THE SOCIAL MEANING OF OFFENSIVE SEXUAL BEHAVIORS: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY

by

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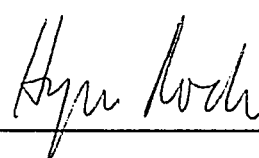

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ABSTRACT

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The purpose of the investigation was to explore variables associated with the social processes involved in a female's perception of and reaction to offensive sexual behavior, particularly as those social processes assist in giving meaning to experiences of perceived sexual aggression. A model for conceptualizing social meaning in offensive sexual situations was developed. The model focused on attribution of responsibility for sexual aggression to female, male, and offensive situation as a function of three interacting sets of variables: situational, emotional/behavioral, and attitudinal.

A questionnaire was devised to measure both the frequency of offensive sexual experiences and the social meaning assigned to specific experiences. The questionnaire was distributed to 600 female undergraduates, 380 of whom completed the questionnaire and comprised the data for analysis.

Approximately 75% of the sample reported experience with offensive sexual behaviors, with a higher frequency for less intimate offenses such as forced necking and petting. Some 15% reported experience with forced intercourse.

Results from variables examining the social meaning of offensive behaviors showed that most of the offensive experiences were associated with the dating situation; physical coercion was the most prominent type of force used, followed by covert threats; and the most frequent emotional reaction was anger, the least was shame. Fear was likely to be reported when the male offender was not in a dating relationship with the respondent and when physical threat to personal safety was involved. Respondents usually dealt with the offense by talking to the offender, getting away from him, or struggling with him. Post-incident behaviors involved talking with the male or avoiding him altogether. Seldom did the females tell parents about the experience, and more infrequently were incidents reported to authorities or discussed with counselors. Attitude measures toward the female role were not effective for determining reaction to offensive sexual behaviors. Measures of sensitivity toward sexual and physical aggression showed promise for determining attitudes which may serve as deterrents to experience with offensive sexual behaviors.

The results from the present study were discussed in terms of widespread experience of offensive sexual behavior, and recommendations were given for obtaining more definitive answers regarding social correlates of offensive sexual behaviors.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Social scientists have long been interested in social concomitants of sexual behavior, particularly the normative prescriptions for sexual expression. The recent focusing of attention (e.g., Amir, 1971) on sexual aggression as a social problem of undeniable magnitude has added greatly to the literature on the topic, but that literature is scattered, lacks form, and is frequently tangential to social science concerns. Professionals who deal with the effects of sexual aggression engage in didactic discussion on the psychological and demographic characteristics of offenders (Cohen, Garofalo, Boucher, & Seghorn, 1971; Goldstein, 1973; Kercher & Walker, 1973; MacDonald, 1971; Rada, 1975), the medical and psychological care of victims (Halleck, 1962; Hilberman, 1976; Nayman & Lanza, 1971; Washington, 1975), the intricate legalities related to sexual crimes (Hibey, 1975; Ploscowe, 1968; Snelling, 1975; Wood, 1973), and sensitizing social services to the needs of victims of sexual aggression (Burgess & Holmstrom, 1974; Gager & Schurr, 1976). These approaches in the literature reflect the diversity of applied areas, but they do not

move toward an understanding and explanation of sexual aggression.

Another line of more theoretically oriented research is concerned with the possible causes and consequences of sexual aggression and directs the way toward conceptualizing sexual aggression as a social phenomenon. Amir (1971) tabulated and discussed demographic data on reported sexual assaults, and nearly half of reported rapes involved at least minimal social interaction between rapists and their victims. Social psychological research has contributed to understanding of the social situation faced by victims of assault in investigation of reactions to victims of misfortune and of the "just-world" hypothesis (Jones & Aronson, 1973; Lerner & Matthews, 1967; Lerner & Simmons, 1966; Stokols & Schopler, 1973). The major focus of studies in these areas, however, has not been specifically on causes and consequences of sexual aggression in this society.

Two recent books which fall outside the social science literature *per se* provide a starting point for investigating sexual aggression as a social phenomenon. Both are products of increased public interest in rape, brought on in large part by the feminist movement. Susan Brownmiller's *Against Our Will: Men, Women, and Rape* (1975) and Diana Russell's *The Politics of Rape: The Victim's Perspective* (1975) use different formats to deliver the same essential message: rape, as a most extreme form of sexual aggression, can be

placed within the context of traditional male/female socialization rather than as an isolated phenomenon detached from contemporary society. Russell elaborates by contending that:

> Rape may be understood as an extreme acting out of qualities that are regarded as supermasculine in this and many other societies: aggression, force, power, strength, toughness, dominance, competitiveness. To win, to be superior, to be successful, to conquer, to demonstrate masculinity to those who subscribe to common cultural notions of masculinity, i.e. the masculine mystique. And it would be surprising if these notions of masculinity did not find expression in men's sexual behavior. (p. 260)

According to Russell, female socialization also contributes to rape, since:

> ...passivity and submissiveness are regarded as typical female behaviors, particularly in relation to men.... Conformity to traditional notions of femininity makes women more vulnerable to rape, at least once they are in a situation where an unarmed man intends to try to rape them. (pp. 271, 268)

The socialization of men to be dominant and females to be passive results in a male/female power discrepancy whereby sexual aggression can be viewed as a form of normal male/female interaction. In short, the expression of sexual behavior in a given situation, the definition of it, and the reaction to it will all reflect past socialization and personal acceptance and interpretation of culturally prescribed norms, rights, and role expectations for males and females.

There are few empirical data concerned with the observation that extreme forms of sexual aggression are based on the same social or psychological dynamics as less severe or "normal" sexual offenses. A series of research reports on male sexual offenses among college students (Kanin, 1957; Kirkpatrick & Kanin, 1957) constitute the most relevant empirical work to date. Their findings clearly emphasize the social basis of sexual offenses of varying types, especially in predicting antecedent conditions and subsequent reactions to such offensive behaviors. For example, Kirkpatrick and Kanin (1957) found that frequency and type of sexual offenses were correlated with the interpersonal interaction of the participants prior to the offensive episode. The most offensive and somewhat more violent behaviors were reported by couples who were engaged as opposed to couples who were in initial stages of the courtship process. These offensive episodes were frequently preceded by some type of mutually accepted intimacy which served to set up a situation of exploitation and shared stigma. Kirkpatrick and Kanin (1957) suggested that a female participated in intimacy to the point where disclosure of the incident would identify her own guilt. In a dating situation, females accepted the sterotypic view that the male is expected to initiate sexual relations, and women are supposed to accept the responsibility for how these relations proceed. Females learn that in cases of sexual

exploitation, they are considered responsible, and are not innocent victims. With the female's reluctance to seek guidance and protection, the male's exploitative advantage is increased, leading to further aggression by the male, and further isolation of the female from institutional or primary group protection.

In short, Kirkpatrick and Kanin (1957) suggested that the interpretation and management of sexual offenses relied heavily on the social situation. Their research, however, was limited to reporting the frequency of various types of offenses, the relationship between the male and female participant, and to whom the incident was reported. It was not directed toward differential reactions to sexual aggression among individuals or toward examination of emotional or cognitive responses to the situation. Further, their definition of sexually offensive episodes was restricted to acts which were believed to be more aggressive than anticipated during normal courtship, but not so extreme to be labeled carnal assault or attempted rape.

More recent research by Davis and Davis (1976) examined social meanings assigned to exhibitionistic encounters as a type of deviant behavior. The focus of the study was on the behavioral strategies victims used in dealing with the situation. Interviews with victims led the researchers to conclude that the social context of the offensive act was crucial in producing the meanings

associated with it by providing a cognitive framework whereby the victims could evaluate the experience and react appropriately. As in other studies, variation in individual responses was not examined, and the behavioral situation in question was clearly deviant, rather than ambiguous or open to alternative perceptions.

A series of studies in progress at Kent State University (Aronson, Olah, & Koss, 1978; Oros & Koss, 1978) are moving more toward a multivariate assessment of social meaning in the experience of sexual aggression. Using several attitudinal, adjustment, and situational measures, the experimenters have discovered that the long-term impact of sexual aggression experienced by female victims is dependent upon the meaning attributed to the situation. A major variable in their research was the relationship between the male and the female.

It appears that social meanings play an instrumental role in the expression of and subsequent perception of sexual behavior; thus, an understanding of sexually aggressive situations and resultant personal and social consequences necessarily involves at least two factors--a combined awareness of social role expectations for aggressor and victim, and the situational and social variables which assist in the interpretation of individual behavior. Social and cultural attitudes serve as a backdrop against which sexual aggression can be analyzed, particularly as those attitudes

influence the interpretation of the situation by male and female participants. Situational judgments of circumstances surrounding sexual aggression determine the nature and severity of consequences and will reflect general cultural attitudes of masculinity and femininity, aggression and passivity, and a host of values concerning male/female relationships in a society.

At this point, it is necessary to develop a reasonably clear notion of what is meant by sexual aggression, and the literature fails to provide much assistance. Most of the literature on sexual aggression is concerned with rape, and adopts the legal definition of forcible rape as carnal knowledge of a woman against her will (Robin, 1977). Despite the many problems encountered in legally defining a situation as rape, this definition is helpful for considering rape as a type of sexual aggression since it involves the element of coercion. Kanin and Kirkpatrick (1957) defined "sexual offenses" as "a male's quest for sexual access of a rejecting female during the course of which physical coercion is utilized to the degree that offended responses are elicited from the female," but they excluded forcible rape or carnal assault from categories of sexual offense despite the fact that "intercourse with violence" was one of the types of offenses examined. Rather than becoming ensnared in the semantic properties which distinguish between rape, seduction, offense and assault, the following is a

working definition of sexual aggression: it is a male's quest for sexual access of a rejecting female during the course of which coercion is utilized to the degree that the female is offended.

In this section it has been shown that the few studies examining social meaning and sexual aggression have made important contributions to initial understanding of reactions to sexual aggression and point the way toward further research to clarify some of the dynamics that might be involved. The elements of the process by which sexually aggressive acts are given meaning include, at the very least, observation or experience of an action, a judgment that the action was the product of an intention, and a final inference of an underlying disposition to account for the intention. The following theoretical framework presents three theories that have been proposed to explain how that definitional process might occur, and to specify some of the factors that might be instrumental for defining aggressive situations. Many of the concepts in the theories overlap, and discussion of them will emphasize points of divergence rather than convergence.

Theoretical Framework: Social Meaning In Sexual Aggression

The situation considered sexually aggressive is socially structured by culturally prescribed norms, rights, and obligations which define the role expectations for males and

females and establish the rules by which these roles relate to one another. In the event that rules which structure acceptable sexual expression are violated, a conflict situation arises. The participants in a conflict situation struggle to interpret verbal and nonverbal gestures and to assign them social meaning which allows a definition of the situation (Scheff, 1968). The likelihood of discrepant definitions by participants may be the result of misperceptions and misunderstandings which are negotiated and renegotiated to define specific behaviors and the entire situation. When sexual aggression is conceptualized in this way, it involves a process of symbolic interaction, a social justification, and an attribution of causality. These sociological and psychological theoretical perspectives will be presented as a framework for examining offensive sexual episodes and social definitions of such episodes.

Symbolic Interactionism. Symbolic interaction, as found in sociological perspective is concerned with the relationship between the self and other perceivers. A basic assumption of symbolic interaction is that people exist in a symbolic environment where objects and events assume importance primarily because of their social meaning. The importance of a social interaction is not derived from a physical description of the exchange, but rather from what elements of the exchange mean to the participants (Stryker, 1964). It follows that human interaction is mediated by the

the use of symbols, by interpretations, or by ascertaining the meaning of one another's actions. In order to understand or account for human behavior, both the situation and the definition of the situation must be taken into account. Thomas (1937) considered this idea in stating:

> The total situation will always contain more and less subjective factors, and the behavior reaction can be studied only in connection with the whole context, i.e.,the situation as it exists in verifiable, objective terms, and as it has seemed to exist in terms of the interested persons. (p. 572)

> An adjustive effort of any kind is preceded by a decision to act or not act along a given line, and the decision is itself preceded by a definition of the situation, that is to say, an interpretation, or point of view, and eventually a behavior pattern. (p.8)

Thus, according to the symbolic interaction framework, a situation is interpreted or defined in terms of the responses of others that give meaning to personal acts. In other words, individual experience can be conceptualized as a reflexive product of social interaction where personal reception of and reaction to information automatically interacts with, and is contaminated by social processes.

Sexual behavior can be viewed as symbolic interaction insofar as males and females learn the culturally prescribed rules which regulate sexual expression and use other people as a "looking-glass self" (Cooley, 1906). This means that persons imagine how they appear to others, how they imagine that another person judges what they think others see, and then arrive at a self-feeling. In the event of inappropriate

sexual aggression that violates an established role relationship, the participants determine a definition of the situation by analyzing the social interaction, the expectations they have, and those which they think others have--all of which give meaning to the encounter.

A sexually aggressive episode is likely to offend a participant if he/she is an unwilling partner, if the understood limits are surpassed, or if role expectations are violated (Weis & Weis, 1975). Not surprisingly, as males follow the socially expected role of sexual initiator, and females the social expectation of submission and responsibility to control male advances, it is very difficult to objectively distinguish between appropriate and offensive sexual behavior. A distinction would have to include possible mutual misinterpretations of a potential seduction, problems revolving around differential expectations for sex-role specific behavior, and discrepencies between male and female definitions of the situation.

In a broad social sense, situations are defined not only by objective reality, but also are influenced by culturally prescribed norms. Further compounding the process of social meaning in the definition of a situation is the need of individual actors to morally justify their behaviors. It is at the level of individual behaviors that theories related to symbolic interaction are useful, especially with the social psychological perspective contained in social

comparison and attribution theories which attempt to explain how individuals justify their behavior and produce distortions in definition of situations in the process. A survey of these two theories follows.

Social comparison and self-justification. In many ways social comparison theory can be regarded as a more psychological version of symbolic interaction. Festinger's (1954) comparison between objective and social reality is analogous to a symbolic interactionist distinction between the physical and the symbolic environment. The process of social comparison is based on a need to ascertain the validity of a perception concerning social reality, an interpersonal complex of subjective judgments. The subjective judgment is validated by other peoples' opinions and judgments, i.e., the social comparison. The symbolic interactionist would refer to this as "taking the role of the other" (Mead, 1934).

A second important element in social comparison is the evaluation of reality in terms of negative or positive qualities. Social reality is perceived and social comparisons are made to validate a percept. Such comparisons contain a self-serving component which tends to enhance the self-concept as an individual chooses another person with a consistent belief in order to validate an initial percept. The choice of "similar others" for social comparison reduces the possibility of having to contend with

discrepant information and also accounts for individual differences in the definition of social situations.

In both symbolic interactionist and social comparison perspectives, a male or female who experiences a sexually aggressive episode will define his or her behavior and the situation in a way that will morally justify, or at least shed as favorable a light as possible, on his/her involvement. In essence, males and females have normative expectations for their own and opposite-sex behavior. If one or the other misjudges the situation and causes offense, then the situation will be defined with an attempt to justify the perceiver's behavior.

Attribution theory. At its current stage of development, attribution processes are theory only in a broad sense since the framework lacks a systematized set of assumptions, propositions, or deductions. It has a plausible set of principles useful in explaining person-perception phenomena, namely attribution of causality to others, to the self, and in understanding cause-effect sequences. It is in the area of self-perception, especially in judgments concerning aspects of the self such as beliefs, feelings, and behaviors that attribution theory overlaps most with social comparison and symbolic interaction.

From an historical perspective, attribution theory was developed primarily to deal with problems of social perception. In social situations, people have questions about the

causes of others' behavior and then actively provide some "common sense" answers. Heider (1946) called this process "naive psychology," or the process of ordinary people trying to understand behavior. As naive psychologists, people generally actively search for the meaning of, and possible reasons for, the behavior of other people (Shaver, 1975). The assumed need for individual attribution of causality relies most heavily on Heider's balance theory which postulates that individuals generally seek psychological balance as they attempt to understand, and thereby master, the causal networks in their environment.

In addition to the concern with social and self-perception, attribution theory is related to the general field of "psychological epistemology" (Kelley, 1973). Kelley described psychological epistemology as the "process by which man 'knows' his world and, more importantly knows that he knows, that is, has a sense that his beliefs and judgments are veridical." Ascription of an effect to a particular cause is part of this process, as are reactions to and evaluations of a given effect. Individuals making causal attributions in person perception tend to be aware of the truthfulness or reliability of their interpretations of others' behavior. This does not mean that attributions are made without bias, rather that underlying causes of behavior can be inferred with reasonable validity. Thus, the process of social perception is a cognitive one which enables the

perceiver to discover underlying regularities that serve to make the world somewhat orderly, predictable and, hence, controllable (Shaver, 1975).

The utility of attribution principles for studying the social meaning and definition of sexually aggressive situations lies in the distinctions made between attributions to self, to others, and to situations. The theory and related research will be described briefly.

Attribution of causality to the self. Attribution processes directed toward the self as causal agent rest on traditional notions of self-concept and theories of self-knowledge, such as contained in the symbolic interaction (Mead, 1934) and social comparison (Festinger, 1954) theories, which recognize attributional bias due to needs for self-enhancement. Although attributions to self are cognitively based, they are also subjective dissonance reductions. Thus, while individuals attribute causality based upon their own performance in cause-effect sequences, their self-attribution reflects the need for moral justification of the appropriateness of that behavior.

Shaver (1975) summarized the research on self-attribution or self-perception by stressing the multi-faceted nature of the process. Not only is self-attribution the result of cognitive appraisal of a situation with related social comparisons to support the individual's judgment, but factors such as self-esteem, internal versus external locus of

control, and relatively enduring personality traits further produce individual differences in self-attribution.

The individual actor who attempts to judge the degree of personal responsibility for an episode of sexual aggression will not only be influenced by the cultural norms which structure the situation and guide the appropriateness of behavior, but also by the need for self-justification, by personal levels of self-esteem, and a complex of idiosyncratic attitudes.

