

CONSENT!

A study of consent violations in de Dutch BDSM-scene



Abstract:

In the Dutch scene, pre-negotiated limits and safeword are ignored on a regular basis. Likewise, many kinksters have experienced scens that. With hindsight, went too far. This is not always considered bad, and it 's certainly not always experienced as abuse. Consent is a less absolute given as usually assumed. Condent is the norm, but not always actual practice.

A substantial part of the consent violations happens at parties. The idea that parties are safe places for a first scene should be revised at least a little. Kinksters often doubt consent in scenes by other people. Some of those who doubt take action, some don't. Yet those who don't often do so after discussing the situation with others or a DM. There is no evidence for a massive bystander effect.

A small minority has ever felt the need to use a party safeword. However, this is not the case for all victims of consent violations at parties. Although a party safeword could contrubute to preventin consent violations, ist sure is no cure all.

KINKYMINDS

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Coverillustration: text: Pluu / image: Senoeni. The illustration depicts a scene gone wrong due to the similarities in sound between the words *Geel* (yellow) and *Geil* (horny).

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Preface

I hope this study contributes to the (statistical) knowledge on the SM-scene in The Netherlands and Belgium. There isn't very much data to begin with. There is some foreign research, but in The Netherlands interest seems to be a bit lacking and researchers that do survey the scene rarely come back to it with their results. Depending on the reception of this study, I'm strongly considering doing some more.

I'd like to thank all the respondents for taking the time to take the survey. The high response certainly contributes to the value of the study. I also would like to thank Pluu, Marijke, Nichi and Voleuse for proof reading the earlier drafts of this report, and Voleuse also for doing the reliability analysis. Of course, only I am responsible for the analysis and conclusions of this report.

The most important conclusion is that consent is less black and white as one might have expected, considering the mantra's of *Safe, Sane and Consensual* and *Risk Aware Consensual Kink*. The temptation to call this report *Fifty shades of consent* was huge, but, with some difficulty, one I resisted

March 2013,
Guilty

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1. Introduction

When you ask a kinkster about the difference between BDSM and abuse, the answer is likely to be: “mutual consent”. Opinions may differ about whether or not BDSM should always be safe as there are quite a few proponents of a risk aware approach over safety, but S&M without the consent of all participants is practically unthinkable. Consent is holy, or so it seems. Despite that image, research by the NCSF¹ showed that amongst kinksters in the US 30% had experienced a violation of a pre-negotiated limit and 15% a violation of a safeword. High numbers, for something that many if not all kinksters consider deadly sins. Unfortunately, the NCSF doesn't go any deeper than these figures. It is not clear, for instance, if people considered those consent violations to be a bad thing, or experienced them as abuse.

At the same time, there has been some discussion in the Dutch scene about consent. Party attendees seem to question sometimes if the play of other attendees is consensual. And similar doubts sometimes arise about pictures at Fetlife. With one incident of a scene that – looking backward – went way too far, the question was posed if there is a bystander effect in the Dutch scene. When in serious doubt about consent, do we act, or do we look the other way? Intervening directly in someone else's scene is usually not allowed, but do we notify a DM? What do we do if we can't find one (Dutch parties don't always have DM's, and where they have Dms they are not always clearly visible)? Introducing a party safeword has been suggested to prevent consent violations at parties, a safeword that people can use when a (play) partner violates someones limit(s) and doesn't respond to the pre-negotiated safeword.

The importance of consent clearly shows from the answers to the question “How important do you think consent is in BDSM?” Obviously, virtually everyone considers consent to be (very) important.

(N=346)	Respondents (%)
Not important	1,2
Somewhat important	2,6
Important	20,8
Very important	75,4

Table 1.1: The importance of consent in BDSM

Respondents were also asked if there is enough attention for consent in the BDSM-scene. A majority thinks there is, but almost a quarter doesn't know.

(N=338)	Respondents (%)
Yes	69,2
No	7,1
Don't know	23,7

Table 1.2: Is there enough attention for consent in the BDSM scene

Despite all discussions and the great importance attached to the notion of consent, there are no figures on consent violations in the Dutch scene. This explorative study tries to provide such

¹NCSF 2013, NCSF Consent Counts Survey, https://ncsfreedom.org/images/stories/pdfs/Consent%20Counts/CC_Docs_New_011513/consent%20survey%20analysis.pdf

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figures. The research questions for this study are:

- What is the frequency of consent violations in the Dutch (language) BDSM scene?
- How are these consent violations experienced by those involved?
- How often do people doubt the consensuality of other peoples' scenes?
- How often is intervening in other peoples' scenes considered?
- How often do we actually intervene in other peoples' scenes?
- Can a party safeword contribute to preventing consent violations and doubts about consensuality?

To study this, a survey was held. The respondents were selected based on self-selection, anyone who wished to participate, could participate. The survey was advertised at:

- Two general BDSM webforums.
- The largest BDSM social media site
- A BDSM webforum aimed at young people (TNG, age 16-35)

At the social media site the survey was advertised, amongst others, in a group for (personal) ads with a very broad audience, a group specifically aimed at Belgium and a group more aimed at people with long term relationships. Due to the time line system, we may expect that many people active on the site were reached.

This method was selected for practical reasons, but limits the results of the study. Firstly, only active online present kinksters were reached. This group is unlikely to be representative for the whole community. Secondly, there is a chance that people who have experienced consent violations were more interested in participating in the survey than people who have not. This means that the figures may be somewhat higher than in the community as a whole, and they should be treated as a maximum and they cannot necessarily be generalised to the whole population. We will return to this in section 6.1.

The survey was open for two weeks, to prevent that only people with daily online activity would respond.

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2. Response and background characteristics

The survey was started by 513 respondents, of which 355 finished the survey. An extremely large proportion responded within the first few days. On the one hand this means that many of the respondents are online daily, on the other hand it may be an indication of the importance attached to this study. In section 6.1 we will briefly analyse differences between early and late respondents.

