Soldiers Drinking in the Barracks

Topic: Alcohol, Consent, Sexual Assault

Situation: Soldiers drinking in the barracks

SPC Sam and SPC Williams were close friends. They agreed to meet in SPC Williams's barracks room to drink alcohol and watch a movie. A new Soldier from the same company, SPC Gordon, was also invited to watch the movie. While watching the movie, SPC Sam drank five glasses of whiskey from a bottle of whiskey that SPC Williams had purchased. SPC Gordon was also drinking and noticed SPC Sam was getting really intoxicated. SPC Gordon and SPC Williams had to check on SPC Sam after hearing vomiting sounds from the bathroom. Outside the bathroom SPC Williams said to SPC Gordon, "SPC Sam is a hot mess when drinking, but fine as hell and I want to tap that." SPC Gordon did not respond to the statement. SPC Sam stumbled back to the room and fell into SPC Williams' lap. SPC Sam gave SPC Williams a big hug and started making out with them, saying, "Oh I love you, you are like my best friend." This was the first time the two had ever kissed. SPC Sam then fell on the floor and passed out. SPC Gordon asked SPC Williams to help get SPC Sam back to the barracks room to sleep it off. SPC Williams lied and said, "Yeah we do this all the time, don't worry about it, we'll both sleep it off here." SPC Gordon then left the room. Once SPC Gordon left, SPC Williams hovered over a motionless, unresponsive SPC Sam, and committed sexual assault. SPC Sam was unconscious, unresponsive, and motionless throughout the entire event. The next morning SPC Sam woke up on the floor, experiencing genital pain, and had no idea what had happened. SPC Sam asked SPC Williams what happened. SPC Williams said, "You were wild last night, you came onto me and were all over me." SPC Sam, uncomfortable and embarrassed, leaves the room.

Discussion Questions:

1. What did you notice was happening in this vignette?

2. What is your reaction to what is happening here?

3. If confronted with a similar situation, what would you do?

4. What Army values have been violated and how could you use the Army Values to address/intervene in this situation?

5. What is the responsibility of those who know of inappropriate conduct?

6. What could have been done?

7. Why do you think nobody intervened?

Solution: The vignette demonstrates how alcohol can be weaponized to facilitate a sexual assault. SPC Williams could clearly tell that SPC Sam was intoxicated and unable to consent. SPC Gordon attempted to get SPC Sam back to their room but was discouraged by SPC Williams. Instead of seeking assistance from others to ensure SPC Sam's safe return, SPC Gordon abandoned that effort. SPC Sam has several options available, the most important being to seek immediate medical attention.