



LEARNING NETWORK VIRTUAL FORUM

Not Yours to Distribute! Intimate Images and Consent

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Wednesday, Feb 8 | 1:00 to 3:30 pm ET



LEARNING NETWORK VIRTUAL FORUM

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Troubling Myths about
Nonconsensual Intimate
Image Distribution

Presented by: Alexa Dodge



Troubling Myths about Nonconsensual Intimate Image Distribution

Dr. Alexa Dodge
Assistant Professor
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Nonconsensual Intimate Image Distribution

AKA:

- ❖ "Revenge Porn"
- ❖ Nonconsensual Pornography
- ❖ Image-Based Sexual Abuse



Rehtaeh Parsons

- Nonconsensual intimate image distribution & digital harassment
- Catalyst for federal *Protecting Canadians from Online Crime Act* (2014)





Fact Checking the Myths

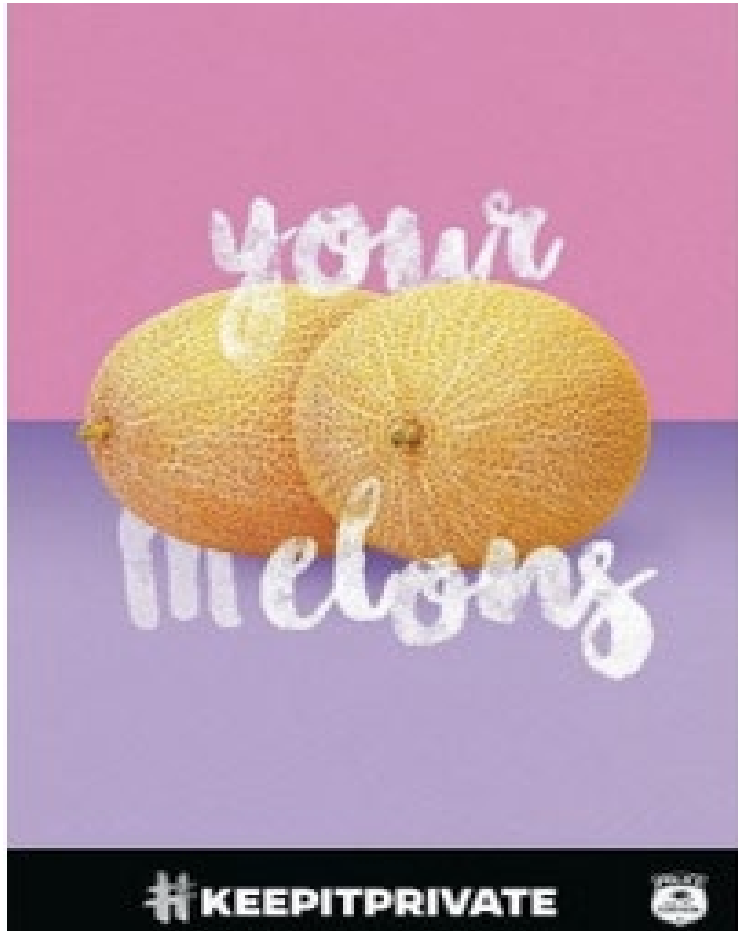
More often committed by men & boys (but not always)

Diversity of victims (including people of all genders) - people who are LGBTQ+, disabled, or Indigenous are disproportionately victimized

Diverse Motivations (not always "revenge")

Victims are not to blame

Challenging Victim Blaming



Reasons victims may not report to police

Slow response to time-sensitive digital harms

Fear of discriminatory treatment or victim blaming

Desire to educate but not criminalize perpetrators





Educate
Offender

Tech
Supports

Emotional
Supports

Legal
Navigation



Resources to help support victims

- <https://www.suziedunn.com/resources>
- <https://ywcacanada.ca/guide-on-sexual-image-based-abuse/>
- <https://mediasmarts.ca/digital-media-literacy/digital-issues/sexting>
- <https://revengepornhelpline.org.uk/>
- <https://novascotia.ca/cyberscan/>
- <https://www.vawlearningnetwork.ca/docs/CyberScan-Report.pdf>

