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'Elaine Wept and Was Lost': Trigger Warnings, Historical Primary Sources, and Date Rape

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**‘ELAINE WEPT AND WAS LOST’:
TRIGGER WARNINGS, HISTORICAL PRIMARY SOURCES,
AND DATE RAPE**

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SEXUALITY STUDIES LIBRARIAN

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TRIGGERS AND CARE: LESSONS FROM AN HONORS 1000 COURSE

- Creating the Course
- Trigger Warnings: General
- Three Triggering Texts and a Countertext
- Lessons Learned
- Questions? and Acknowledgments

'GOING STEADY?: DOCUMENTING THE HISTORY OF DATING IN AMERICAN CULTURE, 1940-1990



RESEARCH GUIDES

Library / GSU Library Research Guides / HON 1000: 'Going Steady?': Documenting the History of Dating in American Culture, 1940-1990 / Week 1: Introduction to Course

HON 1000: 'Going Steady?': Documenting the History of Dating in American Culture, 1940-1990: Week 1: Introduction to Course

Week 1: Introduction to Course	Week 2: Overviews	Week 3: Advice Manuals	Week 4: Popular Fiction	Week 5: Popular Magazines	
Week 6: Newspapers	Week 7: Educational Film	Week 8: Birth Control/Pregnancy	Week 9: Queer Identities	Week 10: Sex Education	
Week 11: Catching Up: Final Projects, Zotero	Information about Presentations and Final Projects		GSU Library Zotero Guide	Zotero Tips	Citing
Secondary Sources	Mining Footnotes				

IMPORTANT: WHEN YOU COME TO CLASS...

Unless otherwise indicated,

WHAT ARE PRIMARY SOURCES?

magazines
rings

HISTORY, AFRICAN-AMERICAN STUDIES, AND WOMEN'S STUDIES LIBRARIAN

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Official

- Basic search strategies (keywords, subject headings, natural-language) for a range of source types
- Basic discussion skills
- Basic interpretive skills
- Basic presentation skills (PowerPoint)
- General overview of the history of dating in 20th-century United States culture

Mine

- Critical thinking
- Pre-research
- Discovery
- Exploration
- Engagement

FINAL PROJECTS

- Short paper describing chosen topic with list of 5 possible keywords (1 page)
- Annotated bibliography of at least 10 primary sources relating to your chosen topic
- Final PowerPoint presentation of one of your 10 primary sources
- Final reflection paper (5 pages)

FIRST “WARNING”: TRIGGER WARNING STATEMENT IN SYLLABUS

- Respectful discussion and other forms of participation will be integral to this course. You are strongly encouraged to participate in discussions, and to listen carefully to other students when they are speaking. Respectful listening and respectful speaking are both components of good participation.
- **Students should also be aware that we are likely to be discussing topics like varying sexualities, teen pregnancy, abortion, date rape, and other potentially controversial topics.**

SECOND “WARNING”: SUGGESTED TOPICS ON COURSE GUIDE

- Integrated (or segregated) proms
- Debutante balls / cotillions
- LGBTQ dating
- Teen pregnancy
- Date rape
- Dating abuse
- “Going steady”
- Birth control
- Interracial dating
- Sex education
- Double standard
- Virginity pledges

ACTUAL TOPICS (SELECTED)

- Polyamory
 - Double standard in art
 - Dating in horror films (*film studies student)
 - Changing tone of love-song lyrics (*music student)
 - Birth control
 - Sex education / abstinence
 - LGBTQ dating violence
 - Conversion therapy
 - Domestic violence
 - Sex in advertising*
 - Rape
 - Appropriate ages for dating
 - Place and “date” status
- *I had to explain why Brooke Shields' Calvin Klein ads were considered sexy. I am old.

