Investigating Acknowledgment of Unwanted Sexual Experiences in College Women

By

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Investigating Acknowledgment of Unwanted Sexual Experiences in College Women

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Dedication

The author wishes to dedicate this work to her parents, Dr. Dilip and Dr. Mrunalini Donde, and her sister, Deepa, for their unwavering support, encouragement, faith, and love.

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I would like to acknowledge and thank Dr. Alyssa Zucker, for her careful attention to this document, her hard work and efforts throughout this process, and her faith in my ability to lead and complete this project. I also wish to thank my core committee members and my external committee members for their contributions to this work, particularly Dr. Olga Tuller, who devoted her time and provided insightful feedback all the way from the West Coast. I am extremely grateful to Ms. Elizabeth Amundson, Registrar of The George Washington University, and would like to acknowledge her kindness and generosity in ensuring the success of my project. I would not have been able to complete this journey without the encouragement, love, and support (both emotional and financial) of my family, especially my parents. I am indebted to them for all that they have given to me. Most importantly, I wish to extend my deepest appreciation and gratitude to the brave, young women who took the time out of their busy schedules to participate in my study. These women inspired me to persevere when I encountered difficult challenges and obstacles throughout this process. My project would never have been possible without their courage and willingness to share their intimate experiences with me. I thank each and every one for their contribution to this project.

Abstract of Dissertation

Investigating Acknowledgment of Unwanted Sexual Experiences in College Women

The purpose of the current study was to enhance knowledge about the specific factors that make it more likely for women to acknowledge and label unwanted sexual experiences as rape. Previous research on acknowledgement has investigated both individual and situational variables to examine differences between unacknowledged and acknowledged victims and to determine which variables best predict acknowledgement. This study aimed to further contribute to this literature by proposing a multivariate model of acknowledgement that included (1) previously-researched variables found to significantly predict acknowledgement, (2) variables that have not been previously examined, and (3) interactions between these newly-proposed variables. Seven variables were statistically significant predictors of acknowledgement. Odds of acknowledging rape increased as participants' reported age, prior experience of abuse, level of physical resistance/physical force, and degree of distress increased. Odds of acknowledging rape decreased as participants' reported level of offender intoxication increased. Additional results revealed that perceived future control significantly predicted acknowledgement at varying levels of feminist/egalitarian identity. These findings provide further insight into the factors predicting acknowledgement as well as the possible benefits to not acknowledge rape. Finally, potential future areas of research are discussed.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Sexual violence is a serious problem that greatly affects the American public. According to the 2003 National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), an American is sexually assaulted every two minutes, and one in six American women has been the victim of an attempted or completed rape (U.S. Department of Justice-Bureau of Justice Statistics [USDOJ-BJS], 2004). Further data from the NCVS revealed that during 2003, "about 7 in 10 female rape or sexual assault victims stated that the offender was someone known to them, whether an acquaintance, a friend, or an intimate" (USDOJ-BJS). Additionally, "women age 16-24 experienced the highest per capita rates of intimate violence (19.6 victimizations per 1,000 women)" (USDOJ-BJS). Thus, college-aged women are at highest risk for sexual assault and rape (Fisher, Cullen, & Turner, 2000; Koss, 1998).

A large number of sexual assault/rape cases remain unreported. Statistics show that fewer than 39% of sexual assaults are reported to law enforcement authorities (Rape, Abuse, & Incest National Network, n.d.). Furthermore this number is not cumulative, meaning it does not include those individuals victimized since the 2003 NCVS as well as those victimized prior to the 2003 NCVS, who may continue to suffer the long-term effects of sexual trauma.

The experience of sexual trauma can lead to devastating physical, emotional, and psychological consequences. Research has investigated links between sexual trauma and a plethora of both physical and mental health problems (Golding, 1999; Hanson et al., 2001; Koss, 1994; Ullman & Brecklin, 2003). Koss (1994) reviewed research highlighting the potential physical and psychological repercussions of rape, including sexually transmitted diseases, stress-related illnesses, pain disorders, physical injuries and wounds, difficulties in sexual functioning, difficulties in social adjustment, significant changes to cognitive schemas (e.g., distrust of others, belief that the world is unsafe), depression, anxiety, intense fear, anger, and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). White, Donat, and Bondurant (2001) discussed the impact of these negative outcomes at the individual and societal levels highlighting social and economic consequences, such as decreased quality of life for children of parents who have experienced abuse, lower employment patterns for women, and reductions in social and economic contributions towards societal development. Therefore, research investigating rape is critical and warrants attention, as sexual trauma can foster potentially long-lasting repercussions that impact people at the individual, family, and community levels.

