Article

One Direction real person fiction on Wattpad.com: A textual analysis of sexual consent

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Abstract
This study focuses on the dominant scripts for sexual consent represented in popular fictional stories of celebrities written by their female fans. A textual analysis was performed on a subset of the most read real person fiction (RPF) stories—a type of fanfiction— about the popular boy band One Direction. Stories were publicly available from an online fiction-writing platform with an extensive user base of teenage girls and young women. Verbal negotiations of sexual consent were frequently featured in these stories. However, several themes emerged to blur clear distinctions between the presence and lack of consent: hesitance or unease for sexual interactions, assumption of a partner's sexual consent, unclear identification of sexual assault, language of attack or aggression to describe sexual interactions, and normalization of sexual actions that surprise a partner. A number of rape myths were also prevalent throughout the stories. The implications of these scripts for One Direction fans and for sexual scripting theory are discussed.

'He what?! And you said no?' She doesn't let me answer before she continues- but yeah I guess. 'You know I read somewhere that in Sweden, at the point where a girl

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says no and the man keeps touching her it's rape, even though he doesn't *actually* rape her ... It's the law!'

The quote above comes from a real person fiction (RPF) story—a type of fanfiction dedicated to celebrities rather than fictional characters—written about a member of the wildly popular English-Irish boy band One Direction (1D). In this excerpt, the female protagonist and her friend discuss the conduct of the band member at a party the previous night. This fictionalized account of his behavior—groping the protagonist with excessive force as they kissed, her multiple attempts to fend him off—presents a nuanced conceptualization of consent. The friend's dialogue expresses concern over the severity of the band member's behavior. Even though he didn't "*actually* rape her," it resonates with something she's learned; in another country, his actions would be considered illegal. The protagonist brushes off her friend's concerns, deciding the band member's conduct wasn't "*that* bad" and instead the result of his drug-induced haze. When he apologizes later, she forgives him.

This 92-chapter story has attracted over 21.9 million reads on Wattpad.com, an online fiction-writing platform with an extensive user base of teenage girls and young women; 80% of the site's users are female and under the age of 25 (Korobkova & Black, 2014). This audience is also international: although 77% of the site's stories are written in English, around 63% of the site's users are registered outside of North America (Wattpad, 2014). It is also common practice for readers to translate popular 1D fanfictions in different languages, which have included German, Turkish, Dutch, and Tagalog (Wattpad, 2014). Some of the most popular 1D RPF stories published on Wattpad.com have exceeded 100 million reads.

This article presents the findings of a textual analysis exploring the complexity of sexual consent within heterosexual sexual encounters in 1D RPF stories on Wattpad.com. The themes in this particular story occur on a spectrum of values about consent present in 1D RPF on Wattpad.com. Some stories describe the band members as sexually aggressive or describe fictional sexual encounters with a band member in which consent is unclear. Some convey scenes of negotiated sexual consent, and still others identify and condemn rape. Given these stories' tremendous readerships, it seems clear that a range of ideals about sexual relationships is reaching a sizeable audience of young women and girls, and, thus, are worthy of scrutiny. The wide circulation of stories that include rape and violent sexual interactions among young females raises questions of social import—on one hand, participants in this community might be perpetuating the idealization of abusive sexual relationships and rape in their storytelling. On the other hand, writers and readers might be expressing nuanced understandings of sexual consent.

The present study analyzes the dominant sexual scripts regarding sexual consent in heterosexual sexual encounters within the 1D RPF community on Wattpad. 1D fans were chosen as the focus of this study because they represent the most active fan group on Wattpad, accounting for a quarter of the site's 150 most popular

authors (Ramdarshan Bold, 2016). The findings of this textual analysis contribute to scholarship on youth sexualities by providing detailed data about the sexual scripts produced by young female fanfiction writers, as well as raising important questions for future research of sexual scripts.

Sexual scripts

Originally conceptualized by Simon and Gagnon (1986), sexual scripting theory posits that people tend to interpret others' actions and model their own behavior according to internalized scripts, which are "the cognitive models that people use to guide and evaluate social and sexual interactions" (Rose & Frieze, 1993, p. 499). According to this theory, all human behavior, including sex, is imbued with symbolic meaning and unfolds in accordance with ritualized scripts. Elements of scripts include: which sexual behaviors are enacted, how they are enacted, by whom they are enacted, in what order they are enacted, what other activities they are enacted in conjunction with, and during which situations they should be enacted (Beres, 2014).

