

Unconscious on Sofa – scripted role play 3

Two people, each to read a part. A = abuser B = bystander. First, read the description of the situation.

A group of 8 male students have been out drinking. They return to their shared house with friends and continue drinking. One of the men passes out unconscious, lying face down on the sofa. One of the party encourages the group to pull down his trousers and underwear. A marker pen is produced, intending to draw a face on the man's buttocks.

A: This is really funny, man, let's give him a nice smiley face.

B: [moves over to the unconscious lad, covers him up] No. Leave it. Seriously, we're not doing a good job of being mates here, we're supposed to be his mates. This isn't cool.

A: Well you don't have to join in, mate, you can get on your high horse but we are having a laugh here. Why don't you go and do something else.

B: I'm staying here. If you're looking for something to do, how about order us some pizza. It's time to get the poor guy upstairs – I'll do it. Order me a pizza, mate? I'll be back in a couple of minutes.

Discussion points:

When scripting this role-play our students were quite positive that somebody would definitely be determined to 'do something' to the unconscious man. They proposed a bystander could minimise the harm by suggesting a less intrusive 'punishment' such as using the pen to draw on the victim's face. Is any kind of 'punishment' wrong? Would any kind of 'punishment' be an assault? Is this behaviour an example of 'lad culture'? If having a laugh is important for lad culture, is being a good mate important too? If you want to, have a go at thinking about other ways of managing the situation or other things the bystander could say at this point.