Refusing Shame

Ex-Corrie actress turns sex photo hack into 'positive thing'

LIFE | 22 Jan 2018



“The papers are saying that I’m ‘devastated’ [...] That’s not my take on it at all. I dedicate almost everything I do to fighting for female empowerment and the empowerment of people with disabilities. I’m not about to go back on my principles now. [...] it is completely unacceptable when people have their privacy disrespected in this way. However, as a vocal champion of women being **totally at one with their bodies and not being ashamed of them**, I am not about to turn around now and go back on my own principles. I am proud of my body. It is beautiful. **And I am entitled to enjoy it and to have a personal and a romantic life**”

Contact Me



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Key Takeaways:

- Impacts a diversity of victims
- Avoid victim blaming
- This is a criminal act, but most victims don't engage law
- Most victims are looking for non-judgmental emotional supports & technological supports to help remove images

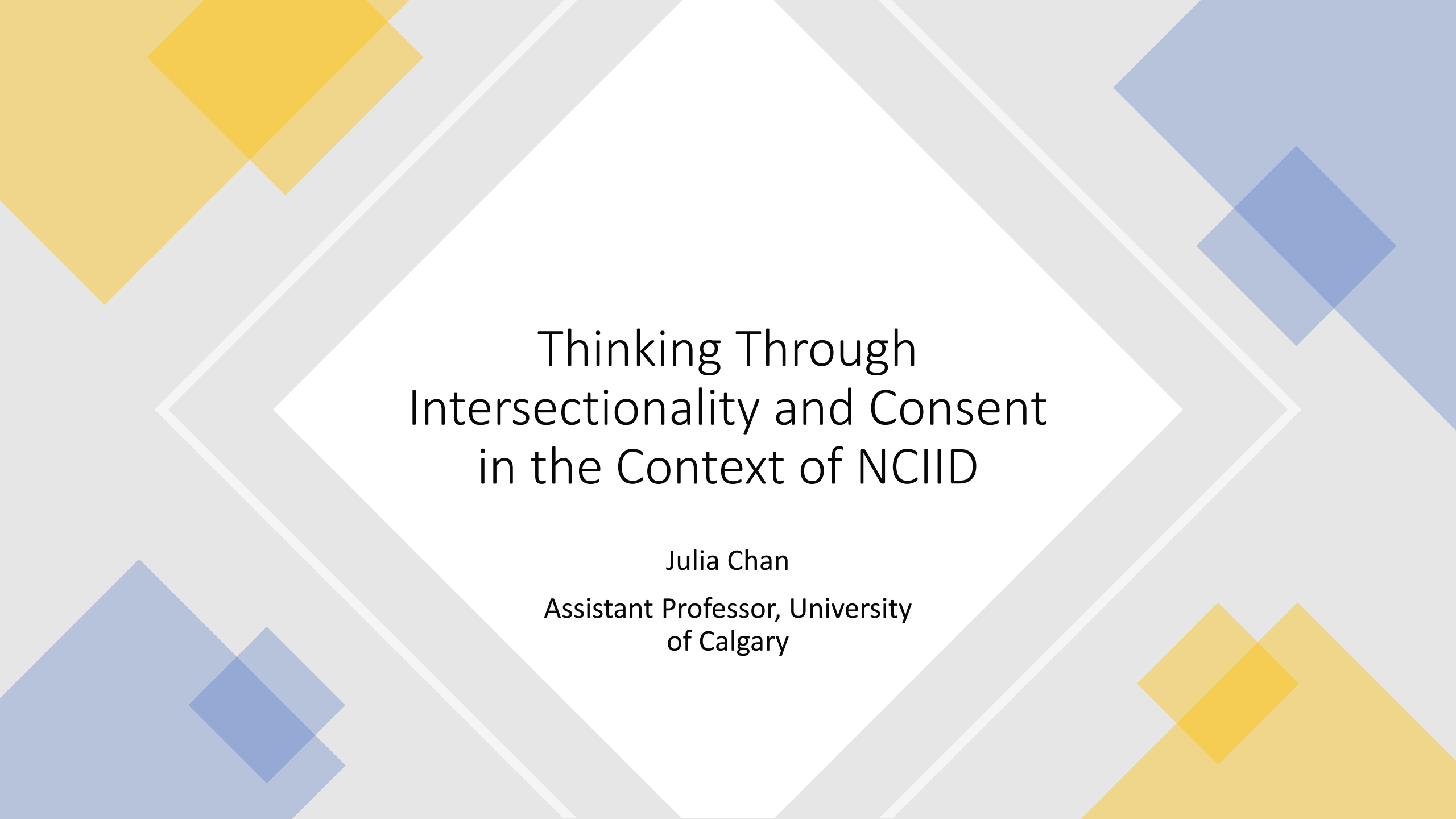


LEARNING NETWORK VIRTUAL FORUM

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Thinking Through Intersectionality
and Consent in the Context of Non-
Consensual Intimate Image
Distribution

Presented by: Julia Chan



Thinking Through Intersectionality and Consent in the Context of NCIID

Julia Chan

Assistant Professor, University
of Calgary