Attribution of causality to others. Jones and Davis (1965) built on Heider's (1946) early work concerning factors that influence an observer's attribution of intent and disposition to another person. Although Jones and Davis' correspondent inference theory is somewhat complex, they essentially state that attribution to others is based on an assessment of situational common and noncommon effects. Noncommon effects of an action represent the most powerful factors in determining how a causal attribution is made. One should be able to predict attribution of causality to other people if common and noncommon situational effects are known, with the most correct attributions made when noncommon effects are identifiable and few in number.

Seldom is a perceiver aware of all common and noncommon situational effects which influence another's behavior and can be attributed without bias. Early work by Heider and Simmel (1944) noted a common bias in attribution which

was simply to believe that a person's action caused an event. Jones and Davis (1965) found that when people attributed causality to themselves, they relied more on situational factors; when attributions were made to others, there was a stronger reliance on personal disposition. A perceiver may be aware of common and noncommon effects of his own decisions, but will rely on a simpler explanation for others' behavior.

Shaver (1975) offered several reasons for the tendency to view other persons as the fundamental origins of causality; all the reasons offered are relevant to attribution of causality for sexual aggression. First, it is easier to attribute causality to a person if searching for alternative environmental explanations requires more cognitive effort or is more difficult to understand. Second, biases left over from cognitive organizations in childhood may influence attribution to persons. As humans learn about normative expectations for sex-role behavior, especially what is appropriate for males and females, it is likely that some learned sequences will be subject to cultural bias which affects later references to that cause-effect link. Third, people formulate similarities between persons and events in terms of behavioral expectations, especially on value-related issues. The perception of goodness or badness, for example, brings to mind what a good person or a bad person looks or acts like. The actual perception is compared with

the expectation and colors subsequent attribution, usually as inaccurate attributes. Lastly, personal motives, needs, and attitudes are a source of bias in personal attribution, with attribution of causality made to maintain consistency or balance among attitudes.

The outline of possible bias in attribution clearly points to the importance of cognitive evaluations in situations as they are influenced by feelings, beliefs, and behavioral expectations, as well as personal motives. Attribution of causality by one participant/observer in a sexually aggressive episode to the other participant, and to himself, will be subject to these same types of variables.

Situational attribution. Kelley (1967; 1972) has been instrumental in drawing attention to situational variables as one of several components in the attribution process. He contended that attributions are made when behavior is examined in light of its consistency over time and across situations. If an actor is inconsistent in behavior across situations, an observer is likely to attribute less causality to personal disposition and more to the situational components.

Kelley (1972) recognized that ordinarily people do not analyze all possible variables for every attribution made, usually because time is not available for a complete analysis. Attributional judgments are made quickly by use of a perceptual shorthand which Kelley referred

as a "causal schemata." The causal schemata is an assumed pattern of data which has been learned, stored in memory, and then activated by environmental cues, mainly present feelings, thoughts and perceptions, the advice and opinion of others, and past experiences. A few such schemata are generalizable across several situations and serve to shorten the attribution process. In other words, by reliance upon causal schemata, attribution is made on the simplest level and with the least analytic effort possible.

Although Kelley used the term "causal schemata" to account for important social and cultural determinants of an attribution, his conceptualization uses many of the same concepts to account for social meaning as do the symbolic interaction or social comparison frameworks. The causal schemata which guide the definition of a sexually aggressive episode will reflect norms, expectations of male and female behavior in a sexual exchange, past experience, situational variables, and attitudes which may be related to the situation or expectations. Insofar as this complex of variables is used to define a situation, and thereby influence the participants' reaction to it, Klemmack and Klemmack (1976) are likely correct in asserting that definition of offensive sexual behaviors will be seeded within the perceptions and experiences of community sexuality.

The three frameworks discussed above interact in their utility for explaining social meaning in defining sexually

offensive situations. The frameworks differ in empirical attempts to examine very similar theoretical concepts. All three theories, however, focus upon the importance of social and individual variables in perception of situations. Viewing sexual aggression as symbolic interaction involves perceiving an aggressive sexual behavior as one structured by culturally prescribed norms, defined roles guiding male and female behavior, and established rules by which these roles relate to one another. In the event that a male or female is offended by displays of sexual aggression which violate established rules, both participants struggle to interpret verbal and nonverbal communication of the other and assign social meaning which allows a definition of the situation. Differential expectations for sex-role behavior, the need for actors to morally justify behavior (found in social justification theory), and ambiguities in individual distinctions between seduction and force, result in discrepancies in the perception of situations. Finally, overlapping the social justification and symbolic interaction frameworks are causal schemata, which consist of learned expectations for causality, and they serve as a perceptual shorthand for defining situations. The causal schema for sexual aggression would probably consist of the learned norms for sexual behavior, role expectations, advice and opinions of others, past experiences, attitudes, and feelings at the time sexual behavior occurred.

Using Kelley's (1972; 1973) notion of attribution to understand cause and effect in a given situation, a tentative model, or causal schema, for offensive sexual behavior is outlined in Figure 1. The variables within this model interact to determine understanding of causality in an offensive sexual situation and are: situational variables, emotional/behavioral responses to the situation, and attitudes. Further, attribution research quantifies the outcome of the perceiver's weighing of variables in a causal schema by use of numerical scales for attributions to self (Bem, 1967; 1972), attributions to others (Jones & Davis, 1965; Jones & Nisbett, 1971), and/or attributions to situations (Kelley, 1973).

FIGURE 1

Causal Schema of Sexual Aggression

Situational Components	Emotional/Behavioral Components	Attitudes
Relationship between participants	Emotional response to incident	Attitude toward sex role
Type of force used in offensive incident	Incident behavior (to deal with incident)	Sensitivity to sexual and physical aggression
Type of offensive sexual behavior	Post-incident behavior (to define the incident)	

Overview of the Present Investigation

The purpose of this study was to investigate the social processes involved in the female's perception of and reaction to offensive sexual behavior. An emphasis was placed on the social meaning assigned to offensive sexual behaviors and how that assigned meaning determined the character of the experience for the female participant. The study was exploratory in its attempt to identify the variables which are significant in giving social meaning to sexual aggression. Despite the voluminous literature discussing rape, and the feminist literature suggesting that rape and seduction are elements of the same basic process, little research exists which deals with an examination of variables related to reactions to rape or seduction and the various types of potentially offensive behaviors between the two extremes.

The research was restricted to an examination of the definition females give to offensive sexual experiences. Although males may be subject to offensive sexual behaviors, they were not included in this study for several reasons. Social norms for dating behavior which place the male in the assertive role make females more probable recipients of offensive sexual behaviors. Further, statistics on reported sexual aggression show female students at particular risk. Brown (1974) found that 27% of rape victims having a stated occupation were students, and demographic studies of rape

reported that between 61% (Amir, 1971) and 68% (McCombie, 1976) of victims are between the ages of 15 and 25.

In an attempt to identify variables existing within the sexual aggression causal schema and to investigate the relevance of those variables for understanding social meaning, the reported research had three main components. First, purely experiential data were collected to discover the incidence of offensive sexual behaviors. Statistics on rape are part of public record, and estimates of unreported rapes have been advanced to provide a clearer picture of that type of offensive sexual behavior (Amir, 1971), but apart from Kanin and Kirkpatrick's data on types of offense (Kanin, 1957; Kirkpatrick & Kanin, 1957), and Oros and Koss' (1978) recent work with serious sexual aggression, there are no contemporary data on the incidence of a range of offensive sexual behaviors.

A second aim of the research was to examine the social meaning which females assigned to various types of sexually offensive situations. Sexually offensive situations were defined as those characterized by a male's quest for sexual access of a rejecting female during the course of which coercion was used to the degree that offended responses were elicited (e.g., Kanin, 1957). The focus was on the importance of social and personal factors as antecedents of, and subsequent reactions to offensive behaviors. The variables studied were the relationship between participants, the type

of force used by the male, type of offensive sexual behavior, emotional/behavioral responses, and attitudinal variables. An assumption was made that the social relationship between participants,and attitudes toward the female role and toward aggression contributed to social meaning in defining the sexual encounter. Further, emotional and behavioral responses were assumed to be behavioral reflections of the female's interpretation of the situation. Attributions to self, male, and situations were measures of responsibility assigned to the offensive sexual incident and the persons involved.

A third part of the research focused on the collection of demographic data, such as race, education, socioeconomic status, grade point average, and age, which were expected to influence individual definition of the offensive sexual behavior.

Given the exploratory nature of the study, several general questions were examined.

1. What is the frequency of occurrence of various types of offensive sexual behaviors?
2. What is the importance of social interaction as a situational component in providing an interpretive backdrop or set of understandings in light of which sexual behaviors take on meaning?
3. Can assigned meaning be determined by such measures as the range of emotional reactions, incident and

post-incident behaviors, and attributions of responsibility for the encounter?

4. Do attitudinal variables affect attribution of responsibility for offensive sexual behavior? For example, does a commitment to traditional sex roles result in a female accepting more responsibility for offensive sexual incidents, since she is normatively responsible for curtailing unwanted sexual overtures and for encouraging desirable ones?
5. What variables influence disclosure of an offensive sexual experience, and to whom is the disclosure made?

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The following review of the literature is divided into two major sections. The first section reviews literature on sexual aggression by presenting a theoretical model which contains four separate foci for that research. These are: research focusing on the offender, on the victim, on the situation, and on societal attitudes and values relevant to sexual expression. The second major section of the review describes a multivariate model for conceptualizing sexual aggression and reviews literature associated with several variables within such a model. The variables to be discussed are: the relationship between the victim and offender, the nature of the sexual offense, the emotional and behavioral responses of the female, the attribution of responsibility for the offense, and attitudes toward female roles and commitment to such attitudes.

The literature on sexual aggression tends to overemphasize the most aggressive and deviant offenses, especially rape. The emphasis on rape probably reflects several concerns. First, the incidence of rape has increased so dramatically as to constitute a real social problem (Vinsel, 1977), a situation that poses threat to women while drawing the attention of funding agencies and researchers. Second,

feminists who attempt to improve the legal protection of women from sexual assault begin with the most serious threat to women. Finally, the hazy distinction between seduction and coercion is easiest to handle by dealing with extremes, although it is complicated even then. This review, therefore, draws heavily on the literature involving rape, largely because of the paucity of research on less serious types of sexual aggression.

Models for Assigning Responsibility for Sexual Aggression

Brodsky and Klemmack (1976) presented several models useful for summarizing and conceptualizing assailant research. Although these models were intended for use with more serious types of sexual aggression, they can be extended readily to all types of offensive sexual behavior. These models outlined the focus of research attention, or placement of responsibility, in a sexual aggression transaction. Like most frameworks, the utility of the models lies in the ability to synthesize empirical data and assist in understanding sexual assault and its behavioral and social sequelae. The four models were presented as: offender blame, victim blame, situation blame, and societal blame.

The offender blame model. Sexual aggression research falling within an offender blame model has dealt primarily with identifying the individual pathology of offenders which culminates in displays of sexual aggression.

The typical research methodology has been either interviews with males who have been labeled as sexually aggressive, or some type of psychological assessment of personality adjustment which compares sexually aggressive males with normal males. Conclusions drawn from such research are that offenders lack aggressive controls and belong to reference groups which encourage sexual aggression (Kanin, 1959), have inappropriate choices of target for sexual outlets (Copeland, et al., 1976), evidence over-controlled hostility (Cohen, et al., 1971), and erroneously define sexual situations and misperceive the sexual availability of females (Parcell & Kanin, 1976). The data concentrating on rapists of offenders sampled only those convicted of the crime and are, therefore, subject to serious questions of bias. First, convicted rapists may or may not be representative of all who rape, since the FBI estimates that five rapes go unreported for every one that is reported (Offer, 1975). Further, of the few reported rapes that eventually go to trial, only seven percent of the accused receive any kind of sentence, while the remainder are acquitted (Robin, 1977). In addition, the tendency for convicted rapists to neutralize and lessen guilt may have influenced reported motives for the initial assault. Lastly, the bulk of assailant research focuses on the rapist as offender and ignores other types of sexual aggression. A notable exception is research by Kanin and Kirkpatrick

(Kanin, 1957; Kirkpatrick & Kanin, 1957) who reported data from questionnaires administered to 380 undergraduate males. They reported that sexual aggression in general is a consequence of poor communication, erroneous beliefs by males concerning female responsiveness, and incorrect information about females which leads to a faulty definition of the situation.

Recent research by Aronson and his colleagues (Aronson, Olah, & Koss, 1978) has examined various types of male sexual aggression using the male offender as a research focus. The researchers conceptualized sexual aggresion as a continuum, and attempted to elucidate some of the characteristics and attitudes of males at various points along the continuum. Two studies were conducted: the first was to identify and interview high and moderately sexually aggressive males, and a control group of nonaggressive males. The second part of the study was the administration of a variety of attitudinal measures. The three groups of males differed significantly on several variables. Highly aggressive males reported greater feelings of pride and righteousness for their sexually aggressive behavior than did the other two groups. They reported that sexually aggressive experiences had a positive effect on their attitudes toward sexuality, thus, easily rationalizing aggression in a manner which allowed them to continue in that behavior. Finally, males high in sexual aggression were more likely

than controls to believe that certain ambiguous behaviors on the part of a woman indicate a desire for sexual intercourse (i.e., heavy breathing, paying attention to the male, and giving suggestive looks), and that women will be less offended by certain inappropriate sexual behaviors. They viewed women as sly and manipulative, and both high and moderately sexually aggressive males agreed more with non-feminist attitudes than did controls.

Highly aggressive males scored similarly to controls on measures of psychological adjustment and were found to be less anxious. This finding provided more support for a social control view of sexual aggression as opposed to a psychopathic view since attitudes and values appeared to distinguish most between males evidencing varying degrees of sexual aggressiveness.

The type of research which chooses to focus on the offender generally directs suggestions and research implications to clinicians who may come in contact with the offender. A possible shortcoming of such an approach is the real likelihood that aggressive males do not view their behavior as maladaptive and may never seek counseling. It is valuable, however, to point the way toward a clearer understanding of the male's acceptance of social attitudes and values which influence his expression of sexual behavior.

The victim blame model. The victim blame model shifts the focus of attention from the offender to the victim who

is viewed as having consciously or unconsciously allowed herself (or himself) to be in a situation that antecedes sexual aggression. The victim blame perspective holds the victim (usually female) responsible if she gave signals of sexual availability. Of course, standards for deciding the meaning of female sexual signals, sexual availability, and final interpretation of the situation are interwoven into social expectations for male and female behavior.

Most studies examining victim characteristics used a scenario of a rape situation as a point of departure and attempted to assess the victim's responsibility for her experience. Such studies (e.g., Jones & Aronson, 1973; Selby, 1977) primarily used a simulated jury method to assess the importance of variables in differential attribution of blame to victims of sexual assault. The methodology typically involved written presentation of a rape situation containing one of several possible conditions, with the respondent asked to assess the degree to which the victim was responsible by assigning a numerical score representing the victim's blame.

The attribution studies have produced a wide, and sometimes contradictory, array of findings. Victims of rape have been assigned greater responsibility for the incident if their clothing or appearance was in any way suggestive of sexual availability (Calhoun & Brock, 1977; Selby, 1977), if they were perceived as "unworthy" (Landy & Aronson, 1969),

if the victim had a prior relationship with the assailant (L'Armand & Pepitone, 1977), if victims refused to discuss their sexual history in court (Cann, Calhoun, & Selby, 1977), if the victim was physically attractive (Calhoun, Selby, Cann, & Keller, 1977), when a victim had a prior history of rape (Calhoun, Selby, & Warring, 1976), and when the victim forcefully resisted the aggressor (Kruelwitz, Nash, & Payne, 1977).

Such an array of research results points out the many variables taken into consideration when judgments are made about a female's involvement in rape. Although many variables seem unrelated to whether or not a woman was a willing participant in a given situation, they are relevant in light of social attitudes and expectations about female sexuality. An important consideration to be kept in mind in reviewing attribution research is the single attribution examined in most studies. The studies cited above asked respondents to describe whether a victim was more or less responsible given certain situational variables which might differ from one study to another. The attribution to the male/aggressor, either separately or as it might interact with attribution to the female/victim, was never examined.

A study concerning psychological factors in rape victims was not in the attribution mold, but did include observations on victim characteristics. Selkin (1976) compared two groups of females, with one group composed of sexual

assault victims and the other group composed of women who successfully resisted an attack. The two groups were administered the California Psychological Inventory. A comparison of scores indicated that resisters scored significantly higher on dominance, sociability, social presence and communality. Selkin interpreted his data to suggest that resisters are more adept in social situations, more expressive of thoughts and feelings, and possess greater qualities of leadership than victims of sexual assault.

The situation blame model. Research studies using a situation blame model focused on environmental and structural circumstances as determinants of sexual aggression. Such a model is different from the other two discussed above purely in focus, but it acknowledges that certain types of males may seek out situations conducive to assault, and females may place themselves in vulnerable situations. Situational research is generally demographic in nature, listing the situational occurrence of assault. For example, situational factors found to contribute to assault are drunkenness (Amir, 1971; Schultz, 1975), public places where potential victims and offenders go (Klemmack, 1977), the likelihood of attack in the victim's home(Amir, 1971), in the back seats of cars (Hartwig & Sandler, 1977), and so on.

Societal blame model. A societal blame model describes data on sexual aggression within a framework of accumulated cultural and societal attitudes. Support for this model

comes from studies which show that convicted sex offenders and the normal male population possess similar attitudes about women (Klemmack, 1976; Watkins, 1976). These data support Brownmiller's (1975) somewhat extreme premise that rape and sexual assault are the manifestation of a "sick society" comprised of "macho" men, sexist child-rearing practices, violence, the double standard, and women as an oppressed class.

Societal blame models of rape and sexual aggression might best be tested by cross-cultural data comparing such aggression with child-rearing practices, social mores for male and female behavior, violence, and the value of women. An alternative is to examine the importance of several variables within a given culture to better understand and predict the occurrence of and response to sexual aggression.

The models described above are useful guides for summarizing the fragmented research on sexual aggression. Because these models focus research in a particular area, they are also useful for making decisions about clinical treatment of aggressive offenders and victims of sexual aggression, for policy-making decisions, and for protection against sexual aggression. Such a focus, however, emphasizes points of divergence in the literature and fails to provide a more realistic multivariate view of combined offender, victim, and situational factors which are interpreted by participants according to social rules for acceptable behavior. In other

words, variables from all four models begin to interact when a sexually aggressive situation is given meaning and the situation is individually defined by participants.