As this study focuses on the content of scripts for sexual consent depicted in 1D RPF, interpretation of these scripts is informed by an understanding of the different levels of script development. Individuals learn and internalize scripts at the cultural, interpersonal, and intrapsychic levels. Cultural scripts involve societally-enforced gender roles (Beres, 2014; Simon & Gagnon, 1986), interpersonal scripts are obtained through socialization (Beres, 2014), and intrapsychic sexual scripts are internal dialogues that individuals cognitively rehearse in anticipation of employing interpersonal scripts, involving sexual attitudes, identities, and fantasies (Beres, 2014; Simon & Gagnon, 1986). Simon and Gagnon's original model posits that cultural, interpersonal, and intrapsychic scripts are necessary components of sexual behavior, although each level's impact varies contextually.

However, critiques of sexual scripting have noted the theory's over-reliance on individual cognitions and failure to address the social context within which scripts are constructed and communicated (Frith & Kitzinger, 2001). Critics emphasize that, when asked to describe one's sexual scripts, individuals' responses are tailored to their social context, functioning as a form of self-presentation (Frith & Kitzinger, 2001). They argue that analyses of research participants' reported sexual scripts may say more about the cultural norms they perceive to be at play than their actual intrapsychic scripts. This perspective informs the present manuscript's interpretation of the scripts for sexual consent in 1D RPF stories. These scripts may contain elements of authors' intrapsychic scripts, but they should not be interpreted as a direct or holistic representation of them. Rather, they represent constructions of scripts that are tailored for a specific cultural context. To contextualize the dominant scripts for sexual consent presented in 1D RPF, the following section reviews existing knowledge about scripts for sexual consent.

Sexual scripts for (non)consent

While generally understood to indicate agreement for sex, conceptualizations of sexual consent are inconsistent across academic literatures (Beres, 2007). Muehlenhard et al. (2016) synthesized some of these varied approaches to defining consent, noting conflicting standards, such as: inferred consent versus verbal communication of consent; consenting to sex versus wanting to have sex; consent as a discrete event versus consent as a continuous process; and assumed consent until refusal ("no" means no but silence means yes) versus affirmative consent (only "yes" means yes). Similarly, Muehlenhard and Peterson (2005) noted how the relationship between sexual desire and sexual consent can involve ambivalence, outlining a model that includes consensual unwanted sex and nonconsensual but wanted sex. Unsurprisingly, research has documented varying understandings of sexual consent among college students. While they described affirmative or verbal consent as the best way to communicate sexual consent, they reported using passive methods of communicating consent, like nonresistance to sexual activity, in practice (Muehlenhard et al., 2016).

Given the wide range of conceptualizations of sexual consent provided by scholars and in data about young people's real-life experiences, this study avoids evaluating 1D RPF with a single definition of sexual consent. Rather, it aims to describe if and how sexual consent is depicted within this community and to compare these portrayals of consent with the varying definitions of consent.

Also of importance, research critical of postfeminism points to an interrelationship between scripts for sexual consent and rape myths. Postfeminist ideologies insist that women have complete agency over their sexual encounters, but simultaneously deny the existence of gendered power structures that contribute to sexual violence and thus diminish women's sexual agency (Burkett & Hamilton, 2012; Powell, 2010). Researchers have found that, in response to this cognitive dissonance, some women adopt rape myth beliefs, like victim blaming, to maintain sexual scripts in which they wield complete agency over their ability to grant or deny sexual consent (Burkett & Hamilton, 2012). Ryan (2011) further explicates the connection between rape myths and sexual scripts, describing how rape myths support sexual scripts that rationalize male sexual aggression and allow women to distance themselves from victim labels and perceived risk of experiencing sexual violence. Therefore, this paper also explores the presence of rape myths within 1D RPF stories.

Rape myths

Rape myths are defined as "attitudes and beliefs that are generally false but widely and persistently held, and that serve to deny and justify male sexual aggression against women" (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994, p. 134). Academic literature has identified a number of popular rape myths. For example, several myths intersect to construct a narrow conceptualization of rape, including beliefs that rape must

involve violence (Payne et al., 1999) and only consists of penile-vaginal intercourse, since digital and oral penetration are not considered severe enough to constitute rape (Peterson & Muehlenhard, 2004), and indeed, in some states do satisfy the legal description of rape. A number of myths blame victims for their rape, like faulting the victim for being intoxicated, dressing provocatively, or "leading men on" (McMahon, 2007; Payne et al., 1999). Other rape myths blame rape on genuine miscommunication between sexual partners, sometimes at the fault of the victim for not communicating clearly enough (O'Byrne et al., 2008; Payne et al., 1999). Conversely, "token resistance" myths claim that women do not mean "no" when they verbally refuse sex (Muehlenhard & Peterson, 2005). Rape myths also claim that women experience pleasure or sexual arousal during rape (Ohbuchi et al., 1994) and excuse sexual violence by invoking discourses about men's strong desire for sex and inability to control themselves once aroused (Payne et al., 1999).