Research shows that, in addition to responses such as changes in law and policy, we need to enact deep social and cultural change to prevent NCIID from happening in the first place.



Identity and Intersectionality



Image-based sexual abuse: Law alone cannot solve the problem

Educating people about what consent means and empowering them to speak up when abuse occurs is equally important, says Catherine O'Sullivan lecturer in criminal law and Criminology at UCC



The news that tens of thousands of sexual images of girls and women have been shared without their consent may provide the final push to get legislation passed. Picture: iStock



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Articles on Image-based sexual abuse
Displaying all articles

A woman is sitting at a desk in a dark room, illuminated only by the light from her laptop. She is looking at the screen with a distressed expression, her hand near her face. The date "August 18, 2022" is visible at the bottom of the image.

The Cultural Default

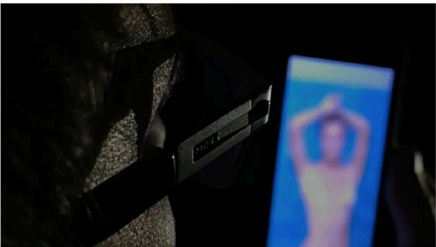
- Young

Able-bodied
- White or light-skinned

Middle-class
- Conventionally attractive

Cisgendered
- Heterosexual

Women



In both 2017 and 2018, police forces in Canada handled about 1,500 reports of non-consensual distribution of intimate images. (CBC News)

AirDrop
A Stranger would like to share a photo.
A woman with long dark hair is lying down, wearing a pink shirt. She is holding a smartphone in her hands. The image is part of an AirDrop notification.