Research on sexual trauma is heavily dependent upon “acknowledgement,” i.e., labeling of an unwanted sexual experience as assault or rape. Acknowledgement is critical when considering utilization of treatment services and mental health outcomes as it can assist women in receiving appropriate support and lead to more rapid recovery from unwanted sexual experiences. Research with women who acknowledged unwanted sexual experiences as rape showed they were more likely to tell someone about their experience, seek crisis services, report their experiences to the police, and believe in seeking therapeutic services (Koss, Dinero, Seibel, & Cox, 1988). Women acknowledging victimization were also more likely to blame their assailants rather than themselves for unwanted sexual experiences (Kahn, Jackson, Kully, Badger, & Halvorsen, 2003). Additional research has shown that women acknowledging victimization are more likely to press charges against their perpetrators in the future, thus minimizing their chances of being re-victimized by the same individual (Layman, Gidycz, & Lynn, 1996). By acknowledging unwanted sexual experiences as rape, women may access resources earlier in their healing process, thereby potentially preventing or lessening the chronic emotional, psychological, and physical problems that stem from sexual trauma (Golding, 1999; Hanson et al., 2001; Koss, 1994; Ullman & Brecklin, 2003).

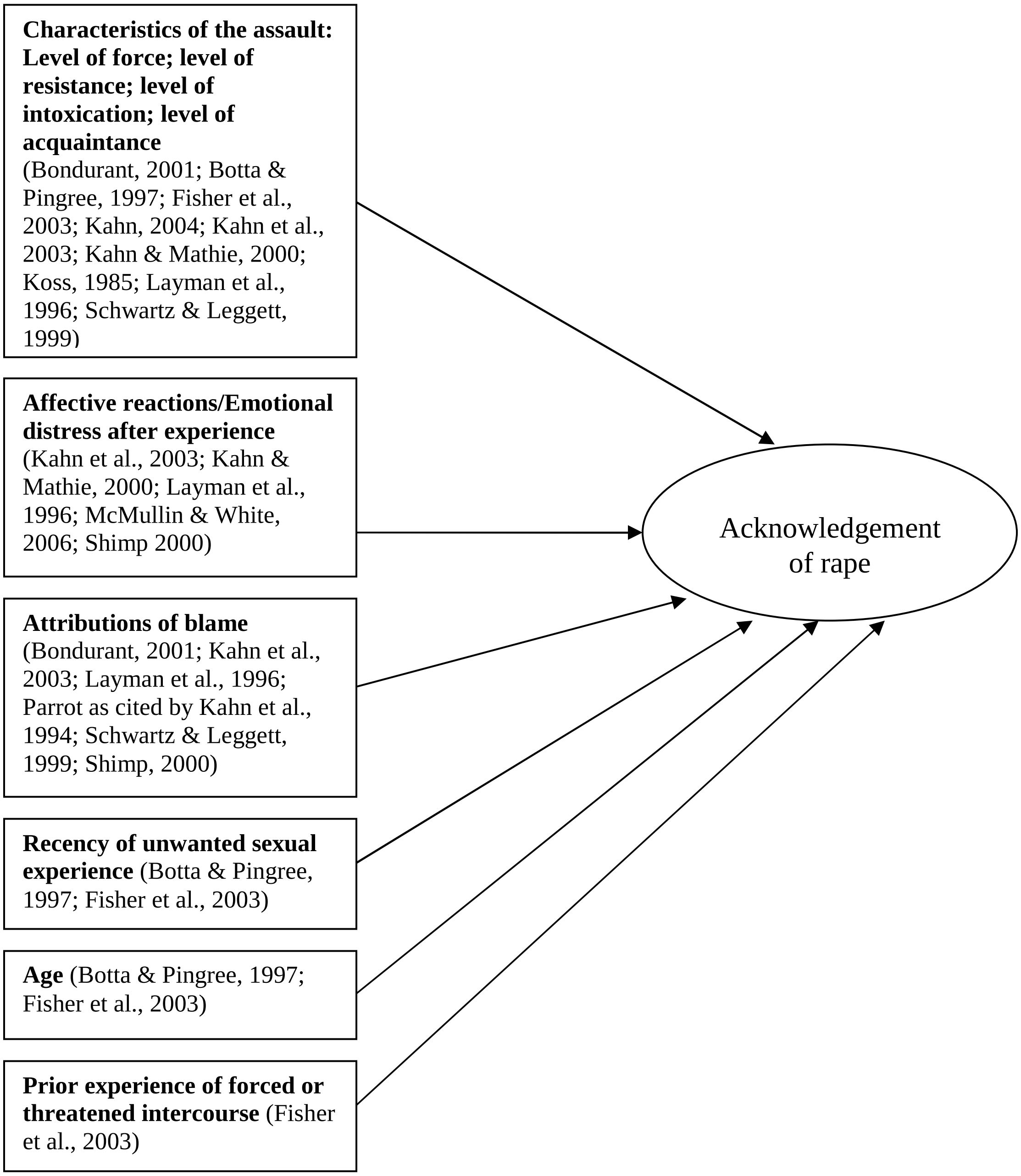
A body of research has also focused on a subgroup of women, referred to as "unacknowledged victims" (Kahn, 2004; Kahn et al., 2003; Kahn & Mathie, 2000; Koss, 1985; Koss et al., 1988; Layman et al., 1996); these are women who do not identify as having been raped, but endorse questions that meet the FBI Uniform Crime Reporting Handbook's and/or the NCVS's criteria for rape. Research has shown that these individuals do in fact report experiencing significant psychological or emotional distress after their unwanted sexual experiences, implying that these women do not simply regret having had the sexual experience or consider it to be "just a bad date" (Schwartz & Leggett, 1999). While "unacknowledged victims" reported having experienced less severe experiences than "acknowledged victims" (Kahn et al., 2003; Layman et al., 1996), unacknowledged victims