

GUYLAND

The
Perilous
World
Where Boys
Become Men

MICHAEL KIMMEL

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For Mitchell Tunick

We two boys together clinging,
One the other never leaving,
Up and down the roads going—North and South excursions making,
Power enjoying—elbows stretching—fingers clutching,
Arm'd and fearless—eating, drinking, sleeping, loving.

—WALT WHITMAN, *Leaves of Grass*

Yet most adults aren't talking. The more religious among us may have firmly held beliefs that dictate abstinence and tolerate no middle ground, while the more liberal among us may give our adolescent children books that explain the physiological aspects of what they need to know but say nothing of the emotional component inherent in sexuality. But rarely do mature adults actively engage their sons and daughters in the kinds of candid conversations that might actually prove useful to them. Rarely do we talk about a sexuality that can be both passionate and ethical; rarely do we even explain that there is such a thing as ethical sexuality that doesn't promote or even include abstinence as a goal. Instead, the whole subject is so shrouded in embarrassment and discomfort that we generally avoid it, hoping that our kids will figure it out for themselves without too much trouble in the meantime. Lucky for us they often do.

But not always.

10 | PREDATORY SEX AND PARTY RAPE

The words ring in my ears today as if they were just spoken. "When it comes to sex, never take no for an answer." Or this: "Look, girls have to say no, even if they want to do it. It's part of being a girl. So if they say no, they're really saying yes. They still really want you to . . ."

Growing up in the suburbs in the 1960s, I heard those phrases as often as I heard my friends reciting the lyrics of the latest Beatles single or the line score of the Yankees games. Hippie or preppie, stoner or jock, nerd or hood, it's how guys talked about what guys talked about.

What I learned in the locker rooms of my youth was, "Tell her anything if you think it'll get you laid." I can still hear my friend Billy, who wrestled at 135 pounds, giving advice to his younger and lighter mat partner:

If she wants to hear that you love her, tell her you love her. If she wants to hear that you'll marry her, tell her you'll marry her. The most important thing is to keep going. Don't stop. If she says no, keep going. If she pushes your hand away, keep going. You only stop if she hits you.

I took this advice seriously; it constituted a how-to manual, a sort of mixed-company etiquette primer—"Mr. Manners" you might say. I called it, as did we all, "dating." And I followed it assiduously, although, alas, not especially successfully.

In the years since, of course, the rules have changed. Completely. My generation's "dating etiquette" is now called sexual assault. You can't keep going if she says no. You can't keep going if she says stop. You can't keep going if she pushes your hand away, or if she hits you. Today, guys know that the rules are completely different.

Or do they?

When I mentioned this story to my class recently at Stony Brook, one of the guys looked up at me and shook his head sadly. "It's not 'don't stop until she hits you.' It's 'don't stop until she *hurts* you.'" Time and again, on college campuses, guys told me something similar: Girls "have to say no" to protect their reputations, they "mean yes, even if they say no," and "if she's drunk and semiconscious, she's willing."

"It's really confusing," says Jake, who graduated from Yale two years ago.

I mean, like, really *really* confusing. On the one hand, like every week you have some dorm seminar or lecture on sexual assault, and like a constant buzz about what's "appropriate" and all, and on the other hand you go to a party on the weekend and it's like everything they said to avoid, everything that is, like, completely illegal and off-limits.

"Like what?" I ask.

Like trying to get girls drunk so they'll have sex with you. Like, I dunno, like lying to them, or like telling them how interested you are in them and how much you like them and all, when it's completely not true, and all you really want to do is have sex with them and then get the hell out of there.

"Omigod, the lies we tell," says Bill, his roommate and fellow grad, a big grin on his face.

Like sometimes I can't believe what I've done to get laid. Like, I've said "I'll only put it in a little"—can you fucking-believe that? Like, "I won't come in your mouth." Like . . .

At this point, though, Bill begins to look a little sheepish.

Like, well, look, I know this isn't PC and all, but a couple of times I've pushed girls' heads down on me, and like one time this girl was so drunk she was near passed out, and I kind of dragged her into my room and had sex with her. When she sort of came to a little bit, she was really upset and started crying and asked why I had done that. I think I said something like, "because you were so pretty" or some bullshit, but really it was because, well, because I was drunk and wanted to get laid. And she was, like, there.

Bill's comment is actually a little more than "not PC"; in most jurisdictions, he could be arrested for sexual assault. To many guys this ambiguity seems like a gray area, a zone where it is not absolutely clear where consent ends and assault begins. Often women agree that the lines get fuzzy and boundaries blur.

But Bill's confession also suggests at least one instance when this gray area is a fraud. Bill was not interested in the girl. He was interested in getting laid. And she was, as he puts it, ". . . like, there." The problem for guys like Bill is that even though they may think that the absence of clear refusal implies consent regardless of circumstances, young women are finally learning that what has been done is "assault."

Is it any wonder that rates of sexual assault are so high?

The Guy Code insists that men get as much sex as they can. And with hooking up the new norm on campus, they may assume that girls want the same thing. Getting drunk, and getting her drunk, is seen as foreplay—whatever happens after that has already been declared consensual.