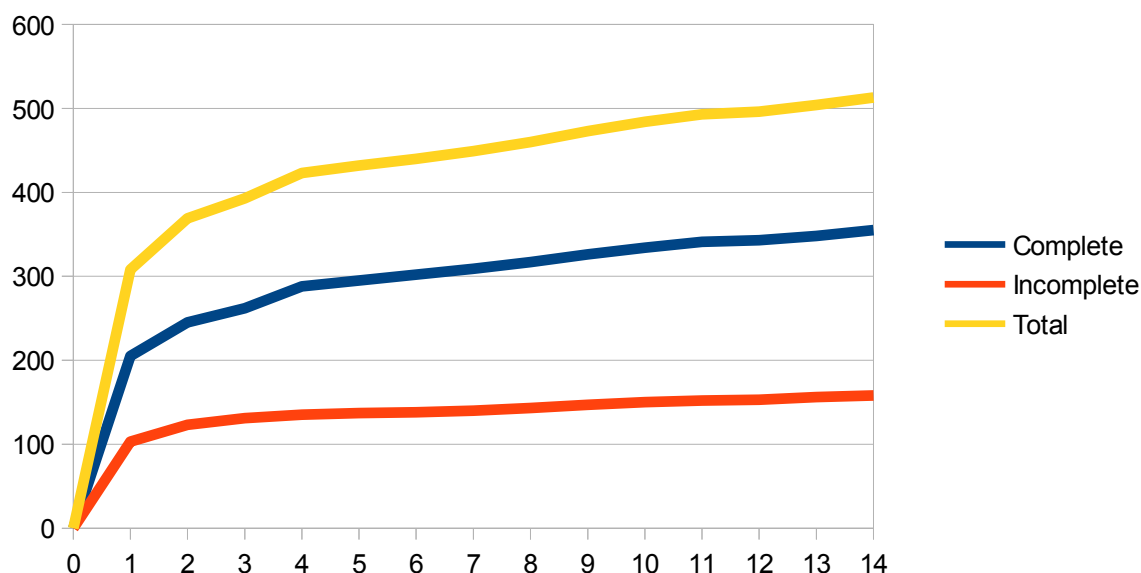


Figure 2.1: Response over the course of 14 days

Respondents that quit the survey prematurely usually did not answer the most important questions. Incomplete surveys therefore have been disregarded in the analysis. Of the respondents, a limited number of background characteristics were asked, which are described below.

Gender and orientation

Of all respondents 39,6% were male, 58,4% female. A small percentage identifies as neither, for instance as “genderfluid”. This group is too small for any inferences and is not included in crosstab analyses for gender. With regard to BDSM-orientation 24,9% identifies mostly as dominant, 51,6% as submissive and 21,8% as switch. Here too, a small percentage identifies differently, such as “kinkster”, “hedonist” or “InnerChild”. In a few instances people identified differently as bottom or sadist. Because for this study the role is of primary importance, these cases were recoded into dominant or submissive. After recoding, 1,7% remains coded as “different”. This group is too small for inferences and was not included in crosstab analysis for orientation.

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There is a statistically significant relation between gender and orientation:

(N=334)	Dom (%)	Sub (%)	Switch (%)	Total (%)
Male	50	27,6	22,4	100
Female	9,5	70,5	20	100
Pierson chi-square	79,03	df. 2	asymp.sig (2-sided)	.000
Likelihood ratio	81,5	df. 2	asymp.sig (2-sided)	.000

Table 2.1: Gender versus orientation

Men are significantly more often dominant, women more often submissive. This confirms the often held image that dominant women are relatively scarce in the BDSM community. Male dominants are also more scarce than female submissives.

In absolute terms too we see this scarcity: there are less female dominant (19) than male subs (37) and less male dominants (67) than female subs (141).

Residence

The survey was aimed at the Dutch speaking scene and was advertised in a Belgian group as well. Of the respondents 86,3% live in The Netherlands, 12,8% in Belgium. A small group (too small for any inferences) lives elsewhere, such as in Norway, India, The UK, or “the border region”).

Age and experience

Beacuse age and experience aren't the same (there are young people with years of experience and older people who have just started), we didn't just ask about age, but also about experience. With the exception of the oldest age groups all groups are relatively well represented.

(N=355)	Respondents (%)
18-30	35,1
31-40	23,6
41-50	25,9
51-60	13,2
61-70	2,3

Table 2.2: Age of the respondents

Likewise, all experience groups are reasonably well represented, with the exception of those with less than a year of experience, and those with between 15 and 20 years of experience. A few respondents gave a different answer, most often people with more experience, but who had taken a break over the years.

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<i>(N=355)</i>	<i>Respondents (%)</i>
<i>Les than 1 year</i>	6,9
<i>1 to 4 years</i>	30,3
<i>5 to 9 years</i>	26,3
<i>10 to 14 years</i>	14,7
<i>15 to 20 years</i>	8,4
<i>20 years or more</i>	12,1
<i>Something else</i>	1,2

Table 2.3: Experience of the respondents

Conclusions

The response to the survey was pretty good. When interpreting the results, however, we should keep in mind the respondents are relative often female and submissive. There is a statistically significant relation between gender and BDSM-orientation.

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3. Personal experiences with consent violations

In this study respondents were asked about three types of situations that can be designated as consent violations. The first two are, analogous to the NCSF study

- Have you ever had a pre-negotiated limit violated in one of your scenes
- Have you ever had a safeword ignored in one of your scenes.

Both are obvious examples of consent violations, as there is a huge consensus in the scene that pre-negotiated limits and safewords are not to be ignored (unless otherwise negotiated, see section 6.1).

But sometimes consent is more implicit and pre-scene negotiations can be brief. Therefore we have asked about a third situation as well, the situation in which no pre-negotiated limits or safewords were ignored, but the respondent, with hindsight, still feels the scene went too far. In such a situation, a consent violation *may* have happened. It is possible that a limit that was not explicitly pre-negotiated was violated, or that the submissive was no longer able to use a safeword. It is also possible that such an incident was just sheer bad luck. A scene gone wrong or a case of severe miscommunication. For this type, therefore, it is even more important to ask how the violation was experienced by the participants. Context is everything here.

This all means that consent in this study was limited to consent *within* a scene or relationship. Not included were experiences with consent violations in situations where there wasn't consent about having a scene in the first place (like someone who tries to dominate someone else out of the blue, or sexual abuse outside of an S&M context).

3.1 The frequency of consent violations

What is the frequency of consent violations? In the survey, we asked about all three types of consent violations. Clearly, ignoring pre-negotiated limits is the most prevalent, ignoring safewords the least. Even then, 20% of the respondents have experienced an ignored safeword at least once. Limits and safewords are obviously not holy. Almost 40% of the respondents has experienced a scene that with hindsight went too far, without a pre-negotiated limit or safeword having been ignored,

Type	Limit (% N=342)	Safeword (N=331)	Too far (N=328)
Percentage "Yes"	45,6	21,8	39,6

Table 3.1.1: Respondents (%) who experienced a consent violation

We should note that the response decreases per type of consent violation. This could mean that some of the respondents that experienced an ignored safeword or a scene that went too far used that situation at the question about pre-negotiated limits (and, hence, didn't answer the other questions). It is therefore possible that the figures for pre-negotiated limits are a bit too high, and those for scenes that went too far a bit too low.

We also asked how often the respondents have experienced such consent violations. Not everyone who has experienced a consent violation answered these questions. Of those who did, many had experienced multiple consent violations of that type.

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<i>Antwoord</i>	<i>Limit (N=157)</i>	<i>Safeword (N=70)</i>	<i>Too far (N=135)</i>
<i>Once</i>	38,9	51,4	57,8
<i>Multiple times</i>	56,1	42,9	37,8
<i>Regularly</i>	4,5	5,7	4,4
<i>Often</i>	0,6	0	

Table 3.1.2: Consent violations, how often?

Again, the question is how to interpret the non-response. Possibly, part of the respondents with just one consent violation per type may have skipped these questions. In that case there could be bias towards multiple experiences with consent violations. Even so, it is clear that a substantial part of the respondents has experienced more than one consent violation of one or more types.

An interesting question is how many respondents have experienced multiple *types* of consent violation. To answer that question, we have created a scale. For every yes on a *type* of consent violation, a point was awarded.

