus the different power relations between two teenagers, one of whom is gender non-conforming (McNally) and between two adults, one of whom is an undercover police officer sent to surveil the other (Monica), are not given any weight.

As another example, legal responses to sexual violence against children and mentally disordered adults have typically emphasised the victim’s lack of capacity and inherent vulnerability, as opposed to their lack of freedom or power in particular relationship contexts.

The paper posits a reorientation of sexual offences law, and sexual ethics, around a concept of 'freedom to negotiate' in a bid to foreground the power dynamics within which sex takes place.

Dr Tanya Palmer is a Lecturer in Law at the University of Sussex. Her research explores the construction of sexual and domestic abuse within the criminal law. She currently holds a Leverhulme Research Fellowship (Re-negotiating Sex and Sexual Violation in the Criminal Law) and is Co-Investigator on an ESRC project exploring unregulated sperm donation.

CECILIA CIENFUEGOS

Unwanted desires, community, and innocence: Is consent enough to account for the injustices of sexual violence?

As authors such as Shklar, Mate or Fricker have argued, injustice is both a political and an epistemic category, which depends on the interpretative tools at hand to conceptualize an experience as such. That is, unlike Rousseau in his *Emile*, who argued that the demand "There is no right!" is natural (a given instinct that inscribes the subject into the moral and political realms), injustice theorists argue that this cry is not articulated with automatic clarity or "naturalness". Epistemic tools are required to develop this sense of injustice, which is always inscribed in frameworks of oppression that predefine who can name injustices as such, and not as cases of mere bad luck (or, even, as one's own fault). Moreover, for a cry of injustice to be articulated, it requires a listening community that recognizes this cry as intelligible, and that assumes the responsibility that follows this recognition. The sense of injustice is thus a (non-natural and always contested) political capacity.

What this paper proposes is a discussion of the extent to which the paradigm of consent limits the possibility of accounting for the complexities that characterise the experience of injustice that accompanies sexual violence. Taking as starting point two texts written by survivors of childhood abuse (*The Incest Diary*, and *Por qué volvías cada verano*), two main aspects of these limitations will be addressed: the individualized victim-perpetrator model imposed by consent culture (Angel 2021; Alcoff 2018); and the construction of the innocent child as the paradigm of the perfect victim (Fischel 2016, 2019). Hence, this paper unfolds around the following questions: How does the paradigm of consent epistemologically frame the perception of the wrongness of rape? And, ultimately, to what extent does this paradigm participate, deepens or at times obscure the particular experiences of injustice triggered by sexual violence?

Cecilia Cienfuegos is a PhD student at Carlos III University. Her work focuses on issues of sexual violence, political philosophy and epistemology. In 2015 she graduated from the Master in Cultural Theory and Criticism at Carlos III, and in 2018 she graduated cum laude from the Research Master in Gender Studies at Utrecht University.

LENA GUNNARSSON

Feminism and sexual consent: Tensions and contentions (VP)

While sexual consent is overall embraced as a promising concept centrally organizing feminist analysis and struggle against sexual violence, there are significant contentions related to feminist understandings of consent, revolving around the instability of the notion itself. In this presentation I address what I see as central theoretical themes in feminist discussions on consent, with a focus on tensions regarding how to make sense of the idea of voluntariness on which the concept of consent is based, in light of how gendered power structures constrain women's freedom. First, I review how feminist contestations of notions of human autonomy and theorizations of structural power challenge the concept of consent. Second, I address how feminist scholars have drawn attention to the overlaps between normative heterosex and sexual violence, thereby destabilizing the boundary between consensual and non-consensual sex. Third, I consider how the notion of a grey area between consent and non-consent stands in a relationship of tension with concerns in the anti-violence movement to draw clear boundaries around the notion of consent. I conclude by suggesting a way of working towards a deepened culture of consent which embraces the ambiguity of sex, sociality and consent.

Lena Gunnarsson (she/her) is Associate Professor and Senior Lecturer in Gender Studies at Örebro University, Sweden. She has ample research experience in various fields related to sexuality and gender, including sexual consent and sexual violence, commercial sex and intimacy, love studies, and feminist theory.