Research has documented the prevalence of rape myths across a variety of media, ranging from television dramas (Brinson, 1992) and newspapers (Meyer, 2010) to comic books (Garland et al., 2016). This study positions rape myths in media content as an element of cultural-level sexual scripts that are supportive of sexual violence. Although framed in different terminologies, scholarship on romance novels and fanfiction suggests the presence of rape myths as well. Research on romance novels has highlighted the prominence of themes that frame men's violence against women as an act of romantic passion (Larcombe, 2005; Radway, 1984). The field of fan studies has noted the presence of sexual violence within adult fanfiction, but often without providing systematic analysis of that content (Bury, 2005; Jenkins, 2006). As one exception, Kustritz (2014) documented a spectrum of Harry Potter "rapefics," or fanfictions that contain rape. While some stories used the rape as a plot tool and explored the victims' trauma at length, others focused on the sexual aggressors' pleasure and overlooked the acts' consequences.

The literature reviewed thus far focuses on adults' scripts for sexual consent and beliefs in rape myths, as well as the scripts and rape myths evident in media content. However, the present study focuses on adolescents; 1D attracts a large audience of adolescent girls, and a large portion of Wattpad's users are teen girls (Korobkova & Black, 2014). Therefore, the following section reviews research about adolescent girls' sexual scripts.

Adolescent girls' sexual scripts and youth fanfiction

Research documenting adolescent girls' sexual scripts reflects literature about the tensions between agency and gendered power structures within postfeminist ideologies (Burkett & Hamilton, 2012; Powell, 2010). To illustrate, some studies report evidence of girls' sex-positive scripts that praise autonomy in sexual decision-making and pursuing sexual pleasure (French, 2013; Spišák, 2017; Suvivuo et al., 2010). On the other hand, in interviews with girls about sexting,

Dobson (2015) found that her participants shamed and condemned other girls' sexting behaviors—framing themselves as sexually agentic through their choice to abstain from sexting and blaming girls whose sexts circulated beyond their intended audiences for taking the pictures in the first place. Other research has similarly noted girls' victim-blaming scripts (French, 2013). Analyses of girls' discourse about fashion are similar; girls described resisting overbearing dress codes and using clothes to look fashionable or "older," but still differentiating themselves from other girls who dress "too" provocatively (Jackson et al., 2013; Raby, 2010).

The studies reviewed above rely on interviews, focus groups, and brief participant-produced narratives to learn about girls' sexual scripts. Fanfiction presents researchers with an opportunity to expand this body of knowledge by providing access to large corpuses of youth-produced scripts that contain more detail and nuance than is practical to obtain via other methodologies. Theory about fanfiction highlights its compatibility with this research paradigm. Fanfiction is theorized as an act of "textual poaching," in which writers borrow certain aspects of media texts, reject others, and reformulate them to construct resistant readings of patriarchal and heteronormative media (Jenkins, 1992). Thus, the content of girls' "textual poaching" in sexual scenes should yield insight about the ways in which they engage with and remix conflicting postfeminist ideologies about sexuality.

The present study asks how the dominant sexual scripts in 1D RPF on Wattpad. com portray sexual consent, rape, and rape myths. The resulting data contribute to scholarship on adolescent sexualities by providing highly detailed and nuanced descriptions of girls' sexual scripts.

Method

Data collection

This study consists of a textual analysis of the sexual scripts and rape myths prevalent in the most popular 1D RPF stories on Wattpad.com. My purpose in targeting the most popular stories is to capture the most-viewed and arguably most influential sexual scripts in the community. These stories are publicly available online; without an account on Wattpad.com, anyone can search for and read them in their entirety. Additionally, the number of "reads" for each story included in this study ranges from 2.7 million to 114 million. Since the data collected for this research is intended for public consumption, I have included direct quotes from the stories. However, in light of the sexual content in these stories, I also took measures to protect the identities of authors. I do not attribute quotes to authors' names, usernames, or the RPF titles. Entering these quotes in online search engines or in Wattpad.com's search bar does not yield links to the stories, and the volume of 1D stories published on Wattpad prevents deductive identification. I also removed any reference to characters' names within direct quotes to further prevent deductive identification.

To collect the data, I used a sampling method that was stratified according to the band member designated as the "love interest." This method compensated for potential differences in content between stories focused on different band members. I searched each band member's name on Wattpad.com's search bar and identified the five most-popular stories out of the first 200 search results for each band member. Out of the 25 stories identified, one story was excluded from the analysis because its narrative centered on a homosexual relationship between two band members, which fell outside the scope of this study's focus on the portrayal of young women's roles in sexual interactions.