<i>Consent score</i>	<i>Respondentes(%)</i>
<i>0</i>	35,6
<i>1</i>	30,8
<i>2</i>	25
<i>3</i>	8,7
<i>(N=312)</i>	

Table 3.1.3: Number of types of consent violations per respondent

This divides the respondents in about three equal groups. About a third has not experienced even a single type of consent violation, almost a third experienced one or more consent violations of one type, and over one third experienced one or more consent violations of two or three types. Almost 65% has experience with at least one type of consent violation. If we limit ourselves to ignored pre-negotiated limits and safewords, then 50,6% has experienced at least one of them.

3.2 The seriousness of consent violations

The high percentages of consent violations in both this study as the NCSF study raise the question how people experienced these consent violations. How bad were they? Limits and safewords are pretty much holy and if *so many* kinksters experience violation of them, the question is whether or not the reports include a lot of very minor, relatively unimportant cases.

In this study we've tried to look at the significance of the violations in several ways. First of all, for every type of consent violation, we asked how bad it was for the least severe occasion, the most severe occasion and on average. Respondents could answer how bad they felt about this consent violation on a ten point scale.

Apart from that, we've asked if the consent violations have ever been experienced as abuse, if respondents have ever considered filing charges with the police and if they have ever actually pressed charges.

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Ignored pre-negotiated limits

In the table below is summarised how bad the respondents felt their experiences with ignored limits were.

	<i>Least severe (N=151)</i>	<i>Most severe (N=148)</i>	<i>On average (N=151)</i>
<i>1</i>	24,5	6,8	8,6
<i>2</i>	13,9	9,5	15,9
<i>3</i>	13,2	10,1	10,6
<i>4</i>	11,3	3,4	7,3
<i>5</i>	4	4,1	9,9
<i>6</i>	6,6	6,8	8,6
<i>7</i>	4,6	8,1	8,6
<i>8</i>	8,6	10,1	10,6
<i>9</i>	4,6	12,8	9,9
<i>10</i>	8,6	28,4	9,9
<i>Average score</i>	4,26	6,68	5,36
<i>Standard deviation</i>	3,04	3,18	2,95

Table 3.2.1: How bad were the experiences with ignored limits

This provides a much more nuanced picture than the scores from section 3.1. There are several clear peaks in the scores. For the least severe experience for 1-4, for the most severe experience at 2-3 and especially 8-10. The least severe experience, therefore, is usually not so bad. But even the most severe occasion is not always experienced as (very) bad. But, for some 50% of the respondents who experienced an ignored pre-negotiated limit, the most severe occasion really was bad, despite the low average score.

This picture is pretty much confirmed when we look at how many respondents have ever experienced an ingored pre-negotiated limit as abuse.

<i>(N=158)</i>	<i>Respondents (%)</i>
<i>No</i>	65,8 (84,57)
<i>Yes, once</i>	22,2 (10)
<i>Yes, multiple times</i>	7 (3,12)
<i>Yes, always</i>	5,1 (2,29)

Table 3.2.2: Ignored limit experienced as abuse (% yes, between parentheses % of total population)

About a third of the respondents who had a pre-negotiated limit ignored (or 15,43% of the population) has ever experienced that as abuse.

	<i>Considered (N=154)</i>	<i>Done (N=139)</i>
<i>No</i>	89	96,4
<i>Yes, once</i>	9,7	3,6
<i>Yes, multiple times</i>	0,6	0
<i>Yes, always</i>	0,6	0

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Table 3.2.3: Ignored limits and filing charges

Slightly over ten percent of those who experienced a violation of a pre-negotiated limit has considered filing charges with the police. Only 3,6% has actually done so (N=5). Not everyone who had a limit ignored answered the question. Possibly, some people who never considered charges skipped the question, so the percentages may be even lower.

Ignored safewords

In the table below is summarised how bad the respondents felt their experiences with ignored safewords were.

	<i>Least severe (N=68)</i>	<i>Most severe (N=68)</i>	<i>Average (N=69)</i>
1	25	14,7	17,4
2	10,3	5,9	7,2
3	5,9	5,9	5,8
4	2,9	1,5	4,3
5	7,4	4,4	10,1
6	5,9	2,9	10,1
7	7,4	13,2	8,7
8	10,3	7,4	8,7
9	2,9	8,8	4,3
10	22,1	35,3	23,2
<i>Average</i>	5,28	6,74	5,8
<i>Standard deviation</i>	3,54	3,43	3,31

Table 3.2.4: How bad were the experiences with ignored safewords

Again, the picture is much more nuanced. Opinions are still divided, even the most severe experience is not considered bad by everyone. Contrasted with ignored limits we see that the least severe experience is considered worse than with ignored limits, while the difference for the most severe case is less. In general, an ignored safeword is considered to be worse than an ignored limit.

This picture is confirmed again, when we take into account how many respondents have experienced an ignored safeword as abuse.

<i>(N=71)</i>	<i>Respondents (%)</i>
No	62 (92,28)
Yes, once	23,9 (4,86)
Yes, multiple times	8,5 (1,71)
Yes, always	5,6 (1,14)

Table 3.2.5: Ignored safeword experienced as abuse (between parentheses % of total population)?

Of the respondents with an ignored safeword, 38% experienced that as abuse at least once. That's 7,71% of the total population. More than 11% of the respondents with an ignored safeword have considered filing charges and 2,9% has actually done so. Interestingly, although ignored safewords seem to be experienced as being worse than ignored limits, there are less actual charges (however,

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differences are unlikely to be significant).

	<i>Considered</i> (% <i>, N=71</i>)	<i>Done</i> (% <i>, N=68</i>)
<i>No</i>	88,7	97,1
<i>Yes, once</i>	11,3	2,9
<i>Yes, multiple times</i>	0	0
<i>Yes, always</i>	0	0

Table 3.2.6: Ignored safewords and filing charges

Scenes gone too far

In the table below is summarised how bad the respondents felt their experiences with scenes gone too far were.

	<i>Least severe</i>	<i>Most severe</i>	<i>Average</i>
<i>1</i>	11,2	4,3	5,8
<i>2</i>	6,4	4,3	7,4
<i>3</i>	8,8	5,2	8,3
<i>4</i>	15,2	7,8	8,3
<i>5</i>	11,2	4,3	15,7
<i>6</i>	9,6	11,3	11,6
<i>7</i>	12,8	20,9	17,4
<i>8</i>	12,8	20,9	14
<i>9</i>	6,4	9,6	5,8
<i>10</i>	5,6	11,3	5,8
<i>Average</i>	5,3	6,62	5,7
<i>Standard deviation</i>	2,65	2,45	2,45

Table 3.2.7: How bad were the experiences with scenes gone too far

Again, a much more nuanced picture emerges. The scores are, however, less extreme than for ignored limits and safewords, the peak being more in the middle ranges (also confirmed by the lower standard deviation). Although the average scores don't differ much, there are clearly less respondents who found it not bad at all or very bad, but a big group that found it to be “medium bad”.