THIRD “WARNING”: HISTORICAL LANGUAGE / RESPECTFUL USE STATEMENT ON “NEWSPAPERS” TAB [\(TO MOVE TO HOMEPAGE\)](#)

- When you search in newspaper databases, it's important to keep in mind that there isn't a way to search by subject (or "about" a topic). Instead, you have to think about what words/language would be used in a newspaper article title and/or article text for that time period.
- **This means that you may well come across language that is uncomfortable or even offensive. History can be very ugly.**
- **It is important that we understand that these words are part of history.**
- **It is also important that we understand the potential of these words to be upsetting or offensive today.**
- **Please be mindful of how you use this language, and be respectful when using it.**

FIRST SOURCE:

MAX WYLIE, *CAREER GIRL, WATCH YOUR STEP!* (1964)

Have a system that you can use if you are in a real jam, one that has meaning to your roommates, code words that sound innocent enough to the uninformed—a phrase, a particular word used in a certain way—but that means “Help” to your friends. If you are with a man who is “on the make” for you and you are finding it distasteful and want to get away, you can almost always make up an excuse to telephone, right in his own presence, “just to be sure we aren’t going to be interrupted.” Then phone, using the magic word or words that mean “Come at once and bring some muscle.”

You can develop such a confidential hook-up with someone you trust besides your roommates, too—someone in your building who will be concerned for your welfare, a strong-armed married man who would be willing to help you if needed, someone who is right there. You can’t hurry that sort of relationship, but at the same time it’s a protection you may need and should develop. If you do need it, you probably need it badly and quickly.

(excerpts from assigned section)

“CAREER GIRL MURDERS” STORY

NEW YORK TIMES, AUGUST 30, 1963

Max Wylie (brother of *Generation of Vipers* author Philip Wylie) was a television and advertising producer, and also the father of Janice Wylie, a *Newsweek* researcher who was found murdered in her Upper East Side New York City apartment on August 28, 1963, with signs that she had also been sexually assaulted. He also wrote *The Gift of Janice* (1964) and was a writer for *The Flying Nun* (1967-1970).

The “Career Girls Murders” were briefly referenced in the “American Dream” episode of *Mad Men*.

Girl Got Phone Threats 10 Days Before Murder

Police Widen Hunt for Killer
of Two on East Side—
No Positive Clues

By ALFRED E. CLARK

The father of Janice Wylie, one of two young women stabbed to death Wednesday morning in an apartment at 57 East 88th Street, said yesterday that his daughter had received threatening telephone calls 10 days ago.

The father, the writer Max Wylie, told the police that the calls were “obscene” and that Janice had been “plagued and terrified by the calls.”

Meanwhile detectives, still



Associated Press

MAGNOLIA WIGGLESWORTH WILL BE YOUR THERAPY DOG TODAY



SECOND SOURCE:

HENRY GREGOR FELSEN, *TWO AND THE TOWN* (1952; 1953 REPRINT)



BUFF CODY was happy. Big, blond, good-natured, looking forward to graduation and the beginning of a real future. He had chosen the best of dozens of offers of football scholarships and he was all set. Girls. He could date any girl he wanted on a last-minute phone call—but girls could wait. College seemed so real that Buff was just existing in high school.

**AND THEN IN ONE IMPULSIVE
MIDNIGHT ACT BUFF CODY
DESTROYED THIS SHINING FUTURE.**

“BEYOND RATIONAL THINKING”

“UP TO THE GIRL”

But Buff was beyond rational thinking. It had been his experience that boys made advances and girls made them stop. Always it had been the girl who called a halt, who drew the line, who broke it up before they got involved. He had a faith in the instinct of girls to know when enough was enough. They had always drawn the line. They always would. It was up to the girl.

“SHE HAD WAITED TOO LONG.”

“ELAINE WEPT AND WAS LOST.”

And Elaine, sensing at last that Buff was beyond reason, that he was in the grip of his emotions, wondered where to draw the line, felt she had gone too far already, and wanted to cry out and save herself. But she had waited too long, and when she cried faintly she didn't know whether she cried halt or hurry. She became as furiously unrestrained as Buff himself, made one last, frightened effort to break away, and, in a situation where Carol would have laughed and saved herself, Elaine wept and was lost.

MAGGIE IS READY TO SEE YOU NOW



THIRD SOURCE:

GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY SIGNAL, OCTOBER 10, 1977



Staff Photo by Sidell Tighman

GSU Police Sgt. Trudy Boyce conducts a course that teaches potential victims how to get out of a rape situation without getting hurt.

GSU Police Program Teaches Rape Refusal

By Marty Nolan

Learn how to say no to a rapist without getting hurt.