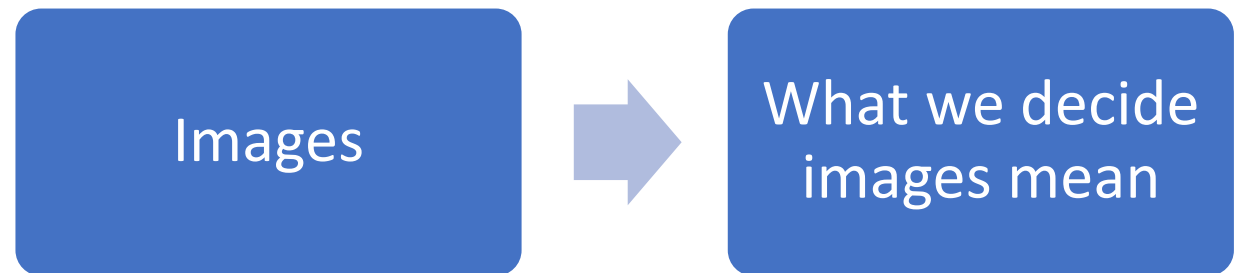
Decline Accept

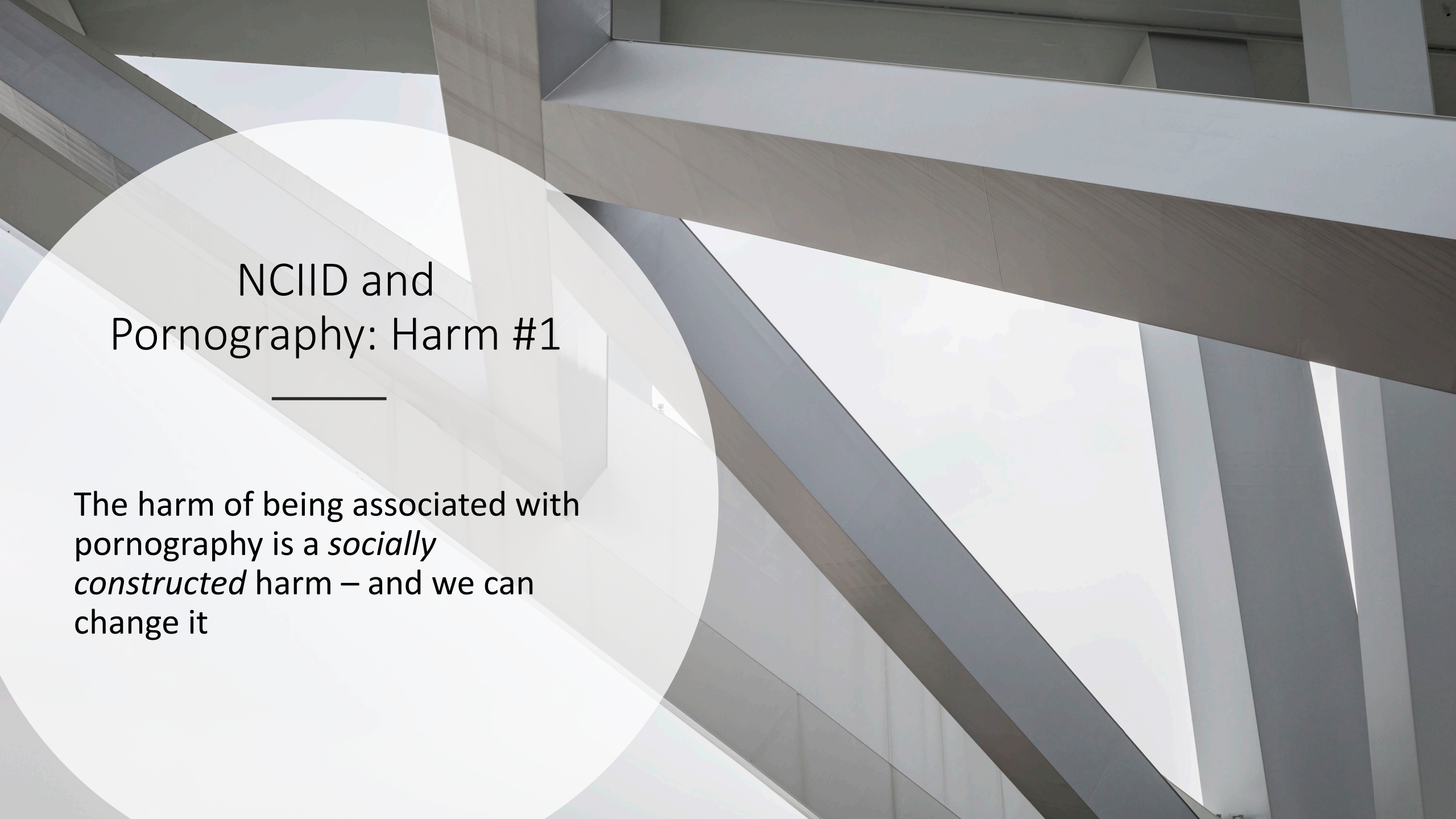
A quick guide on sexual image based abuse



The Harms of NCIID

Why are non-consensually distributed intimate images harmful?