Of course, not all guys are like Bill. And there are certainly cases where the gray area really is a gray area. As we have seen, alcohol is

often used to *create* a gray area, a realm of plausible deniability where no one supposedly has to take responsibility for what he (or she) wanted to do. Alex, a senior at Michigan State, learned this the hard way. One night at a party in an off-campus apartment he and a girl got drunk—really drunk. He liked her, and he thought she liked him. They were dancing, getting close, kissing. She went into one of the bedrooms and lay down on the bed. The guy whose room it was asked her to get up, and she did. She went back into the living room and they danced more, drank more. Then she went back in the bedroom and lay down again. Alex thought it was because she wanted to have sex with him, so he “helped” her get undressed, then he got undressed. And when, moments before intercourse happened, she said, “What are you doing? Stop!” he stopped. She started crying. He apologized, explaining that he thought she wanted to have sex. She became hysterical, and accused him of attempted rape. Several days later she filed attempted rape charges with the local police. And though the charges were eventually dropped, it was not before his parents, her parents, and their lawyers all became involved.

Alex is not a rapist. He’s a nice guy, a decent guy, who likes women and would like to have a girlfriend, or at least a “friend with benefits.” He hasn’t had a lot of sex, doesn’t “score” every weekend with a different woman. To his thinking, he didn’t do anything wrong, and he certainly didn’t do anything that every other guy he knows would have done under the circumstances. In fact, he did less—when she asked him to stop, he actually stopped.

In a more traditional dating culture, boundaries are in place to protect both men and women from falling into this kind of gray area. Premarital sex certainly occurs, but it does so in the context of a relationship. In today’s hookup culture, where sex is a casual affair that needn’t be preceded by any kind of relationship whatsoever, where sexual encounters often occur after huge amounts of alcohol have been consumed by both parties, and where even consensual sex is marked by vagueness, lack of judgment, and misunderstanding, it is no wonder that cases like Alex’s occur with alarming frequency.

Driven to Distraction: The Numbers Game

The public conversation about sexual assault on campus has primarily been a battle over numbers. In the 1980s, psychologist Mary Koss conducted some surveys that found what appeared at the time to be astonishingly high rates of unwanted, forced, or coerced sex among college students. The results were not easy to convert into tidy soundbites, and sparked hyperbolic and near-frenzied responses from both feminists and anti-feminists over the extent of campus sexual assault.

In the early 1990s, feminist writers like Naomi Wolf and Robin Warshaw drew on Koss’s research to proclaim a virtual epidemic of campus sexual assault. They claimed that one in four women had had an experience that met the legal definition of rape, even if “rape” was not the term she used to describe that experience. Most women saw what had happened as a mistake, a date gone bad, a guy who got carried away. They blamed themselves for leading him on, for giving mixed signals, for not really knowing what they wanted, for being too drunk to say no clearly.

Quickly did the anti-feminists jump in to gainsay the results of these studies. Writers like Cathy Young and Camille Paglia pooh-poohed what they regarded as inflated numbers, and laid the blame for campus sexual assault entirely at the feet of the women. Some argued that inflated date rape statistics are symptomatic of campus feminism run amok; man-haters encouraging coddled liberal women at elite universities to impose their prudishly Pollyanna view of sexuality on the rest of the nation. Katie Roiphe’s 1993 book, *The Morning After: Sex, Fear, and Feminism*, argued that young women must take responsibility for whatever happens to them for better or for worse.

Roiphe, Young, and Paglia all argue that boys will be boys, and that to constrain male sexuality is to do a disservice to young men. As Paglia explains, today’s female students have the temerity to believe “they can do anything, go anywhere, say anything, wear anything.” Well, she says, “No, they can’t.”

A woman going to a fraternity party is walking into Testosterone Flats, full of prickly cacti and blazing guns. . . . A girl who lets

herself get dead drunk at a fraternity party is a fool. A girl who goes upstairs alone with a brother at a fraternity party is an idiot. Feminists call this 'blaming the victim.' I call it common sense. . . .

Every woman must take personal responsibility for her sexuality. . . . She must be prudent and cautious about where she goes and with whom. When she makes a mistake, she must accept the consequences and, through self-criticism, resolve never to make that mistake again.

But even if women could live their lives according to Camille Paglia's credo, the fact remains that women on college campuses are "at greater risk for rape and other forms of sexual assault than women in the general population or in a comparable age group." Regardless of how one tries to parse the numbers, the seamy underside of the campus sexual culture is sexual assault.

The numbers do have a story to tell. Whether they are as inflated as Wolf and other feminist activists report, or as low as even the more conservative estimates of Young, Paglia, and others promoting a more *caveat emptor* approach, they're still high. Perhaps the most reliable study, from the National Institute of Justice in 1997, found that between one-fifth and one-quarter of women are the victims of attempted or completed rape while in college. More than half were by a guy that the woman was dating. If they were "only" 10 percent instead of 20 percent that would be extraordinarily high. Even if they were 5 percent, that would *still* be extraordinarily high.

And at the same time, most everyone acknowledges that sexual assaults on campus are drastically underreported. In Bonnie Fisher's N.I.J. study, only 5 percent of the completed or attempted rapes were reported to law enforcement officials (either local or campus police) although two-thirds told someone about it. Only one-tenth of the rapes that are actually reported to campus crisis hot lines are also reported to the police. Most are reported only to friends, or to no one at all.