A Multivariate Model for Sexual Aggression

Kelley's (1972; 1973) "causal schemata" construct applied to sexual aggression can serve as a useful integrating device for the models proposed by Brodsky and Klemmack. If the initial reaction to and subsequent consequences of sexual aggression hinge upon the definition of the situation, and causal schemata are the cognitive elements instrumental in understanding cause and effect in any situation, then social meaning assigned to sexual aggression can be studied by examining variables which comprise the causal schema for sexual behavior. As noted before, according to Kelley, causal schemata are best conceptualized as "an assumed pattern of data in a complete analysis of variance framework." Such a framework implies interaction of variables during the attribution process. Causal schemata are learned, stored in memory, and then activated by environmental cues, mainly present thoughts, feelings, and percepts, the advice and opinion of others, and past experiences. Victim and offender variables may take the form of expectations for male and female behavior. Environmental cues are situational in nature. Cultural or societal variables are a part of learned expectations for sexual expression, but also feelings, percepts, thoughts, and past experiences all become meaningful

within the societal framework.

Identification of variables within the causal schema for sexual aggression has not been undertaken at this point in research efforts; however, researchers have tentatively identified some factors as important determinants of social meaning in the definition of sexual aggression. The model presented in Chapter 1 identified some of the factors which can be assumed in the causal schema as: situational factors such as the relationship between participants, the type of coercion or forced used, and the type of offensive sexual behavior; emotional/behavioral components during and after the offensive incident; and attitudes toward sex roles and toward sexual and physical aggression. These will be described in more detail below, with inclusion of some relevant research findings.

Relationship between victim and offender. The relationship between participants in a sexually aggressive episode strongly affects the social meaning given to that episode. For example, by legal definition, husbands cannot sexually assault their wives; therefore, if a woman is offended by her spouse, her definition of the situation will reflect social expectations of conjugal sexuality (Robin, 1977). Degree of acquaintance between participants will also influence expectations of receptivity, of behavioral responses, and it will set a standard for expected levels of intimacy and how that intimacy is perceived.

Weis and Borges (1973; 1975) used a symbolic interactionist framework to comment on social meaning assigned to aggression by husbands and friends. They stated that society trains women to be helpless, men to be aggressive, and a woman learns early to expect that the men she knows will not attack her, but will be her protectors. The fact that women are assaulted (sexually and otherwise) by husbands and lovers, and approximately 50% of the women who report having been raped were assaulted by friends and relatives, shows that men frequently do not meet these expectations. The social meaning a woman assigns to aggression from an acquaintance will reflect her expectations for that person's behavior, the conflict or dissonance experienced when expectations for behavior are not consistent with actual behavior, and her assessment of situational or personal factors which give meaning to her experience.

Weis and Borges (1973) elaborated on the definition of rape when the male was an acquaintance:

> Her emotional investment in the person and in her relationship with him will make any definition, other than rape, more plausible and acceptable to her. In the stereotypic conception of rape, rapists are supposed to be strangers. When the rapist is known to her, this widely-held expectation contributes to her difficulty or inability to define the act as rape before, during, or after the event, and accounts in part for her ineffectual and often inappropriate response to his behavior. (p. 83)

Several studies provide empirical data to clarify the importance of the relationship of participants in assigning

social meaning to sexual aggression. Either due to a tendency to blame the victim or a need to hold females responsible for control of sexual intimacy, a female's most common reactions when assaulted by an acquaintance are feelings of shock, betrayal, and humiliation with self-accusatory guilt for having placed herself in the situation in the first place (Russell, 1975). Undergraduate females in Kanin's (1957) study reported greatest guilt when they were involved with their aggressor, probably because they associated the offense with the possibility that they somehow provoked the incident. Kanin reported that males in his sample readily agreed that females were subjected to sexual aggression because "they asked for it" in some way during interaction with the male.

Oros and Koss (1978) reported findings from exploratory data on the effects of a victim's definition of forced intercourse and her subsequent emotional adjustment. Based on data from a sexual experiences survey, Oros and Koss divided the sample of 330 females into two groups: acknowledged rape victims who experienced forced intercourse and defined it as rape; and unacknowledged rape victims who experienced forced intercourse but did not define it as rape. When type of force was controlled, the variable which was most important in determining whether or not subjects defined themselves as victims was the degree of acquaintance with the male -- unacknowledged victims were better acquainted with the man.

Definition of oneself as a victim did not result in any differences in emotional adjustment after the incident since all subjects were functioning within a normal range on adjustment scales, but the impact was greater for acknowledged victims. They reported more negative views of men after their experience, and had more negative attitudes toward sexuality. These differences suggest that the two groups conceptualized their experience differently, and that the impact differed depending upon that conceptualization. The degree of acquaintance with the male was an important determinant in the conceptualization and interpretation of the experience.

A recent study by Davis and Davis (1976) reported the social meaning assigned to an exhibitionistic encounter between strangers. The female victims of indecent exposure recognized the inappropriateness of the exhibitionist's behavior, but felt no personal responsibility for the encounter, had little difficulty over their own role in the incident, and viewed their victimization as accidental. The social meaning given to the encounter was influenced by the exhibitionist having been a strange male and the belief that they had just happened to be there. The absence of guilt with strangers, especially in minor offenses where no threat was involved, suggests that social interaction contributes important information to females who are defining offensive situations and behaviors.

The nature of the offensive sexual behavior. When defining offensive sexual behavior as any sexual advance forced on a person, offensive behavior can run the gamut from verbal innuendoes to brutal rape. The distinguishing feature is the degree of sexual intimacy involved. The reaction to an offense is expected to vary depending upon the perceived seriousness of the offensive behavior, which is a combination of the type of offense and the force used to coerce one to engage in behavior against his/her will.

Although the rape literature deals with extremes in sexual aggression and may be subject to bias, some studies show that variation in the rape assault is important for predicting subsequent reactions. Burgess and Holmstrom (1975; 1976) interviewed rape victims who had volunteered to describe their experience and their personal reaction to it. The interviewers reported that victims whose rapists beat them or threatened them with weapons experienced severe psychological trauma and suffered long-term effects when compared with victims who were coerced in less violent ways. In other words, rape as forced intercourse was differentially defined in light of perceived or experienced threat or violence which accompanied the act.

Oros and Koss (1978) also restricted their research of personal reactions to sexual aggression to women who had experienced forced intercourse, and they reported similar results. Their study used self-definition of victimization

as a point of departure to examine those variables distinguishing between women who would label their experience as rape from those who would not. Those women who acknowledged themselves as rape victims perceived a greater degree of threat to personal safety during the assault, and had more lasting emotional reactions to the incident, than did women who were classified as unacknowledged victims. It is important to note, however, that in the Oros and Koss study the degree of acquaintance with the male was most significant in distinguishing acknowledged from unacknowledged victims. The subjects may have felt less threat to personal safety, given the same violent act, when they were better acquainted with the male aggressor.

Kanin's (1957) study of male sex aggression is the only research which examined a range of offensive behaviors. Because the degree of aggression and the more serious (sexually intimate) types of offenses interacted with the relationship between participants (engaged women reported the greatest sexual aggression from their partners), no clear-cut statements were made about the importance of the degree of offensiveness. Also, Kanin's analysis did not isolate personal meaning given to types of offenses by asking the females how they felt about a given incident, but he inferred the meaning given to the seriousness of the offense by asking who was told about it. Presumably, the more serious and threatening an offense was defined to be by the victim,

the greater the likelihood that she would seek institutional support. Separate analysis of the type of offense and the degree of perceived threat in a given type of sexual offense should elucidate the relevance it has for giving meaning to sexual aggression. The research on types of offenses at this point has not been able to isolate the importance of types of offensive sexual behaviors in definition of situations.

Emotional reaction. One element important in the definition of a situation, and constituting part of the reaction to the situation itself, is the victim's emotional response. It is assumed that emotional and behavioral reactions to a situation can be used to infer the social meaning assigned to that situation. Very few studies have examined the victim's emotional response to sexual aggression, although the rape literature discusses victim reaction to violence and individual coping styles of victims (Burgess & Holmstrom, 1975; Holmstrom & Burgess, 1975). Davis and Davis (1976) interviewed victims of exhibitionistic encounters and could find no single affective response to characterize victim responses and made no attempt to predict behavioral responses or social meaning on the basis of differing emotional reactions.

A study by Selkin (1976), cited previously, compared emotional reactions of rape victims and resisters. He interviewed 32 rape victims and 23 women who had successfully

resisted rape who were asked, in check-list fashion, to describe emotional reactions during the sexual assault. Victims were significantly more likely to report having felt frightened, insulted, startled, terrified, panicked, desperate, shocked, frozen, and humiliated. No differences were found between the two groups for anger or disgust. Selkin suggested that victims' responses were predisposed to feeling rather than action, and implied withdrawal and removal of self from the situation. One might hypothesize that the victims in Selkin's sample were more "feminine" than resisters since they appeared to manifest cultural expectations of female passivity rather than aggressively confronting their attacker.

The lack of substantive information on emotional response in sexually aggressive situations leaves many questions unanswered. For example, does individual emotional response vary according to the type of offense? Does the relationship between the male and female influence the emotional response of victims, and if so, how? Is an emotional response related to attitudes about sexuality, or is it a more individual, situation-specific response? Answers to these questions should assist in conceptualizing processes in the definition of sexually aggressive situations.

Behavioral strategy for dealing with the offense. Recently women have been deluged with advice from books, talk-show guests, and law enforcement agencies describing

methods for dealing with sexual aggression. That advice includes ignoring the aggressor, crying, not begging, fighting him, reasoning with him, just talking, and, if he happens to be a fiancé enamoured beyond reason, vomiting on him (Conroy, 1975; Storaska, 1975). Unfortunately, such advice is not always practical. It was gleaned primarily from interviews with victims and sometimes rapists who reported what worked, or did not work, for them. In any event, unless the preventive reaction is well structured on the part of the woman's behavioral norms, she is unlikely to use them under stress. Also, data on emotional reactions to rape shed little light on behavioral reactions to sexual aggression in general.

A behavioral response to sexual aggression gives some insight into how that person defined the situation. Again, using the sparse literature as a guide, a distinction has been made between a behavioral response during the offense, which may be a coping response, and the post-offense reaction, which may be conceived of as social justification (Festinger, 1954), negotiation of reality to further define the situation (Scheff, 1968), use of a support system to overcome continuing effects of the offense (Kanin, 1957), or protection against repetition of the offense.

Research reporting behavioral responses to sexual aggression generally relied on victims' reports of how they behaved during the offense and what they did afterward.

Javorek (1976) found that women could be more successful at preventing assault by running away or by crying out; they could not prevent victimization by talking to the assailant or by using alcohol or drugs before the incident. Kirkpatrick and Kanin (1957) reported that females felt anger or guilt at the time of the offense, but chose secrecy as the most common post-offense response. Davis and Davis (1975) reported that when confronted by an exhibitionist, subjects reported behavioral responses such as removing themselves from the encounter, ignoring the man, getting help, and getting involved by talking to the man. Only one-fourth of the women in the sample called the police to report the incident.

These results do not provide a very clear understanding of behavioral responses and how those responses relate to a definition of the situation. One might assume that coping responses such as withdrawal, anger, and talking are ways of responding to a negative situation. The post-offense reaction of secrecy may suggest that females hesitate to associate themselves with incidents of sexual aggression, or that they do not anticipate receiving support from persons or institutions.

There are several problems with the literature on female behavioral responses during and after a sexual offense. First, and most important, there are few data on what women feel during the offense, what they do about it, and how that

relates to social meaning and defining the situation. Second, most of the available data concerning behavioral responses concentrate on rape victims. Finally, personality factors, attitudes, and situational factors influence behavioral responses and how successful they are for the individual. These variables have yet to be examined as a composite.

Attribution of responsibility. The literature on attribution processes in rape is extensive and has been discussed within the context of the victim blame model. Attribution theory has been helpful in identifying factors which are significant determinants of the degree of responsibility attributed to rape victims. An underlying assumption, useful for testing an attributional model, is that in rape the victim's innocence will always be a matter of question, since proving her assailant's guilt necessitates proving her own innocence (Weis & Borges, 1973; Weis & Weis, 1975). The major contribution of attribution research for understanding sexual aggression has been to expose the existence of situational variables which are relevant for defining situations where responsibility is attributed to both victim and aggressor.

Although attribution theory has contributed greatly to an understanding of cognitive processes and attitudes central to perceived culpability of rape victims, the research may have been more beneficial for testing the theory

than for understanding the antecedents and consequences of rape. Due to the attributional focus on the victim of misfortune, there are no data on how responsibility is distributed among all participants in a rape situation. Perhaps an assumption can be made that as less responsibility is attributed to rape victims, more is attributed to rapists. Or perhaps increases in situational attribution decrease male and female responsibility. Such assumptions have not been examined, nor has attribution for sexual aggression been examined as an interaction among participants and the situation.

Another limitation of rape attribution research rests with the existence of personal bias in attribution. The rational process of attribution can be affected by the perceiver's personality, expectations, and personal motives (Jones, et al. 1971; Lerner & Matthews, 1967; Sosis, 1974). Females appear to be able to identify with the plight of rape victims more so than males and consistently attribute less blame to victims (Calhoun, et al. 1976; Krulewitz, et al. 1977; Selby, et al. 1977). It is not known whether females would then attribute more responsibility to males, or whether personality variables significantly influence individual female attributions.

Some of the problems with existing attribution research could be solved by using a model which conceptualizes the process in a manner which is more consistent with sexually

aggressive situations. Use of Kelley's (1967; 1973; 1975) model of attribution would provide a multiple assessment of causality for sexual aggression. The model assumes attribution is a multidimensional process which requires attribution to actors and situations. In a sexually aggressive episode, attribution to both male and female actors takes the onus from the victim, and also considers situational variables. Requesting subjects to distribute attribution of causality among both male and female participants as well as the environmental context should reflect a more accurate assessment of individual perceptions of cause and effect.

Attitudes. Both attribution theory and the symbolic interactionist framework recognize the importance of attitudes regarding normative sexual behavior for males and females in understanding sexual aggression. One might expect that the female's perception of the female role, and her conformity to those expectations will influence her definition of offensive sexual behaviors and subsequent reactions to them. The same would be true for males for their own sex-role expectations and their expectations for opposite-sex behaviors.

Spence and Helmreich (1973) developed a Likert-type scale called the Attitudes Toward Women Scale, which measures attitudes about the rights and roles of women, dating behavior, sexual behavior, and marital relationships. Using the scale as a guide, one might postulate that females who hold traditional views of femininity should react differently

to sexual aggression than females who hold more liberal views, especially if differing sex-role expectations influence social meaning. The Attitude Toward Women Scale has not been used widely in sexual aggression research, but has been reported in research by Klemmack (1976) with child molesters and Watkins (1976) with rapists. Both studies reported no significant differences in attitudes toward women held by offenders and the general norms for males. Perhaps using such a scale with females would prove more insightful about female behavior.

Summary. This review of the sexual aggression literature briefly summarized research which has concentrated singularly on aggressors, victims, situations, or attitudes. Applying a multivariate model of attribution of causality to sexual aggression led to the notion that these four all interact as a perceiver arrives at a definition of any given episode. An array of situational, aggressor, victim, and attitudinal variables were presented as they might relate to cognitive definitions of offensive sexual behaviors. Existing literature examining these types of variables was reviewed.

A major weakness of the literature on sexual aggression is the primary concern with rape. While a rape situation may have much in common with other types of sexual aggression, there is nothing to suggest whether or not types of offensive sexual behaviors vary more in degree or kind, or whether each is characterized by separate situational and

social variables. Ideally, the social control of sexuality is maintained by a set of rules and a diverse group of social meanings. These meanings and rules provide the interpretive backdrop or set of understandings in light of which unexpected deviations take on meaning. The research on rape may, or may not, generalize to other types of offensive behaviors. The same rules and processes used to define rape situations may not apply to other types of sexual aggression.

The need to better understand the experience of sexual aggression is apparent from the statistics on incidence rates. The problems associated with definition and reporting make it difficult to assess actual incidence of sexual aggression. Rape statistics, for instance, show continued increases in reported rapes of up to 60% since 1972 (Hartwig & Sandler, 1977). One of the more conservative estimates states that three rapes go unreported for every one reported (Curtis, 1975). Studies examining other types of sexual offenses (Kanin, 1957) found that 56% of a sample of undergraduate women have experienced some type of offensive sexual behavior. Since such experiences appear to be quite common, information on the cognitive handling of aggressive episodes seems warranted. This research study examined several variables to better understand the relative importance in the social meaning attached to offensive sexual behaviors.

CHAPTER III

METHOD

Respondents

The subjects were initially 600 undergraduates enrolled in one of three North Carolina universities: University of North Carolina-Greensboro (UNC-G), which appeals to middle-class students; North Carolina Agricultural and Technical (A&T), and Winston-Salem State University (WSSU), both universities historically serving black students primarily. Sampling of female students within these universities can be considered a haphazard procedure in general (Smith, 1975), and especially so in this study, due to the voluntary nature of participation, and to the emphasis on obtaining a large number of females willing to complete a lengthy questionnaire about a sensitive topic. Although the sample was purposive, the intended 600 respondents from the three institutions were considered to offer a relatively broad representation of black and white undergraduate Southern women.

Selection of respondents within each of the schools varied. The sample from UNC-G consisted of 357 students and was drawn from classes in sociology and home economics. The 205 subjects from A&T were drawn from the population of women

living in three on-campus residence halls. Finally, the 38 WSSU respondents attended classes in sociology and psychology. Of the 600 questionnaires distributed, 397 were returned, 380 of which were adequately completed for inclusion in the study.

The treatment of subjects was in accordance with the ethical guidelines advanced by the Human Subjects Review Committee at UNC-G.

The respondents were equally distributed across undergraduate classes, most were unmarried (92%), and 74% reported experiencing at least one offensive sexual incident. Racial composition of the sample was: 41% black, 58% white, and .5% oriental.