NCIID and Pornography: Harm #1

The harm of being associated with pornography is a *socially constructed* harm – and we can change it

Challenging cultural beliefs about pornography

- Pornography = violence, misogyny, objectification
- Pornography = “low” culture
- Underlying negative beliefs about sex, sexuality, sex work

Victim-blaming and Neoliberalism: Harm #2

- Neoliberalism: a logic that structures government and social/cultural life according to free-market concepts
- The individual and “responsibilization” – all negative outcomes are the result of poor choices and poor self-management
- Ignores systemic barriers of racism, sexism, queerphobia, transphobia, ableism, poverty, lack of access to resources

Victim-blaming
and
“responsiblization”

“Why did you take the picture in the first place?”

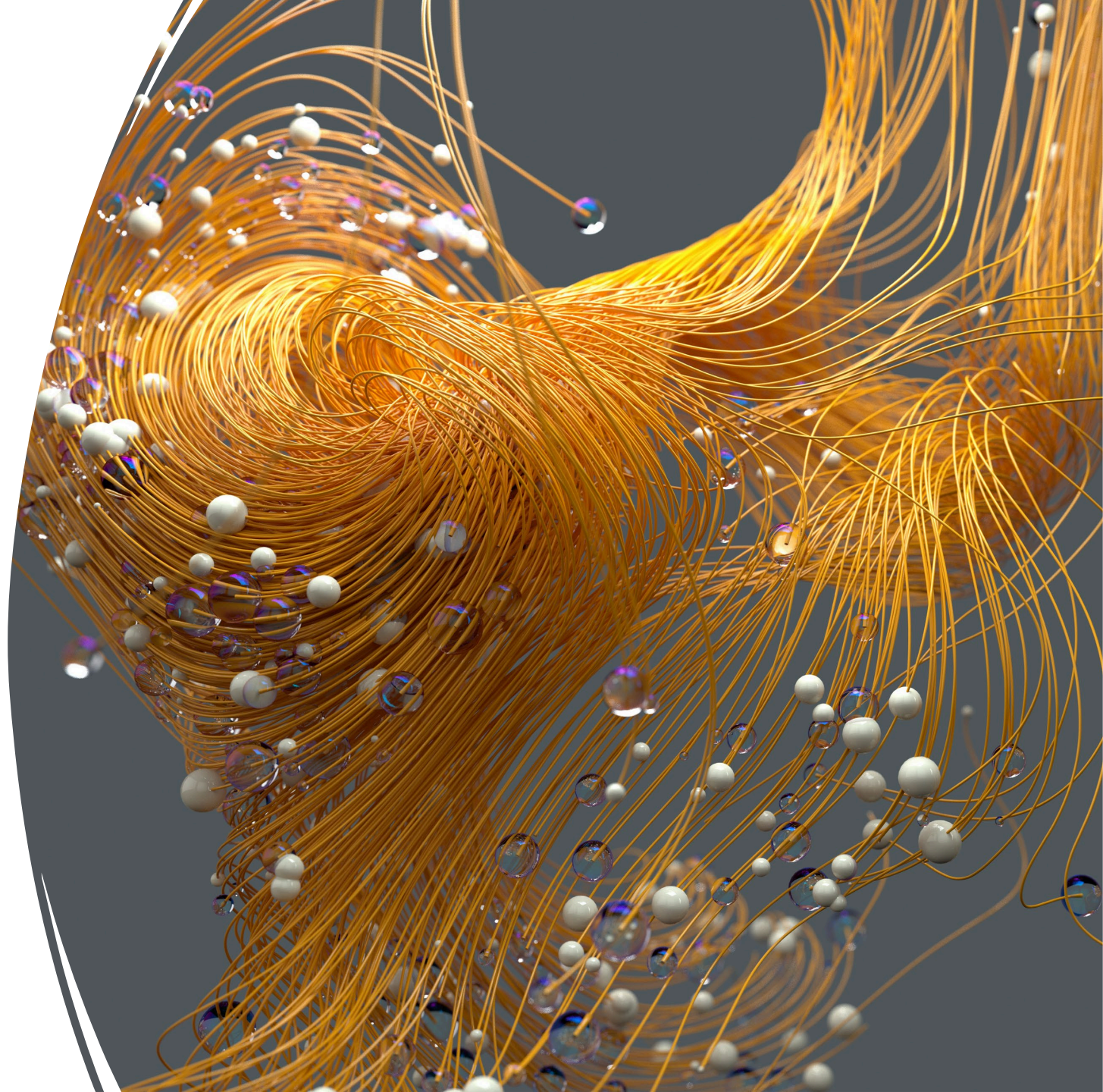
“What did you think would happen when you shared it?”