Why do so few women report sexual assault? There is a common list: shame, self-blame, fear of reprisal, fear of being ostracized. But remem-

ber, nine out of ten offenders were known to the victim—usually a classmate, a friend, or an acquaintance—and it's clearly easier to report strangers than a person you know. According to the survey, 12.8 percent of completed rapes, 35 percent of attempted rapes, and 22.9 percent of threatened rapes take place on a date. And somewhere around half of both perpetrators and victims had been drinking. Alcohol has a way of weakening resolve for taking police action.

Also, while researchers find that college women remain more frightened by the prospect of stranger rape, and curtail their activities to minimize their risk of stranger rape, the most treacherous time for a college woman is when she is at a party, drinking, with people she thinks she knows. Among the various categories of acquaintance rape—rape while on a date, rape by a former or current intimate partner, or rape in a nonparty, nondate situation—the most common of all is "party rape," which is defined by the Justice Department as a rape that "occurs at an off-campus house or on- or off-campus fraternity and involves . . . plying a woman with alcohol or targeting an intoxicated woman."

So it's entirely possible that women, as well as men, are likely to misperceive what would legally qualify as a rape or attempted rape as a "date gone bad." In fact, according to Fisher's survey, less than half of the women who had experienced something that fits the legal definition of rape actually described what happened to them as rape.

Yet one has to engage in some strange epistemology to conclude that if *they* don't define it as rape, it wasn't rape. For most crimes, the subjective experience of the victim plays little role in the labeling of a crime. A robbery is a robbery, whether or not you were dressed so nicely that the mugger thought you wanted it. It's still a robbery even if, in your drunken foolishness, you walked through a bad part of town in the middle of the night with an expensive camera around your neck, or if you "consented" in your fright and said, "Here, take my money!" Crimes don't often depend on victim confirmation; there are legally set standards that define it. But somehow when it comes to sex crimes against women, whether or not the victims actually label it a crime seems of paramount importance.

It's probably true that the rates of sexual assault have climbed recently

not because more women are being raped or assaulted but because more women now recognize that what happened to them is not “a date gone horribly wrong,” but an assault. What’s more, they know that if they complain about it they are far more likely to be believed than were only a decade ago. Pat Connell, a 25-year veteran of the Cal-Berkeley Police Department, gives a more impressionistic version. Sexual assault, when he first started, was “almost always a guy jumping out of the bushes.” Now, he says, “what we get are date-rape cases. It’s the biggest problem we have here.”

It’s not that current rates have soared especially high. It’s that those rates in the past were so artificially low—based on women either not recognizing the assault as being out of bounds, or feeling afraid to make a public issue of it by going to the police. Especially if she was likely to be blamed all over again for being in the wrong place, wearing the wrong clothes, or drinking the wrong drinks. Who needs that on top of everything else?

Guys and Sexual Assault

What’s wrong with the date-rape debate is that until recently men were not included in the discussion. This changed when UCLA psychologist Neil Malamuth surveyed male students’ “attraction to sexual aggression.” In his research, between 16 percent and 20 percent of the male respondents said they would commit rape if they could be certain of getting away with it. That’s one in six. When Malamuth changed the word “rape” to “force a woman to have sex,” between 36 percent and 44 percent said they would—as long as they could be certain they wouldn’t get caught. In another study, 15 percent of college men said they actually had used force at least once to obtain intercourse—a rate which does seem to corroborate the statistics provided by women.

The question for us, then, is why? Why would nearly two of every five college males in this study commit sexual assault if they believed they could get away with it? For one thing, it has to do with some distorted ideas about women and sex. As we have seen, many men subscribe to what sexual assault counselors call “date rape myths”—

that women want sex just as much as men do but are socialized to say no even if they mean yes; that women like to be forced to have sex; that drunk women are “fair game.” In some interesting research in Germany, psychologists found that “as long as rape myths are not openly challenged in social interactions, men who endorse rape myths may assume that their own beliefs are shared by many others.” These distortions can lead men to think that a sexual assault is simply a sort of after-the-fact change of mind by a girl who really did want to, but then thought better of it.

As we have also seen, for many guys the drive to score is a male-male competitive drive, a sort of “keeping up with the Joneses” around sex. Guys’ incessant predation turns out to be a form of compensation—a way for guys to keep up with impossibly high, but imagined, rates of sexual activity.

University of Kansas psychologist Charlene Muehlenhard has been studying adolescents’ sexual encounters for more than a decade, and her findings underscore this idea. She found that more men (57.4 percent) than women (38.7 percent) reported that they had engaged in unwanted heterosexual intercourse due to being enticed—that is, someone made an advance that he or she had difficulty refusing. More men (33.5 percent) than women (11.9 percent) had unwanted heterosexual intercourse because they wanted to get sexual experience, wanted something to talk about, or wanted to build up their confidence. And more men (18.4 percent) than women (4.5 percent) said they engaged in heterosexual intercourse because they did not want to appear to be shy, afraid, or unmasculine or unfeminine. Peer pressure was a factor for 10.9 percent of the men but only 0.6 percent of the women.