That picture is confirmed when we take into account how many respondents ever experienced a scene gone too far as abuse:

	<i>Respondenten</i> (% <i>, N=137</i>)
<i>No</i>	78,1 (91,43)
<i>Yes, once</i>	16,1 (6,29)
<i>Yes, multiple times</i>	5,8 (2,29)
<i>Yes, always</i>	0 (0)

Table 3.2.8: Scenes gone to far experienced as abuse (between parentheses % of total populatiom)

Only 22% of the respondents with a scene gone too far ever experienced that as abuse. That is 8,5% of the population. Again, the picture is confirmed by the considered and actual charges.

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	<i>Considered (% , N=133)</i>	<i>Done (% , N=131)</i>
<i>No</i>	97	98,5
<i>Yes, once</i>	3	1,5
<i>Yes, multiple times</i>	0	0
<i>Yes, always</i>		0

Table 3.2.9: Scenes gone too far and filing charges.

How often a “bad” consent violation

To get an even better view on how many people have experienced a *bad* consent violation, we have recoded the questions into a new variable, looking at the respondents who scored a 7 or higher at the most sever experience. This indicates how many repondents have had a really bad experience with a consent violation.

	<i>Limits</i>	<i>Safeword</i>	<i>Too far</i>
<i>Respondents (%)</i>	13	6,5	3,7

Table 3.2.10: How often a “bad” consent violation (% of total population)?

Of course, if we use the recoded variables as a scale we can also see how many respondents have experienced at least one bad consent violation. That goes for 14,6% of the respondents. For ignored limits and safewords there is a strong correlation with the percentage that has experienced a consent vialtion as abuse (14,43%, 7,71% and 8,58%). For scenes gone too far, consent violations are clearly less often experienced as bad, compared with how often they are considered abuse. When, in a similar way, we look at how many respondents have had at least one experience they considered abuse, that is 20,6%.

3.3 Consent violations and background variables

In this section we describe the relations between consent violations and the background variables: Gender, orientation, residence, age ans experience. The (many) tables for this section can be found in the appendix to this report.

Gender

Are women more often victim of consent violations? The usual theory is that men can more readily defend themselves, but on the other hand, the availability of relatively few partners for male subs might incline them to accept more. The picture that emerges from this study is that women do indeed experience consent violations more often than men. For ignored limits and safewords, the relation is significant².

Women also find the least severe and average consent violation worse than men. For the most severe experience, the picture varies. For ignored limits, women find that worse, for ignored safewords, men. For scenes gone too far, differences are neglectable. The significance of these differences has not been tested.

² Limit: Chi-square 7,740, df. 1, Asymp.sig. (2 sided) ,005, Too far: (Chi-square 6,018, df.1. Symp.sig (2-sided ,014)

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For looking at abuse, the variables have been recoden to two groups (never experienced as abuse and at least once experienced as abuse). For ignored limits, women have experienced that as abuse significantly³ more often than men. For ignores safewords, we see the same pattern (but not significant). For scenes gone too far, the relation is significant again⁴.

For filing charges the numbers are too small for drawing significant inferences. For ingnored limits and safewords, all respondents who considered filing charges were women, for scenes gone too far there was also one man who considered filing charges (out of 4).

Concluding, it seems that women are more often the victim of consent violations and experience that as abuse more often. We cannot infere from this study if women experience objectively worse consent violations than men or if they subjectively experience them differently.

Orientation

For ignored limits and safeword we clearly see that subs experience them significantly⁵ more often than dominants. For scenes gone too far there is no significant relation. An interesting question is if dominants provide socially acceptable answers (a dominant who experienced such a consent violation admits his own guilt), experience situations differently than subs, or whether a relatively small group of dominants are responsible for a relatively large amount of consent violations. Switches, interestingly, experience the most scenes gone too far.

Subs experience consent violation as worse than dominants. Switches are in between for ignored limits and safewords, but experience scenes gone too far as less bad than both dominants and subs. Dominants and switches consider scenes gone too far the worst, subs ignored safewords.

It is also clear that subs have most often experienced a consent violation at least once as abuse, for ignored safewords even more than half of those who experienced such a situation. Switches follow, and dominants come last. These relations are significant⁶ for all types of consent violations. This might indicate that dominants interpret situations differently than subs.

Amongst the respondents who considered filing charges, by far most were sub, a few switch, and a single dominant. In the case of the dominant, however, it concerned charges about a retaliation by a sub who experienced a scene as gone too far, not charges about the scene itself.

In summary, subs experience more consent violations than dominants, consider them worse and more often as abuse. The question remains how to explain that, given that all consent violations require two or more involved parties.

Residence

There is no relation between residence and experience with consent violations. The respondents from Belgium considered ignored limits less bad than respondents from The Netherland. For ignored safewords and scenes gone too far, that was the other way around.

Belgians who have experienced a consent violation experienced that as abuse more often than

3 Chi-Square 4,877, df.1, Asymp.sig (2-sided) ,027

4 Chi-square 6,346, df. 1, Asymp.sig ,012

5 Gren: Ci-square 6,072, df.2 Aymp.sig (2-sided) ,048, Safeword: Chi-square 10,441, df.3, Asymp.sig (2-sided) ,005

6 Limit: Chi-square 11,168, df.2, Asymp.sig (2-sided) ,004. Safeword: Chi-square 9,612, df. 2. Asymp.sig (2-sided) ,008. Too far: Chi-square 7,872, df.2, Asymp.sig (2-sided) ,020

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Dutch respondents, however that relation is only significant for ignored safewords⁷. Respondents from both countries considered filing charges, but the number of Belgians in the sample is too small for inferences.

Summarising there seem to be few, and at most weak, relations between residence and consent violations.

Age

At a first glance there doesn't seem to be a relation between age and ignored limits, a positive relation with ignored safewords, a negative relation with scenes gone too far, significant only for ignored safewords (with two cells with an expected count less than 5). So we can only speculate: It seems that older respondents have more often experienced an ignored safeword, younger respondents more often a scene gone too far. There is no significant relation between age and having experienced consent violations as abuse.

The number of respondents is too small to make inferences about age and how bad violations were and filing charges.

Experience

As with age, we only analysed the frequency of experiences and whether or not they were experienced as abuse. For ignored limits and scenes gone too far, we see that the percentage of respondents having such an experience first rises with experience, but decreases for respondents with more than 15 years experience. These relations are significant. For ignored safewords there is a significant, possibly positive relation, but with one cell with an expected count less than 5⁸. There is no significant relation between experience and having experienced a consent violation as abuse.

3.4 The location of consent violations

An interesting question is *where* consent violations take place. One of the mantras in the world of BDSM is that a play party is a safe place for a first scene, due the presence of other people and DM's. Respondents could check multiple answers.