SIGRID WALLAERT

Hermeneutical Otherness: Why women don't always know what they want

Taking Katherine Angel (2021) as a starting point, as the CFP of this conference invites us to do, situates our current moment in what she calls "consent culture". With cutesy YouTube animations about cups of tea and shareable hashtags like #ConsentIsEverything, the message is clear: the only moral standard needed in sexual relationships is consent. Except... is it? in *Tomorrow Sex Will be Good Again* (2021), Angel problematizes the monopoly consent holds over sexual morality. She points out that at the centre of consent culture lies the expectation that women must speak up about what they want. But therefore, and this is where it gets tricky, they are also expected to know what exactly they want. This might be easy when it comes to tea, but not so much when it comes to sex. Here, I want to introduce Miranda Fricker's (2007) concept of hermeneutical injustice to make sense of the trickiness Angel points at. Why is it so hard for women to know what they want when it comes to sex? I argue that because of women's generally disadvantaged position regarding social power, they simply do not have access to the necessary hermeneutical resources to fully make sense of their social experiences, including sexual ones. Here, the

issue is not just that women struggle to make intelligible what they want to others, but also to themselves. Additionally, hermeneutical tools exist largely for experiences which are seen as normal. But, following (among others) Haslanger (2014), there are two senses of that word: either statistical or normative. In the case of women's sexual experiences, the normality is normative, and the normality is male. Women are treated as Other, which means they don't get sufficient hermeneutical resources to understand themselves. This makes consent culture extra tricky, and also dangerous.

Sigrid Wallaert (she/her) is a PhD researcher in Philosophy at Ghent University, Belgium, where she previously completed a master's and research master's degree in the same subject. Her work looks at feminist rage through the lens of epistemic injustice, and highlights the potential productive qualities this type of anger can have.

PANEL 3

14:00 – 15:30

Negotiation and Mediation of (Non-Consensual) Sexual and Social Agency

MARIA JOÃO FAUSTINO AND NICOLA GAVEY

The failed promise of sexual consent in women's experiences of coercive and unwanted anal sex with men (VP)

In this paper we critically interrogate the concept of sexual consent in relation to women's experiences of coerced and unwanted heterosexual anal sex. Among the 18 women we interviewed, some clearly labelled their experiences of unwanted anal sex with men as nonconsensual. Many others, however, suggested that they had, in some way, consented. We identified two main discursive patterns in the ways that women discussed consent in these contexts: one that equated it with capitulation, mostly associated with experiences of verbal pressure, and another that reduced consent to a lack of resistance to unwanted and unexpected anal penetration. Through these women's accounts it was clear that consent and coercion are not mutually exclusive. Overall, consent was scripted as a gendered interaction, premised on men's sexual entitlement and women's roles as sexual caretakers and gatekeepers. These gendered dynamics underpinned even the two cases in which women were pressured to anally penetrate their male partners. We argue that women's accounts and reflections on consent illuminate structural fragilities in the very concept of sexual consent as a marker of ethical sex. Consent was substantively distinct from sexual enthusiasm and mutuality. We conclude that it fails in its promise to protect women against sex that is coercive, hurtful and unethical.

Maria João Faustino is a PhD student in the Department of Psychology at the University of Auckland. Her doctoral research focuses on the ongoing mutations in heterosexual repertoires and their coercive and gendered dynamics.

SIMONE KREUTZ

The (re-)appropriation of sexual agency in the aftermath of sexual violation

The article discusses the (re-)appropriation of sexual agency after the experience of sexual violation. It utilizes the term 'sexual violation' (Alcoff 2018) instead of sexualized violence to better highlight the role of sexual agency on the part of the victim. It focuses on the time span in which the experience is not yet identified as an act of sexual violation or marked by ambivalence on the part of the victim. Three aspects are thereby central for the discussion: Firstly, the role of unconsciousness/ambivalence regarding the experience of sexual violation. Secondly, the effect on desire and consent as means to define 'just sex' (Gavey 2005) in the aftermath of sexual violation. Thirdly, the importance of sexual agency for further social/sexual interactions. It builds upon the work of Cahill (2016), who identifies the (partly) overcoming of sexual agency as central for sexual violation. The article aims to expand this focus on the time span following the act of sexual violation by discussing a specific reaction to it, namely a kind of 're-enactment' of the event by the victim. It argues that this behaviour might lead to potential conflicts in the aftermath of sexual violation, specifically towards the common understanding of consent and desire. The article therefore recommends a focus on sexual agency to better understand the situation of the victim, viewing the (re-)appropriation of sexual agency as central for the 'healing process' and the victim's further participation in social/sexual interactions.

Simone Kreutz (she/her) works as a research associate at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. She has a master in political science and is currently working on her PhD project regarding collective accountability in cases of sexualized violence. Her areas of interest include sexualized violence, critical theory as well as transformative justice/community accountability.