did report greater psychological distress, (e.g., PTSD) when compared with "nonvictims" (i.e., women who have not experienced an unwanted sexual experience at all) (Layman et al., 1996). Therefore *in comparison* to acknowledged victims, unacknowledged victims may report fewer PTSD symptoms or even view themselves as less traumatized (Kahn et al., 2003). However this does not mean that they are unlikely to endorse symptoms of PTSD, anxiety, or depression at all. Additionally Koss et al. (1988) argued that because they are less likely to view their experiences as rape, unacknowledged victims are at risk for not seeking important legal and mental health services that could greatly assist them with their recovery. Unacknowledged victims are also more likely than acknowledged victims to continue relationships with perpetrators (Layman et al., 1996).

Research on the acknowledgement of rape can be affected by various methodological limitations and shortcomings. Defining what constitutes rape presents unique challenges, not only for victims, but also for medical and mental health professionals, legal and law enforcement authorities, and the general American public (Koss, 1996, 1998). Therefore, acknowledgement of rape is complicated by the ways in which sexual victimization is described, interpreted, and defined by society (Donat & D’Emilio, 1998; Hamby & Koss, 2003).

Previous studies have been criticized for failing to use precise definitions and terminology to assess women’s experience of sexual trauma. Many past studies have used narrow definitions, terms, and survey methodologies that reflect unacknowledged biases of dominant social groups (Muehlenhard, Powch, Phelps, & Giusti, 1992) and fail to capture sexual victimization that occurs within the context of intimate relationships (Koss, 1998). Flawed survey methodology at the national level has been identified as one factor that leads to the underreporting (and therefore, the lack of acknowledgement) that is common among victims of rape (Koss, 1996, 1998). Thus, participants are often forced to classify and place their experiences within the confines of specific methodological instruments (Muehlenhard et al., 1992), thereby potentially influencing their perceptions and understanding of their own unwanted sexual experiences.