Development of the Questionnaire

A questionnaire was constructed to assess a respondent's experience with and reaction to offensive sexual behaviors. The series of items devised was expected to clarify the meaning females give to offensive sexual experiences. Item content included several types of offensive sexual behaviors (ranging from forced necking to forced oral sex), the frequency of offensive sexual experiences occurring at different points in time, the relationship between male and female participants (e.g., stranger, first date, just met him, not a formal date, steady date, fiance, spouse, other relative or acquaintance/neighbor), and the reaction to the offensive episode. Attribution of responsibility was made for types

of offensive sexual behavior to the male, to the female (self), and to the situation. Causal attribution was measured by the respondent's numerical rating of responsibility on a 9-point scale ranging from: "1" representing no responsibility for the incident, to "9", representing complete responsibility. A similar scale was first used by Jones and Aronson (1973), with variations on the same format used by other researchers.

It should be emphasized here that this study is a preliminary examination of a complex problem and involves the use of instruments developed to explore sexual aggression from a unique point of view. Many of the items on the questionnaire were derived from instruments cited in the published literature. The selection of categories for relationship between participants in an offensive sexual episode was an adaptation from the Kirkpatrick and Kanin (1957) instrument, with additional categories added for "spouse" and "other relative." The choice of post-incident responses was influenced by Kirkpatrick and Kanin's questionnaire. Selkin's (1976) findings of typical emotional responses of rape victims and resisters were particularly helpful in narrowing down possible adjectives describing potential emotional reactions during the sexual behavior, as was the Burgess and Holmstrom (1974; 1975; 1976) interview data from rape victims. Adjectives included on the questionnaire were selected from the Multiple Affect Adjective Check List

(Zuckerman & Lubin, 1965) and can roughly be divided into anger, fear, or self-blame responses. Finally, Davis and Davis (1975) offered several types of coping behaviors of victims which served as a guide for development of questionnaire items concerning responses during the offensive incident.

Included in the questionnaire were several items and scales unrelated to the situational experience of sexual aggression, which are assumed to affect the social meaning assigned to an offensive sexual behavior. The short form of the Attitudes Toward Women Scale (AWS) was included, with the expectation that commitment to traditional feminine roles will influence the definition of and social meaning assigned to offensive sexual behaviors. The development of the AWS, including reliability and validity estimates for both the original scale and the shortened version, was reported by Spence and Helmreich (1973).

A second type of attitudinal measure was developed to assess the respondent's sensitivity toward sexual and physical aggression. Four scenarios depicting sexual and physical aggression were presented and evaluated for their degree of offensiveness to the respondent.

A series of items obtained demographic data: race, age of the respondent, educational status, grade point average, and marital status. Socioeconomic status was assessed by educational level of each parent, and by an

occupational status score for each parent, calculated by using Nam and LaRoque (1976) scores for occupational status. Several items included were expected to provide evidence of experience with offensive sexual behaviors and to assist in prediction of outcomes of offensive sexual experiences. These were: age of first date, age respondent first had sexual intercourse, and ideal age for marriage.

A copy of the questionnaire is contained in Appendix A.

Data Collection

The procedure for contacting undergraduate women and distributing the questionnaires to potential respondents varied for the institution in which the student was enrolled. The procedure for data collection is described first by the instructions given to all respondents, followed by the steps taken in each institution.

Although several methods were used to select subjects, the initial contact and instructions to respondents was the same. When respondents were contacted, the investigator explained the purpose of the study, described the general content of the questionnaire, and invited respondents to participate voluntarily. To insure anonymity, respondents were requested to avoid identifying themselves on the questionnaire. Questionnaires were then distributed, and respondents received instructions for returning completed questionnaires. Follow-up procedures were not made, due to variations in data collection and the anonymity of subjects.

Procedural variations between and within institutions was necessary due to differences in institutional cooperation in gaining access to students. At UNC-G, respondents were selected from classes in the home economics and sociology departments and were contacted during class meetings. Respondents from home economics classes completed the questionnaire during a class session, a procedure which yielded a response rate of 85.5%. Those respondents contacted through classes in sociology were likewise asked to participate in the study at the beginning of a class session, but due to an inability to use class time, respondents returned completed questionnaires at the beginning of the next class session. In addition, the sociology instructor requested that a form be attached to each questionnaire which reassured respondents that participation in the research was voluntary, was in no way associated with class performance and grading, and respondents acknowledged their understanding of voluntary participation by checking an appropriate box on the attached sheet. This procedure resulted in a smaller return of completed questionnaires. The overall response rate for the two sociology classes was 38%.

Respondents from A&T, assembled for residence hall meetings, were given a verbal description of the research and questionnaire content. Those respondents who volunteered received a copy of the questionnaire, completed it in their

free time, and returned completed questionnaires to residence hall advisors. Two weeks after initial contact, all students received a reminder note requesting they complete the questionnaire if they had not done so. This two-step procedure resulted in a 54% response rate.

Potential respondents from WSSU were selected from sociology and psychology classes where instructors allowed class time for initial contact, but not for completion of the questionnaires. Completed questionnaires were returned at the beginning of the next class session. The response rate from WSSU was 86.8%. The markedly high response rate from WSSU students compared to UNC-G sociology students who followed the same procedure for completing questionnaires is likely due to different emphases placed on the ethical use of human subjects at the two institutions. No committee exists at WSSU to approve research studies using human subjects, and the investigator discovered that at the end of those class sessions where initial contact was made with WSSU students, the instructors reminded students to return the questionnaires as an "assignment" for the class. While this technique appeared to be an acceptable means of insuring a high response rate for that institution, it meant that students who chose not to participate did so at the risk of possible repercussions if they overtly protested. Although students who failed to complete questionnaires were not identified, since questionnaires were returned by students

anonymously placing them in a box upon entrance into a class, some WSSU students may have perceived an element of coercion to participate.

In preparation for the data analysis, 17 questionnaires were omitted due to a large amount of missing data. For the few subjects who had omitted 1 or 2 items on the AWS, each blank response was coded as a zero, or neutral response. Generally, only four or five questionnaires required this alteration.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

The results derived from the questionnaire and scales are presented in three major sections: descriptive demographic data; the incidence of offensive sexual behaviors; and social meaning in defining causal attribution for sexual aggression.

Demographic Variables

Means, standard deviations, and appropriate percentages for selected demographic variables are contained in Table 1. The mean age of respondents was 20.6. Typically, they had their first date in their mid-teens (M=15.82) and first experienced sexual intercourse in their late teen years (M=19.83). Fifty percent of fathers were not educated beyond high school, 30% had received some training in college, and 12% had graduate training. Comparable levels for mother's education were: 50% high school, 42% college, and 6% graduate schooling. These findings indicate that mothers of the respondents had more formal education than fathers.

The religious preference for over half of the respondents was either Baptist (35.6%) or Methodist (17.7%), with a sizeable percentage (13%) expressing no religious preference. Respondents were usually single (91.7%), and were distributed

TABLE 1

Descriptive Statistics (Means, Standard Deviations and Percentages) for Demographic Variables

Age		
	Mean	SD
Age of Respondents (N=380)	20.56	3.89
Age of First Date (N=363)	15.82	2.73
Age of First Sexual Intercourse (N=342)	19.83	2.77

Parent Education		
	Fathers (N=350)	Mothers (N=353)
Less than High School	23.1%	12.2%
High School Graduate	30.9%	39.7%
Some College/Technical School	19.4%	25.5%
College Graduate	14.0%	16.7%
M.A., M.S., etc.	7.7%	5.1%
Ph.D., etc.	4.9%	0.8%

Religious Preference (N=368)			
Baptist	35.6%	Protestant	10.6%
Methodist	17.7%	None	13.0%
Presbyterian	5.4%	Other	17.7%

College Major (N=357)	
Nursing	20.4%
Home Economics	19.6%
Business/Economics	15.4%
Elementary Education	9.8%
Sociology	7.6%
Psychology	6.4%
Other	20.8%

Educational Status (N=370)	
College Freshmen	29.7%
College Sophomore	28.9%
College Junior	21.6%
College Senior	18.6%
Graduate Level	1.1%

TABLE 1 (cont.)

Marital Status (N=374)	
Single	91.7%
Married	6.7%
Separated	0.5%
Divorced	1.1%

Race (N=371)	
Black	41.2%
White	58.2%
Oriental	0.5%

evenly across classes in undergraduate school, with 20.4% majoring in nursing, 19.6% in home economics, 15.4% in business/economics, and 9.8% in education.

Incidence of Offensive Sexual Behaviors

Section A of the questionnaire assessed the incidence of six types of offensive sexual behaviors, which were defined as sexual advances forced on a woman to the extent that she became offended by that force. Respondents were requested to indicate how many times they experienced each of the six types of offenses for two time periods: during the past year, and since the age of 13.

Ninety-eight of the respondents, or 26%, reported never having experienced any type of offensive sexual behavior. A breakdown of responses for the experience of offensive sexual behavior during the past year and since age 13 is contained in Table 2. It can be seen from the range of behaviors experienced that the more "intimate" behaviors occurred less frequently, and few females experienced a particular type of offensive behavior more than once or twice. More females provided data about the incidence of

TABLE 2

Incidence Percentages of Six Offensive Sexual Behaviors Experienced in the Last Year and Since the Age of 13[a]

Offensive Sexual Behaviors	Total N	Incidence in the Last Year						
		Never	Once	Twice	3-5 Times	6-10 Times	10+ Times	Don't Know
Forced Necking	370	64.3	14.1	9.2	7.6	2.2	1.9	0.9
Forced Petting/Above	375	68.8	14.7	5.9	6.1	1.6	2.1	0.8
Forced Petting/Below	375	76.5	12.3	4.5	2.9	0.8	1.6	1.3
Forced Attempted Intercourse	375	81.3	13.6	2.7	0.8	0.5	0.8	0.3
Forced Intercourse	373	91.2	6.7	0.8	0.3	0.5	0.3	0.3
Forced Oral Sex	373	94.1	4.0	1.3	0.3	0.0	0.3	0.0

Offensive Sexual Behaviors	Total N	Incidence Since the Age of 13						
		Never	Once	Twice	3-5 Times	6-10 Times	10+ Times	Don't Know
Forced Necking	348	45.7	16.7	10.9	14.4	4.0	7.5	3.7
Forced Petting/Above	353	54.1	15.6	8.2	11.3	2.8	5.1	2.8
Forced Petting/Below	352	67.0	13.4	6.0	6.0	2.3	3.1	2.3
Forced Attempted Intercourse	351	75.2	14.5	3.7	4.3	0.3	1.7	0.3
Forced Intercourse	349	87.4	6.6	3.2	1.4	0.6	0.6	0.3
Forced Oral Sex	352	92.0	4.3	1.4	1.4	0.6	0.3	0.0

[a] The data for "since the age of 13" exclude data for the "last year."

offensive sexual behaviors over the "past year" than "since age 13." The percentage of respondents who reported never experiencing offensive sexual behaviors in the "past year" was higher than "since age 13." The percentages for incidence of offensive sexual behavior generally were lower for the "past year" than "since age 13." The differences between the two time periods measured may have been due to the longer time frame for the occurrence of offensive sexual behaviors "since age 13," improved ability to prevent such incidents with maturity, and possible distortions in memory of actual numbers of experiences. The higher percentage of "don't know" responses in the "since age 13" category indicates that some respondents were unable to remember actual incident of offensive behaviors, especially for the necking and petting offenses.

Social Meaning in Defining Causal Attribution for Sexual Aggression

This section contains data pertaining to the three types of variables in the causal schema of sexual aggression. The first part involves measures of the situational components (the relationship between participants, type of force used, and the type of offensive sexual behavior), followed by data for the emotional and behavioral reactions to the incidents, and third, the attitudes toward women and toward tolerance of sexual and physical aggression. The

fourth part concerns analyses of the attribution scales (self, male, and situation) in terms of the three types of variables in the causal schema. Results from statistical analyses of interactions between the variables will be presented in the last part of this section.

Situational components. Results from the three situational components in the causal schema for attribution will be presented separately.

(1) Type of offensive sexual behavior. The incidence of offensive sexual behaviors from Section A of the questionnaire is restricted to offensive episodes occurring either in the "past year" or "since age 13." A more accurate assessment of the incidence of offensive sexual behaviors ever experienced is found in the number of respondents who completed sections of the questionnaire dealing with the most offensive experience for six types of offensive sexual behaviors. Responses to Sections B-G in the questionnaire produced the following data from the 380 respondents: 63% reported "forced necking," 51% "forced petting above the waist," 38% "forced petting below the waist," 29% "forced attempted intercourse," 14% "forced actual intercourse," and 10% reported "forced oral sex."

Appendix B contains the percentage of responses to items for the most offensive incident experienced by respondents for six types of offensive sexual behaviors.

(2) Relationship between participants. The "relationship between participants" variable determined whether dating and courtship are associated with the experience of offensive sexual behaviors, and how a relationship might affect the definition of the offense. In describing the most offensive situation for the six types of offensive behaviors, respondents identified the male participant as: a "stranger," "just met" him informally, he was a "first date," a "steady date," a "fiancé," "spouse," "other relative," or "acquaintance/neighbor." Examination of Table 3 indicates that for all types of offensive behaviors combined, "first" and "steady" dates were participants in over 60% of the described incidents. The percentages increase somewhat for the "steady date" situation as the "intimacy" in type of offensive behavior increases; and for the "first date," the percentages decrease with increasing "intimacy" of offense. "Acquaintance/neighbors" were participants in approximately 15% of all types of offenses.

(3) Type of force. The type of force experienced with an offensive sexual behavior was expected to influence the definition of the situation. Force was measured by an ordinal-type scale ranging from "no threat" to increasing levels of overt threat, i.e., "verbal threats" to safety, use of "physical strength" to subdue without physical harm,

TABLE 3

Percentage of Reported Offensive Sexual Behaviors for Types of Relationship Between Participants [a]

Offensive Sexual Behaviors	Total N	Types of Relationship							
		Stranger	Just Met	First Date	Steady Date	Fiance	Spouse	Relative	Acquaintance
Forced Necking	239	05	21	33	23	02	00	01	15
Forced Petting Above Waist	194	04	11	29	37	03	01	02	13
Forced Petting Below Waist	143	05	07	21	41	04	01	02	18
Forced Attempted Intercourse	109	03	07	15	47	08	02	01	17
Forced Actual Intercourse	53	08	04	11	55	06	04	00	13
Forced Oral Sex	37	05	05	08	46	08	08	03	16
Totals	775	4.6	12.3	24.4	36.5	4.0	1.3	1.5	15.4

[a] The Total N values were derived from the number of responses from sections labeled B-G in the questionnaire.

"beating or slapping," and threat to life by "use of a weapon."

The data in Table 4 are response percentages for each type of force, and they appear to be fairly consistent across the types of offensive behaviors.

Although use of weapons was generally negligible, 4% of the described "forced actual intercourse" situations involved "use of weapons." "Beating and slapping" were seldom reported for the less intimate types of sexual behaviors, but they occurred in 8% of the "forced actual intercourse" offenses, and 11% of "oral sex" offenses. The type of force used in over 50% of all offenses was "physical strength" to subdue without bodily harm. The second highest percentage for the type of force used was the "no threat" response, which was approximately 40% for each type of offensive sexual behavior.

Emotional and behavioral reactions. Three variables will be discussed as part of a behavioral response to a sexually offensive situation. These are the emotional response at the time of the offense, the behavioral strategy used during the offense, and a post-offense response.

(1) Emotional response to offensive incidents. Emotional reaction to offensive incidents was measured by presenting nine affective adjectives. Respondents checked

TABLE 4

Percentage of Responses For Six Offensive Sexual Behaviors and Five Types of Force [a]

Offensive Sexual Behaviors	Total N	Types of Force: Use of Weapon	Beat/ Slap	Physical Strength	Verbal Threats	No Threat
Forced Necking	235	01	03	54	02	41
Forced Petting Above Waist	190	01	02	51	03	42
Forced Petting Below Waist	141	01	04	50	06	40
Forced Attempted Intercourse	108	02	02	50	04	42
Forced Actual Intercourse	52	04	08	50	02	37
Forced Oral Sex	37	03	11	46	03	38
Totals	763	1.3	3.3	51.4	3.0	41.0

[a] The Total N values were derived from the number of responses for types of force from sections labeled B-G in the questionnaire.

those adjectives which characterized their feelings at the time of a given offensive incident.

The response percentages for adjectives checked are found in Table 5, according to offensive sexual behaviors. It is important to recognize first that the number of respondents differed on each behavior, consistent with the previous observation that most offensive behaviors occurred on the less intimate levels of "forced necking" and "forced petting above and below the waist." Overall for

TABLE 5

Percentages of Emotional Adjectives Checked by Respondents for Six Offensive Sexual Behaviors

Offensive Sexual Behaviors	Total Adjectives Checked	Emotional Adjectives								
		frightened	angry	nervous	shocked	insulted	calm	disgusted	startled	shame
Forced Necking	554	9.2/ 22.1	21.3/ 31.6	11.2/ 24.7	8.3/ 22.9	13.2/ 29.4	3.1/ 28.8	18.1/ 34.8	9.7/ 30.3	6.0/ 26.0
Forced Petting/Above	430	9.5/ 17.7	21.9/ 25.1	13.3/ 22.7	9.5/ 20.4	14.0/ 24.2	3.0/ 22.0	14.0/ 20.9	10.0/ 24.2	4.9/ 16.5
Forced Petting/Below	367	13.4/ 21.1	17.4/ 17.1	12.5/ 18.3	11.4/ 20.9	11.7/ 17.3	4.1/ 25.4	12.0/ 15.3	11.2/ 23.0	6.3/ 18.1
Forced Attempted Intercourse	276	18.8/ 22.5	21.0/ 15.5	17.4/ 19.1	13.0/ 17.9	14.5/ 16.1	2.5/ 11.9	14.9/ 14.3	7.2/ 11.2	8.7/ 18.9
Forced Intercourse	163	14.7/ 10.4	17.2/ 7.5	14.7/ 9.6	11.7/ 9.5	12.9/ 8.5	2.5/ 6.8	11.7/ 6.6	6.1/ 5.6	8.6/ 11.0
Forced Oral Sex	116	12.1/ 6.1	10.3/ 3.2	12.1/ 5.6	14.7/ 8.5	9.5/ 4.4	2.6/ 5.1	19.8/ 8.0	8.6/ 5.6	10.3/ 9.4
Total Emotional Adjectives		/231	/374	/251	/201	/248	/ 59	/287	/178	/127
Percentages		/11.8	/19.1	/12.8	/10.3	/12.7	/ 3.0	/14.7	/ 9.1	/ 6.5

adjectives checked, it appears that "angry" (19%) was most often the reaction experienced, regardless of the offensive behavior. Second most often checked was "disgusted" (14.7%), followed closely by "nervous" (12.8%) and "insulted" (12.7%), and these three adjectives were checked similarly for all offensive behaviors except "forced necking," where "disgusted" occurred most often. The adjectives receiving fewest responses were "calm" (3.0%) and "shame" (6.5%). Thus, it appeared that the respondents evidenced minimal tranquility and little self-blame during the offensive incidents.

