Sex, Power and Consent

Youth culture and the unwritten rules

Sex, Power and Consent: Youth culture and the unwritten rules draws on the real world stories and experiences of young women and young men – as told in their own words – regarding love, sex, relationships and negotiating consent. Judicious reference to feminist and sociological theory underpins explicit connections between young people's lived experience and current international debates. Issues surrounding youth sex within popular culture, sexuality education and sexual violence prevention are thoroughly explored.

In a clear, incisive and eminently readable manner, Anastasia Powell develops a compelling framework for understanding the 'unwritten rules' and the gendered power relations in which sexual negotiations take place. Ultimately *Sex, Power and Consent* provides practical strategies for young people, and those working with them, toward the prevention of sexual violence.

Anastasia Powell is Lecturer in Sociology in the School of Social Sciences at La Trobe University.

Sex, Power and Consent

Youth culture and the unwritten rules

Anastasia Powell



Cambridge University Press	
978-0-521-14429-2 - Sex, Power and Consent: Youth Culture and the U	Unwritten Rules
Anastasia Powell	
Frontmatter	
More information	

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi, Dubai, Tokyo, Mexico City

Cambridge University Press 477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521144292

© Anastasia Powell 2010

This publication is copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2010

Cover design by Marianna Berek-Lewis Typeset by Aptara Corp. Printed in Australia by BPA

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

National Library of Australia Cataloguing in Publication data Powell, Anastasia. Sex, power and consent: youth culture and the unwritten rules / Anastasia Powell. ISBN 9780521144292 Includes index. Bibliography. Generation Y-social life and customs. Generation Y-Attitudes. Generation Y-Violence. Man-woman relationships. Sex difference (Psychology). 305.2

ISBN 978-0-521-14429-2 paperback

Reproduction and communication for educational purposes

The Australian *Copyright Act 1968* (the Act) allows a maximum of one chapter or 10% of the pages of this work, whichever is the greater, to be reproduced and/or communicated by any educational institution for its educational purposes provided that the educational institution (or the body that administers it) has given a remuneration notice to Copyright Agency Limited (CAL) under the Act.

For details of the CAL licence for educational institutions contact:

Copyright Agency Limited Level 15, 233 Castlereagh Street Sydney NSW 2000 Telephone: (02) 9394 7600 Facsimile: (02) 9394 7601 E-mail: info@copyright.com.au

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Cambridge University Pre	ess						
978-0-521-14429-2 - Sex,	Power and	Consent:	Youth	Culture	and t	he Unwritten	Rules
Anastasia Powell							
Frontmatter							
More information							

Contents

Li	st of tables and boxes	<i>page</i> vii
A	knowledgements	ix
1	Introduction: Rewriting the rules?	1
2	Generation Y: Problematic representations of youth and sex	10
3	Sex: The 'new' rules of engagement	29
4	Power: Framing sexual violence in young people's	
	everyday encounters	55
5	Consent: Negotiating consensual sex	86
6	Technology: Unauthorised sexual images and sexual violence	106
7	Education: Sex, power and consent in schools	126
8	Prevention: Policy, programs and practical strategies	154
9	Conclusion: Re-writing the rules and preventing sexual violence	173
Aj	ppendix	177
Bi	bliography	187
In	dex	207

v

Tables and boxes

TABLES

Table 7.1	Example student projects in curriculum areas other than	
	sexuality education page	e 142
Table 7.2	Features of effective school-based sexual violence preventions	144
Table 8.1	Examples of prevention strategies for sexual violence	156

BOXES

Box 5.1	Meaning of consent	90
Box 5.2	Jury directions on the accused's awareness of consent	91
Box 6.1	Definition of cyberstalking	117
Box 8.1	NASASV national standards for the primary prevention of sexual assault through education	161
Box A.1	Focus group discussion questions	181
Box A.2	In-depth interview questions	184

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to many people for their support and assistance throughout the development of this book and the research upon which it is based. Special thanks go to Matthew Weston, who has been a steady source of reassurance throughout the research and writing processes. I also wish to thank Adam Sutton, Fiona Haines and Suellen Murray who, each in their own way, have provided the mentorship and encouragement that has been so integral to completing the research project and this resulting book. Thank you also to many friends and colleagues who have supported me along the way, including staff in the School of Social Sciences at La Trobe University who have provided critical comment and assisted me to develop my ideas for *Sex, power and consent: Youth culture and the unwritten rules.*

The article upon which some parts of Chapter 6 are based appeared as 'Configuring consent: Emerging technologies, unauthorised sexual images and sexual assault' in the *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Criminol*ogy, and I would like to extend my thanks to the editor and reviewers who provided comment on that initial piece of work. I would also particularly like to thank Kyja Noack-Lundberg for her research assistance and diligent attention to detail. Thank you to Cambridge University Press, in particular Zoe Hamilton and Debbie Lee, who have demonstrated such commitment to this book, and to my editor, Helena Bond, whose expertise and astute advice have been so valuable throughout the final stages of production.

Most of all, thank you to the young women and men who have shared their perspectives and experiences with me. This book would not have been possible without your generous contributions of time and openness. I hope that I have done justice to your struggles and your strengths.