



Sexual Offences Act 1956

1956 CHAPTER 69

PART I

OFFENCES, AND THE PROSECUTION AND PUNISHMENT OF OFFENCES

Assaults

14 Indecent assault on a woman

- (1) It is an offence, subject to the exception mentioned in subsection (3) of this section, for a person to make an indecent assault on a woman.
- (2) A girl under the age of sixteen cannot in law give any consent which would prevent an act being an assault for the purposes of this section.
- (3) Where a marriage is invalid under section two of the Marriage Act, 1949, or section one of the Age of Marriage Act, 1929 (the wife being a girl under the age of sixteen), the invalidity does not make the husband guilty of any offence under this section by reason of her incapacity to consent while under that age, if he believes her to be his wife and has reasonable cause for the belief.
- (4) A woman who is a defective cannot in law give any consent which would prevent an act being an assault for the purposes of this section, but a person is only to be treated as guilty of an indecent assault on a defective by reason of that incapacity to consent, if that person knew or had reason to suspect her to be a defective.