(2) Behaviors to deal with offensive sexual behavior. The response percentages for reactions to the offensive sexual behavior are contained in Table 6. The number of respondents varied across offensive sexual behaviors, with largest numbers for "forced necking" and "forced petting" behaviors. The behavior checked most often to deal with all offensive sexual behaviors was "tried talking to him" (28.9%) followed closely by "struggled with him" (22.6%) and "got away from him" (21.4%). Overall, "just tolerated it" (10.7%) was not one of the more frequently checked responses, but the percentage of respondents who checked that response within types of offensive behaviors varied considerably. Respondents who described "forced attempted intercourse" offenses seldom "just tolerated it" (3.7%),

TABLE 6

Percentages of Incident Behaviors Checked by Respondents for Six Offensive Sexual Behaviors

Offensive Sexual Behaviors	Total Reactions Checked	Incident Behaviors						
		Got Away	Strug-gled	Toler-ated	Tried Talk-ing	Phys-ical Fought	Too Sur-prised	Scream
Forced Necking	341	27.9/ 37.5	20.5/ 26.2	10.6/ 28.3	28.7/ 28.7	6.7/ 19.5	4.4/ 27.3	1.2/ 18.2
Forced Petting Above the Waist	291	23.0/ 26.5	17.2/ 18.7	10.3/ 23.6	28.5/ 24.3	6.9/ 16.9	5.8/ 30.9	1.4/ 18.2
Forced Petting Below the Waist	229	20.5/ 18.6	25.8/ 22.1	9.2/ 16.5	27.1/ 18.1	12.7/ 24.6	3.9/ 13.4	0.9/ 9.1
Forced Attempted Intercourse	189	19.6/ 14.6	27.0/ 19.1	3.7/ 5.5	31.7/ 17.5	11.6/ 18.6	2.6/ 9.1	3.7/ 31.8
Forced Actual Intercourse	99	4.0/ 1.6	26.3/ 9.7	15.2/ 11.8	27.3/ 7.9	17.2/ 14.4	6.1/ 10.9	4.0/ 18.2
Forced Oral Sex	55	5.5/ 1.2	20.0/ 4.1	32.7/ 14.2	21.8/ 3.5	12.7/ 5.9	5.5/ 5.5	1.8/ 4.5
Total Incident Behaviors		/253	/267	/127	/342	/118	/ 55	/ 22
Percentages		/21.4	/22.6	/10.7	/28.9	/10.0	/ 4.6	/ 1.9

while "just tolerated it" was the behavior used by one-third of the few respondents describing "forced oral sex" incidents. The behaviors checked least often were "too surprised to do anything" (4.6%) and "screamed for help" (1.9%). Thus, most respondents in the sample dealt with the offensive incident by directly confronting the male and seldom were too surprised to act and seldom called for help.

(3) Post-incident behavior. The response percentages for post-incident behavior are contained in Table 7, according to offensive sexual behaviors. Again, the most responses were for "forced necking" and "forced petting" incidents. The post-incident behavior checked most frequently over all offensive behaviors was "avoided him" (32.6%), followed by "talked with him about it" (25.2%) and "didn't tell anyone" (22.5%). "Told friends about it" (14.2%) varied somewhat over offensive behaviors, with a larger percentage of respondents "telling friends" about offensive "forced necking" situations (17.3%) than of offensive "oral sex" episodes (7.5%). The reverse was apparent for frequency of responses for "told no one," which was checked by 22.5% of the respondents; however, the highest percentage of "told no one" responses was for offensive "oral sex" situations (35.8%) compared with "forced necking" situations (20.3%). "Talking with counselors" (.6%)

TABLE 7

Percentages of Post-Incident Behaviors Checked by Respondents for Six Offensive Sexual Behaviors

Offensive Sexual Behaviors	Total Responses Checked	Post-Incident Behaviors: Avoided Him	Told Friends	Talked With Him	Told Parents	Reported It	Told No One	Counselor
Forced Necking	306	38.9/ 35.3	17.3/ 36.1	18.0/ 21.1	4.2/ 34.2	1.0/ 23.1	20.3/ 26.6	0.3/ 16.7
Forced Petting Above the Waist	249	31.7/ 23.4	13.7/ 23.1	28.1/ 26.8	3.6/ 23.7	1.2/ 23.1	21.3/ 22.7	0.4/ 16.7
Forced Petting Below the Waist	193	30.1/ 17.2	15.0 19.7	28.0 20.7	4.1 21.1	1.0 15.4	21.2/ 17.6	0.5/ 16.7
Forced Attempted Intercourse	152	28.9/ 13.1	11.2/ 11.6	28.9/ 16.9	3.3/ 13.2	2.0/ 23.1	25.0/ 16.3	0.7/ 16.7
Forced Actual Intercourse	82	29.3/ 7.1	12.2/ 6.8	26.8/ 8.4	3.7/ 7.9	1.2/ 7.7	24.4/ 8.6	2.4/ 33.3
Forced Oral Sex	53	24.5/ 3.9	7.5/ 2.7	30.2/ 6.1	0.0/ 0.0	1.9/ 7.7	35.8/ 8.2	0.0/ 0.0
Total Post-Incident Behaviors		/337	/147	/261	/ 38	/ 13	/233	/ 6
Percentages		/32.6	/14.2	/25.2	/3.7	/1.3	/22.5	/0.6

was an infrequent response for all offensive sexual behaviors, as was "reported it to authorities" (1.3%).

Attitudes. The AWS is a 25-item scale which measures attitudes toward the rights and roles of women. Subjects responded to each item on a 4-point scale ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." The highest value (4) was anchored to the response category reflecting a more liberal attitude toward women; thus, high scale scores represented liberal attitudes, low scale scores reflected conservative attitudes. The numerical values assigned to each AWS item are reported in Appendix C.

AWS scores for the sample ranged from 33 to 100 (M=78.89, SD=10.26, N=366).

Four items were devised to measure tolerance of sexual and physical aggression, with the expectation that a baseline measure of sensitivity would aid in analysis and interpretation of results. The response percentages contained in Table 8 indicate that each of the three described sexual aggressions elicited a "highly offensive" response (60%-76%), and the description of repeated physical aggression produced 63% of responses indicating an intention to terminate the relationship. Few respondents found the descriptions inoffensive or were willing to tolerate repeated physical aggression.

TABLE 8

Percentage of Responses Indicating Attitudinal Sensitivity to Four Items of Sexual and Physical Aggression

Items	Attitudinal Sensitivity			
	Highly Offensive	Moderately Offensive	Slightly Offensive	Not Offensive
Forced petting above waist: first date	60	27	11	03
Forced attempted intercourse: fiance	63	27	07	03
Forced attempted intercourse: spouse	76	17	06	01

	Break up	Threaten Break up	Try to Stop	Overlook it	Learn to Like it
Physical aggression	63.0	22.0	16.7	0.3	00.0

Attribution in Offensive Sexual Behaviors

Attribution of responsibility for offensive sexual behaviors was examined for "self" (female respondent), "male" (other), and "situation." The three attributions were measured by a 9-point scale, with "1" representing complete responsibility for an offensive sexual behavior to a "9" representing no responsibility.

Attribution means and standard deviations for "self," "male" and "situation" for the types of offensive sexual behaviors are reported in Table 9. The statistics for attribution to "self" and "male" are consistent across all

TABLE 9

Means and Standard Deviations for Attributions to Self, Male, and Situations by Type of Offensive Sexual Behavior, with t-Test for Self-Male Comparisons

Offensive Sexual Behavior	Attribution	Mean	SD	t	df	p
Forced Necking	Self	7.10	1.76	24.18	232	<.001
	Male	2.45	1.55			
	Situation	5.61	2.51			
Forced Petting/Above	Self	7.19	1.86	20.61	191	<.001
	Male	2.60	1.72			
	Situation	5.54	2.38			
Forced Petting/Below	Self	6.94	1.63	14.96	133	<.001
	Male	2.71	1.78			
	Situation	5.18	2.48			
Forced Attempted Intercourse	Self	6.66	2.09	11.82	106	<.001
	Male	2.73	1.88			
	Situation	4.98	2.52			
Forced Actual Intercourse	Self	6.62	2.41	7.32	52	<.001
	Male	2.58	2.07			
	Situation	4.73	2.36			
Forced Oral Sex	Self	6.78	2.29	6.75	36	<.001
	Male	2.62	2.13			
	Situation	5.08	2.72			

offensive behaviors, with most responsibility for the behavior attributed to the male (M=2.45 to 2.73). The t-test results indicate that statistically significant differences exist between the attributions to "self" and to "male" for each offensive sexual behavior (p<.001). Comparisons between means for situation and persons were not made; however, means for situational attributions for all offensive sexual

behaviors suggest that situations were somewhat ambiguous, although standard deviations were greater for situations than for both persons. Results from analyses using "situational" attributions are presented in a later section on variable interrelationships.

Variable Interrelationships

The data for types of offensive sexual behaviors, relationships between participants, and types of force were analyzed by chi-square procedures when sufficient response frequencies were available in the original format, or when collapsed across cells.

Chi-square analyses were conducted for each of the offensive sexual behaviors reported in the last year and since age 13 associated with the eight relationships between participants. None of the tests were statistically significant, indicating that the experience of offensive behaviors was not significantly associated with any of the relationships.

The association between type of force and relationship between participants was analyzed across the offensive sexual behaviors. Three of the tests for offensive behaviors had statistically significant results and are shown in Table 10, with observed frequencies and chi-square values. (Other relationship by type-of-force tests were not run due to insufficient responses.) The use of "physical force"

TABLE 10

Observed Frequencies and Chi-Square Values for Relationships between Participants by Offensive Sexual Behaviors for Statistically Significant Types of Force

Relationship	Forced Necking		Forced Petting/Above		Forced Petting/Below	
	Phys. Str.	No Threat	Phys. Str.	No Threat	Phys. Str.	No Threat
Just met	28	20	11	09	06	02
First date	38	38	34	16	19	09
Steady date	24	27	25	43	23	33
Acquaintance/ neighbor	31	02	16	09	16	05
	χ^2=22.02 df=3 p<.001		χ^2=12.95 df=3 p<.01		χ^2=11.33 df=3 p<.01	

for "forced necking" (χ^2=22.02, df=3, p<.001), forced "petting above the waist" (χ^2=12.95, df=3, p<.01), and "forced petting below the waist" (χ^2=11.33, df=3, p<.01) was the most frequently reported type of force used by "just met, not formal dates," "first dates," and "acquaintances." The "steady date" relationship was more frequently associated with the coercion measured by the "no threat" response.

Emotional/Behavioral Variables

Emotional responses to offensive sexual behaviors were analyzed for relationship to participants. The statistically significant tests are cited in Table 11. In offensive

TABLE 11

Observed Frequencies and Chi-Square Values for Relationships Between Participants by Offensive Sexual Behavior for Statistically Significant Emotional Responses

Relationship	Forced Necking (N=230)						Petting/Above (N=176)			
	Fear		Disgusted		Shame		Disgusted		Startled	
	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Stranger	05	06	06	05	08	03	--	--	--	--
Just met	38	13	33	18	48	03	12	10	21	01
First date	70	08	41	37	73	05	41	15	47	09
Steady date	45	10	39	16	43	12	56	16	52	20
Acquaintance/ neighbor	23	12	15	20	28	07	14	12	15	11
	χ^2=13.86		χ^2=9.79		χ^2=9.52		χ^2=8.06		χ^2=12.03	
	df=4		df=4		df=4		df=3		df=3	
	p<.01		p<.05		p<.05		p<.05		p<.01	

TABLE 11 (cont.)

Relationship	Petting/Below (N=125)						Attempted Intercourse	
	Anger		Insulted		Disgusted		Anger	
	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Just met	05	05	05	05	04	06	--	--
First date	11	19	19	11	23	07	06	10
Steady date	41	18	42	17	47	12	31	20
Acquaintance/ neighbor	16	10	24	02	16	10	06	13
	χ^2=9.22 df=3 p<.05		χ^2=8.86 df=3 p<.05		χ^2=8.53 df=3 p<.05		χ^2=5.95 df=2 p<.05 N=86	

"forced necking" behaviors, "fear" (χ^2=13.86, df=4, p<.01) was reported in about 10% of the offensive behaviors involving a "first date," compared to 34% of such incidents involving "acquaintances." Reported "disgust" (χ^2=9.79, df=4, p<.05) was highest for "acquaintances" (57%) and lowest for "steady dates" (29%). The frequency of "shame" responses (χ^2=9.52, df=4, p<.05) for "forced necking" was low, but reported in 5% of the "first date" relationships compared to 12% in the "steady date" relationships.

Significant differences in reported emotions for "forced petting above the waist" were found for "disgusted" (χ^2=8.06, df=3, p<.05) and "startled" (χ^2=12.03, df=3, p<.01). "Steady dates" were associated with the lowest percentage of reported "disgusted" responses (22%) and "just met" and "acquaintances" with the highest (46%). "Startled" responses tended to characterize incidents involving "acquaintances" (42%), but were not typically associated with offensive behaviors from "just met, not formal dates" (1%) or "first dates" (9%).

Relationship between participants in "forced petting below the waist" incidents significantly differentiated the responses of "anger" (χ^2=9.22, df=3, p<.05), "insulted" (χ^2=8.86, df=3, p<.05), and "disgusted" (χ^2=8.53, df=3, p<.05). "Anger" tended to characterize such offending episodes with "first dates" (63%), and the "steady date"

experience was associated with the lowest incidence of "anger" responses (30%). Experiences involving "insult" were least associated with offending behaviors from "acquaintances" (7%), and highest with "just met, not formal date" (50%). "Disgusted" responses more frequently involved "just met, not formal dates" (60%), and occurred least with "steady dates" (20%).

The "anger" response for "forced attempted intercourse" was significantly different, depending upon the dating relationship versus an acquaintance relationship ($\chi^2=5.95$, $df=2$, $p<.05$). "Acquaintance/neighbors" (68%) and "first dates" (63%) who attempted intercourse were associated with a high frequency of "anger" responses; offenses involving "steady dates" were associated with "anger" in 39% of the reported incidents.

No significant differences were found in reported emotions for "forced actual intercourse" by "steady dates" or "acquaintance/neighbors."

The emotional responses to offensive sexual behaviors were also analyzed for the types of force variable. The resulting chi-square tests having statistically significant values are found in Table 12, together with observed frequencies for the relevant variables.

The data in Table 12 indicate that several emotions emerged consistently across the offensive behaviors for

TABLE 12

Observed Frequencies and Chi-Square Values for Two Types of Force Used in Offensive Sexual Behaviors for Statistically Significant Emotional Responses

	Forced Necking (N=223)						Forced Petting/Above (N=179)							
	Fear		Anger		Insulted		Anger		Insult		Disgust		Startle	
Type of Force	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Physical Strength	93	33	53	74	81	46	36	61	58	39	59	38	81	16
No threat	85	11	59	37	74	22	57	25	64	18	64	18	57	25
	χ^2=6.40		χ^2=7.74		χ^2=3.96		χ^2=17.41		χ^2=6.01		χ^2=5.36		χ^2=4.17	
	df=1		df=1		df=1		df=1		df=1		df=1		df=1	
	p<.01		p<.01		p<.05		p<.001		p<.01		p<.02		p<.05	

	Forced Petting/Below (N=127)						Attempted Intercourse (N=100)							
	Anger		Calm		Disgust		Fear		Anger		Insult		Disgust	
Type of Force	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Physical Strength	28	43	69	02	43	28	23	31	15	39	28	26	26	28
No threat	43	13	44	12	46	10	32	14	31	15	34	12	35	11
	χ^2=16.23		χ^2=9.24		χ^2=5.96		χ^2=6.25		χ^2=14.1		χ^2=4.24		χ^2=7.02	
	df=1		df=1		df=1		df=1		df=1		df=1		df=1	
	p<.001		p<.01		p<.01		p<.01		p<.001		p<.05		p<.01	

TABLE 12 (cont.)

Type of Force	Forced Actual Intercourse (N=45)			
	Fear		Anger	
	No	Yes	No	Yes
Physical Strength	11	15	09	17
No threat	15	04	14	05
	χ^2=4.63 df=1 p<.05		χ^2=5.23 df=1 p<.05	

the two types of force having sufficient responses to be analyzed, "physical strength" and "no threat." For all offensive sexual behaviors indicated, "anger" was associated with the use of "physical strength," and "no threat" responses had low frequencies for reported "anger."

"Fear" was significant for "forced necking" and both "forced attempted" and "forced actual intercourse," with "physical strength" evoking a greater frequency of "fear" responses than "no threat." In a similar manner, "physical strength" was associated with higher frequencies of reported "insult" and "disgusted," and "no threat" with lower frequencies of these emotions for "forced necking" and/or petting, and "forced attempted intercourse" behaviors.

Feeling "startled" was significant for "forced petting above the waist" behaviors (χ^2=4.17, df=1, p<.05), with "physical strength" associated with a low frequency of "startled" responses (17%), and "no threat" with a moderately higher frequency (31%).

"Calm" responses (χ^2=9.24, df=1, p<.01) significantly differentiated types of force in "petting below the waist" situations. Respondents did not generally report "calm" feelings during such offensive incidents. However, 21% of the "no threat" responses, compared to 3% of the "physical strength" responses, were associated with feeling "calm."