Sometimes, as we’ve seen, the pressure to have sex is so great that it eclipses the pleasure. Says Mark, now 24, reminiscing about a particularly unpleasant experience in college:

I remember there was this party, and all my buds are like telling me that there is this really hot girl who sorta likes me, and, like, I already had a girlfriend back home, but they were like all, “Who cares, dude? It’s a party and she’s hot!” and so I got a little drunk,

got her a little more drunk, and we had sex and like the whole time it was because I had to tell the guys I did her, you know? I didn't even really like her or anything. But they would have been on my case forever if I passed it up. I think I had sex not because I wanted to have sex, but because I wanted to have *had* sex—so I could talk about it. How fucked up is that?

Already this is a potentially toxic brew of misinformation (beliefs about other guys' sexual activity) and disinformation (date rape myths). But it takes a little extra to push perceptions into activity: license. Women may be vulnerable to male predation, but only if the men exploit that vulnerability.

Some argue that sexual exploitation is a masculine trait, that men are hardwired from millennia of evolution to try and get over on someone for personal gain; that having sex with as many women as possible, with or without their consent, is the most successful strategy for ensuring your own genetic immortality. Of course, there are some evolutionary imperatives, deeply ingrained from millennia of adaptation. But while evolution may explain the largest scale patterns of human interaction, there is no possible way that it explains what will happen this weekend at that fraternity party on campus at State or Tech. There is, after all, such a thing, equally imperative from an evolutionary standpoint, which is called human agency, or, to be brief, *choice*. Rape is a choice, not a biological program.

And so, from an evolutionary standpoint, what is significant is that *most men don't make this choice*. Most men do not commit sexual assault. Most men do not have a date "go bad" or have her "change her mind afterward." Even if the most hyperbolic statistics were true and one-fourth of all college women were assaulted, that would mean that three-fourths were not. And if even *all* of the men surveyed by Neil Malamuth who said they would force a girl to have sex if they knew they could get away with it actually did it, it would still be "only" half of them. What kind of pathetic evolutionary imperative would it be if half of all members of the group don't do it?

Men choose to act this way. And they choose to act this way because

they believe it to be justified and they believe that other guys, whose approval is the whole point of this exercise, will reward them for it. They choose to act because of ideology—the beliefs they have about what they should or shouldn't do, what they can or can't do, and why. In other words, what enables men to choose to commit rape and call it something else are some of the core elements of Guyland—the cultures of entitlement, silence, and protection.

Getting Over as Getting Back

Guys believe that they are entitled to women's bodies, entitled to sex. Unfortunately for them, a significant number of women don't see it that way. And, as we've seen, when entitlement is thwarted guys seek revenge. Curiously, while psychologists and feminists and the entire legal system see male sexual aggression as the initiation of violence, guys describe it in a different way—not as initiation but as retaliation. What are they retaliating against? The power that women have over them.

To listen to guys speak, it's women who have the power in sex, not men. Says Dave, a 25-year-old computer consultant in Chicago:

Oh, definitely girls. They have all the power. They have the big power—the power to say no. I want them, I want sex with them, and they're the ones who decide whether it'll happen or not. Some bitch decides whether or not I get laid. I don't decide, she does. It's not fair.

Dave began his description in a sort of temperate voice, without much rancor. But a few seconds later, he looked frustrated and mad, and the tone of his voice had risen to match. Again and again, as guys described their feelings to me, they would at some point stop *describing* their feelings and actually start *feeling* them. Anger lies just below the surface of a conversation about sexual politics; it is remarkably easy to tap, and to activate into full-scale rage.

Tim Beneke, a journalist, once traveled around the country interviewing men about their views on rape. These men had never commit-

ted rape and yet the violence of their language is arresting. Here's what one 23-year-old who worked in a company in San Francisco told him:

Let's say I see a woman and she looks really pretty and really clean and sexy and she's giving off very feminine, sexy vibes. I think, wow I would love to make love to her, but I know she's not interested. It's a tease. A lot of times a woman knows that she's looking really good and she'll use that and flaunt it and it makes me feel like she's laughing at me and I feel degraded. . . . If I were actually desperate enough to rape somebody it would be from wanting that person, but also it would be a very spiteful thing, just being able to say 'I have power over you and I can do anything I want with you' because really I feel that they have power over me just by their presence. Just the fact that they can come up to me and just melt me makes me feel like a dummy, makes me want revenge.

Guy after guy seemed to understand how their reactions to women made them feel surprisingly aggressive. Here was Stan, another guy Beneke interviewed:

Growing up, I definitely felt teased by women. I think for the most part women knew I was attracted to them so women would sit in a certain way or give three-quarter beaver shot or give you a little bit of tit and maybe not give much more, or lift their skirts a certain way. I definitely felt played with, used, manipulated, like women were testing their power over me. I hated it with a passion! With a *fucking* passion!

These sorts of replies—which seemed to invert the power dynamics between men and women that analysts, feminists, and social scientists had been observing—stunned Beneke. Why does it look like men are in power when they constantly talk about being powerless? He looked at the language men use to describe female attractiveness. Women are “ravishing,” or “stunning,” she’s a “bombshell” or a “knockout”; she’s “dressed

to kill,” a real “femme fatale.” Men describe themselves as being “blown away” and “knocked out.” As suggested in metaphor, women’s beauty is perceived as violence to men: Men use violence to even the playing field, to restore equality.

Recently, *Men’s Health* magazine surveyed 444 readers (97 percent of whom were male). Forty-nine percent said that there were women in their office whose manner of dress was “pointedly provocative.” And one-third believed that men should report such women for sexual harassment.