“You know you can’t trust anybody.”

“Why didn’t you protect yourself?”

Centring Care and Interdependence

- Victim-blaming is a socially and culturally constructed harm – and it can also be changed
- Victim/survivors deserve care, empathy, and support – not blame
- Care as antidote to neoliberalism





Non-consent: Harm #3

Consent: a relationship between two parties

- Creating an intimate or sexual image does not equal consent for it to be distributed
- Sharing an image with one person does not imply consent for that person to share it with anyone else
- It is the responsibility of the other person to obtain consent before sharing an image
- Consent is not always enthusiastic – sometimes a person is coerced into giving consent
- A person can always change their mind and withdraw consent at any time

Non-consent

Non-consent in the context of NCIID: the consent relationship is completely ignored

Results in negation of someone's right to make choices about their life, denial of right to self-determine, violation of individual's autonomy



“The video got out”

- Cultural belief: information and images have a will of their own, are “naturally” viral, will “escape” as soon as they get the chance
- Creation/distribution of images is a conscious human choice
- Surveillance capitalism helps normalize non-consensual practices around data

Care and Ethics

- Creating/distributing images is a conscious human choice
- Obtaining and respecting consent is an act of care
- We can and should expect ethical and caring behaviour from one another
- Learn, teach, and practice (digital) ethics

Summary of take-aways

- **Think intersectionally.** De-centre whiteness, heteronormativity, ableism, and the middle-class
- **Question and challenge sex-negativity** – the devaluation of sex, sexuality, sex work, and sex workers
- **Challenge victim-blaming and the “responsibilization” of individuals for their own violations** – recognize the actions of the perpetrator and the importance of centring care/interdependence
- **Notice when and how actions of those who commit NCIID are erased or dismissed.** We can all learn, teach, and practice ethical behaviour as an act of care

Resources

- Victims of Image Crime: Speak Out! <https://voic.org.uk/>
- Discussion of attitudes toward sex and sex work by Lara Karaian (video): <https://cfe.torontomu.ca/events/revenge-porn-sexting-what-do-law-freedom-expression-and-privacy>
- *The Care Manifesto: The Politics of Interdependence* by the Care Collective, 2020
- Draw the Line: <https://draw-the-line.ca/get-informed/>

Resources

- Ethics and privacy: <https://mediasmarts.ca/digital-media-literacy/digital-issues/privacy/privacy-ethics>
- The eQUALITY Project: <https://www.equalityproject.ca/>
- Affirmative Camera Consent for Survivors of Digital Violence: <https://www.cagoldberglaw.com/a-guide-to-coping-with-quarantine-as-a-survivor-of-digital-violence/>
- Consent Comes First: <https://www.torontomu.ca/sexual-violence/education/laws-of-consent-in-canada/>

Some Helpful References

Burns, Anne. "In Full View: Involuntary Porn and the Postfeminist Rhetoric of Choice." *Twenty-first Century Feminism: Forming and Performing Femininity*, edited by Claire Nally and Angela Smith. Palgrave Macmillan, 2015, pp. 93-118.

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