No significant differences in reported emotions by "physical strength" versus "no threat" were found for "forced oral sex" incidents.

Attitudinal Variables

The AWS, as a measure of commitment to traditional feminine values, was involved in analyses to determine how attitudes are related to incidence of offensive sexual behavior and to attribution processes in defining offensive sexual behaviors.

One-way analysis of variance tests for AWS score by number of experiences with offensive sexual behaviors were performed for the "past year" and "since age 13" categories. Of the 12 tests, only "forced petting below the waist" in

the "past year," varied significantly with scores on the AWS, $F(6, 354)=2.99$, $p<.01$. AWS score means for the seven categories of experience with "forced petting below the waist" varied as follows: don't know ($M=68.60$), 3-5 times ($M=73.0$), twice ($M=77.31$), once ($M=77.32$), never ($M=79.21$), more than 10 times ($M=87.0$), and 6-10 times ($M=89.67$).

The second attitudinal measure, "sensitivity to sexual and physical aggression," was subjected to chi-square analyses to determine whether high sensitivity toward aggression would result in decreased experiences with such offenses. The frequency of experienced offensive sexual behaviors was collapsed, resulting in a "never" category for no experience with an offensive sexual behavior, and a category for one or more such experiences. "Don't know" responses were eliminated from the analysis.

None of the chi-square values were statistically significant for "sensitivity to sexual and physical aggression" and types of offensive sexual behaviors in the "past year" and "since age 13." It should be noted, however, that a chi-square analysis approached statistical significance when the two highest offensive ratings (highly offensive and moderately offensive) were contrasted with "never" and "one or more" offensive sexual experiences.

Attribution Variables

Analysis of attribution data examined the attribution variables of self, male, and situation for offensive sexual

behaviors, relationship between participants, attitudes, and demographic variables.

First, one-way analysis of variance tests were performed between the eight types of relationship between participants and attributions to self, male, and situation. These three attribution analyses were performed for each of the six offensive sexual behaviors. Two of the 18 tests were statistically significant. "Male" attribution varied over types of relationship between participants for "forced necking" ($F(6,226)=3.54$, $p<.01$), and "forced petting above the waist" ($F(7,184)=3.52$, $p<.01$) incidents. With "1" representing the greatest attribution of responsibility, and values up to "9" representing least responsibility, attribution means for relationship between participants in "forced necking" incidents were: "relative" ($M=1.3$), "stranger" ($M=1.5$), "pinned or engaged" ($M=3.0$), "acquaintance" ($M=1.8$), "just met" ($M=2.4$), "first date" ($M=2.5$), and "steady date" ($M=3.0$). Attribution means for relationship between participants for "forced petting above the waist" incidents were: "relative" ($M=1.0$), "stranger" ($M=1.7$), "pinned or engaged" ($M=1.8$), "acquaintance" ($M=2.2$), "first date" ($M=2.3$), "just met" ($M=2.5$), "spouse" ($M=3.0$), and "steady dates" ($M=3.3$).

Coefficients of correlation were computed to determine the relationship between AWS scores and attributions to

"self," "male," and "situations." Results contained in Table 13 indicate that the respondents' commitment to traditional feminine roles and values (AWS) was not systematically related to attribution of responsibility for offensive sexual behaviors. The correlation for "self" attribution in "forced necking" situations (r=.11, p<.05) indicated that for those offensive behaviors, increases in AWS score (i.e., less traditional attitudes) are related to decreases in "self" attribution. Conversely, in "forced petting below the waist" situations, higher AWS scores were associated with increases in "self" attributions.

TABLE 13

Spearman Correlation Coefficients between AWS Scores and Self, Male, and Situation Attributions for Six Offensive Sexual Behaviors

	Attributions		
Offensive Sexual Behaviors	Self	Male	Situation
Forced Necking	.11*	-.09	.06
Forced Petting Above Waist	.09	-.11	.05
Forced Petting Below Waist	-.23**	.12	-.09
Forced Attempted Intercourse	.05	-.13	.05
Forced Actual Intercourse	.19	-.06	.03
Forced Oral Sex	.16	-.13	-.06

* p<.05
** p<.01

Multiple regression procedures were used to predict attributions to "self," "male," and "situation" within types of offensive sexual behaviors. This statistical method permitted an examination of the extent to which each selected independent variable contributed to accountability for the dependent variable, once the effects of the remaining independent variables had been removed. Attribution value was the dependent, or criterion variable, and the independent, or predictor variables were: AWS score, respondent's age, grade point average, age of first date, age of first sexual intercourse, father's occupational status score, mother's occupational status score, and race. A multiple regression analysis was done for each type of attribution ("self," "male," and "situation") for each of the six types of offensive sexual behaviors. Results from these analyses showed the majority of the regression analyses were unable to account for a significant amount of variation in attribution scores.

For purposes of attribution in general, the most important result of the regression analyses lies in the inability to predict attribution processes using attitudinal, personal, and demographic variables.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

The purpose of this investigation was to explore variables associated with a female's experience with and definition of offensive sexual behaviors. The more salient results from the study will be discussed as they relate to incidence of offensive sexual behaviors and to a somewhat tentative conceptualization of social meaning in the definition of offensive situations.

The results will be discussed in two major sections: the incidence of offensive sexual behaviors, and the social meaning of such behaviors. Demographic variables were used as predictors of attribution in multiple regression analyses and will be discussed with the attribution data in the section on social meaning.

Incidence of Offensive Sexual Behaviors

Most of the literature reporting accurate statistics on the incidence of forced sexual contact for females concentrates on rape (e.g., Amir, 1971). Kanin (1957) reported the incidence of several types of sexually aggressive behaviors in a sample of undergraduate females, but excluded assaults which might constitute rape. The types of offensive behaviors examined in this study extended Kanin's variables to include rape and oral sex.

Experience with offensive sexual behaviors was reported by 74% of the respondents in this sample. The incidence appears quite high at first glance, but an examination of the breakdown by types of offending behaviors produced percentages consistent with those from other studies. Kanin (1957) reported that 56% of his sample experienced offenses ranging from forced petting to attempted intercourse, but that percentage was obtained for offensive behaviors which occurred during the year prior to data collection. It is likely that the incidence of offending sexual behaviors has increased over the past 20 years, or perhaps females are reacting to feminist issues and may be more likely to define a forceful sexual behavior as offensive. More recent research with a sample of northern undergraduate women reported a 15.5% incidence of forced intercourse (Oros & Koss, 1978) which is comparable to the 14% in this sample who experienced the offense.

The reported incidence of offensive sexual behaviors must be interpreted in light of instructions given to respondents. A sexual offense was defined as "sexual advances forced on a woman, and she becomes offended by that force." The respondent's own interpretation of what constituted force, as well as normal distortions in memory, are likely to have influenced the data.

The overall trend in the incidence of offensive sexual behavior was a tendency toward experiencing an offense only once or twice, with fewer respondents experiencing the more intimate types of sexual behavior. Perhaps females learned, through their initial experience, to prevent further offensive behaviors; or having once experienced it, they ceased to define future incidents in the same manner. Oros and Koss (1978) proposed that many females who experienced serious types of sexual aggression by an acquaintance minimized the experience because it was dissonant with expectations for that person's behavior. The students in their sample reported experiencing less stress from such experiences as a result of the dissonance reduction. In a similar manner, perception of force as offensive may be minimized.

Definition of Causal Attribution of Sexual Aggression

A model for conceptualizing social meaning in offensive situations was developed to guide selection and analysis of variables in this investigation. The model focuses on attribution of behavior for self (female), other (male), and situation as a function of three interacting variable groups -- situational, emotional/behavioral, and attitudinal. The discussion of these variables follows the sequence used in describing results.

Situational variables. The situational variables of offensive sexual behaviors, relationship between

participants, and the type of force the female experienced, were assumed to be important determinants for understanding offensive sexual behavior.

The relationship between participants in an offensive situation was expected to affect the female's reaction to it by providing social expectations for behavior (Weis & Borges, 1973). In 5% of reported offenses in this sample the male and female were strangers. The remaining 95% had experienced some type of social interaction prior to the offense. The importance of the type of social interaction for the incidence of offensive sexual behavior is evident in the finding that over 60% of offensive sexual behaviors were associated with the dating relationship, particularly with steady dates. It is probable that steady dates may have expectations about sexual accessibility that reflects an implicit negotiation between the male and female. Since males are expected to be the sexual initiators, undefined limits may be tested to the point where one's partner is offended.

Several studies have suggested that females who have experienced more violent types of force during offensive sexual incidents have difficulty assimilating the experience in an adjustive fashion (Oros & Koss, 1978; Burgess & Holmstrom, 1975; 1976). The type of force reported most frequently in this study was the use of physical strength

to subdue without bodily harm, with very few respondents having been threatened with weapons or physical beatings. Thus, no statistical comparisons could be made between physically violent and less threatening types of force.

The most interesting finding for the type of force used was the high frequency of "no threat" responses. It was initially expected that "no threat" responses might appear for offensive necking or petting behaviors that "just happen" before the female can prevent them. The percentage of "no threat" responses, however, remained consistently high for all types of offensive sexual behaviors, suggesting that the women were responding to some type of force other than those included in this questionnaire. Oros and Koss (1978) reported that 15% of the females in their sample had experienced "psychological coercion" from males during sexually aggressive confrontations. It is possible that females interpreted the "no threat" category as a psychological coercion response. Several respondents who reacted to questionnaire items by written comments briefly noted that "there are many types of force!" when responding to the "no threat" category. It is also possible that the "no threat" category was used when more specific categories were inappropriate.

The tendency for respondents to indicate the type of force with either "physical strength" to subdue without

bodily harm or "no threat" suggests the need to consider changes in that questionnaire item. Further conceptualization of force is warranted, not only to clarify the perceived coercion behind a "no threat" response, but also to further delineate types of force within the "physical strength" without bodily harm category.

Emotional/Behavioral Variables

The typical emotional response to offensive sexual behaviors for respondents was primarily "anger," followed by feeling "insulted" and "disgusted." This finding is consistent with Selkin's (1976) data on emotional responses for rape victims and resisters. Respondents did not feel "calm" or "shamed," however, and the absence of shame feelings is inconsistent with results from research with rape victims (Holmstrom & Burgess, 1975; Russell, 1975) and with victims of forced petting (Kanin, 1957). The overall low frequency of "shame" responses may indicate that respondents in this study did not accept responsibility for controlling male sexual advances, or that other emotions predominated. There was a greater tendency for respondents to report feelings of shame when the male was a relative, but the number of respondents who were offended by a relative was too small either to analyze further or to have confidence in statistical tests.

When emotional responses were examined by relationship to offender, two patterns emerged, one for steady dating

relationships, and another for acquaintance/neighbor relationships. Offensive sexual behaviors by steady dates were associated with moderate feelings of anger, but low fear, perhaps because trust was violated or behavioral expectations were not met. Conversely, acquaintances/neighbors who offended respondents appeared to promote feelings of fear, disgust, and shock. These results suggest that the experience of forced sexual behaviors from steady dates may be anger provoking, but not so totally unexpected as to cause fear or shock, which might be the case with acquaintances or neighbors.

Results from analysis of emotional responses for types of force showed different affective patterns for "physical strength" and "no threat." "Physical strength" was generally associated with greater feelings of "anger," "fear," "insult," and "disgust," and few "startled" responses. "No threat" responses, on the other hand, were associated with fewer feelings of "anger," "fear," and "insult," and a higher incidence of "startled" and "calm" responses. The emotional responses characterizing "no threat" situations hint at possible dynamics underlying such perceived coercion. Respondents reacted to the coercion in an accepting manner, although it was not taken as a matter of course. The absence of high fear and anger responses may be due to personality characteristics of the respondents, or to an awareness of sexual behavior

expectations females feel compelled to respond to, yet find offensive.

The data on emotional responses to offensive sexual behaviors were difficult to interpret, other than in a broad sense of anger being a common response to forced sexual behaviors, and shame or calm feelings an infrequent response. The results which differentiated emotional responses by types of force and relationship between participants for some types of offensive behaviors suggest possible interactions among all three variables. Since respondents checked the many emotions they were feeling, a scale which requires a rank-ordering of emotional responses to an offensive behavior might be more useful for understanding the complexity of emotions accompanying a forced sexual encounter.

Variables representing behavioral responses during and after the offensive incident were not subjected to statistical testing, but response frequencies were useful for describing typical responses. Females generally tried to talk to the male and/or tried to leave the situation -- these were the most frequent means of dealing with the offensive behavior. They frequently struggled with the male, but seldom physically fought him. Approximately 15% of the offensive behaviors were dealt with by simply tolerating them. The descriptive data for behavioral

responses are consistent with behaviors one might expect for dating situations, which comprised over 60% of the sample of offensive behaviors. Seldom did subjects scream for help, which suggests that they may not have wanted to call attention to themselves, or that their relationship to the male made it inappropriate.

Post-incident behaviors followed the pattern of independent behavior females evidenced during the offensive incident. Avoiding the male was a common post-incident tactic, which presumably curtailed repetition of the offensive behavior. The respondents indicated discussion of the incident with the male participant in approximately one-third of the reported cases, which suggests that relationships were not systematically terminated with the occurrence of any type of offensive sexual behavior.

Over one-third of the respondents didn't tell anyone about their offensive experience, with higher percentages for forced actual intercourse and forced oral sex. This suggests that, despite the absence of reported "shame" responses, they did feel some stigma attached to the incident. A few respondents marked "didn't tell anyone" and "talked with male," so it is possible that post-incident discussions with the male participant were sometimes sufficient for dealing with the incident. A more frequent post-incident response, however, was actively

avoiding the male and not talking with anyone about it.

At least two studies reported similar post-incident behaviors in their samples, and interpreted the finding as a consequence of the relationship between participants. Oros and Koss (1978) found that females who experienced sexual aggression from a male in a dating situation had difficulty defining and responding appropriately to the aggression. Consequently, they usually chose to keep silent and were left to assimilate the experience alone. Kanin (1957) similarly found that females who experienced forced sexual behaviors were isolated from support groups, especially when the male and female were in a dating relationship.

The finding that, for all types of offensive sexual behaviors, 1.3% were reported to authorities, 3.7% reported to parents, and .6% of the respondents talked with counselors, leads to the conclusion that the women were deprived of, or did not take advantage of, whatever formal social support existed. Those who shared the experience with friends (14%) may have benefited from informal support from peers.

Attitudinal Variables in Definition of Offensive Sexual Behavior

The AWS score for respondents who had experienced forced intercourse significantly distinguished between

respondents by incidence of forced intercourse in the past year. No other significant relationships between AWS score and experience of offensive behaviors were found, which implies that the respondents' commitment to the traditional female role was not associated with whether or not she experienced offensive sexual behavior, nor how frequently. Examination of cell means for the significant F test for incidence of forced actual intercourse reveals no linear pattern in AWS scores by incidence of sexual aggression. The lowest AWS means, representing traditional attitudes, are for respondents who marked "don't know" (M=68.60) in response to the question on incidence of forced actual intercourse. One might speculate that respondents having traditional attitudes were made more vulnerable to forced actual intercourse by an inability to distinguish between seduction and rape. On the other hand, they may have been passively relying on the male to define situations for them, and were unsure about the element of coercion versus choice in their own involvement.

The highest cell mean for AWS and actual intercourse in the past year was for respondents who experienced forced actual intercourse 6-10 times (M=89.67). The liberal attitude for these respondents may be interpreted in different ways. Liberal attitudes may be related to feminist

behaviors which antagonized males and made the respondent more vulnerable to offensive behaviors, liberal attitudes may result in increased definition of male sexual advances as forced, or more liberal attitudes concerning the role of women is a consequence of the respondent's experience with offensive sexual behaviors. Further studies appear warranted to discern attitudinal factors in defining behaviors.

The scenarios measuring sensitivity toward sexual and physical aggression were not statistically significant in distinguishing between respondents who had never experienced offensive sexual behaviors and those who had at least one such experience. There was a tendency toward reported high sensitivity to be associated with no experiences with offensive sexual behavior, indicating that high sensitivity toward sexual and physical aggression may serve as a deterrent for experiencing such behaviors. Perhaps if females readily admit that such behaviors are highly offensive on a questionnaire, the same message is conveyed to males. Although the scenarios were assumed to have face validity, they were not formally tested for reliability or validity.

Attribution as Definition of Offensive Sexual Behaviors

Since attribution scores represented the interpretation and definition of offensive sexual behaviors, results from

attributions to self, male, and situation were expected to provide important information about how females interpreted offensive sexual behaviors. Significant comparisons between means for male and female attribution of responsibility showed that females consistently attributed highest responsibility to the male and lowest to themselves. Contrary to expectations from the victim-blame studies (e.g., Landy & Aronson, 1969; L'Armand & Pepitone, 1977) females did not attribute significantly more responsibility to themselves when the male was a steady date versus being a stranger or first date, when they were physically overpowered as opposed to experiencing no threat, or when they experienced forced intercourse versus forced necking.

Correlational analyses between attribution scales and AWS scores revealed no consistent relationship between a commitment to traditional sex roles and female attributions to self, as might be expected if females are normatively responsible for controlling sexual activity (Weis & Borges, 1973). Self-attribution was related to AWS score for forced necking and forced petting incidents, with liberal attitudes regarding women's roles associated with decreases in self-attribution scores in forced necking incidents. The correlation coefficient was so small for forced necking situations (r=.11, p<.05) as to make any

predictions of attribution somewhat inappropriate. Correlations between AWS and male and situational attributions were not significantly related.

A possible interpretation of low attributions of responsibility to self in offensive sexual incidents relies on symbolic interaction notions. For an overwhelming majority of the offenses, the male aggressor was involved with the female as a steady date, a situation involving expectations for both his and her behavior. When sexually offended, particularly when physical overpowering is involved, the female was unwilling to accept the bulk of the blame for the male's unexpected behavior.

Low self-attribution scores may also represent a self-justification (Festinger, 1954). The self-justification framework applied to offensive situations posits that a participant will define his or her behavior and the situation in a way that will morally justify, or at least shed a favorable light, on his/her involvement. In this way, the low self-attribution scores for respondents can be construed as an attempt to justify her own participation.