On Tuesday, Oct. 25, Georgia State University police will be sponsoring a special two-hour program designed to teach potential rape victims what to do when a possible rape situation occurs. The program will be held in room 303 of the Urban Life Building.

According to Sergeant Trudy Boyce, a five-year veteran of the university police force, "the program will be oriented toward using one's head rather than using physical means to prevent being raped."

Boyce said it was a good idea to use your head first because

together and work out a plan by which she might be able to prevent the rape.

Boyce, who works as supervisor of the Key Control Department in Sparks Hall, said she felt that a rapist really puts women on a pedestal and rape is merely an attempt to make the woman lower than he is.

Treating the rapist like a

human being and trying to reason with him and talk him out of the crime is probably the safest way to prevent the attack, according to Boyce.

The two-hour program which will feature a film called *How To Say No To A Rapist*, will be free of charge.

A second program will be held Nov. 2 in room 302 of the Urban Life Center.

Girl Scouts Help Students Adjust

By Phyllis Rich

A project to help young girls with "difficulties adjusting in school" is being sponsored by the Northwest Georgia Girl Scout Council in cooperation with Atlanta City Schools, according to Susan Shulman, Girl Scouts project director.

“HOW TO SAY NO TO A RAPIST”

“Boyce said it was a good idea to use your head first because if you try to use violence to prevent the rape, ‘you might blow your only chance of getting away without being hurt.’”

“Treating the rapist like a human being and trying to reason with him and talk him out of the crime is probably the safest way to prevent the attack, according to Boyce.”

MAGGIE, DUBIOUS ABOUT THE IDEA OF “RAPE REFUSAL”



COUNTERTEXT: "NO MEANS NO," A DIFFERENT WORLD, MARCH 1989



Note that Walter is using the bat to hold Garth The Rapist in place and make his point. While the bat implies a potential threat of violence, Walter does not swing the bat at Garth. (Images from Upworthy and Netflix).

LESSONS LEARNED: TRIGGER WARNINGS... YES OR NO?

General Warnings

- Syllabus
- Course guide: copy from “Newspapers” tab to main page while keeping on “Newspapers”: natural language
- Suggested topics include potentially triggering topics as legitimate project topics

TRIGGER WARNINGS... YES OR NO?

Specific Sources: Already Taught

- *Career Girl, Watch Your Step!*
 - No advance warning
 - Will introduce murders/*New York Times* image into class discussion
- *Two and the Town*
 - Will likely warn again
 - Pair with milder story and experiment with reading order

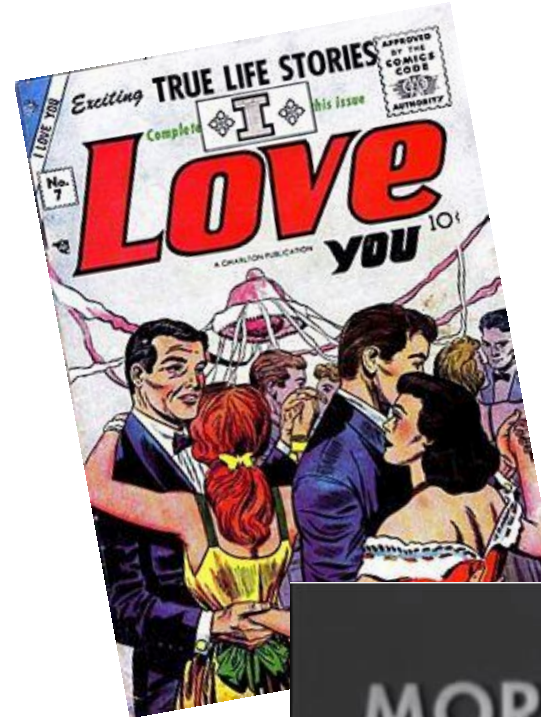
TRIGGER WARNINGS... YES OR NO?