In a letter to the editor of the *New York Times* denouncing sexual harassment guidelines, William Muehl, a retired professor at the Yale Divinity School claimed that:

From the moment a young male reaches puberty, he is bombarded with sexual stimuli by the culture in general and his female peers in particular. The way women dress and conduct themselves makes it virtually impossible for men to overlook their physical charms. Nothing is more absurd than a television talk show in which a feminine panel denounces sexual harassment, while dressed in such a way as to exhibit acres of its own flesh.

Muehl concluded by approvingly quoting “one college chaplain” who claimed “the way young women dress in the spring constitutes a sexual assault upon every male within eyesight of them.”

Yet even the angriest of men, the most disempowered, would stop short of sexual assault if not for the culture of silence among his peers. Transgressing boundaries, ignoring a woman when she says no, or doesn’t say yes, or is too drunk to know what exactly is happening to her—this doesn’t happen in a vacuum, one guy and one girl. There are often bystanders whose silence might easily be mistaken for approval.

Usually the bystander absolves himself of any complicity. “Hey, don’t look at me,” he shouts in protest, “I never raped anybody.” And he’s usually right. But neither did he intervene at a party when it seemed clear that someone was about to be raped. Nor did he refrain from spreading the rumor about some girl who got “trained” or gang banged, nor say to

anyone that he thought such behavior was gross and wrong, let alone illegal.

Rather, here is what he is more likely to say:

Girls are continually fed drinks of alcohol. It's mainly to party but my roomies are also aware of the inhibition-lowering effects. I've seen an old roomie block doors when girls want to leave his room; and other times I've driven women home who can't remember much of an evening yet sex did occur. Rarely if ever has a night of drinking for my roommate ended without sex. I know it isn't necessarily and assuredly sexual assault, but with the amount of liquor in the house, I question the amount of consent a lot.

That's one guy's description of a party at his fraternity house. He questions it, but doesn't ever have a chat with his roommate, nor does he intervene if he thinks there is the possibility of assault. This is where the dynamics of Guyland are in plain view: Bros Before Hos.

The culture of silence both enables the worst of the guys in their predatory behaviors and at the same time prevents the best of the guys from speaking up about what they really think about all this sexual predation. Challenging your roommates, stepping in to stop sex from happening when a woman is clearly too drunk either to consent or to refuse sex, is a betrayal of brotherhood. In a sexual culture where men and women are seen as being on opposite teams, where men are mandated to "get over" on women and women are mandated to "protect themselves" from sexual assault, scoring one for the team is crucial. If you refuse to "score" yourself, you are at least expected not to block the shot for your buddies. In this setup, defending or protecting a woman is worse than switching teams, it's an act of treason.

Even when sexual assault is called by name and reported, and when legal action is pursued, the culture of protection often kicks in to minimize the damage or to deflect responsibility away from the perpetrators and onto the victims. For example, in 2001, a group of college football players and recruits were accused of gang rape at the University of Colorado. I learned about this case when I was asked to

be an expert witness for two of these women, Lisa Simpson and Anne Gilmore. After reading close to 5,000 pages of materials, including court testimony, depositions by the women, the athletes, and university officials, I was stunned by how well the case illustrated the cultures of entitlement and silence that surround sexual assault and muffle the cries of the women in a culture of protection. The collusion of athletic department officials and the corrupt complicity of university administrators who were unable or unwilling to challenge their winning football team was even more astonishing. Eventually they all—the coach, the athletic director, the president, and the chancellor—resigned, but not before they revealed exactly how the culture of protection operates.

In early December 2001, a group of high-school football recruits arrived on the campus of the University of Colorado for a weekend of recruitment activities. The university's football team had gone from being the doormat of the Big 12 to being a major collegiate powerhouse, able to compete with perennial conference powers like Oklahoma and Nebraska. The university had also become a hotbed of sexual assault by high-profile athletes. Several cases had been reported and adjudicated through the 1990s—a badge of dishonor that so irked alumnus Rick Reilly that he wrote a series of exposés in *Sports Illustrated*, where he was a columnist.

On the night of December 7, several of these recruits and a few of the team members had sex with a few female students at an off-campus residence. The next day, three of these women brought criminal charges against the men for rape and sexual assault, and they subsequently sued the university for facilitating the gang rape and failing to prevent it (which is actionable by law if the university "knew, or should have known" that such an assault was likely and made no moves to prevent it).

When the recruits first arrived on campus, they were met by team members whose charge it was to show them a good time, and encourage them to come and play for Colorado. Sometimes, at other schools, recruits are also met by pretty coeds who are paid by the alumni association to "escort" the recruits. Everyone knows that these escorts will have sex with them.

One of the recruits told the police after the assaults of December 7 that the football players promised to get him sex. "They told me that . . . we gonna all get laid and you know. See how . . . see how we do it so you can all come here so we can party like this every weekend." He continued, "They told us, you know, this is what you get when you come to Colorado."

His expectations raised, he became angry when he hadn't had sex after one day. One player recalled that he became "kind of upset" and said he "didn't have fun because he didn't hook up with any women." And another player testified that the recruit "came up to me and was, like—he goes, 'What's up on the girls? You didn't give me no girls.'" A party was hastily arranged by some players and one or two of their female friends (not Simpson or Gilmore) who were themselves groupies.

