



Consent means more than a simple “yes”

by Layla Saqibuddin

According to Rape Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN), consent is an agreement between participants to engage in sexual activity. It doesn't have to be verbal, but communicating verbally and agreeing to different sexual activities can help both you and your partner know and respect each other's boundaries

On the other hand, many believe that as long as they don't hear the word “no,” all sorts of sexual activity is okay to do. The truth is, however, that's not enough to “give” consent or initiate sexual activity.

According to Planned Parenthood, consent is as easy as “FRIES.” F stands for, “freely given.” This means that doing something sexual is a decision that should be made without pressure, force, manipulation, or while intoxicated.

R stands for Reversible. “Anyone can change their mind about what they want to do, at any time. Even if you've done it before or are in the middle of having sex,” the Planned Parenthood site states.

I stands for “Informed.” This means be honest. For example, “if someone says they'll use a condom and then they don't, that's not consent.”

Next we have E, which stands for Enthusiastic. If someone isn't excited, or really into it, that's also not consent.

18% of college students think someone has consented as long as they don't say “No.”

Lastly, S stands for Specific. Being specific means “saying yes to one thing like going to the bedroom to make out.” On the other hand it “doesn't mean they've said yes to others like oral sex.”

Hence, without consent, sexual activity, including touching, is sexual assault or rape. According to the Washington Post, however, between January and March of 2015, 18% of college students think someone has consented as long as they don't say

“No.”

According to the Washington Post, partners try to read and assume body language. John Indermuehle, a student at the University of Massachusetts at Lowell who was quoted from the Washington post said, “most men wouldn't think to ask explicitly for consent if it was clear the other party was interested.” Instead, “men try to read body language,” said Indermuehle.

Indermuehle points out many assume body language, take advantage, and don't communicate. Saalika Khan, a student at Towson University, believed her experience showed how important it is to give consent. A few years ago, a man tried to sneak into her bed while she was asleep, putting his arms around her and kissing her. She slapped and punched him.

“I don't know why guys think, ‘If I just do it, she'll do it, too,’” Khan said. “I never understood that. There has to be a conversation.”

High school students shared their opinion on what consent is.

“I think that consent is coherent when there's a very clear statement

CONSENT

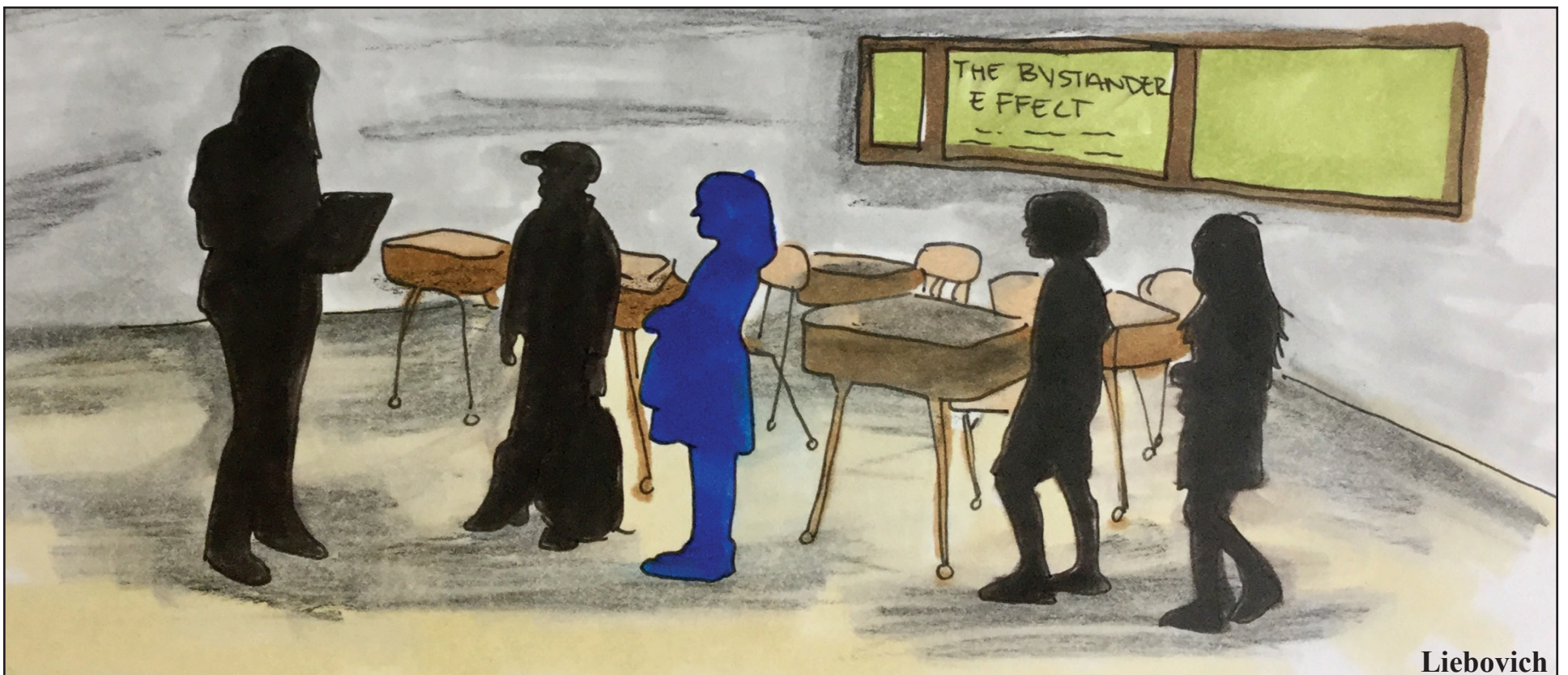
- F**reely given
- R**eversible
- I**nformed
- E**nthusiastic
- S**pecific

