

"Only yes means yes" does not ensure sexual freedom

escrito por Lúdia Puigvert | agosto 31, 2022



What if I get coerced and I say yes, even if I don't want to? The international scientific community calls it coerced yes/coercive yes and it is on the agenda regarding sexual assaults. [Scientists have been publishing](#) about it for years.

Speech acts, in this case "saying yes", are not enough to affirm that there was consent, on the contrary, the insistence on the word "yes" can induce those who attack and those who are accomplices with the aggressors to accept that "she/he said yes" and to silence the interactive power

and all communicative acts that happened and that led the victim to “say yes”.

It is very positive that laws are being passed on this subject and article 178 of the *Organic Law on the Integral Guarantee of Sexual Freedom* includes coercion that is a crime, even if “yes” is said. But it is negative that so much emphasis is placed on “only yes means yes”, a slogan that is now everywhere without considering the very positive content of that article.

In the CONSENT research project (PID2019-110466RB-I00) funded by the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation and the State Research Agency, we are analyzing which communicative acts among young people are coercive and which are consensual. For this, we have included the voice of young people who tell us how they have lived and live these situations, as well as voices of prosecutors, judges, lawyers, professionals from different fields who attend to victims, security forces, nightlife personnel, etc. All of them agree on the importance of identifying these communicative acts that go beyond speech acts and that would help generate environments free of coercion to be able to freely decide which relationships to have and which ones not.