Case 5: Glad-Handing Below the Belt

As Conner enjoyed the packed concert, happily swaying with the crowd to one of his favorite songs with a beer in his hand above the fray, he felt a tap on his shoulder. He turned his head to see a very attractive blonde woman he didn’t recognize, about 5’5”, with a coy smile on her face. Before he could think of a witty introduction, she looked him in the eyes, smiled even bigger, and firmly grabbed his crotch in her right hand and squeezed gently. Instinct led him to back up a step, difficult to do in the well-packed crowd, and she smoothly moved forward through the space he created. Taken aback, he watched her do the same to another young man standing near him, leading to the realization that she was grabbing unsuspecting males as a way to move closer to the stage. She reached the front row in short order.

After the show at their favorite bar, Conner and his friends rehashed the concert. Conner told his friends about the strange encounter with the attractive blonde woman and what he guessed she was doing. His friend, Carol, was the first to pipe up, nearly choking on her drink when he made it to the description of the grab, “Well that’s more action than you’ve seen in months, so good for you!” Devin was even more excited for him, “Tell me you got her digits, dude! She sounds hot and fun!” And his roommate Jake added, “Damn! If I had done that, I would have been arrested or had the crap beat out of me or both.”

All of his friends agreed that it was a really good plan for an even moderately attractive woman who wanted to get to the front of the crowd. His female friends contemplated using the tactic for the next concert, if they were stuck towards the back. Although Conner had been feeling a bit violated and offended, his friends’ responses made him think that maybe his initial reaction was wrong and that sexual attention from an attractive woman should always be welcome.

Case from the 2019 National Intercollegiate Ethics Bowl

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