

on Bein^g
unenthusiastic
about
enthusiastic
cOⁿseNt

★

CONSENT IS A BIT LIKE
MAGIC - IT TURNS WHAT WAS
PREVIOUSLY FORBIDDEN INTO
ALLOWED SOMETHING
OR EVEN

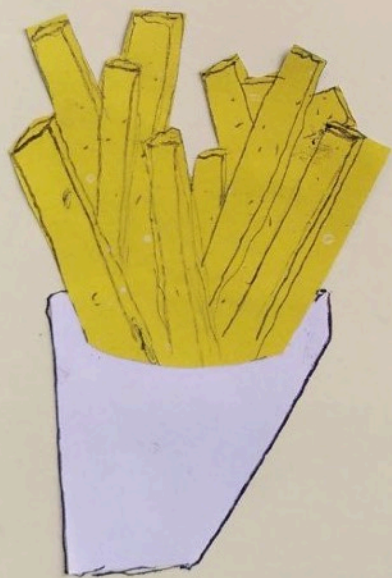


DESIRED!

* * * * *

BUT HOW CAN WE KNOW THAT
THE CONSENT GIVEN IS
VALID - REAL! - CONSENT?

PROGRESSIVE SEX POSITIVE
EDUCATION AT TIMES
OUTLINES THE PARA-
METERS OF GOOD
VALID CONSENT BY
USING THE ACRONYM



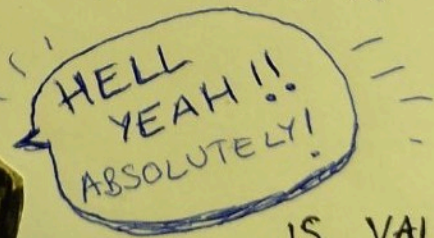
F → freely given
R → reversible
I → informed
E → enthusiastic
S → specific

Coerced consent is no valid consent.
Saying "Yes" to one thing doesn't
mean affirming other things automatically.
Hiding important facts about the
action the person is consenting to
devalues the given consent.
And when it comes to sex we
hope the person is not only
agreeing to the sex, but that they
actually want the sex they
are agreeing to. Consent means
willingness, but willingness doesn't
mean wanting. Doesn't mean
being eager to do the thing.
That's why **ENTHUSIASTIC CONSENT**
came in.

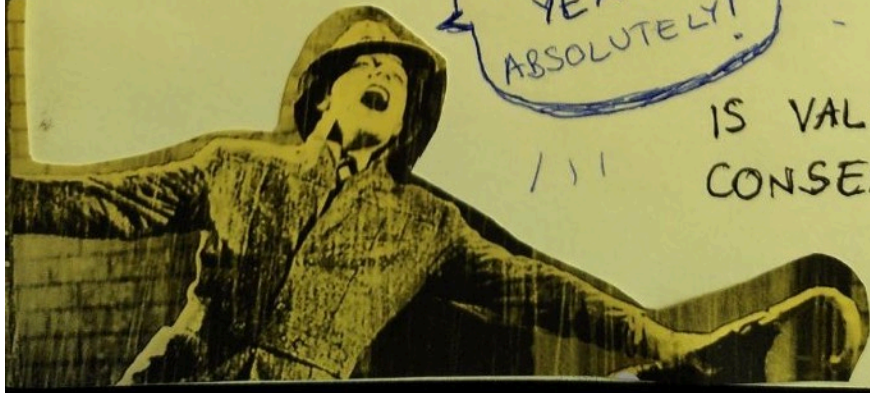
CONSENT & SEX ARE
COMPLICATED - OR RATHER:
COMPLEX



SO DID WE SOLVE
THE RIDDLE BY POINTING TO
THE FACT THAT ONLY A



IS VALID
CONSENT?



Well...

Let's Shed

Some light on

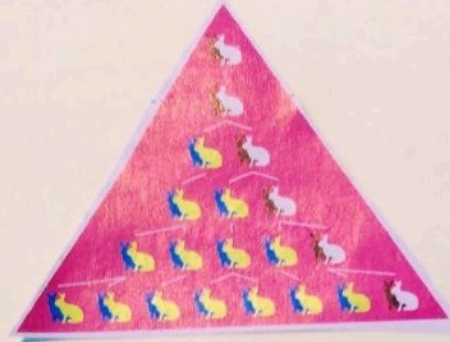


The limits and pitfalls
with so called enthusiastic
consent that come

1

ENTHUSIASM IS NOT EQUALLY ACCESSIBLE FOR EVERYBODY.

PEOPLE WHO IDENTIFY AS BEING ON THE ASEXUAL SPECTRUM FOR EXAMPLE, NOT DESIRING PEOPLE SEXUALLY WILL NEVER LEAD TO ENTHUSIASTIC CONSENT. SOME ACES DO HAVE SEX, BUT OUT OF OTHER - BUT EQUALLY VALID - REASONS, THAN BECAUSE THEY ARE HYPED TO HAVE SEX. MAYBE THEY DO IT OUT OF CURIOSITY, MAYBE TO DO THEIR PARTNERS A FAVOUR.