Lisa Simpson, Anne Gilmore, and a couple of other girls had been hanging out at home in their pajamas that evening, playing some drinking games, and finally, at about 1 a.m., they decided to go to sleep. They were in their rooms, in their beds, with the lights off, when suddenly a group of players and recruits knocked on their door. Simpson, groggy and half-asleep, turned over in her bed to find a huge guy standing over her. "I'm a recruit," he said. "Show me a good time. Suck my dick."

Let's be honest: of course, there are groupies on many college campuses, a few women who hang out in various locales frequented by players, and who are willing participants in sexual encounters with them. College athletes are celebrities, after all, and like rock bands or movie stars—or even elected officials—their celebrity status, not to mention their wealth and notoriety for partying, is a sexual turn-on.

But this was not a case about groupies. This was a case of a planned "party" whose sole purpose was to get some black recruits some sex with some white girls. (The distasteful racist undercurrent is quite evident.) The players planned it with a couple of their male friends, and one female friend suggested Simpson's apartment, and then brought the recruits to the women's place. The only problem was that no one had told the women that they were "invited" to the same party.

The case eventually was resolved: Several of the recruits were not admitted to the university, and the players pleaded guilty to reduced

charges and were sentenced to community service. That community service, incidentally, consisted of working out in the weight room on the chance that visitors might want a tour of the facility—which even the athletic director called a "sham." That's how the culture of protection works.

Was the football program chastened, the entire athletic department humiliated, the university disgraced? Eventually. Eventually, the coach resigned, as did the athletic director, the chancellor, and even the president—all proclaiming their lack of accountability. And eventually, the university settled the case with Lisa Simpson and the others for over \$1 million, not because the university admitted any wrongdoing, but because they said it wanted to put the matter to rest. Responsibility was so diffused that a gang rape seemed to be nobody's fault.

And before that, when the story broke, everyone did more than run for cover; they tried to throw a blanket over the entire event. A year after his participation in the assault on Lisa Simpson, the football program tried again to get one of the participating recruits admitted. He was a good player, after all. Perhaps the best illustration of this culture of protection came from Joyce Lawrence, one of the members of the commission that was charged with investigating the recruiting scandal. "The question I have for the ladies in this is why they are going to parties like this and drinking or taking drugs and putting themselves in a very threatening or serious position," she said. (Remember, Simpson was in her PJs, in her bed, with the lights out.) Attitudes like this are what sustain predatory sexual entitlement.

Greeks and Jocks

Nowhere is the brotherhood more intense, the bonding more intimate and powerful, or the culture of protection more evident than among athletes and fraternity members. Greeks and jocks live at the epicenter of Guyland. It's one reason why the risk of sexual assault is higher among these high-prestige all-male groups. The example above is not an isolated event, not as much of an anomaly as we might like to believe. One survey of twenty universities with Division I athletic programs found

that male athletes comprised 3.7 percent of the student population, but also comprised 19 percent of sexual assaults reported to the Judicial Affairs Office.

It's not the simple fact of being in an all-male group. There are plenty of all-male groups in which such activities seem to happen rarely, if at all. Members of the golf and tennis teams are rarely accused of sexual assault, let alone gang rape, nor are members of the all-male computer programmers club or math team. Nor are all fraternities equally at risk to promote and support sexual assault. In a fascinating study, sociologists Ayres Boswell and Joan Spade found they could distinguish between "rape prone" and "rape free" fraternities in part by the ideologies that the guys held and their beliefs in rape myths. Just like among athletes, higher-prestige fraternities promoted a higher level of sexual entitlement.

Campus athletes are especially prone to these ideas of entitlement. Journalist Robert Lipsyte calls it a "jockocracy"—a quasi-aristocratic culture in which privilege and prestige and other rewards accrue inordinately to athletes, and in which, therefore, they come to feel entitled to special treatment. One former professional basketball player put it this way:

What happens when you come from nothing, or relatively nothing, once you're presented with something—in this case the natural, or unnatural adulation that comes from adults patting you on the back or sliding through classes, all that other stuff—you begin . . . to think that the world is handing out things to you . . .

As Edward Goldolf, an expert on campus sexual assault, put it,

If you're an athlete in college, you're given scholarships, a nice dorm, doctors, trainers, a lot of support and attention from fans and cheerleaders who ogle you. That sense of privilege influences you, and some guys may then think "I deserve something for this. I can take women, the rules don't apply to me." They feel they're above the law.

In one study, 30 percent of Cornell football players reported high levels of sexual entitlement—a statistic that prompted the university to institute mandatory annual sexual assault awareness workshops for players.

In 1987, the NCAA imposed the "death penalty" on Southern Methodist University after it was revealed that football boosters had paid sorority women up to \$400 a weekend to have sex with high-school football recruits. "I thought the young woman was one of the team groupies who hang out with team members and do whatever [the team members] want," one of these recruits said of a woman who was gang raped during a recruiting visit.