	<i>Limit</i>	<i>Safeword</i>	<i>Too far</i>
<i>own home</i>	50,6 (23,1)	43,1 (9,16)	42,3 (16,6)
<i>(play) partner's home</i>	57,7 (25,9)	54,2 (11,3)	50 (20,8)
<i>(play) party</i>	28,2 (13)	26,4 (5,9)	30 (11,8)
<i>in public</i>	14,1 (6,5)	5,6 (1,1)	5,4 (2,0)

Table 3.4.1: Location of consent violations (% of respondents who experienced a consent violation of that type, between parentheses % of total population)

Clearly the own home and the home of the play partner are most often given as the location of consent violations. Still, over a quarter of the people who had a consent violation say this has (also) happened at a party. Of the total population, 13% has experienced an ignored limit at a party, 5,9%

7 Chi-square 8,201, df.1, Asymp.sig (2-sided) ,004

8 Limit: Chi-square 18,805, df. 5, Asymp.sig. ,002. Safeword: Chi-square 18,408, df. 5, Asymp.sig (2-sided) ,002, 1 cell expected count below 5 (4,91). Too far: Chi-square 12,071, df. 5, Asymp.sig. (2-sided) ,015

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an ignored safeword and 11,8% a scene gone too far.

3.5 Filing charges

In open questions, the respondents who considered filing charges were asked about their reasons for doing so or not doing so. The answers were pretty limited and only have anecdotal value. Reasons to file charges were, amongst others, physical injuries and threats against the respondent and his or her child, drawing a boundary, making a statement and protecting others.

Reasons not to file charges included: fear of abuse, fear not to be believed, threats, assumed powerlessness of the police and the difficulty of proving mental damage, realising that it was abuse years after the facts, having bad feelings regarding the police, where the respondent was blamed for the violation, not having the name and address of the partner, being unsure if authorities would consider it abuse, concerns for the family of the perpetrator.

Summarising, doubts about being taken seriously by authorities is at least a recurring theme.

3.6 Conclusions

Consent violations are rife in the Dutch language BDSM scene. Many respondents experienced multiple consent violations, many of which also of multiple types. 64,4% of the respondents has experienced one or more types of consent violation. A substantial part of those has experienced multiple instances of consent violations of one or more types.

For ignored limits and safewords we see clearly groups of instances that were not bad and groups of instances that were bad. For scenes gone too far, by contrast, we see a big group who considered it "medium bad". A substantial number of the consent violations is not experienced as bad at all, but 14,6% of the respondents has experienced at least one bad consent violation and 20,6% has experienced at least one consent violation as abuse.

Therefore, it seems that the mantra of consent as basis for SM isn't entirely right. There is a clear discrepancy between the norm and reality. Consent is violated regularly, and sometimes that is bad, and sometimes it is not. But it is obviously something that happens to *a lot* of people. An interesting question, then, is why some instances are bad, while others are not. There are at least two theoretical explanations. It could be the nature of the consent violation (some violations are less bad) or the attitude of the people (some people consider consent violations worse than other people). We have no data to say anything about the first theory. The second theory is unlikely to explain all variation, as only 3,8% of the respondents didn't find consent important. The first theory therefore seems to be the more likely one.

Women experience consent violations more often than men and seem to experience that more often as bad than men (though differences are small). Women also experience consent violations more often as abuse, and although numbers are small it seems that mostly women consider filing charges. The question remains if women are victim of more serious consent violations, or if they experience them as more serious. Based on this study, we cannot answer that question.

Subs experience ignored limits and safewords more often than doms, with switches in between. For scenes gone too far there is no significant relation. Subs experience consent violations as worse than dominants, with switches in between for ignored limits and safewords. Switches consider scenes gone too far less bad as dominants and subs. Subs consider consent violations more often as abuse than dominants, with switches again in between. Hence, there seems to be a pretty clear relation between orientation and consent violations.

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There are no clear relations between residence and consent violations.

There are no significant relations between age and consent violations. At a glance, however, it seems that older respondents have experienced ignored safewords more often than younger respondents, younger respondents seem to have more experiences with scenes gone too far. This could be an interesting point for further research. There are significant relations between experience and consent violations. For ignored limits and scenes gone too far, the percentage first rises, then decreases with experience. This could be a cohort effect. For ignored safewords, there seems to be a positive relation with experience,

The own home and the home of the play partner are the most often mentioned locations for consent violations. But of the total population 13 percent has experienced an ignored limit, 5,9% an ignored safeword and 11,8% a scene gone too far at a party. The image of play parties as safe places for a first play date, seems to be in need of some revision.

Finally, filing charges is not often considered, and really happens even less. The expectation of not being taken seriously is a recurring theme in peoples' reasons not to file charges.

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4. Consent violation in other peoples scenes

The respondents, when watching other people play, find it important to know that the scene they are watching is consensual. In online discussions people admit, however, that they sometimes have doubts about consent. Scenes, even at parties, can be pretty rough. How important people find it to know scenes are consensual is summarised in the table below. Respondents were asked how important (on a ten point scale) they find it to know for sure that a scene is consensual in different settings.

	<i>Own home</i>	<i>Other peoples home</i>	<i>(Play)party</i>	<i>In public</i>
<i>Average</i>	8,93	7,99	7,66	8,05
<i>Standard deviation</i>	2,12	2,32	2,46	2,49

Table 4.1: The importance of consent in other peoples scenes

In their own home people find this the most important, at parties and other people's homes a bit less. So it seems to be that people find this less important in situations where other people like a party host or organisation is (partially) responsible for what is going on, while it is more important in the respondent's own home or in public.

The respondents were also asked whether or not – if they are present at other people's scenes sometimes – they have had doubts about consensuality. They were also asked how often they doubted consensuality, how bad that felt to them on a ten point scale (for the least severe, most severe and average occasion) and if they had ever walked away from such a scene.

After that, respondents were asked if they had ever considered intervening in such a scene, or had actually intervened. Both groups were asked for their specific actions and their reasons .

4.1 Doubting consent

Amongst the respondents that answered the question, 28,9% have doubted the consensuality of a scene at least once.

<i>(N=305)</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>
<i>Respondents (%)</i>	28,9	71,1

Table 4.1.1: Doubts about consent

Of these respondents, about half had such doubts more than once, but there are few people who doubt other people's scene's consensuality very regularly.

<i>(N=89)</i>	<i>Respondents (%)</i>
<i>Once</i>	43,8
<i>Multiple times</i>	53,9
<i>Regularly</i>	2,2
<i>Often</i>	0

Table 4.1.2: Frequency of doubts (% of the respondents that doubted at least once)

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The respondents were then asked *where* they doubted consent (multiple answers possible). Obviously consent is rarely doubted in the respondents own homes. But 90% of the respondents who have had doubts about consent had had such doubts (also) at play parties.

<i>(N=88)</i>	<i>Respondenten (%)</i>
<i>Own home</i>	2,3 (0,6)
<i>Other people's home</i>	19,3 (4,8)
<i>(Play)party</i>	89,8 (23,1)
<i>In public</i>	11,4 (2,8)

Table 4.1.3: Location of doubts about consent (between parentheses % of total population)

When people have such doubts, people feel pretty bad about it.

	<i>Least severe</i> <i>(N=81)</i>	<i>Most severe</i> <i>(N=77)</i>	<i>Average</i> <i>(N=81)</i>
<i>Average</i>	6	7,26	6,58
<i>Standard deviation</i>	2,43	2,4	2,16

Table 4.1.4: How bad are doubts about consent?