Data analysis

I conducted an interpretative textual analysis of the 24 stories, using a qualitative data analysis software, Atlas.ti 8, to organize the dataset. To analyze the data, I used an inductive process characteristic of grounded theory (Straus & Corbin, 1990), in which I coded the data on a line-by-line basis, guided by close attention to scenes in which kissing or sexual activity occurs and explicit character mentions of sex or rape. I utilized several interpretive approaches to facilitate inductive coding. For example, I used value coding—which uses beliefs, attitudes, or values communicated in a text as a unit of analysis (Saldaña, 2016)—to interpret passages where characters' thoughts and emotions during sexual interactions complicate the representation of consent or non-consent. When encountering passages focused on characters' actions, I used *in vivo* coding to note the significance of different verbs and descriptors, since *in vivo* coding preserves the specific language used in a text (Saldaña, 2016). Given the length of the dataset (24 stories, ranging from 30 to 128 chapters), I conducted axial coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) in an iterative process, looking for connections and patterns between codes throughout the coding process rather than doing two separate rounds of coding. If I noticed a new element of a sexual script—i.e. who performs which types of actions, how these actions are performed, etc. (Beres, 2014)—or a new rape myth occur more than twice, I considered it an emergent theme and returned to the beginning of the dataset to recode for consistency.

This individual, interpretive coding process gave me the flexibility necessary to analyze the dataset's nuanced portrayals of sexual consent and rape. I maintained systematic rigor by analyzing the data on a line-by-line basis and by utilizing several tools within the software. I tracked both the frequency with which each code occurred and the "spread" of each code across the dataset to observe whether its use was concentrated within a few stories or more evenly distributed across all the stories. I also used Atlas.ti's code co-occurrence capabilities to determine how often codes overlapped, which enabled me to ground interpretation of any single code within the context of the documents it occurred within and the other codes that most frequently accompanied it. These tools helped me avoid inappropriately isolating the codes from their context while also avoiding anecdotalism by considering their representation throughout the dataset.

Findings

While a range of themes involving gender and romantic relationships occurred in the dataset, this study was concerned with the themes describing scripts for sexual consent and themes describing the presence and nature of rape myths. All stories involved kissing, but 10 of the 24 stories involved only kissing and did not describe or allude to sex. Five stories indicated that sex occurred but ended the narration before it did, or just as it was beginning. Nine stories included graphic descriptions of sex. Although I still reference stories that involve only kissing in this analysis, I place more emphasis on the 14 stories that involve sexual interactions given this paper's focus on sexual consent. Emergent themes included sexual consent, assumptions of consent, sexual violence, hesitation or unease during kissing or sexual activity, language that describes kissing or sexual activity as aggressive or assaultive, and kissing or sexual activity that surprises a partner.

Affirmative consent

Many of the sex scenes throughout the dataset featured interactions in which consent is depicted through verbal conversation. These scenes model the affirmative consent standard, which maintains that silence or lack of resistance cannot be interpreted as consent; consent must be actively communicated (Muehlenhard et al., 2016). Many academic fields identify affirmative consent as the ideal, as well as state laws in California and New York requiring universities to include affirmative consent in campus policies (Muehlenhard et al., 2016). Therefore, I used the code "affirmative consent" when at least one partner verbally expressed desire to engage in physical or sexual activity, and the other partner communicated agreement to also engage in the activity. I interpreted nodding in affirmation as an active expression of agreement to engage in a sexual activity. However, nonverbal actions that are not explicitly communicative, like participation in the sexual activity, lack of resistance, and non-vocalized thoughts about desire, did not qualify as communicating agreement.

Affirmative consent was a frequent element of romantic encounters: among the 24 stories, I coded 91 times affirmative consent was attained. Additionally, characters negotiated not having sex 25 times, and they negotiated affirmative consent for kissing or other physical activities, like cuddling, 23 times. All 14 of the stories that described or alluded to sex included codes for affirmative consent.

Men "know" what women want

In addition to overt negotiations of consent, assumptions of consent also emerged as a prevalent theme. Men's assumption of women's consent for kissing and other sexual activity occurred 23 times, whereas women's assumption of men's consent occurred three times. Assumptions of consent occurred in 12 of the 24 total stories, nine of which either described or alluded to sex (out of the 14 stories describing or alluding to sex). Men's assumption of consent tended to involve interpreting

women's bodies or nonverbal cues as confirmation of consent. Men interpreted women's bodies by assuming that physiological arousal equates to desire or by believing they can see desire manifested in women's eyes. Nonverbal cues that men interpreted as consent included moans or absence of obvious resistance.