Some previous research efforts have taken these methodological limitations and shortcomings into account and successfully uncovered similarities and differences between unacknowledged and acknowledged victims in order to gain insight into why women would or would not choose to label their experiences as rape (Kahn, 2004; Kahn et al., 2003; Kahn & Mathie, 2000; Koss, 1985; Layman et al., 1996; Schwartz & Leggett, 1999; Shimp 2000). Other researchers (e.g., Bondurant, 2001; Botta & Pingree, 1997; Fisher, Daigle, Cullen, & Turner, 2003; McMullin & White, 2006) have identified specific factors that predict acknowledgement of unwanted sexual experiences as rape. Figure 1 depicts a schematic diagram of factors that have been found to distinguish unacknowledged victims from acknowledged victims or to predict acknowledgement. Each factor will be discussed in detail below.

Figure 1: Known factors that distinguish unacknowledged victims from acknowledged victims[1]


Characteristics of the assault: Level of force; level of resistance; level of intoxication; level of acquaintance (Bondurant, 2001; Botta & Pingree, 1997; Fisher et al., 2003; Kahn, 2004; Kahn et al., 2003; Kahn & Mathie, 2000; Koss, 1985; Layman et al., 1996; Schwartz & Leggett, 1999)
Affective reactions/Emotional distress after experience (Kahn et al., 2003; Kahn & Mathie, 2000; Layman et al., 1996; McMullin & White, 2006; Shimp 2000)
Attributions of blame (Bondurant, 2001; Kahn et al., 2003; Layman et al., 1996; Parrot as cited by Kahn et al., 1994; Schwartz & Leggett, 1999; Shimp, 2000)
Recency of unwanted sexual experience (Botta & Pingree, 1997; Fisher et al., 2003)
Age (Botta & Pingree, 1997; Fisher et al., 2003)
Prior experience of forced or threatened intercourse (Fisher et al., 2003)
Acknowledgement of rape

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[1] Unfortunately, each study used different ways of operationalizing predictor variables, e.g., variables assessing level of physical harm, resistance (verbal and/or physical), and aggression/force used by the perpetrator were sometimes measured as single items or as aggregate items. However, with what has been investigated so far, a similar pattern of predictor variables emerge.

Characteristics of the unwanted sexual experience

As noted first in Figure 1, certain situational characteristics of the assault have been identified as differentiating unacknowledged from acknowledged victims (Kahn & Mathie, 2000). These characteristics include level of force, presence of a weapon, level of resistance, level of acquaintance with the offender, and level of intoxication. Kahn (2004) concluded that the primary factor in a woman's decision (or even an outside observer's decision) to label her experience as rape is the actual nature of the situation, i.e., characteristics of the unwanted sexual experience. In fact, Kahn et al. (2003) found that the use of the term rape was most often associated with forced vaginal intercourse rather than forced sexual acts involving anal or oral sex, even if these acts were unwanted. Furthermore, research has found that both acknowledged and unacknowledged victims hold "rape scripts," i.e., cognitive schemata for how a "typical rape" occurs and the perceived "typical" characteristics of a rape (Kahn, Mathie, & Torgler, 1994). This research found that discrepancies between rape scripts and women's actual reported characteristics of unwanted sexual experiences can affect acknowledgement. Thus, situational factors may be critical in contributing to why some women, but not others, view their experiences as being rape (Kahn, 2004).

Koss (1985) found that acknowledged victims tended to have more forceful, violent, brutal encounters, whereas unwanted sexual experiences reported by unacknowledged victims spanned from a range of low to moderate to high levels of violence. Additional empirical research found that unacknowledged victims reported lower levels of perceived perpetrator force whereas acknowledged victims perceived that their assailants used more force and aggression during their assaults (Kahn et al., 2003;

Kahn & Mathie, 2000; Layman et al., 1996). Level of force may also affect acknowledgement if it differs from victims' perceptions of the characteristics of a "real" rape. Kahn et al. (1994) revealed that unacknowledged victims were more likely to possess forceful, violent rape scripts that greatly differed from their actual experiences, whereas acknowledged victims were more likely to have less force in their rape scripts, but to have experienced more force than unacknowledged victims in their assaults.