When we look at who doubt consent, there is no significant relation between gender and such doubts. There is, however, a significant⁹ relation with orientation. Dominants doubt consent more often than switches, who doubt it more often than subs. Respondents from Belgium doubt consent more often than respondents from The Netherlands¹⁰. However, because there are very few Belgians in the sample, there might be self-selection bias here.

There may be a relation between age and doubts about consent. Younger respondents doubt consent the least, the older groups the most. The relation is not entirely clear and only almost significant¹¹.

There is also a relation between experience and doubts. People with more experience doubt consent more often (with the exception of the group with over 20 years of experience), but this relation too is only almost significant¹².

4.2 Responses to doubting consent

Subsequently we asked how people responded to their doubts about consent. Over half of the people who have doubted the consensuality in other peoples' scenes have walked away at least once from such a scene. Almost two thirds have considered intervening and more than a third has actually intervened.

9 Chi-square 6,183, df.2, Asymp.sig (2-sided) ,045

10 Chi-square 5,466, df.1, Asymp.sig (2-sided) ,019

11 Chi-square 8,978. df. 4, Aymp.sig (2-sided) ,062

12 Chi-square 10,119, df.5. Asymp.sig (2-sided) ,072

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	<i>Walked away</i>	<i>Considered intervening</i>	<i>Intervened</i>
<i>No</i>	41,1	34,8	65,5
<i>Once</i>	28,9	37,1	25,3
<i>Multiple times</i>	27,8	20,2	8
<i>Always</i>	2,2	7,9	1,1

Table 4.2.1: Responses to doubts about consent.

Those who intervened were asked what they did to intervene (more than one answer possible)

	<i>Respondents (%)</i>
<i>Notified DM</i>	70 (9,9)
<i>Asked if participants were okay</i>	46,7 (7,3)
<i>Intervened directly</i>	30 (3,4)

Table 4.2.2: Interventions as a response to doubts about consensuality (between parentheses percentage of total population)

Of those who intervened, 70% notified a DM and asking if the participants are still okay is also a popular intervention. But 30% has intervened by themselves directly. Some people filled in “something else” for this question, mostly people who discussed the situation with others first, before notifying a DM, and people who checked with the participants after the scene.

Those who did not intervene were also asked about their actions.

<i>Actie</i>	<i>Respondents</i>
<i>Nothing</i>	19,3 (3,9)
<i>Walked away</i>	14 (4,8)
<i>Discussed with others people</i>	36,8 (10,7)
<i>Discussed with DM</i>	19,3 (7,9)

Table 4.2.3: Non-interventions as a response to doubts about consensuality (between parentheses percentage of total population)

Those who didn't intervene often did discuss the situation with other people or a DM before deciding to do nothing. Still, a small but substantial part of the respondents (8,7% of the total population) does nothing or walks away. In the category “something else” some respondents mention they talked with the participants after their scene. A clear majority does actually do something, before deciding not to intervene. There certainly does not seem to be a massive bystander effect.

4.3 Conclusions

The respondents clearly find it important that scenes they watch are consensual. In situations where people are themselves responsible, or are the only ones who could intervene (at home or in public), the respondents find that even more important than in situations where other people are partially responsible (play parties, other peoples homes). But in the latter situations people still find it important.

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Almost 30% of the respondents has doubted the consensuality of a scene at least once. Almost half of them doubted more than once. Almost 90% of the respondents who had doubts about consensuality has had such doubts at play parties. When they doubt, they feel pretty bad about it. Subs have the least doubts about consensuality, dominants the most. Belgians seem to doubt more than Dutch respondents and there seem to be relations between age and experience and doubts about consent, but these are not significant.

When having doubts, almost half has at least once walked away. Almost two thirds have considered intervening and about a third has actually intervened. Notifying a DM and asking participants if they are okay are the most popular interventions. About 30% of the respondents who intervened, intervened themselves directly. When people *don't* intervene, that is often after discussing the situation with other people or a DM. But a substantial part of the respondents walks away or does nothing without discussing that. If this is due to a bystander effect, that effect is not massive.

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5. Party safeword

One proposal to prevent consent violations at parties is the introduction of a party safeword, valid for everybody. This way, bystanders should no longer have to doubt consensuality. For if there is no longer consensuality, people could use the party safeword, even when no personal safeword was negotiated or was ignored.

5.1 Opinions on party safewords.

In the survey people were asked directly about their opinion on party safewords.

	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>
<i>Respondents</i>	60	40

Table 5.1.1: Can a party safeword contribute to preventing consent violations?

A majority of the respondents thinks a party safeword can contribute to preventing consent violations.

	<i>Party at own home</i>	<i>Party at other peoples' homes</i>	<i>Play party</i>
<i>Average</i>	4,42	4,32	5,43
<i>Standard deviation</i>	3,54	3,24	3,43

Table 5.1.2: The importance of a party safeword

When asked about the importance of a party safeword, the average scores are pretty low. The standard deviations are pretty high however, reflecting differences in opinion. For play parties for instance there is a pretty big groups that scores a 1 (28,4%) against a pretty big group who scores a 7 or higher (44,5%).

5.2 The need for a party safeword

The question is if a party safeword can, in fact, contribute (a lot). In theory, a party safeword is especially usefull in relation to ingnored safewords. But that is the type of consent violation the least likely to occur at parties (although 26,4 percent of the respondents with an ingnored safeword had such an experience at a party).

For other types of consent violation it is less clear how a party safeword could contribute to preventing consent violations. Two situations are conceivable:

- A safeword was pre-negotiated but not used
- No safeword was pre-negotiated

In the latter situation, a party safeword could also contribute. In the first situation it is unlikely.

We have also asked the respondents if they have ever felt the need for a party safeword.

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<i>(N=297)</i> <i>Respondents</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>
	7,1	92,9

Table 5.2.1: Ever felt the need for a party safeword?

Out of all respondents who answered the question, 7,1% have ever felt the need for a party safeword. By comparison, 13% has had an ignored limit, 5,9% an ignored safeword, and 11,8% a scene gone too far at a party.

To get a better view, we can also look at how the victims of consent violations at parties think about a party safeword,

<i>Respondenten (%)</i>	<i>Limit</i>	<i>Safeword</i>	<i>Too far</i>
	13,6	30	12,5

Table 5.2.2: Percentage of victim of a consent violation at a party who felt the need for a party safeword.

As was to be expected, especially the victims of ignored safewords felt the need for a party safeword. Surprisingly, even out of this group this is only 30%. It seems to be that there is only a need for a party safeword for the heavier kinds of consent violations.

5.3 Conclusions

Opinions on party safewords are pretty divided. A majority of 60% thinks a party safeword can contribute to preventing consent violations at parties. Some 7% has felt the need for such a safeword for themselves. At the same time it is clear that that need only exists for a part of the consent violations, and even only for a part of the victims of consent violations at parties.

We may conclude that a party safeword could contribute to preventing a number of, possibly severe, consent violations, but clearly not all consent violations at parties. As a part of those is not very serious, let alone experienced as abuse, it likely not even worth seeking preventing all cases of consent violations. If, however, we would want to prevent a large part of consent violations at parties, there should be a more active and attentive DM policy that goes well beyond introducing a party safeword.