When questioned about these sorts of practices, coaches reply not with a moral compassion for the young women, but with a fear that if they *don't* do it, all the schools that *do* will gain a competitive advantage by getting all the good football players. In a radio interview, for example, Terry Holland, former basketball coach and athletic director at the University of Virginia, echoed these sentiments when he commented on the hostess programs and other "use" of female students:

I think if you said to every AD in the country, "We're going to eliminate this practice of allowing whatever the group is called on campus to show football players and basketball players and other recruits around," every AD would buy into it immediately. The problem is it's very difficult for any institution, or even any conference, to react unilaterally to these types of suggestions because the competition is so fierce . . .

When one of the Boston Celtics was accused of rape, Massachusetts Superior Court Judge Robert Barton eloquently described this culture of protection:

The athletes are spoiled. They're pampered. . . . They've been spoiled everywhere they've gone. Everybody has covered for them. The coach has covered for them. The professors have covered for them. The police cover for them . . . to make sure that the star

quarterback or basketball player or baseball player is going to be able to play next week.

But there is plenty of evidence that implementing successful sexual assault prevention policies for athletes and eliminating the opportunities for such assaults (especially during recruiting visits) does not result in uncompetitive athletic programs. Athletic directors at a few premier universities with nationally competitive football programs—including the University of Southern California, Miami, Penn State, Ohio State, Michigan, UCLA, and Stanford—have instituted mandatory sexual assault prevention programs for their players. Most programs use outside experts; some are done by the university police department. Interestingly, though it's important that coaches be briefed both before and after, they generally do not attend the programs. If they are present, the athletes pay little attention to the presentation and focus entirely on the coaches' reactions. At Stanford, one of the more enlightened athletic programs in the nation, the players' parents are encouraged to attend these sessions with their sons and they are housed in the same hotel—and often on the same floor—as the recruits.

Many of these competitive programs have abandoned the female hostess programs that Colorado has only recently abandoned. As Mike Karowski, assistant athletic director at Notre Dame, told a reporter:

We've decided not to have a bunch of women hosting football players. There's no need. In fact there's no need to have one of these programs anywhere. We're not selling sex here, and when you present a group of attractive females to a high school football player, that's the impression you're giving them.

In order for such a program to work, though, the culture of protection must be challenged. And that can only happen when not only the campus administration but also the coaches make it a priority. "When the coach gives a clear and consistent message that such behavior will not be tolerated," one trainer told me, "and backs it up with immediate action, you set a climate that can prevent sexual assault. Maybe not

completely. But better." As one head coach of a Division I basketball team explained it to me:

Look, my team is only as good as next year's recruiting class. We need to recruit the best kids out there. Gotta get 'em. And if we have one screwup, one dumb guy who does something really stupid, there are a dozen parents who are going to say, "The heck with this guy and his program, I want something better for my boy." I want to prevent sexual assault because I don't want those kids going somewhere else.

One coach who gets it appears to have been Pete Carroll, coach at USC. When he coached the New England Patriots, Carroll also instituted mandatory annual sexual assault prevention training from the Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) Program—one of the most impressively comprehensive programs in the country.

Homosociality, Status, and Gang Rape

I'd always considered the "gang bang" a sort of urban legend. It's a staple of adolescent male lore, but I suspect it was so incomprehensible to me because it was simply impossible to fathom that a bunch of guys could stand in line, with erections, waiting their turn to have sex with a girl who actually wanted to have sex with all of them.

But gang rape is found often enough on college campuses to cause concern. Like binge drinking and hooking up, gang rapes tend to be far more rare in guys' lives after college—it seems to be a phenomenon that requires both the intense bonding of day-to-day residential homosociality (as in a single-sex dorm or fraternity house) and also the relative safety provided by the American college campus.

On campuses, the research suggests, gang rapes are most often perpetrated by men who participate in intensive all-male peer groups that foster rape-supportive behaviors and attitudes. "Gang rapes involving members of close-knit fraternities or athletic teams have been viewed as groupthink phenomena where members of high-status groups become

inculcated with the groups' moral superiority, invulnerability, and consensus" write psychologists Mary Koss and John Gaines. But not only there, of course. Dorm floors and off-campus apartments work just as well.

The gang bang actually confers status for the men involved. Anthropologist Peggy Reeves Sanday had been teaching anthropology at the University of Pennsylvania for a decade when a gang rape was reported to have occurred on her own campus. She spent the next couple of years interviewing every involved party—the women, the accused men, other students, the administrators, police, and court officers—to try to understand the different "frames" that each group brought to the event. Sanday, applying the same lens that she used in studying rape in pre-industrial societies, argued that rape was a cultural vehicle that initiated men into masculine roles and circumscribed aggression of young males toward one another by redirecting it toward women. "Whenever men build and give allegiance to a mystical, enduring, all-male social group, the disparagement of women is, invariably, an important ingredient of the mystical bond, and sexual aggression the means by which the bond is renewed." It was clear to her that the woman was the vehicle for a male-male experience; gang rape is "the glue that binds the brothers to the fraternity body."

In his coming-of-age memoir, *Makes Me Wanna Holler*, former street thug and now *Washington Post* journalist Nathan McCall recounts his own participation in a gang rape. At age 14, he was invited to what his friends called "running a train." In a carefully planned scenario, a girl was invited to what she thought was a party. She was assaulted and threatened. McCall felt compelled to join, afraid of being called soft, even though he felt too guilty to actually do anything. He faked intercourse. Afterward, though, he joined in the celebration of their conquest: "It sealed our bond . . . we served notice that we were a group of up and coming young cats."