Planned Parenthood

made by you that you would like to continue sexual advances or activity in a sober state with a clear mind” said junior Jeremy Lau.

Moreover, Senior Anahi Toolabian believes in order to have safe sex, partners should be open about their needs and wants from the other person.

“We can also prevent sexual assault by educating students what to do in certain situations. We should also talk about what we would do in certain situations and what consent it. Hence, we can just respect our significant other in a more meaningful and safer way,” said Toolabian.



Liebovich

Former LA teacher sentenced to 35 years

by Eva Rotyburg

Students growing up on the North Shore usually go to school with a sense of safety and trust in their educational environment. However, a recent arrest of a teacher in the community reminds us that we are not completely sheltered.

Matthew Laird, 33, was sentenced to 35 years in prison on Apr. 17, after admitting to raping a student.

He is a former teacher from North Shore Academy in Highland Park and Loyola Academy in Wilmette, and he worked as a quiz bowl coach and club sponsor at Stevenson High School in Lincolnshire.

Laird pleaded guilty to charges of aggravated criminal sexual assault, and criminal sexual assault, and possession of child pornography in exchange for prosecutors dropping dozens of other charges, according to the Wilmette Beacon.

Laird was first arrested last October following a tip in January

2018 that someone had uploaded child pornography on a adult pornography website.

Detectives tracked the upload to an internet address associated with his home in Glenview, and after attaining a search warrant, seized electronic devices containing hundreds of videos and images of child pornography, according to the Wilmette Beacon.

The harrowing results of the trial have had an impact on students attending Laird's places of employment.

‘It's important to recognize that we shouldn't be surprised something like this is happening in our area. We aren't immune from sexual assaults’

Ari Marcelo, a sophomore at Huntley High School, attended North Shore Academy and was a student of Laird's as a sophomore. Marcelo said Laird “was very friendly with everyone and liked to talk a lot.”

Laird taught English at Loyola Academy from 2011 to 2014. In 2014, he began as a teacher's aide at North Shore Academy, part of the North Shore Special Education District, NNSSED, that included students from 18 public school districts in the area.

Laird became a teacher at the school in 2016-17. In early October 2018, NNSSED Superintendent Kurt Schneider said the district immediately placed Laird on administrative leave after the original tip.

Marcelo said, “He seemed to be a little touchy. Like one of those teachers who casually touches you on the shoulder. Thinking about it now I just get creeped out because it seems so evident now, but it was sort of normal then.”

Schneider confirmed Laird was fired by the district on Oct. 10, 2018

because he refused to cooperate with NNSSED's internal investigation into the allegations.

“We have no confirmation at this time that any North Shore Academy students are involved in this,” Schneider said in a statement on Wednesday, Oct. 24, 2018. “From the minute we learned of this investigation, we have worked closely to provide computers, photos, personnel files, etc., to aid the police.”

Laird began a sexual relationship with a high school freshman in 2008 while working at Loyola.

After she graduated and moved away for college, she agreed to spend the night at Laird's house while on a visit home, but she made it clear that she had no interest in having sex with him, prosecutors said.

The woman said she woke up to find Laird sexually assaulting her, and Laird was found to have recorded a video of the rape and uploaded it onto the internet, prosecutors said.

After Laird was jailed with no bail on charges of raping the former high school student, investigators

found evidence of additional victims, according to prosecutors.

He was subsequently indicted on additional counts of sexual assault and possession of child pornography before entering his guilty plea on Apr. 17.

Martina Lobou, a sophomore at Stevenson High School, where he was a Scholastic Bowl Coach, said, “It's hard to believe a normal adult at my school actually did these things.”

The events also have hit students at New Trier. Adhishree Kathikar, a sophomore, said “It's pretty scary, the possibility of something like that happening in our community is something people don't see.”

Alanna Goldstein, a senior, agreed.

“It's important to recognize that we shouldn't be surprised something like this is happening in our area. We aren't immune from sexual assaults.”