6. Reflection and conclusion

In this final chapter we will address some of the methodological limitations of this study. After that, we will briefly reflect on the main conclusions.

6.1 Methodological reflections

Some methodological reflection is necessary. On the one hand there is the clear possibility of bias in this study, on the other hand several conclusion give rise to questions for further research.

Bias

As noted before in the introduction, the biggest methodological risk for this study is self-selection bias. It is likely that people who have experienced a consent violation are more interested in this type of survey. The fact that over half of the response was gathered within 24 hours raises the question whether that might be more so for this group of respondents. To study this we looked at the differences between the first and last 175 respondents (by and large the first and last third) for the three most important questions of this survey. Within these subsets we only used the completed surveys.

	<i>Limit</i>	<i>Safeword</i>	<i>Too far</i>
<i>First 175</i>	49,1	23,9	34,9
<i>Last 175</i>	41,9	17,7	46,3

Table 6.1.1: Experience with consent violations: difference between first and last 175 respondents

This does not provide a very clear picture. Ignored limits and safeword seem to be less prevalent amongst the late respondents. Scenes gone too far, however, seem to be more prevalent. SO there might be a risk at overestimating the prevalence of ignored limits and safeword, and underestimating the prevalence of scenes gone too far. The decreasing response for the questions on these types of violations also pointed in the same direction.

It also clear that the results of this study cannot be generalised towards a larger community than the group of active kinksters with online presence. Also, no attempts were made to find participants in the – often separated – gay and lesbian scene. The conclusions that amongst this particular group consent violations seem to be so prevalent is still an interesting conclusion.

It is difficult to study the underrepresentation of men and dominants as we have no figures for the total population. However, a number of dominants remarked that the survey seemed to be aimed more at subs (studying the incomplete surveys does not point in the direction of overrepresentation of dominants amongst the incompletes). This means that there is some risk that these groups are underrepresented, which could result in overestimating the prevalence of consent violations.

It is as good as certain that Belgians are underrepresented. However, there does not seem to be a significant relation between residence and experience with consent violations.

Summarising, in case of bias, everything seems to point in the direction of overestimation rather than underestimation for ignored limits and safewords. It seems wise to keep in mind the true figures might be a bit different (less ignored limits and safewords, more scenes gone too far).

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Reliability analysis

The internal consistency over the whole survey is low (Cronbachs Alpha .23) as two question don't correlate with anything (see below) and two questions (use of and need for a party safeword) only with each other.

From factor analysis we do find two clusters: Cluster I (ignored limit, ignored safeword, scene gone too far. Doubts about consent, need for a party safeword) and Cluster II (need for a party safeword, use for a party safeword). The reliability for Cluster I gives an Alpha of .49 which is more reasonable (for some of the more important questions we find correlations that could be expected).

What stands out is that the questions about the importance of consent and the attention for consent in the scene are not part of any clusters. Possibly, socially acceptable answers play a role here, decreasing the reliability of these questions.

Further research

At several points this study suggests further research might be interesting or necessary. An explicit inclusion of the gay and lesbian scene (and including sexual orientation in the background variables) would certainly strengthen the study. Another topic of interest would be how the police responded to charges being filed. Another type of consent violation that wasn't included – consent violation in BDSM context but outside of pre-negotiated play setting – would deserve some attention as well. One respondent, for instance, came with the example that someone had tried to hypnotise her without full informed consent.

Another questions that rises from this study is *why* some consent violations are bad, while others are not. Is that due to the nature of the consent violation, or due to the subjective experience of the participants? A related subject is the issue of consensual non-consent. For some people, violating consent fits within their relationship. They use what might be called meta-consent. Part of the potential respondents of this survey notified the author that for this reason, they couldn't really answer the questions of the survey. Further research should include question on consensual non-consent or meta-consent, to get a better view of this group.

Of the statistically significant relations it is interesting that consent violations first rise, then decrease with experience. The question is if this is a cohort effect, in which the younger generation might be less careful than the older generation. An alternative explanation, however, could be that older victims of consent violations have left the scene relatively more often. Also for age the question is if there really is a relation wherein ignored safewords are more prevalent among older players, but scenes gone too far more among younger players.

Also, the question why dominants less often report consent violations than submissives requires more research. Possibly they didn't interpret the questions right, as they were not the *victim* of a consent violation, but the *perpetrator*. But, for the same reason, they might provide socially more acceptable answers. Also, it could be that a relatively small group of dominants is responsible for a relatively large part of the consent violations.

Finally, qualitative research on the substance of consent violation, on what actually happens, would be a valuable addition to this quantitative study.

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6.2 Most important conclusions and recommendations

In this final section we'll reflect on the main research questions from section 1, without repeating all separate conclusions in detail.

What is the frequency of consent violations in the Dutch (language) BDSM scene?

Often. The idea that consent is absolute in the BDSM-scene doesn't hold. Consent is very important, but at the same time, it gets violated on a pretty large scale. Almost 65% of the respondents have experienced at least one type of consent violation. There are significant relations with gender, orientation and experience. Consent clearly is the norm, but not always actual practice.

How are these consent violations experienced by those involved?

Not always equally bad. "Just" 14,6% has experienced at least one bad consent violation and 20,6% has ever experienced a consent violation as abuse. But there are many cases that are not experienced as bad. Women experience more consent violations as abuse than men. Still, only a very small part of the respondents considered filing charges or actually did so.

In this sense too, consent is less absolute than often suggested. It is violated quite regularly, but that's not always bad. Still, a substantial part of the respondents has experienced a *bad* consent violation.

Considering the frequency of consent violations and the fact that such violations aren't always bad, it is a valid question if consent as ultimate division between BDSM and abuse holds up. Consent violations, to some extent, seem to be part of the game. Not necessarily intended, but neither something to be prevented at all costs (which might not even be possible)

How often do people doubt the consensuality of other peoples' scenes?

Almost a third (28,9%) has doubted consent in scenes of other people, and that tends to make them feel bad. Their concerns are not entirely unjustified. Of the total population 13% has experienced an ignored limit, 5,9% an ignored safeword and 11,8% a scene gone too far *at a party*. The idea that parties are the ultimate safe place for a first scene is need of some reassessment too.

How often is intervening in other peoples' scenes considered? And: How often do we actually intervene in other people's scenes?

A large part of the people who have doubted consent in scenes of other people, has considered intervening. Only a part of them has actually done so. Notifying a DM or asking participants if they are still okay are the most prevalent interventions. Only a minority directly intervenes themselves. But even many of those that do not intervene, tend to discuss the situation first with other people or a DM before deciding not to intervene. There is no massive bystander effect regarding doubts of consensuality.

Can a party safeword contribute to preventing consent violations and doubts about consensuality

A majority of the respondents (60%) is of the opinion that a party safeword can contribute to

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preventing consent violations. And 7,1% of the respondents has felt the need for such a safeword for themselves. On the other hand, most consent violation do not happen at parties. The victims of ignored safewords at parties are of course the main beneficiaries of a party safeword, but even amongst them “only” 30% has felt the need for a party safeword themselves.