Sometimes, the context of the story affirmed the accuracy of men's interpretations of women's nonverbal cues, like interpreting a smile as an affirmative response to a stated request for a kiss. In other instances, men's assumptions of consent relied on women's lack of resistance. To illustrate, during a make-out session in one story, a band member reached under his partner's shirt, then paused "to see if she's freaking out." After deciding that, based on body language, she was not "freaking out," he proceeded to touch her breasts. The couple was interrupted before any further sexual activity could occur. Later, her friend asked if she had wanted to have sex with the band member. "Well . . . Yeah I guess," she said, indicating he didn't misinterpret her lack of "freaking out," although her response suggests ambivalence more than enthusiasm. Such circumstances are comparable to existing data about young people's lived experiences. Research has found that young adults often consent to sex even when it is unwanted (Muehlenhard & Peterson, 2005) and that students rely on non-verbal cues for consent, such as reciprocation of or nonresistance to sexual actions, more often than verbally-negotiated affirmative consent (Muehlenhard et al., 2016).

In some situations, though, the female protagonist's narration of the scene suggested that the band member's assumption of consent might have been, at least initially, incorrect. The following narration of a female protagonist's thoughts illustrates such an instance: "I unfolded my legs and stretched them out. They were starting to cramp up. [Band member's name] must've *interpreted it the wrong way* [italics added] because he slid me down from the baseboard and hovered over me. It happened too fast that I couldn't protest." The band member proceeds to engage in unreciprocated "dirty talk," then he guides her hand inside his clothing and begins rubbing his erection, although her "hand was stiff," suggesting her reluctance. "Please . . . just do this baby," he pleads. She nods in agreement and continues the action without his assistance. This conversation models the definition for "affirmative consent" that I applied to coding content, since the band member verbally expresses desire for sexual activity, and the protagonist actively communicates her agreement by nodding. However, this code fails to capture the complexity of this interaction. The band member begins the sexual activity without any expression of agreement from the protagonist, and her narration suggests that she did not intend to engage in sexual activity—the band member misinterpreted her actions and began sexual activity "too fast that [she] couldn't protest." Furthermore, the band member pleads for the protagonist to continue sexual activity in a way that is coercive, rather than asking about her willingness. This tension between affirmative consent and coercive behavior reflects literature describing how women and girls navigate postfeminist ideologies, which insist on women's complete sexual agency but do not recognize the possibility of gendered power dynamics (Burkett & Hamilton, 2012; Powell, 2010). The narration in

this fanfiction describes an instance of male sexual coercion but does not acknowledge the coercion, framing the protagonist's eventual acquiescence as an unproblematic agreement of sexual consent.

One story features a band member using his assumption of a woman's consent, based on her physiological arousal, as justification for raping her. Although the woman verbally protests sex, the band member rationalizes his actions to himself and the woman. The story reads: "He felt her wetness through her underwear, signaling her body reacting perfectly to him. [The band member said] 'Your lips say no, but your body is saying yes.'" The rape scene is intended to contribute to the band member's portrayal in this particular narrative as an evil character and ruler in a post-apocalyptic society. [Stories that take place in alternate universes are common in fanfiction communities.] However, as the author continues to narrate the rape scene, the band member's incorrect assumption of consent appears to gain some validity; the woman's protests of "Please, let me go" shift to "Please, my king, take me!" And when the band member asks, "Tell me, does your husband ever make you feel this good?," she answers "N-no." The third-person narration reinforces the authenticity of the woman's shift toward desire by using the phrase "moans of pleasure" twice to describe her reactions. The story's chronology aligns with dangerous myths that women secretly want to be raped (Ohbuchi et al., 1994) and that women do not actually mean "no" when they refuse sex (Muehlenhard & Peterson, 2005). The presence of this myth obscures the conceptual clarity of rape in the story; the narration's emphasis on the woman's pleasure suggests the band member was "correct" in his reading of the situation and undermines the seriousness of rape.

It wasn't rape, it wasn't that bad, or it wasn't his fault

Sexual violence played a significant role in these stories, and was often identified as assault. When I used the following codes, the context of the story presented an interpretation of the event as nonconsensual. The code "rape/sexual assault" includes instances of rape or sexual assault that occur within the narrative, as well as characters' reflections about previous rape/sexual assault, and occurred 10 times. Instances of "female initiates/continues unwanted kissing" occurred 9 times, "male initiates/continues unwanted kissing" 23 times, and "male initiates unwanted grope" 18 times. Accounting for instances in which these codes co-occurred, there were 47 unique instances of nonconsensual activity among 24 stories.

Sexually violent content often served as a tool for plot development. In one story, the band member rescues the female protagonist as another man sexually assaults her. Her relationship with her attacker is not central to the story; rather, the episode allows her to be rescued by the band member, which sparks the beginning of their romance. Three discrete stories in the dataset involve incidents in which a man initiates an unwanted kiss with the female protagonist, the band

member learns of the kiss and is jealous, and the couple must resolve the misunderstanding to salvage their relationship.