Later, he reflected on gang bangs: Yes, they involved sex, but they weren't about sex. "It was another way for a guy to show the other fellas how cold and hard he was" by "using a member of one of the most vulnerable groups of human beings on the face of the earth—black females."

Gang rape cements the relations among men. But more than that, gang rape permits a certain homoerotic contact between men. Sometimes, it actually gets a little graphic. When one participant reported his pleasure at feeling the semen of his friends inside the woman as he raped her, one senses a distinctly homoerotic component. Was the woman merely the receptacle, the vehicle by which these men could have sex with one another and still claim heterosexuality?

On campus, gang rapes are often one type of "party rape," in recognition of where and when they seem to happen. But make no mistake about it: Party rapes don't just happen. They're planned. The victim has already been selected. "She is often drunk or high on drugs—in many cases, she is nearly or totally incapacitated and unable to understand or voice consent or resistance, let alone physically fight or escape from a group of stronger people," writes Robin Warshaw. In a now-classic study, Menachem Amir found that 71 percent of the gang rapes were planned; 11 percent were partially planned. Only 16 percent were spontaneous.

Alcohol is also almost always part of the equation. Alcohol may "release pent-up aggression, dull one's perceptions, and make one more vulnerable to peer pressure," says rape expert Andrea Parrot. As we have seen, alcohol can also be a strategy to avoid responsibility. And it can be used as part of a deliberate rape strategy. As sports scholar Todd Crosset writes, "[d]rinking may be part of some men's premeditated strategy to coerce women into unwanted sex or to be violent; it may also be a convenient and socially accepted means by which men can distance themselves from their violence."

So, athletes or frat guys are more prone to gang rape not because they are athletes or frat guys, but because being frat guys or athletes confers on them an elite status that is easily translated into entitlement, and because the cement of their brotherhood is intense, and intensely sexualized, bonding.

Those same guys are often fond of quoting that stirring passage from Shakespeare's *Henry V*, in which the young king inspires his badly outnumbered and overmatched soldiers to fight at Agincourt, proclaiming "he who sheds his blood with me shall be my brother." Yes, the cement of men's bonding is, as Churchill said, composed of blood, sweat, and

tears. And apparently, in some cases, semen. How debased has become King Hal's noble proclamation.

Antioch Rules

What about everyone else? Challenging the culture of entitlement, breaking through the culture of silence, and dismantling the culture of protection involves everyone on campus.

A few years ago, Antioch College, long a bastion of educational progressivism, had decided that consent to sexual activity required more than not saying no. It required that people say *yes*—to everything. Verbal consent, the new Code of Conduct stated, is required for any sexual contact that is not “mutually and simultaneously initiated.” “Do not take silence as consent; it isn't,” the policy stated.

When this rule was first enacted at Antioch, the reaction was overwhelmingly negative. The anti-feminist chorus howled in derision at feminist protectionism gone berserk. Charlton Heston added it to a list of campus political correctness completely out of control. Can you believe, he told an audience at Harvard in 1999, that “at Antioch College in Ohio, young men seeking intimacy with a coed must get verbal permission at each step of the process from kissing to petting to final copulation . . . all clearly spelled out in a printed college directive.”

Women on college campuses generally applauded the change. Guys, however, did not seem happy at all. “If I have to ask those questions I won't get what I want,” blurted out one young man to a reporter. But is explicit consent the wettest blanket ever thrown over adolescent sexual fumbblings? Is hearing “yes” a turnoff? Is hearing yes to “Can I touch you there?” “Would you like me to?” “Will you lick me?” “Can I fuck you?” a guarantor of instant detumescence? Probably not.

Interestingly, when Canada introduced similar language into its *national* policy on sexual assault, no howls of protest seem to have gone up from the millions of Canadian men who were suddenly going to be deprived of that hard-earned sex. Indeed, it seems to work just fine.

And Antioch students seem to have taken their new sexual assault policy in stride. Instead of saying, “Do you want to have sex?” which,

admittedly, might be a little forward for people just beginning their sexual adventure, they simply say, “Do you want to implement the policy?” Perhaps it's that sense of humor that will break the ice.

Those rules of sexual conduct—simply codifying what would be civil behavior in any decent society—only hint at the conversations we need to be having, both on campus and off. Most of the time, on campus today, the programs on “Rape Awareness” focus on women—helping them to reduce their risk of sexual abuse. Women learn that they have to pay attention to their surroundings, monitor their drinking, and make sure they are safe. Such an emphasis is, of course, necessary and important.

But also incomplete. What do such programs assume about men? They assume that *unless* women take these preventive steps to self-police, guys, those basically out-of-control predatory sexual animals, will prevail. Or, maybe a little better, that while most guys wouldn't even fantasize about sexual assault, let alone do it, neither will they lift a finger to interrupt it, challenge other guys, or in any way disturb that enabling code of silence that protects the bros, no matter what they may do to the hos.

I think we can do better, and ask a little more of men. Nowhere is this better expressed than on a “splash guard” that a colleague devised for Rape Awareness Week at his university. (A “splash guard” is placed in a urinal in a men's room to sanitize it, and prevent splatter.) He had thousands made up for every public urinal on campus with a simple and hopeful slogan: “You hold the power to stop rape in your hand.”