A final, more methodological explanation specific to this investigation involves the instructions given to respondents for selecting offenses to be described on the questionnaire. Subjects were asked to describe their most offensive experience with forced necking, forced petting,

forced intercourse, and so on. In so doing, subjects had to choose the behavior they had already defined as most offensive. The act of being offended may have implied that the offender did something to the offended person, thus minimizing self-responsibility. It is also conceivable that respondents were most offended by situations over which they had little control, and perceived the male as having had the advantage -- and most of the responsibility.

Whereas females attributed least responsibility to themselves, they consistently attributed most to the male. Variations in male attribution, however, did appear for the relationship between participants in necking and petting offenses. Relatives and strangers were assigned more responsibility for these offenses than were steady dates, perhaps reflecting the female's understanding of the particular male and his motives. The small number of "strangers" in the analysis requires a cautious interpretation of this result.

The degree of male attribution was more valuable for understanding the definition of offensive episodes than was self-attribution. The relationship between participants tended to influence attribution, such that males having relationships with respondents were not blamed as much as were strangers or relatives who forced sexual

contact. There were no similar patterns for self-attributions.

Assessment of situational attribution provided little insight into social meaning in offensive sexual behaviors. The means and standard deviations for situational attributions indicated ambiguity concerning responsibility attributed to situations, perhaps because respondents considered personal behaviors more important than situational variables, or perhaps interacting situational variables cannot easily be measured on a single scale. Further statistical analysis may clarify the relevant variables in attributing responsibility for offensive sexual behavior to the situation in which the incident occurred.

Attempts to predict attribution to self, male, and situation using regression analysis were generally unsuccessful. Several demographic variables (e.g., race, age, grade point average, age of first date, age of first sexual intercourse, father's occupational status, mother's occupational status) were used as predictors. No one type of variable was able to predict attribution consistently. The insignificant results from regression analysis may be due to problems described earlier about the measurement of attribution. Altering the scales so that a given amount of responsibility is attributed across types of

situations and persons may have produced a more accurate assessment of attribution as an interacting process. Such a procedure would force respondents to consider each type of attribution in relation to others.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

Examination of personal definitions of offensive sexual behaviors provides a starting point for investigating sexual aggression as a social phenomenon. The social interaction inherent in sexual aggression suggests that the expression of sexual behavior in a given situation, the definition of it, and the reaction to it will reflect past socialization and the personal acceptance and interpretation of culturally prescribed norms, rights, and role expectations for males and females. This study was an exploratory investigation of the social processes involved in the perception of and reaction to offensive sexual behaviors, particularly as those social processes assist in giving meaning to experiences of perceived sexual aggression.

A model for conceptualizing social meaning in offensive sexual situations was developed, primarily to guide selection of variables in this investigation. The model focused on attribution of causality for self (female), male, and offensive situation as a function of three interacting sets of variables: situational, emotional/behavioral, and attitudinal.

A questionnaire was devised to measure the frequency of offensive sexual experiences for females in the past year and since age 13, and also to assess the meaning given to specific experiences of offensive sexual behaviors. Six hundred females from three undergraduate institutions were asked to complete the questionnaire; 380 women returned the questionnaires which comprised the data for analysis.

Some 75% of the respondents indicated experiences with offensive sexual behaviors, with a higher frequency for the "less intimate" offenses such as forced necking and petting, and they reported fewer incidents in the last year than during the period since 13 years of age (about 6 years).

In analyzing the variables postulated in the model, it was found that most of the offensive experiences were associated with the dating situation, especially involving a steady date; "physical coercion" and "no threat" were prominent in the offensive behaviors, and the respondents reacted with anger as the major emotion. Fear was more likely to occur when the offense involved an acquaintance/neighbor, and when physical threat to personal safety was involved. The emotions of shame and "calm" were not usually experienced. Behavioral responses usually involved talking about the offense with the offender, struggling or

getting away; post-incident behaviors also involved talking with the male or avoiding him altogether. Seldom did the respondents tell parents about the experience, and even more infrequently were incidents reported to authorities or discussed with counselors. The AWS measure of attitudes toward the female role was not particularly effective in understanding the social meaning assigned to offensive sexual incidents, and the measures of sensitivity to sexual and physical aggression showed some promise for determining attitudes of those respondents who had not experienced some of the offensive sexual behaviors.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The results of this exploratory investigation led to several conclusions concerning social meaning in defining offensive sexual behaviors. These conclusions are related to the general questions about incidence and definition of offensive sexual behavior advanced in Chapter 1. The conclusions are presented with recommendations and implications for further research.

First, results from this study indicate that offensive sexual behaviors occurred quite frequently, given the parameters of the sample, with the majority of behaviors considered to be less serious or traumatic to the victim. The addition of more serious offensive behaviors in forced petting, intercourse and oral sex, accompanied by

physical force (or implications from "no threat"), warrants further serious examination of offensive sexual behaviors from the victim's perspective. Although this study was not concerned with analysis of the victim's psychological experience, it can be inferred that an adjustive process is involved, and it likely includes resolution of anger, fear, and ambivalency about sharing the experience with significant others. While numerous recent studies have focused on the victim of sexual aggression by rape, the data in this study provide a unique interaction of situational, emotional/behavioral, attitudinal and demographic information which affect the victim and her definition of a variety of offensive experiences.

The second conclusion suggested by data in this study is that the definition of offensive sexual situations can be ascertained from interacting situational, behavioral, and attitudinal variables. This was best seen with results for experience of an offensive sexual behavior involving a steady date, which was significantly related to: the experience of certain offensive sexual behaviors, coercion by means of physical force or "no threat", feeling disgusted or insulted but not shocked or afraid, and assigning less responsibility to steady dates for forced necking and petting above the waist.

Additional research in this area will need to reduce the number of variables which were currently studied, and

alter the measurement of variables to obtain more definitive information about definition of offensive sexual incidents. Serious consideration should be given to measurement of the relationship between participants. Since most offensive incidents were associated with the dating relationship, further delineation of dating relationships over time or seriousness of commitment should clarify definitions of such offensive incidents.

The type of force variable was conceptualized in this study in terms of perceived threat to personal safety for women in situations of forced sexual contact. The frequency of "no threat" responses suggested the probable existence of covert threat as a significant underlying dynamic for some situations and relationships. Reconceptualizing force as having overt and covert properties should provide a clearer, more accurate picture of coercion in sexual behavior. The different emotional responses associated with the "no threat" condition in this study provides important data on covert forms of coercion, and suggests that "no threat" may represent cultural expectations for sexual activity, personality characteristics which make some females vulnerable to assertive males, or perhaps it represents a form of exchange for situations in which some females lose more by not participating.

The measurement of emotion as either present or absent might be improved by providing a rank-ordering of emotional responses. The complex array of equally-weighted emotions limited the interpretation of the data in relation to situations, relationships, types of offensive sexual behaviors, and types of force.

The third conclusion is that attitudes appear to influence definitions of sexual behavior, and are related to a female's experience with forced sexual contact. Results from attitudinal data in this study are more suggestive than conclusive, but do support inclusion of attitudes in research with offensive sexual behaviors. Results from the AWS were not as revealing as was expected, and future studies may benefit from use of the AWS with fewer, more controlled variables, or use of other instruments. The items developed to measure sensitivity to sexual and physical aggression tended to distinguish between respondents who never experienced offensive sexual behaviors and those who had one or more experiences for some behaviors. Further development of such items into a scale, with reliability and validity measures, appears to be a worthwhile consideration for future work in this area.

Finally, the fourth conclusion suggested by the results from attribution scales is that attribution processes are

useful for conceptualizing definition of situations as cause/effect sequences. The attribution results from this study suggested that female respondents attributed little responsibility to self and most responsibility to the male participants, regardless of the type of offensive behavior. Attributions to situations were neutral, suggesting greater importance of actors over situations for assigning social meaning to offensive behaviors. Again, these results were suggestive, and restricting the number of variables and altering attribution scale to divide the total responsibility among male, female, and situation should be considered in future studies.

In addition to the recommendations offered for changes in measurement, there is need for continued research with diverse groups. While replication studies with other populations are certainly warranted, additional studies are needed which consider psychological variables, various age groups, and comparisons between the definition of offensive sexual behaviors by males and females.

In summary, the exploration of variables associated with the female's definition of offensive sexual behaviors led to four preliminary conclusions. First, the incidence and consequences of offensive sexual behaviors is sufficiently high to warrant further research attention. Second, interacting situational, behavioral, and attitudinal

variables are determinants of social meaning in offensive sexual behaviors. Third, attitudinal data tentatively indicated that high sensitivity toward aggression is related to no experience with offensive sexual behaviors. Fourth, that attributions to self, male, and situation reflect definitions of offensive behaviors, but further clarification of attribution in offensive sexual situations is needed.

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APPENDIX A

ASSESSMENT OF SEXUAL OFFENSES QUESTIONNAIRE

ASSESSMENT OF SEXUAL OFFENSES

This questionnaire will measure several aspects of sexual aggression. No matter how well a woman is able to express her wishes, there are likely to be times when sexual advances are forced on her and she becomes offended by that force. Below is a list of possible types of sexual advances that might offend a woman if they were forced on her. Please circle the number which best describes how often you experienced such an offense.

A.

	In the past year							Since you were 13						
	Never	Once	Twice	3-5 times	6-10 times	More than ten times	Don't know	Never	Once	Twice	3-5 times	6-10 times	More than ten times	Don't know
a. forced necking (kissing)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
b. forced petting above the waist (hand contact with breast)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
c. forced petting below the waist (hand contact with genitals)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
d. forced attempted intercourse (without penetration)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
e. forced actual intercourse (with penetration)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
f. forced oral sex (oral with genital contact)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

B. Using the same types of possible offenses, describe <u>the most offensive</u> situation you have ever experienced within the <u>forced necking</u> category by responding to the following statements. If you have never experienced such an offense, leave Section B blank.

1. What was your relationship to that person? (Check one)

_____total stranger
_____just met him; not formal date
_____a first date
_____regular or steady date
_____"pinned" or engaged
_____spouse
_____other relative; who_____
_____acquaintance/neighbor

2. What type of force was used during the offensive episode?
_____threat to life by use of a weapon
_____physical threat by using hand to beat or slap
_____use of physical strength to subdue without physical harm
_____verbal threats to your person or safety
_____no threat was used

3. Place a check next to the word(s) that best describe your feelings at the time.

_____frightened	_____shocked	_____disgusted
_____angry	_____insulted	_____startled
_____nervous	_____calm	_____shame

4. Place a check next to the response(s) that describes what you did to deal with the situation.

_____got away from him	_____tried to talk to him
_____struggled with him	_____physically fought him
_____just tolerated it	_____too surprised to do anything
_____screamed for help	

5. Place a check next to the response(s) that describes what you did after the incident.

_____avoided him	_____reported it to authorities (police, campus authorities)
_____told friends about him	
_____talked with him about it	_____didn't tell anyone
_____told parents about it	_____talked with a counselor

6. How much do you consider the incident to be your fault? (Circle)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Completely responsible							Not at all responsible	

7. How much do you consider the incident to be the man's fault?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Completely responsible							Not at all responsible	

8. How much responsibility was due to the situation rather than to either you or the man?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Completely responsible							Not at all responsible	

C. Describe the most offensive situation you have ever experienced within the forced petting above the waist category by responding to the following statements. If you have never experienced such an offense, leave the section blank.

1. What was your relationship to that person? (Check one)
   _____total stranger
   _____just met him; not formal date
   _____a first date
   _____regular or steady date
   _____"pinned" or engaged
   _____spouse
   _____other relative; who_____
   _____acquaintance/neighbor

2. What type of force was used during the offensive episode?
   _____threat to life by use of a weapon
   _____physical threat by using hand to beat or slap
   _____use of physical strength to subdue without physical harm
   _____verbal threats to your person or safety
   _____no threat was used

3. Place a check next to the word(s) that best describe your feelings at the time.
   _____frightened _____shocked _____disgusted
   _____angry _____insulted _____startled
   _____nervous _____calm _____shame

4. Place a check next to the response(s) that describes what you did to deal with the situation.
   _____got away from him _____tried to talk to him
   _____struggled with him _____physically fought him
   _____just tolerated it _____too surprised to do anything
   _____screamed for help

5. Place a check next to the response(s) that describes what you did after the incident.
   _____avoided him _____reported it to authorities
   _____told friends about him (police, campus authorities)
   _____talked with him about it _____didn't tell anyone
   _____told parents about it _____talked with a counselor

6. How much do you consider the incident to be your fault? (Circle)

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
   Completely responsible ... Not at all responsible

7. How much do you consider the incident to be the man's fault?

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
   Completely responsible ... Not at all responsible

8. How much responsibility was due to the situation rather than to either you or the man?

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
   Completely responsible ... Not at all responsible

D. Describe the most offensive situation you have ever experienced within the forced petting below the waist category by responding to the following statements. If you have never experienced such an offense, leave the section blank.

1. What was your relationship to that person? (Check one)
   _____total stranger
   _____just met him; not formal date
   _____a first date
   _____regular or steady date
   _____"pinned" or engaged
   _____spouse
   _____other relative; who_____
   _____acquaintance/neighbor

2. What type of force was used during the offensive episode?
   _____threat to life by use of a weapon
   _____physical threat by using hand to beat or slap
   _____use of physical strength to subdue without physical harm
   _____verbal threats to your person or safety
   _____no threat was used

3. Place a check next to the word(s) that best describe your feelings at the time.
   _____frightened _____shocked _____disgusted
   _____angry _____insulted _____startled
   _____nervous _____calm _____shame

4. Place a check next to the response(s) that describes what you did to deal with the situation.
   _____got away from him
   _____struggled with him
   _____just tolerated it
   _____screamed for help
   _____tried to talk to him
   _____physically fought him
   _____too surprised to do anything

5. Place a check next to the response(s) that describes what you did after the incident.
   _____avoided him
   _____told friends about him
   _____talked with him about it
   _____told parents about it
   _____reported it to authorities (police, campus authorities)
   _____didn't tell anyone
   _____talked with a counselor

6. How much do you consider the incident to be your fault? (Circle)

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
   Completely responsible ... Not at all responsible

7. How much do you consider the incident to be the man's fault?

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
   Completely responsible ... Not at all responsible

8. How much responsibility was due to the situation rather than to either you or the man?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Completely responsible							Not at all responsible	

E. Describe the most offensive situation you have ever experienced within the forced attempted intercourse category by responding to the following statements. If you have never experienced such an offense, leave the section blank.

1. What was your relationship to that person? (Check one)

_____total stranger
_____just met him; not formal date
_____a first date
_____regular or steady date
_____"pinned" or engaged
_____spouse
_____other relative; who_____
_____acquaintance/neighbor

2. What type of force was used during the offensive episode?

_____threat to life by use of a weapon
_____physical threat by using hand to beat or slap
_____use of physical strength to subdue without physical harm
_____verbal threats to your person or safety
_____no threat was used

3. Place a check next to the word(s) that best describe your feelings at the time.

_____frightened _____shocked _____disgusted
_____angry _____insulted _____startled
_____nervous _____calm _____shame

4. Place a check next to the response(s) that describes what you did to deal with the situation.

_____got away from him _____tried to talk to him
_____struggled with him _____physically fought him
_____just tolerated it _____too surprised to do anything
_____screamed for help

5. Place a check next to the response(s) that describes what you did after the incident.

_____avoided him _____reported it to authorities
_____told friends about him (police, campus authorities)
_____talked with him about it _____didn't tell anyone
_____told parents about it _____talked with a counselor

6. How much do you consider the incident to be your fault? (Circle)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Completely responsible							Not at all responsible	

7. How much do you consider the incident to be the man's fault?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Completely responsible							Not at all responsible	

8. How much responsibility was due to the situation rather than to either you or the man?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Completely responsible							Not at all responsible	

F. Describe the most offensive situation you have ever experienced within the forced intercourse category by responding to the following statements. If you have never experienced such an offense, leave the section blank.

1. What was your relationship to that person? (Check one)

_____total stranger
_____just met him; not formal date
_____a first date
_____regular or steady date
_____"pinned" or engaged
_____spouse
_____other relative; who_____
_____acquaintance/neighbor

2. What type of force was used during the offensive episode?

_____threat to life by use of a weapon
_____physical threat by using hand to beat or slap
_____use of physical strength to subdue without physical harm
_____verbal threats to your person or safety
_____no threat was used

3. Place a check next to the word(s) that best describe your feelings at the time.

_____frightened _____shocked _____disgusted
_____angry _____insulted _____startled
_____nervous _____calm _____shame

4. Place a check next to the response(s) that describes what you did to deal with the situation.

_____got away from him _____tried to talk to him
_____struggled with him _____physically fought him
_____just tolerated it _____too surprised to do anything
_____screamed for help

5. Place a check next to the response(s) that describes what you did after the incident.

_____avoided him _____reported it to authorities (police, campus authorities)
_____told friends about him
_____talked with him about it _____didn't tell anyone
_____told parents about it _____talked with a counselor

6. How much do you consider the incident to be your fault? (Circle)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Completely responsible							Not at all responsible	

7. How much do you consider the incident to be the man's fault?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Completely responsible							Not at all responsible	

8. How much responsibility was due to the situation rather than to either you or the man?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Completely responsible							Not at all responsible	

G. Describe the most offensive situation you have ever experienced within the forced oral sex category by responding to the following statements. If you have never experienced such an offense, leave the section blank.