EMILY SETTY AND JESSICA RINGROSE

Digital sexual violence and the gendered constraints of consent in youth image sharing

This presentation will discuss two qualitative studies exploring youth intimate image sharing, conducted with 191 British young people over a four-year period. We will explore a discursive absence of consent in the data and discuss how image sharing occurs within inequitable gendered cultures of normalised online sexual harassment and abuse. We will describe the technological affordances that create temporal and material endurance of images and explore how these affordances compromise consent in digital contexts in gender-specific ways. We will discuss the pressure on girls to send nudes and how boys' desire for girls' nudes also drives transactional, uninvited "dick pics." We will then consider the non-consensual sharing of images of girls and boys and demonstrate how the implications are often worse and longer lasting for girls. We will show how the increased risk of non-consensual sharing of girls' nudes led to heightened responsabilisation of girls for

the life of their images, as well as long-lasting feelings of regret and shame for creating and sending nude images of their bodies. We argue for a change in educational messages around sexual consent to explicitly address cultures of normalised abuse that surround the life of images in digital contexts.

Emily Setty is a Lecturer in Criminology at the University of Surrey, specialising in young people's sex and relationship cultures. Emily undertakes qualitative research with young people to understand the risks and harms that unfold for young people in digital and non-digital contexts and works with policy and practice stakeholders to implement changes to how they seek to prevent and respond to the challenges and issues that young people face. Emily is presenting on behalf also of Professor Ringrose, UCL, and Dr Kaitlyn Regehr, University of Kent.

CAROLINA BANDINELLI

Dating apps and the platformisation of desire: Towards post-erotic romance?

In the last decade, digital media have deeply transformed the technosocial landscape of love and sex. In particular, dating apps have become mainstream technologies of desire, reaching millions of users worldwide and contributing to the ethical and aesthetic (re)codification of romance. This paper explores this process from a feminist perspective, reflecting on women's experience of dating apps in light of the current debates on risk, trust and consent. Drawing on qualitative interviews, focus groups and ethnographic observation, conducted over five years in Italy and in the UK, I investigate how gendered relationships are experienced, remediated and renegotiated by heterosexual and queer women as part of the process of platformisation of desire. In so doing, I extrapolate some elements of what I tentatively call post-erotic culture of romance, an emerging structure of feeling which stems at the crossroad of two interrelated threads: namely, the exhaustion of desire, suffocated by the demand to enjoy an (often painful) romantic and sexual life, and the will to articulate a new moral to 'repair' love and sex from the tears of gendered oppression and commodification.

Carolina Bandinelli (she/her) is Associate Professor in Media and Creative Industries at Warwick's Centre for Media Cultural and Policy Studies. Her research is concerned with emerging forms of subjectivity and sociality in the digital culture industries, Her monograph *Social entrepreneurship and Neoliberalism: Making Money While Doing Good*, is published by Rowman and Littlefield International (2020). At present, she is researching digital cultures of love.

*Labour, Commodification and the Evidence of Experience in Sexualised Data Cultures***SOPHIE WHITEHEAD**

Everyone's Invited: To what extent can anonymity be a useful tool for pushing consent culture forwards?

'Everyone's Invited' is an anonymous online platform started in 2020, by the then 22-year-old Soma Sara, as a space 'for survivors to share their stories'. The platform 'went viral' in March 2021, receiving testimonies about experiences of sexual harm from people – often, but not exclusively, young women – all over the country. So far, the site has received over 50,000 testimonies. Taking inspiration from both Katherine Angel's (2021) writing on the links between consent culture and postfeminist sensibilities which frame feminism through the lens of the individual, and from Tanya Serisier's (2018) work on the politics of speaking out, this presentation puts forward the idea that an anonymous, collective platform for testimony has scope to subvert the pitfalls of narrative politics, consent culture, and failing criminal justice responses to sexual harm. This is because it is able to function as a form of 'kaleidoscopic justice', looking beyond individual cases, and instead centring connectedness and victim-survivor voice, without inadvertently favouring certain voices over others (McGlynn & Westmarland, 2019). Taking the form of a discussion, this presentation asks what is the role of anonymity and shared testimony in the case of Everyone's Invited? What are the possibilities and limitations of anonymity as a tool for moving beyond consent culture, carceral feminism, and the impotent and hierarchical tendencies of personal narrative politics?

Sophie Whitehead is a second year PhD student in the Department of Digital Humanities at King's College London, where she's researching the conditions and possibilities of the Everyone's Invited platform against rape culture. Alongside this, she works with the charity School of Sexuality Education to design and deliver consent workshops in secondary schools.