Across a number of studies, multivariate analyses that included variables related to level of physical force consistently revealed that this construct significantly predicts acknowledgement, even with other predictors in the model (Bondurant, 2001; Botta & Pingree, 1997; Fisher et al., 2003). More specifically, level of physical injury/harm, level of physical force (both vaginal and anal/oral; both threats of force and actual force), and presence of a weapon were found to significantly predict acknowledgement. In fact, women who reported experiencing greater levels of physical force were two to three times more likely (and even more in certain studies) to acknowledge their experiences as rape. Therefore, I hypothesize that the following variables will predict acknowledgement: physical harm/injury sustained, level of physical force of offenders, and presence of a weapon. As these variables increase, I expect the odds of acknowledging rape to increase.

Level of resistance is also an important distinguishing factor in acknowledgement research and has been measured by physical resistance, verbal resistance, and clarity of nonconsent. Research has shown that acknowledged victims were more likely than unacknowledged victims to face forceful aggression from perpetrators and therefore reported engaging in more physical resistance (Kahn et al., 2003; Kahn & Mathie, 2000; Layman et al., 1996). Acknowledged victims also reported communicating their refusal of consent more clearly than unacknowledged victims (Layman et al., 1996). Logistic regression analyses have provided evidence that, when assessed, level of resistance is a significant predictor of acknowledgement (Bondurant, 2001; Fisher et al., 2003). Women who reported greater levels of resistance were two to three times more likely to acknowledge their experiences as rape. When both physical resistance and verbal resistance were measured and included in analyses as separate variables, there were mixed findings. Fisher et al. (2003) found that verbal resistance significantly predicted acknowledgement while physical resistance did not. Bondurant (2001) found that both physical and verbal resistance significantly predicted acknowledgement. It is important to note, however, that resistance was measured differently in these studies. Thus, I hypothesize that levels of verbal and physical resistance will predict acknowledgement. As levels of verbal and physical resistance increase, I expect the odds of acknowledging rape to increase.

Level of intoxication is another contextual factor that has been examined within acknowledgement research. Unacknowledged victims were more likely than acknowledged victims to report unwanted sexual experiences during which the woman and/or her assailant were intoxicated by drugs and/or alcohol (Kahn & Mathie, 2000; Layman et al., 1996; Schwartz & Leggett, 1999). In fact, women who were intoxicated were less likely to acknowledge their experiences as rape or attempted rape, despite stating that they did not want to engage in sexual intercourse and that they did not have the cognitive ability to say no or physically resist unwanted sexual encounters (Schwartz & Leggett, 1999). Only 3.3% of women in this study who had had an unwanted sexual experience while too intoxicated to give consent labeled their experience as rape

(Schwartz & Leggett). Using logistic regression, McMullin and White (2006) found that acknowledged victims were less likely than unacknowledged victims to have been drinking during their reported unwanted sexual experiences. I hypothesize that level of intoxication reported by participants will predict acknowledgement. Specifically, as level of intoxication experienced by participants increases, I expect that acknowledgement of rape will decrease.

Finally, the nature of the relationship between the woman and the perpetrator has been discussed widely in the literature as a characteristic of unwanted sexual experiences that significantly influences acknowledgment of rape. Koss (1985) found that most of the unacknowledged victims in her study had been assaulted by an acquaintance or romantic partner. Because their assaults had occurred within the context of a close personal relationship, unacknowledged victims tended to believe that what they had experienced did not constitute rape. Kahn et al.'s (2003) research provided further support for this finding by revealing that women who did not label their experiences as rape or attempted rape were more likely than women who labeled their experiences as rape/attempted rape to have had assailants with whom they shared an intimate relationship. Parrot (as cited by Kahn et al., 1994) provided one explanation for this phenomenon, suggesting that unacknowledged victims may not identify unwanted sexual experiences as rape out of concern for the perpetrator.