In some situations, the blame for rape, assault, or nonconsensual sex was either deflected from the perpetrator or otherwise minimized. Such events occurred 10 times across three different stories. In the story that introduces this study, the female protagonist describes the band member's groping, in spite of her refusals, as "not that bad" and redirects some of the blame to the band member's drug-fueled high instead of the band member himself. Later in the story, both main characters blame the protagonist for requesting sex while intoxicated, and for becoming intoxicated in the first place [see section "*Good men don't take advantage of women, sometimes*" for further description of this scene]. These scenes act out the myth that rape is the fault of victims if they are compromised by alcohol or drugs when it occurred (McMahon, 2007; Payne et al., 1999).

The presence of reduced blame for rape and sexual assault was more complicated throughout the previously mentioned post-apocalyptic story. The narrative portrays the band member as violent and immoral, a repeated rapist. Seven of the ten uses of the code "rape/sexual assault" and 13 uses of the other codes describing nonconsensual activity occurred within this story, accounting for a third of the times a code for nonconsensual activity was employed across the dataset. However, several moments in the story complicate a straightforward presentation of rape. As described in the previous section [see "*Men 'know' what women want*"], the band member's interpretation of a victim's body invokes the myth of female pleasure during rape (Ohbuchi et al., 1994). Later, the story's third-person narration about a different rape introduces a nuanced conceptualization of rape that is not easily described by a singular script. The narration says, "As much as she hated it, she climaxed, she reached the point of pleasure under his touch, something he had not been able to force her to do." The narrator identifies the episode generally as rape, but insists that certain elements of the rape—the "pleasure" she experienced "under his touch" and her orgasm—were not forced and therefore fall outside the construct of rape. Additionally, language throughout the story narrowly interprets rape as forced vaginal intercourse where the victim attempts to stop the interaction. Out of the seven times within this story that I used the code "rape/sexual assault," four instances captured scenarios in which the band member forces the protagonist to perform sex acts other than vaginal intercourse, like giving or receiving oral sex. Although these scenes are depicted as nonconsensual, they are not identified as rape or even as sex, which minimizes their severity within the narrative. For example, before forcing the protagonist to perform oral sex, the band member says, "Fine I won't force you to have sex ... *but* I want something else in return." In this case, forced intercourse is considered as a form of sexual violence, but forced oral sex is considered "something else." These scenes invoke the rape myth that only penile-vaginal intercourse is a severe enough offense to be categorized as rape (Peterson & Muehlenhard, 2004) and therefore shouldn't be considered as "that bad."

Women should be agentic, but they should feel uneasy about it

Relevant to sexual consent, a theme that emerged during kissing and sexual activity was hesitation or unease. Any situation in which a character hesitated before or verbally or mentally expressed unease regarding kissing or sexual activity triggered the use of this code. Women hesitated or experienced unease about kissing 31 times and about sexual interactions 32 times. These hesitations rarely occurred in stories that only contained kissing, but out of the 14 stories that described or alluded to sex, all but one contained women's hesitations for kissing or sex.

For women in these narratives, emotions were the source of hesitance or unease for kissing or sex: worry about disagreements; anxiety about the risks associated with sex; confusion from overwhelming emotions; discomfort with inappropriate times and places for kissing or sex; insecurities about their own bodies; and confusion stemming from sexual inexperience. Often, these feelings went unvoiced by women and ignored by men, suggesting that women's apprehension and anxiety are a "natural" part of sexual interactions.

The relationship between hesitance and unease for sexual activity and several of the themes mentioned above is especially striking during one female protagonist's initiation to sex. In this story, the band member's effort to obtain consent prompts an emotional inventory by the protagonist:

> 'Do you want this?' [band member's name] whispered against my cheek, prompting the flush in it. The question made my head pound. My thoughts were all over the place. I wasn't in the state to return a rational answer ... I loved him, I wanted him close. That was all I knew. I acted before my mind could process the wholeness of this situation. I returned a nod and he dipped to kiss me again.

This passage was coded as containing affirmative consent, since the band member asked for consent and the woman responded with a nod intended as communication. However, the ensuing narration notes how her lack of knowledge about sex made the experience confusing and painful.

> The next sensation was far from pleasant, in fact, it was somewhat excruciating. It was so sudden, so foreign. That was when I realised what I had really gotten myself into.... The stinging pain grew everytime I felt him move. I wasn't aware of the dynamics, how this worked. As far as I knew, it wasn't supposed to hurt. Why would people do it if it did? Something was wrong.

Her unease intensifies throughout the interaction; at one point, her first-person narration read: "[He] continued to push into me and at a point I felt like I was on the verge of tears. What would we achieve from these actions? What would come after this?"