SARAH BANET-WEISER

Commodifying believability: The market for anti-sexual violence

In this talk, I analyse the market for anti-sexual violence products and services which has boomed with the spectacular visibility of #MeToo. With roots in a much longer history of feminist markets and marketized feminisms, the current market for anti-sexual violence is one that capitalizes on the popularity of feminist discourses whilst simultaneously enshrining, through commodification, some of the prevailing assumptions about truth,

belief, and sexual politics that I argue are constitutive of a “post-truth” framing of both women’s speech and of sexual harm as endemically doubtful—and so, too, of rape culture. Rather than seeing the unbelievability of women’s testimonies as a cultural and political problem, the anti-sexual violence market—much like mainstream responses to the problems of mis/disinformation and post-truth—positions it as a technological one. Looking at consent and bystander apps as well as wearable tech, I call into question a market that capitalizes on women’s fear while implicitly promising that if only women can furnish “more” and “better” evidence of their experiences of sexual violence and harm, the economy of believability will somehow be reconfigured in their favour. In eschewing the politics of belief and its relationship to the horizon of sexual justice, these evidentiary technologies re-enshrine the idea that women’s testimonies cannot and should not, on their own, count as evidence of sexual harms. They are, in other words, responses to the unbelievability of women that nonetheless leave that unbelievability intact as a source of market value.

Sarah Banet-Weiser is joint Professor of Media and Communication at the Annenberg Schools for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania and the University of Southern California. She is the author of *Authentic™: The Politics of Ambivalence in a Brand Culture* (2012), and *Empowered: Popular Feminism and Popular Misogyny* (2018), among others. She is currently, along with Kathryn Higgins, completing a new book titled *Believability: Sexual Violence, Media and the Politics of Doubt* (forthcoming, Polity Press).

LAUREL ROGERS & ZARINAH AGNEW

(Para)sexual entrepreneurship: Agency, power, and prosumer labor on Bimbo TikTok

As (para)sexual content creation claims an increasingly larger share of the attention economy, there is an attendant need for scholarship exploring the particular place of sexualized “prosumer” labor—the interrelated process of production and consumption—on social media and its role in re-making gendered social and sexual relations. Women’s participation in the so-called “sexualization of culture” remains a contentious area in feminist theory, reanimating long-standing points of tension related to questions of agency and power. Our contribution to this debate is an analysis of the complexities and contradictions of contemporary postfeminist media cultures through prosumer labor on “Bimbo TikTok”. As a way of framing our inquiry, we employ Laura Harvey and Rosalind Gill’s concept of “sexual entrepreneurship”, which allows for nuanced analyses of enacting agency and resistance within the discursive constraints of gender identities and mediated subjectivities under neoliberal capitalism. We further develop the notion of “sexual entrepreneurship” by examining the interconnection between the increasing effort to manage social consumption and the changing division of labor, and the reification of subjectivity and desire by both.

Laurel Rogers (she/her) is a Ph.D. student in the Department of Media, Communications and Cultural Studies at Goldsmiths University. Her research explores the sexual division of labor in social media production.

Dr Zarinah Agnew is a neuroscientist, and now conducts social and behavioral science in naturalistic settings. They are the founder of the Alternative Justices project—a decentralised feminist collective that serves to provide alternatives to carceral systems in the case of domestic violence, rape & sexual assault.

REBECCA SAUNDERS

Consent culture, pornographic performativity and definitive data cultures

This paper considers the relationship between contemporary consent culture and heteronormative pornographic film in relation to concepts of performance; affective and physical labour; and the categorical status of desire (Angel). It considers the 'enthusiastic consent model' in relation to pornography's construction of consent as hyperbolic and unproblematic and considers gestural, (non)verbal and affective ways of communicating consent as part of a learned and labour-intensive postfeminist performance. The notion of consent as definitive is linked to pornography's representation of 'good' sex as smooth and linear, as well as to datafied sexual technologies such as sex tracking apps, smart vibrators and smart condoms, which normalise the idea of sex and desire as numerical processes. Women's consent becomes a similarly categorical element designed to produce a perfect sexual encounter: without the awkwardness and hesitancy of negotiations and refusals that would 'ruin' the performance or imply the man is undesired or not 'cliterate'. The link between sexual data cultures and the notion of consent as uncomplicated and finite is explored in relation to producing the conditions for male sexual violence because it posits a single, unproblematic and unidirectional instance of consent as capable of eradicating deeply historically embedded gender inequalities. Lastly, this paper explores the idea of performance as a reflexive and interior consent for women themselves. Performances of consent allow a woman to demonstrate to herself that she *is* enjoying sex, that she has agency when she may not and, crucially, that she is safe. The categorical status of consent is useful for women too, to reassure themselves in the moment that they are not victims of sexual violence. This 'structure of feeling' gives way later to ambiguity, anger, guilt and resentment which, because of the falsity of consent's definitive logic, become irretrievably integrated into consent's affect.

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