



Red Flags in Dating Relationships

Red flags are warning signs that the relationship is likely to become violent. According to research studies, the following factors seem to be important in detecting pre-rape behavior and/or abuse among dates and acquaintances.

Sexual Entitlement

- Touching another person with no regard for her/his wishes.
- Sexualizing relationships that are appropriately non-sexual (teacher/student, employer/employee, etc.)
- Using conversation that is inappropriately intimate (“What color is your underwear today?”).
- Telling sexual jokes at inappropriate times or places.
- Making inappropriate comments about people’s bodies, sexuality, etc.

Power and Control

- Interrupting people, especially women.
- Being a “bad loser”.
- Exhibiting inappropriate competitiveness.
- Using intimidating body language.
- Game playing.
- Isolating partner from family and friends.

Hostility and Anger

- Showing a quick temper.
- Blaming others when things go wrong.
- Tending to transform other emotions into anger.

Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence

- Using threats in displays of anger.
- Using violence in non-violent situations.
- Approving observed violence.
- Justifying violence.

Information adapted from Rockbridge Global Village's Project Horizon Website, <http://organizations.rockbridge.net/projecthorizon/faqteen.htm>; retrieved 5/22/06; The Aurora Center for Advocacy and Education of the University of Minnesota; and

Acquaintance Rape: *The Hidden Crime*, edited by Andrea Parrot and Laurie Beechhofer, 1991, John Wiley and Sons, Inc.