The next day, the protagonist tells the band member that she is in pain. His response minimizes her pain and blames her for not telling the band member

sooner. The narration from his point of view reads: "'I'm sorry...' I apologised even though I wasn't so sure what she was talking about. 'I didn't know. You could've said something and I would've-.'" Although this sexual interaction is not treated as nonconsensual in the story, a combination of elements of this scene nevertheless echo the myth that rape is a result of miscommunication (O'Byrne et al., 2008; Payne et al., 1999). Neither character acknowledges that the protagonist's inexperience caused her to not fully understand what the band member meant when he asked, "Do you want this?," making the initiation of intercourse a painful surprise to her. Additionally, the band member blames the protagonist's failure to communicate as the cause of her pain.

Good men don't take advantage of women, sometimes

Men hesitated or expressed unease about kissing five times and about sexual activity 12 times. Narratives in which men's hesitation/unease for sex involved women's intoxication are revealing of tensions between different stories' conceptualizations of sexual consent. In one story, the featured band member considers accepting the female protagonist's invitation for sex, although she is inebriated. He decides that doing so would be "taking advantage of her" and declines sex. However, another story in the dataset evaluates consent under the influence differently. The band member hesitates to accept his drunk partner's invitation for sex, but eventually decides that sex in this situation is permissible as long as the female initiates and leads the interaction. When the couple discusses it the next day, the band member apologizes, admitting that the protagonist was "too wasted" and "it wasn't right." The author included the protagonist's internal dialogue about the incident:

> I'm not gonna be all mad and dramatic about it - because I'm not, I'm just embarrassed of myself - and he seems genuinely sorry and I guess it's all my own fault anyways since I apparently decided to go all in with the shots. Yes he maybe should have stopped, but as far as I remember I didn't really take no for an answer.

Although the protagonist does not identify these events as rape, the blame she places on herself for an interaction in which a man "maybe should have stopped" still alludes to the myth that women are partly responsible for their rape if it happens while they are intoxicated (McMahon, 2007; Payne et al., 1999).

Men love aggressively

While coding inductively, a theme regarding aggressive and assaultive language to describe kissing and sex also emerged. This language contributes to the dominant sexual scripts in the dataset by depicting *how* characters perform sexual actions. This code was employed 123 times to identify phrases like "assault on his neck," "attack on her lips," "slammed into her" and "crashed onto his lips" that described actions performed by men and women during kissing or sex. This language only

co-occurred with aforementioned codes for sexual assault and nonconsensual physical activity 11 times, highlighting its frequent accompaniment of normal physical and sexual interactions. To illustrate the use of this language, one author narrated a kissing scene with the following description: "His not so gentle assault on my lips surely did leave my neck giving off a tingling sensation … His lips slammed against mine and I felt my whole body literally move back slightly from the force." This language described females' actions 13 times, yet the framing of sexual activity through assaultive language was nonetheless more common for male-initiated activity and therefore seems to prioritize male aggression as a frame for physical interactions.

Men act fast

Additionally, I noted the frequency with which characters surprised or startled a romantic partner with an unexpected kiss or other sexual action, such that the partner had no time to react. The following excerpt exemplifies this type of action. Although the band member and the protagonist hastily establish verbal consent to engage in foreplay, the band member's subsequent actions come as a surprise. The protagonist narrates:

> He unbuckled and unbuttoned his belt and jeans in a matter of seconds. Before I could even process what was about to happen, I felt his erection push all the way inside of me as he roughly thrust his hips, causing my back to hit the wall with full force.

In total, men surprised women with a kiss or other sexual action 52 times, compared to 14 instances in which women initiated the surprise. These actions were often received with enthusiasm after the initial shock. Other times, they violated women's wishes. Several stories featured plotlines where a man other than the band member surprises the protagonist with a kiss that she did not want, causing conflict between her and the band member when he learns of the kiss. Even though such actions were uninvited by the women, the band members tended to blame the women for these kisses and felt justified in their anger. Although involving forced kisses instead of rape, these types of plot lines still appeal to rape myths of victim-blaming (McMahon, 2007; Payne et al., 1999; Peterson & Muehlenhard, 2004).

Discussion

This textual analysis examined 24 of the most-popular 1D RPF stories published on Wattpad.com to uncover the dominant scripts of sexual consent. These scripts do prioritize affirmative consent, which has been identified as the ideal for sexual activity (Muehlenhard et al., 2016); affirmative consent for sex occurred 91 times in the stories.

However, the same stories express tensions between varying conceptualizations of consent. Some of this ambiguity emerged from men's presumptions of women's consent. Sometimes the band members were correct in their assumptions, but other times, the stories failed to acknowledge men's incorrect interpretations of women's body language. Data on college students' sexual experiences indicate that such assumptions are common practice among young people (Muehlenhard et al., 2016). Tensions between conceptualizations of consent also emerged when different authors provided conflicting interpretations of the ability to grant consent while intoxicated or when lacking in sexual knowledge. Additionally, the frequency of women's hesitance and unease for sexual interactions within the dataset suggests that a woman's deference to a man is appropriate, even when she is hesitant. Furthermore, the language of aggression and attack used to describe sexual activity and the frequency of "surprise" sexual actions serve to valorize sudden and aggressive behavior that silences women.