IF YOU DO SEX BECAUSE YOU WANT TO MAKE A BABY YOU MIGHT HAVE SEX AS A MEANS TO THAT END.

SEX CAN THEN LOOK QUITE MANAGED - DOING IT WHEN YOU ARE FERTILE ETC. AND THIS MIGHT NOT ALWAYS CORRELATE WITH ENTHUSIASM.

STILL YOU CAN CONSENT TO THIS SEX BECAUSE YOU KNOW WHY YOU DO IT AND YOU FULLY AFFIRM THE POSSIBLE OUTCOME.

IN ORDER TO DO THEIR JOB SAFELY
SEX WORKERS ARE NOT SUPPORTED
BY A FRAMEWORK OF ENTHUSIASTIC
CONSENT.

A film strip with a black box containing text. The film strip shows a scene with people in white dresses and a large yellow and pink banner. The text in the black box is:

SUCK
DICK.
EAT
PUSSY.
POLE
DANCE.

AS WITH ANY OTHER JOB WE MIGHT
AT TIMES BE ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT
OUR TASKS. AT TIMES NOT. IT SHOULD
NOT BE A NECESSARY MEANS.

2)

SEX AS AN
AMBIVALENT OR
AMBIGUOUS
MATTER

- AND THE MANY FEELINGS
AND REASONS ACCOMPANYING
IT

Maybe you already noticed something in #1) → even if you are not trying to procreate at the moment, are not a sex worker and not asexual you might have had similar experiences outside the enthusiastic consent-framework that were still consensual - meaning they were not assault, not coerced, not manipulated. They were just accompanied by something else than a clear

JA!
OH JA!
OH JAAA!

MAYBE IT WAS MORE SHY.
MAYBE BECAUSE YOUR DESIRE IS MORE RESPONSIVE. MORE A JOURNEY. MAYBE DESIRE DID NOT STRUCK YOU LIKE A LIGHTNING BOLT SO SAYING "LET'S TRY AND SEE WHERE WE GO" FELT MORE ACCURATE THAN "FUCK YEAH!"



YOUR FEELINGS
CAN BE MORE
TENDER OR
MIXED THAN
A CLEAR
"YES!"

WHAT
COULD
THEN BE
THE FACTORS
TELLING YOU
YOU STILL
WANT TO
KEEP GOING?

What makes
you feel safe?
Knowing that you can
repair possible ruptures
with your (play-)
partner? Feeling
respected by them?
Having coping
strategies?

Feeling
comfortable
enough to relax
into the unknown
and into the
messiness?

AT TIMES DESIRE FEELS
LIKE CONTRADICTING FORCES.
"YES" & "NO" AT THE SAME
TIME



AND THE PROBLEM
OF OVEREMPHASIZING
ENTHUSIASM THEN
CAN LEAD TO ...

3: PERFORMING / FAKING ENTHUSIASM

You know the other person vowed to have sex only when their "partner" showed enthusiastic consent? You have mixed feelings but don't want the interaction to end? So instead of communicating your manifold feelings you work hard on exaggerating that you really, really want this ...



Or the other way around
- as the person initiating sex you could (consciously or subconsciously) focus more on trying to get an enthusiastic "yes" by exaggerating how great your offer is...



IN ANY WAY THE CONSENT IS STUCK IN A GATEKEEPING-LOGIC WHERE YOU JUST HAVE TO USE THE RIGHT WAY OF MAKING THE OTHER CONSENT OR GIVE CONSENT IN ORDER TO FINALLY OPEN THE DOOR TO SEX

#4

DOES ENTHUSIASTICALLY
WANTING SOMETHING
AUTOMATICALLY MAKE
IT BETTER OR
UNQUESTIONABLE?

AND IS A NONENTHUSIASTIC
FEELING AUTOMATICALLY AN
INDICATOR THAT THE THING
IS BAD?



DO WE ALWAYS WANT WHAT WE SHOULD?

Capitalism for example works because
it can feed our desires and trigger
enthusiasm. We enthusiastically consent
to buy all kind of shit. Does it make
us flourish / happy / nourished / better
people? What about the things we
don't enthusiastically consent to?
Like all the self-care that goes beyond
bubble baths: protesting, going to therapy,
facing our fears, cleaning our room...



The things we want - our will - is always already influenced by our culture, education, society, peers etc. etc. It takes more than enthusiasm to find out if our desire is more

true to us
or to the things
we have
incorporated -
without consent.

Why do we
want what
we want?

RÉSUMÉ

Receiving an enthusiastic
"Yes!!" feels great!

But it should not be the only or best factor to be taken into account when creating an ethical sexual culture. But what are the alternatives? Maybe to understand consent as a COLLABORATION. We go on a journey together in our encounter, where the outcome is not entirely clear. But we know that everybody involved wants to be here. With all of their feelings.

Knowing about your & the other's INTENTIONS can help. Why do you want to have sex (with this person)?

Knowing about the relationship-shaping function of sex & consent can help. Your actions will influence each other. Does this come with care & compassion?

or is the other just a means to an end to get your needs met?