Specific Sources: New Options

- *GSU Signal* article
 - No advance warning, subtheme will have been established.
 - Think about whether, or where, to include this item
- *Different World*:
 - Thinking about how/where to include this

ACKNOWLEDGING AND WORKING WITH (NERVOUS) LAUGHTER

- Kitsch is real
- Allow laughter... up to a point
- Interrogate it (gently)
- “And we’re laughing. But...” as point of entry into discussion of historical perspective
 - Example: *Two and the Town* in particular: in 2016, we call this date rape. In 1952, they wouldn’t have.
- Balance: seriousness, silliness, happiness



MORE DATES
FOR KAY

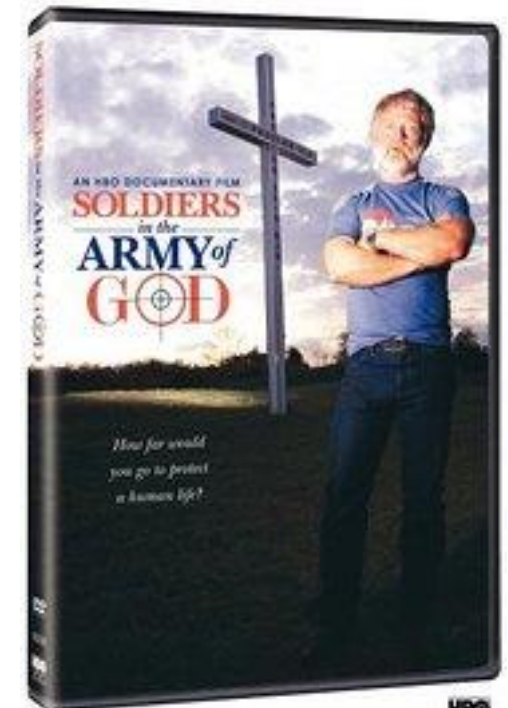
Coronet Instructional Films

Copyright MCMLII David A. Smart

LESSONS LEARNED: NOTE ON VISUALS

- Assigned sources did not include any graphic images or audiovisuals.
- Difficult topics were addressed textually (*Two and the Town*) or in veiled ways.
 - *Two and the Town* (textual)
 - *Boys Beware* (1961 “mental hygiene” film warning against “sick” homosexual men but no sexual activity shown)
 - *VD Attack Plan* (1973 Disney educational film on STDs [yes], featuring cartoon germs and stick-figure humans)
- Other instructional experiences: practice run of “object analysis” exercise on anti-abortion with instructors included more graphic sources, including disturbing video images

Instructor: “We can’t show those images to freshmen.”



YIKES.

LESSONS LEARNED: FROM TRIGGERS TO CARE

- Role of instructor in caring for students, encouraging self-care
- Instructor must also consider own self-care when dealing with difficult or triggering subjects
- Dark humor. Nervous humor. Real humor. Bunny videos.
- Empowerment. Things that get it right. That in 1989 a sitcom about HBCU life focused on teaching young men about consent.



Did someone call for “bunny videos”?

LESSONS LEARNED: TEACHING DIFFICULT TOPICS

- Emphasize respectful use of language.
- Control discussion as needed: instructor can insist on seriousness when necessary while also acknowledging laughter, including nervous laughter. “And we’re laughing. But...”
- Use challenging topics to teach historical perspective/specificity.
 - What do these sources tell us about a particular time?
 - Have things changed? Better? Not? Somewhat better? Different? How? Why?
- Think carefully about visual/audiovisual images.
- Balance with positive representations: range of lightnesses, darknesses.

QUESTIONS?



(Maggie declined to be photographed dancing with bunnies.)
(The bunnies agreed that this was for the best.)

COURSE GUIDE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- HON 1000: ‘Going Steady?’: Documenting the History of Dating in American Culture, 1940-1990 course website: <http://research.library.gsu.edu/datinghistory> (currently the Fall 2015 version; link for 2015 version will be archived <http://research.library.gsu.edu/datinghistory2015> when the 2016 version goes live)
- Many thanks to Jason Mihalko, The Irreverent Psychologist (<http://irreverentpsychologist.blogspot.com>) for permission to use photos of his dog Magnolia “Maggie” Wigglesworth.
- Thanks also to Joel Glogowski for sending on bunny videos while I was assembling this presentation, and for permission to use his photo of Erin Glogowski’s bunny Scoopy (RIP Scoopy). Thanks also to Jason Puckett for the idea of recurring cute-animal slides.