Also, a wide range of rape myths were prevalent across the stories, including: a narrow conceptualization of rape as only involving vaginal intercourse (Peterson & Muehlenhard, 2004), the myth of female pleasure during rape (Ohbuchi et al., 1994), blaming victims for inviting rape or unwanted sexual activity (McMahon, 2007; Payne et al., 1999), blaming rape on one partner's intoxication (McMahon, 2007; Payne et al., 1999), and miscommunication as a justification for rape (O'Byrne et al., 2008; Payne et al., 1999). The presence of these myths did not exclusively coincide with rape scenarios; they were alluded to within scenes that included affirmative sexual consent, complicating the presentation of consent within the scene. Other times, these rape myths served to mitigate the blame that is attributed to the band member for rape or for a partner's pain during sex, redirecting some of this blame to the woman.

The blurry boundaries between consent and non-consent illustrated in this dataset add important knowledge to feminist research about adolescent sexualities. Existing research has documented girls' use of victim-blaming strategies in order to project a postfeminist self-presentation of sexual agency (Dobson, 2015; French, 2013; Jackson et al., 2013; Raby, 2010). This analysis finds the use of additional rape myths to present female characters as sexually agentic in spite of male characters' sexually coercive and aggressive behavior: that alcohol excuses sexual violence, that sexual violence is the result of miscommunication, and that "it's not rape" unless it involves vaginal penetration. The dataset evidenced several other themes that manifested postfeminist sensibilities: inability to detect coercion, ignoring hesitations or unease for sex, framing men's sudden and aggressive actions that silence women as desirable, and validating men's assumptions of women's consent within the context of the story. As a result of these tensions, many of the scripts for sexual consent captured in this dataset are ambiguous and sometimes contradictory. These findings are at odds with sexual scripting theory's focus on highly ritualized scripts, demonstrating how the meanings ascribed to sexual behavior can be incompatible with the goal of identifying a clearly defined sexual script.

The authors' notes in these stories suggest that complicated social processes may contribute to the construction of these narratives, drawing more attention to critiques of sexual scripting theory's overemphasis on individual cognitions (Frith & Kitzinger, 2001). It is common practice on Wattpad for authors to leave brief notes at the beginning and/or end of each chapter; thus they were captured within this study's data collection. Typically, these notes ask readers to weigh in on the narrative. As such, the development of sexual scripts in the narratives might be influenced by reader input. Additionally, some author instructions for interpreting their writing suggest divergence from the authors' own values, sometimes even stating they do not condone their characters' violent behavior. The manner in which some writers reify male aggression by including it their narrative while also noting their rejection of such beliefs suggests that online communities constitute unique social contexts that shape the construction of sexual scripts. Future research should explore how the structural features of Wattpad and cultural norms within the 1D fan community interact in influencing authors' presentation of sexual scripts in their writing.

Important to note, it is outside the scope of this study to thoroughly investigate the relationship between the depictions of sexual consent in this dataset and the authors' and readers' personal attitudes about sexual consent. In addition to potential interactional influences on script production, these sexual scripts should also be interpreted in the context of amateur fiction intended for entertainment. Elements of these scripts—like sudden and aggressive kissing or sexual actions—may have been written with the intent of heightening the drama of a scene and seem derivative of the sudden and forceful kissing characteristic of iconic scenes in romance movies such as *The Notebook* and *Crazy, Stupid, Love*. Additionally, cultural narratives that associate male celebrity status with unrestrained sexual desire from adoring fans (Rowe, 1994) may complicate the presentation of men's assumptions of women's consent throughout the dataset. It is possible that this ideology may underlie scenes in which the band member assumes a woman's sexual consent, rendering his assumption logical to readers who subscribe to this cultural narrative. More research is needed, specifically interviews with writers of 1D RPF, to understand how participation in this community impacted writers' personal scripts for sexual consent.

The findings of this study suggest useful applications for fans and non-fans alike. For example, they could inform the development of curricula for youth sex education by indicating what misconceptions about sexual consent and rape are widely circulated among this demographic group and in need of correction. If interested in promoting positive social change, producers of media content for adolescent girls and young women could utilize this information to identify and address problematic themes in their content. Most importantly, though, 1D fans demonstrate exceptional ability, initiative, and dedication to organizing and marshaling support for the band members. Despite the band's breakup, fans engage in an impressive range of activities to support their solo careers, from hanging posters in their hometowns to promote their new music to hosting

streaming parties with fans across the globe to boost the rankings of both their old and new songs. Given the findings in this paper, and with enough interest, 1D fans could channel the same energy and ingenuity to incite a cultural shift in discourse about sexual consent within online fan communities that reaches millions.

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