We may conclude that a party safeword can contribute, but certainly will not prevent all consent violations. The question remains if that would be necessary and desirable, as not all consent violation are bad. They seem to be part of the game, and perhaps other attendees should do well to keep that notion in mind as well. It might well be that they experience a possible consent violation as worse than the participants themselves. Nonetheless, there is a case for a more active and attentive DM-policy, beyond introducing a party safeword.

Recommendations

Parties who wish to retain a profile as being safe would do well to consider introducing a party safeword and to uphold an active, albeit not overdone, DM policy regarding consent. Some additional publicity to attendees about what to do when you doubt consent might also help, as a substantial part seems to do nothing.

But we should not forget that the private sphere is a much bigger source of consent violations. More attention for such violations in the private sphere would certainly be necessary.

Finally, we should ask ourselves if consent as absolute demarcation between abuse and BDSM is still valid. Sometimes, by accident or not, limits are violated and this is not always experienced as bad. Perhaps it would be better to relate BDSM to some form of meta-consent. In general, there should be consent, and if things really get out of hand it becomes abuse, but where people play, accidents do happen.

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Appendix 1: Background characteristics and consent violations

Gender and consent violations

	<i>Limit</i>	<i>Safeword</i>	<i>Too far</i>
<i>Male</i>	37	17	32
<i>Female</i>	52,6	24	45,8

Table 3.3.1: Gender and consent violations (% yes)

	<i>Limit</i>			<i>Safeword</i>			<i>Too far</i>		
<i>Male</i>	3,55	6,02	4,43	4,67	7,37	5,45	4,9	6,68	5,39
<i>Female</i>	4,59	7,05	5,82	5,76	6,8	6,22	5,53	6,66	5,88

Table 3.3.2: Gender and seriousness of consent violations (average for least severe, most severe and average instance)

	<i>Limit</i>	<i>Safeword</i>	<i>Too far</i>
<i>Male</i>	22	28,6	8,9
<i>Female</i>	40	45,7	27,8

Table 3.3.3: Gender and consent violations as abuse (% once or more)

Orientation and consent violations

	<i>Limit</i>	<i>Safeword</i>	<i>Too far</i>
<i>Dom</i>	34,1	8,4	36,5
<i>Sub</i>	50,3	25,7	40
<i>Switch</i>	44	23	42

Table 3.3.4: Orientation and consent violations (%yes)

	<i>Limit</i>			<i>Safeword</i>			<i>Too far</i>		
<i>Dom</i>	3,57	5,26	4,41	3,5	5,12	4,25	5,07	6,44	5,44
<i>Sub</i>	4,83	7,63	6,06	6,42	7,61	6,71	5,84	6,97	6,05
<i>Switch</i>	3,66	5,55	4,53	4,27	5,43	4,8	4,52	6,15	5,41

Table 3.3.5: Orientation and seriousness of consent violations (least severe, most severe, average)

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	<i>Limit</i>	<i>Safeword</i>	<i>Too far</i>
<i>Dom</i>	13,3	0	9,7
<i>Sub</i>	45,6	53,5	31,4
<i>Switch</i>	28,1	27,7	12,9

Table 3.3.6: Orientation and consent violations experienced as abuse (% at least once)

Residence and consent violations

	<i>Limit</i>	<i>Safeword</i>	<i>Too far</i>
<i>Netherlands</i>	45,5	21,1	39,2
<i>Belgium</i>	44,2	25,6	39

Table 3.3.7: Residence and consent violations (% yes)

	<i>Limit</i>			<i>Safeword</i>			<i>Too far</i>		
<i>Netherlands</i>	4,45	6,69	5,48	5,19	6,72	5,78	5,26	6,53	5,64
<i>Belgium</i>	3,5	6,65	5	6,88	7,22	6,44	5,88	7,69	6,6

Table 3.3.8: Residence and seriousness of consent violations

	<i>Limit</i>	<i>Safeword</i>	<i>Too far</i>
<i>Netherlands</i>	33,6	32,2	20,9
<i>Belgium</i>	47,4	80	35,3

Table 3.3.9: Residence and consent violations experienced as abuse (% at least once)

Leeftijd en consentoverschrijdingen

	<i>Limit</i>	<i>Safeword</i>	<i>Too far</i>
<i>18-30</i>	44,1	13,7	43,2
<i>31-40</i>	48,8	25,3	41,8
<i>41-50</i>	46,6	25	39,5
<i>51-60</i>	43,2	32,6	31
<i>61-70</i>	37,5	0	25
<i>71-80</i>	0	0	0

Table 3.3.10: Age and consent violations

	<i>Limit</i>	<i>Safeword</i>	<i>Too far</i>
<i>18-30</i>	26,9	18,8	22,4
<i>31-40</i>	39	40	8,3
<i>41-50</i>	32,5	42,9	28,6
<i>51-60</i>	47,6	53,8	35,7

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61-70	33,3	0	50
71-80	0	0	

Table 3.3.11: Age and consent violations experienced as abuse (% at least once)

Experience and consent violations

	<i>Limit</i>	<i>Safeword</i>	<i>Too far</i>
<i>< 1 year</i>	33,3	13	28,6
<i>1-4 year</i>	31,7	13,1	35,7
<i>5-9 year</i>	52,8	16,1	44,8
<i>10-15 year</i>	64,7	34,7	57,4
<i>15-9 year</i>	48,3	28,8	32,1
<i>20 – year</i>	45	37,8	23,1

Table 3.3.12: Experience and consent violations

	<i>Limit</i>	<i>Safeword</i>	<i>Too far</i>
<i>< 1 year</i>	25	33,3	0
<i>1-4 year</i>	14,3	30,8	23,7
<i>5-9 year</i>	47,8	57,1	25
<i>10-15 year</i>	32,3	41,2	23,1
<i>15-20 year</i>	28,6	28,6	10
<i>> 20 year</i>	50	35,7	27,3

Table 3.3.13: Experience and consent violations experienced as abuse (% at least once)

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Appendix 2: Background characteristics and doubts about consent in scenes by other people

	<i>Respondents (% yes)</i>
<i>Male</i>	30,7
<i>Female</i>	25,4
<i>Dom</i>	37
<i>Sub</i>	22,4
<i>Switch</i>	28,5
<i>Netherlands</i>	25,8
<i>Belgium</i>	44,4

Table 4.1.5: Doubts about consent by gender, orientation and residence

	<i>Respondents (% yes)</i>
<i>18-30</i>	18,4
<i>31-40</i>	30,3
<i>41-50</i>	37,3
<i>51-60</i>	34,9
<i>61-70</i>	33,3
<i>71-80</i>	0

Table 4.1.6: Age and doubts about consent

	<i>Respondents (% yes)</i>
<i>< 1 year</i>	17,6
<i>1-4 year</i>	19,5
<i>5-9 year</i>	32,1
<i>10-15 year</i>	31,2
<i>15-20 year</i>	46,2
<i>20 – year</i>	36,8

Table 4.1.7: Experience and doubts about consent