1. What was your relationship to that person? (Check one)

_____total stranger
_____just met him; not formal date
_____a first date
_____regular or steady date
_____"pinned" or engaged
_____spouse
_____other relative; who_____
_____acquaintance/neighbor

2. What type of force was used during the offensive episode?

_____threat to life by use of a weapon
_____physical threat by using hand to beat or slap
_____use of physical strength to subdue without physical harm
_____verbal threats to your person or safety
_____no threat was used

3. Place a check next to the word(s) that best describe your feelings at the time.

_____frightened	_____shocked	_____disgusted
_____angry	_____insulted	_____startled
_____nervous	_____calm	_____shame

4. Place a check next to the response(s) that describes what you did to deal with the situation.

_____got away from him	_____tried to talk to him
_____struggled with him	_____physically fought him
_____just tolerated it	_____too surprised to do anything
_____screamed for help	

5. Place a check next to the response(s) that describes what you did after the incident.

_____avoided him	_____reported it to authorities
_____told friends about him	(police, campus authorities)
_____talked with him about it	_____didn't tell anyone
_____told parents about it	_____talked with a counselor

6. How much do you consider the incident to be your fault? (Circle)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Completely responsible							Not at all responsible	

7. How much do you consider the incident to be the man's fault?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Completely responsible							Not at all responsible	

8. How much responsibility was due to the situation rather than to either you or the man?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Completely responsible							Not at all responsible	

H. The statements listed below describe attitudes toward the role of women in society that different people have. There are no right or wrong answers, only opinions. You are asked to express your feeling about each statement by indicating whether you agree or disagree. Please indicate your opinion by circling the appropriate number.

	agree strongly	agree mildly	disagree mildly	disagree strongly
1. Swearing and obscenity are more repulsive in the speech of a woman than of a man.	1	2	3	4
2. Women should take increasing responsibility for solving the intellectual and social problems of the day.	1	2	3	4
3. Both husband and wife should be allowed the same grounds for divorce.	1	2	3	4
4. Telling dirty jokes should be mostly a masculine prerogative.	1	2	3	4
5. Intoxication among women is worse than intoxication among men.	1	2	3	4
6. Under modern economic conditions with women being active outside the home, men should share in household tasks such as washing dishes and laundry.	1	2	3	4

		agree strongly	agree mildly	disagree mildly	disagree strongly
7.	It is insulting to women to have the "obey" clause in marriage.	1	2	3	4
8.	There should be a strict merit system in job appointment and promotion without regard to sex.	1	2	3	4
9.	A woman should be as free as a man to propose marriage.	1	2	3	4
10.	Women should worry less about their rights and more about becoming good wives and mothers.	1	2	3	4
11.	Women earning as much as their dates should bear equally the expense when they go out together.	1	2	3	4
12.	Women should assume their rightful place in business and all the professions along with men.	1	2	3	4
13.	A woman should not expect to go exactly to the same places or to have quite the same freedom of action as a man.	1	2	3	4
14.	Sons in a family should be given more encouragement to go to college than daughters.	1	2	3	4
15.	It is ridiculous for a woman to run a locomotive and for a man to darn socks.	1	2	3	4
16.	In general, the father should have greater authority than the mother in bringing up children.	1	2	3	4
17.	Women should be encouraged not be become sexually intimate with anyone before marriage, even their fiances.	1	2	3	4
18.	The husband should not be favored by law over the wife in the disposal of family property or income.	1	2	3	4
19.	Women should be concerned with their duties of childbearing and house tending, rather than with desires for professional and business careers.	1	2	3	4
20.	The intellectual leadership of a community should be largely in the hands of men.	1	2	3	4
21.	Economic and social freedom is worth far more to women than acceptance of the ideal of femininity which has been set up by men.	1	2	3	4
22.	On the average, women should be regarded as less capable of contributing to economic production than are men.	1	2	3	4

	agree strongly	agree mildly	disagree mildly	disagree strongly
23. There are many jobs in which men should be given preference over women in being hired or promoted.	1	2	3	4
24. Women should be given equal opportunity with men for apprenticeship in the various trades.	1	2	3	4
25. The modern girl is entitled to the same freedom from regulation and control that is given to the modern boy.	1	2	3	4

I. Demographic data:

1. Father's occupation_____

2. Mother's occupation_____

3. Father's education (Check)
_____less than high school
_____high school graduate
_____some college, tech. school
_____college graduate
_____M.A., M.S. degree
_____M.D., Ph.D. or equivalent

4. Mother's education (Check)
_____less than high school
_____high school graduate
_____some college, tech. school
_____college graduate
_____M.A., M.S. degree
_____M.D., Ph.D. or equivalent

4. Do you have a religious preference?
_____ No _____Yes; what _____

5. How often do you attend religious services:
_____never
_____less than once a year
_____about once a year
_____several times a year
_____about once a month
_____2-3 times a month
_____nearly every week
_____every week
_____several times a week

6. Age _____

7. Race:
_____Black ____White
_____Other, what_____

8. Educational status:
_____Freshmen _____Sophomore _____Junior _____Senior
_____Graduate student

9. Grade point average _____

10. College major _____

11. In what state (e.g., North Carolina, New Jersey) or foreign country were you living when you were 16 years old? _____

12. Were you living with both your own mother and father when you were about 15 or 16 years old?
_____yes
_____no; if no, who were you living with_____

13. How many brothers and sisters do you have?_____

14. What is your marital status?
_____single _____married ____separated ____divorced
_____widowed

15. If you are single, do you plan to get married?
_____definitely yes _____ probably no
_____probably yes _____ definitely no

16. For a woman who does get married, what age do you think is the ideal age to marry? _____

17. How old were you when you went out on your first date? _____
_____ Check here if you have not been on a data.

18. How old were you when you first had sexual intercourse?_____
_____ Check here if you have not had sexual intercourse

19. If you get married, how happy or unhappy would you be to have these different numbers of children?

(1) very unhappy; (2) a little unhappy; (3) not unhappy-not happy; (4) a little happy; (5) very happy

(CIRCLE a number for each question)

a.	no children	1	2	3	4	5
b.	1 child	1	2	3	4	5
c.	2 children	1	2	3	4	5
d.	3 children	1	2	3	4	5
e.	4 children	1	2	3	4	5
f.	5 children	1	2	3	4	5
g.	6 children	1	2	3	4	5
h.	7 children	1	2	3	4	5
i.	8 or more children	1	2	3	4	5

J. Rate the following situations in terms of how offensive they appear to you.

1. On their first date, while kissing at the door, Tom used force to touch Cathy's breast. In your opinion, how offensive is his behavior:
____highly offensive; ____moderately offensive; _____slightly offensive; ____not at all offensive

2. John used force in trying to have sexual intercourse with his fiance, stopping after about five minutes of her continued protest. In your opinion, how offensive was his behavior?
   _____ highly offensive
   _____ moderately offensive
   _____ slightly offensive
   _____ not at all offensive

3. One evening Joe used force to overpower his wife in order to have sexual intercourse with her against her wishes. In your opinion, how offensive was his behavior?
   _____ highly offensive
   _____ moderately offensive
   _____ slightly offensive
   _____ not at all offensive

4. Imagine that your boyfriend slaps you and apologizes, promising not to do it again. About one month later he slaps you again even harder and again apologizes. What would you do?
   _____ learn to like it; it shows he loves me
   _____ nothing; I'd overlook it
   _____ try to pursuade him to stop; tell him how I feel about it
   _____ tell him I'll break up with him if he does it again
   _____ break up with him

APPENDIX B

PERCENTAGE OF RESPONSE FOR ITEMS FROM QUESTIONNAIRE SECTIONS B-G

B. Forced Necking

1. (N=239) total stranger, 5%; just met him, not a formal date, 21%; a first date, 33%; regular or steady date 23%, pinned or engaged, 2%; spouse, 0%; other relative, 1%; acquaintance/neighbor, 15%.

2. (N=235) threat to life by weapon, 1%; physical threat by beating/slapping, 3%; physical strength, 54%; verbal threats, 2%; no threat, 41%.

3. (N=236) frightened, 22%; angry, 50%; nervous, 26%; shocked, 19%; insulted, 31%; calm, 7%; disgusted, 42%; startled, 23%; shame, 14%.

4. (N=236) got away from him, 40%; struggled with him, 30%; tolerated it, 15%; talked to him, 42%; fought him, 10%, too surprised, 6%; screamed for help, 2%.

5. (N=231) avoided him, 52%; told friends, 23%; talked with him, 24%; told parents, 6%; reported to police, 1%; didn't tell anyone, 27%; talked with counselor, 0%.

6. Self attribution: (N=233) 1, 0%; 2, 1%; 3, 2%; 4, 5%; 5, 13%; 6, 11%; 7, 16%; 8, 27%; 9, 25%.

7. Male attribution: (N=233) 1, 36%; 2, 27%; 3, 14%; 4, 9%; 5, 10%; 6, 3%; 7, 1%; 8, 0%; 9, 0%.

8. Situational attribution: (N=223) 1, 6%; 2, 7%; 3, 10%; 4, 10%; 5, 19%; 6, 7%; 7, 12%; 8, 9%; 9, 20%.

C. Forced Petting Above the Waist

1. (N=194) total stranger, 4%; just met him, informal date, 11%; first date, 29%; regular or steady date, 37%; pinned or engaged, 3%; spouse, 1%; other relative, 2%; acquaintance/neighbor, 13%.

2. (N=192) threat to life by weapon, 1%; beat/slap, 2%; physical strength, 51%; verbal threats, 3%; no threat, 42%.

3. (N=194) frightened, 21%; angry, 49%; nervous, 29%; shocked, 21%; insulted, 31%; calm, 7%; disgusted, 31%; startled, 22%; shame, 11%.

4. (N=193) got away from him, 35%; struggled with him, 26%; tolerated it, 16%; screamed for help, 2%; tried to talk, 43%; physically fought, 10%; too surprised to do anything, 9%.

5. (N=193) avoided him, 41%; told friends, 18%; talked with him, 36%; told parents, 5%; reported to police, 2%; didn't tell anyone, 28%; talked with counselor, 0%.

6. Self attribution: (N=192) 1,1%; 2, 0%; 3, 4%; 4, 4%; 5, 13%, 6, 7%; 7, 18%; 9, 19%; 10, 33%.

7. Male attribution: (N=192) 1, 34%; 2, 25%; 3, 18%; 4, 7%; 5, 11%; 6, 1%; 7, 3%; 8, 1%; 9, 1%.

8. Situational attribution: (N=189) 1, 3%; 2, 7%; 3, 11%; 4, 9%; 5, 31%; 6, 4%; 7, 9%; 8, 5%, 9, 21%.

D. Forced Petting Below the Waist

1. (N=143) total stranger, 5%; just met him, not formal date, 7%; first date, 21%; steady date, 41%; pinned or engaged, 4%; spouse, 1%; other relative, 2%; acquaintance/neighbor, 18%.

2. (N=141) threat to life by weapon, 1%; beat/slap, 4%; physical strength, 50%; verbal threats, 6%; no threat, 40%.

3. (N=143) frightened, 34%; angry, 45%; nervous, 32%; shocked, 29%; insulted, 30%; calm, 11%; disgusted, 31%; startled, 29%; shame, 16%.

4. (N=143) got away him, 33%; struggled, 41%; tolerated it, 15%; screamed, 1%; talked with him, 43%; fought him, 20%; too surprised, 6%.

5. (N=143) avoided him, 41%; told friends, 20%; talked with him, 38%; told parents, 6%; reported to police, 1%; didn't tell, 29%; talked with counselor, 1%.

6. Self attribution: (N=143) 1, 1%; 2, 1%; 3, 7%; 4, 7%; 5, 17%; 6, 10%; 7, 12%; 8, 18%, 9, 27%.

7. Male attribution: (N=143) 1, 32%; 2, 23%; 3, 15%; 4, 10%; 5, 16%; 6, 2%; 7, 2%; 8, 1%; 9, 1%.

8. Situational attribution: (N= 137) 1, 8%; 2, 5%; 3, 16%; 4, 10%; 5, 26%, 6, 4%; 7, 8%; 8, 5%; 9, 19%.

E. Forced Attempted Intercourse

1. (N=109) total stranger, 3%; just met him, not formal date, 7%; first date, 15%; steady date, 47%; pinned or engaged, 8%; spouse, 2%; relative, 1%; acquaintance/neighbor, 17%.

2. (N=109) use of a weapon, 2%; physical beat/slap, 2%; physical strength, 50%; verbal threats, 4%; no threat, 42%.

3. (N=109) frightened, 48%; angry, 53%; nervous, 44%; shocked, 33%; insulted, 37%; calm, 6%; disgusted, 38%; startled, 18%; shame, 22%.

4. (N=109) got away, 34%; struggled, 47%; tolerated it, 6%; screamed, 6%; talked with him, 55%; fought him, 20%; too surprised, 5%.

5. (N=109) avoided him, 40%; told friends, 16%; talked with him, 40%; told parents, 5%; reported to police, 3%; didn't tell anyone, 35%; talked with counselor, 1%.

6. Self attribution: (N=107) 1, 1%; 2, 1%; 3, 5%; 4, 8%; 5, 16%; 6, 8%; 7,18%; 8, 17%; 9, 25%.

7. Male attribution: (N=107) 1, 32%; 2, 25%; 3, 18%; 4, 8%; 5, 9%; 6, 3%; 7, 3%; 8, 1%; 9, 2%.

8. Situational attribution: (N=102) 1,7%; 2, 13%; 3, 10%; 4, 15%; 5, 26%; 6, 3%; 7, 5%; 8, 5%; 9, 18%.

F. Forced Actual Intercourse

1. (N=53) stranger, 8%; just met him, informal date, 4%; first date, 11%; steady date, 55%; pinned or engaged, 6%; spouse, 4%; other relative, 0%; acquaintance/neighbor, 13%.

2. (N=53) use of a weapon, 4%; beat/slap, 8%; physical strength, 50%; verbal threats, 2%; no threat, 37%.

3. (N=53) frightened, 46%; angry, 53%; nervous, 45%; shocked, 36%; insulted, 40%; calm, 8%; disgusted, 36%; startled, 19%; shame, 26%.

4. (N=53) got away, 8%; struggled, 49%; tolerated it, 28%; screamed, 8%; talked with him, 51%; fought him, 32%; too surprised, 11%.

5. (N=53) avoided him, 45%; told friends, 19%; talked with him, 42%, told parents, 6%, reported to police, 2%; didn't tell, 38%; talked with counselor, 4%.

6. Self attribution: 1, 4%; 2, 0%; 3, 9%; 4, 11%; 5, 8%; 6, 11%; 7, 9%; 8, 11%; 9, 36%. (N=52)

7. Male attribution: 1, 42%; 2, 26%; 3, 4%; 4, 13%; 5, 6%; 6, 2%; 7, 2%; 8, 4%; 9, 2%. (N=52)

8. Situational attribution: (N=52) 1, 8%, 2, 15%; 3, 12%; 4, 8%; 5, 27%; 6, 4%, 7, 12%; 8, 8%; 9, 8%.

G. Forced Oral Sex

1. (N=37) stranger, 5%; just met, informal date, 5%; first date, 8%; steady date, 46%; pinned or engaged, 8%; spouse, 8%; relative, 3%; acquaintance/ neighbor, 16%.

2. (N=37) use of weapon, 3%; beat/slap, 11%; physical strength, 46%; verbal threats, 3%; no threat, 38%.

3. (N=37) frightened, 38%; angry, 32%; nervous, 38%; shocked, 46%; insulted, 30%; calm, 8%; disgusted, 62%; startled, 27%; shame, 32%.

4. (N=37) avoided him, 35%; told friends, 11%; talked with him, 43%; told parents, 0%; reported to police, 3%; didn't tell, 51%; talked with counselor, 0%.

5. (N=37) got away, 8%; struggled, 30%; tolerated it, 49%; screamed, 3%; talked with him, 32%; physically fought, 19%; too surprised, 8%.

6. Self attribution: 1, 3%; 2, 0%, 3, 5%; 4, 14%; 5, 14%, 6, 3%, 7, 8%; 8, 22%; 9, 32%. (N=35)

7. Male attribution: 1, 43%; 2, 19%; 3, 11%; 4, 11%; 5, 8%; 6, 3%; 7, 0%; 8, 0%; 9, 5%.(N=35)

8. Situational attribution: (N=35) 1, 9%; 2, 17%; 3, 9%; 4, 6%; 5, 23%; 6, 3%; 7, 9%; 8, 9%; 9, 17%.

APPENDIX C

WEIGHTING OF RESPONSES ON THE ATTITUDES TOWARD WOMEN SCALE

	agree strongly	agree mildly	disagree mildly	disagree strongly
1. Swearing and obscenity are more repulsive in the speech of a woman than of a man.	1	2	3	4
2. Women should take increasing responsibility for leadership in solving the intellectual and social problems of the day.	4	3	2	1
3. Both husband and wife should be allowed the same grounds for divorce.	4	3	2	1
4. Telling dirty jokes should be mostly a masculine prerogative.	1	2	3	4
5. Intoxication among women is worse than intoxication among men.	1	2	3	4
6. Under modern economic conditions with women being active outside the home, men should share in household tasks such as washing dishes and laundry.	4	3	2	1
7. It is insulting to women to have the "obey" clause in marriage.	4	3	2	1
8. There should be a strict merit system in job appointment and promotion without regard to sex.	4	3	2	1
9. A woman should be as free as a man to propose marriage.	4	3	2	1
10. Women should worry less about their rights and more about becoming good wives and mothers.	1	2	3	4
11. Women earning as much as their dates should bear equally the expense when they go out together.	4	3	2	1
12. Women should assume their rightful place in business and all the professions along with men.	4	3	2	1
13. A woman should not expect to go to exactly the same places or to have quite the same freedom of action as a man.	1	2	3	4

	agree strongly	agree mildly	disagree mildly	disagree strongly
14. Sons in a family should be given more encouragement to go to college than daughters.	1	2	3	4
15. It is ridiculous for a woman to run a locomotive and for a man to darn socks.	1	2	3	4
16. In general, the father should have greater authority than the mother in bringing up children.	1	2	3	4
17. Women should be encouraged not to become sexually intimate with anyone before marriage, even their fiances.	1	2	3	4
18. The husband should not be favored by law over the wife in the disposal of family property or income.	4	3	2	1
19. Women should be concerned with their duties of childbearing and house tending, rather than with desires for professional and business careers.	1	2	3	4
20. The intellectual leadership of a community should be largely in the hands of men.	1	2	3	4
21. Economic and social freedom is worth far more to women than acceptance of the ideal of femininity which has been set up by men.	4	3	2	1
22. On the average, women should be regarded as less capable of contributing to economic production than are men.	1	2	3	4
23. There are many jobs in which men should be given preference over women in being hired or promoted.	1	2	3	4
24. Women should be given equal opportunity with men for apprenticeship in the various trades.	4	3	2	1
25. The modern girl is entitled to the same freedom from regulation and control that is given to the modern boy.	4	3	2	1