Research that utilized logistic regression techniques did not reveal relationship dynamics as a statistically significant predictor of acknowledgement (Bondurant, 2001; Fisher et al., 2003; McMullin & White, 2006). However descriptive statistics indicated that in all of these studies, the percentage of women victimized by strangers was extremely small compared to the percentage of women victimized by acquaintances (e.g., 6% versus 94%; Bondurant, 2001; and 2.13% versus 97.87; McMullin & White, 2006). Regardless of these findings, level of acquaintance is still an important factor that merits investigation. I hypothesize that level of acquaintance will predict acknowledgement such that as level of acquaintance increases, the odds of acknowledging rape will decrease.

Affective reactions experienced by women after the unwanted sexual experience

The second factor highlighted in Figure 1 involves the affective reactions experienced by women after an unwanted sexual encounter. Research indicates that unacknowledged victims reported feeling “less traumatized” than acknowledged victims who tried to resist forceful sexual advances (Kahn et al., 2003). Thus, the emotional and affective reactions of women in response to unwanted sexual experiences may have influenced acknowledgement (Kahn & Mathie, 2000). Other findings have shown that acknowledged victims in comparison to unacknowledged victims do experience more intense emotional reactions subsequent to their unwanted sexual experiences, and these reactions may have influenced women in defining their experience as rape (Kahn & Mathie, 2000). Further empirical work has shown that unacknowledged victims do not report as many symptoms of PTSD and rape-related stress as acknowledged victims (Layman et al., 1996) and that acknowledged victims report high levels of distress and negative affect after their experience (Kahn et al., 2003). Consistent with these findings, Shimp’s (2000) work revealed a significant correlation between posttraumatic stress and acknowledgement. Recent research has found that unacknowledged and acknowledged victims did not differ in levels of reported PTSD symptoms (Conoscenti & McNally, 2006), but that acknowledged victims reported more frequent and more intense somatic health complaints.

PTSD symptoms experienced after an assault have not yet been tested as a predictor of acknowledgement in logistic regression analyses. Assessment of PTSD symptoms has often been measured as a “current” level of distress, as researchers have made attempts to understand if unacknowledged victims experience the persistent, long-standing psychological distress that acknowledged victims report. McMullin and White (2006) found changes over time in acknowledged and unacknowledged victims’ reported levels of psychological distress and psychological well-being. While both acknowledged and unacknowledged victims reported improvement in their psychological well-being, acknowledged victims also reported a decrease in their levels of psychological distress. Unacknowledged victims reported experiencing fairly stable levels of psychological distress over time. The current study will build upon this research by including symptoms of psychological distress as a predictor variable in multiple logistic regression analyses. As levels of psychological distress increase, the odds of acknowledging rape are hypothesized to increase.

Attribution of blame for the unwanted sexual experience: Self-blame

Attribution of blame for the unwanted sexual experience, the third factor in Figure 1, may predict acknowledgement. Parrot (as cited by Kahn et al., 1994) suggested that women may not acknowledge their victimization due to self-blame. In fact, Phillips’ (2000) qualitative work indicated that unacknowledged victims do indeed “often reflect back on the very strategies they relied on to enter, manage, and make an exit from their encounters, and transform them into internalizations of personal responsibility for their own abuse” (p.150).

However, Schwartz and Leggett (1999) found that 79.3% of women who were raped while intoxicated and 50% of women who were raped by force or threat of force (and not intoxicated) felt that they were to blame for the incident to some degree. Thus, a large percentage of acknowledged victims in addition to unacknowledged victims also reported suffering from self-blame. Similarly, Shimp (2000) found no direct relationship between self-blame and sexual assault acknowledgement. Due to these mixed findings, self-blame was not included in the current study. In fact, self-blame may be more complicated than previously imagined (refer to section below entitled *Perceptions of future control/future likelihood of unwanted sexual experiences* for further information).

Attribution of blame for the unwanted sexual experience: Perpetrator blame

Kahn et al.’s (2003) work confirmed the importance of perpetrator blame in acknowledgement decisions. Women who acknowledged unwanted sexual experiences as rape in their study were more likely than unacknowledged women to mention explicitly or imply that the assailant was to blame in qualitative description of their assaults. In fact, women who did not label their experiences as rape did not mention assailant blame at all (Kahn et al., 2003).

Shimp’s (2000) work revealed that perpetrator blame mediated a relationship between self-blame and sexual assault acknowledgement. In other words, greater self-blame was related to less perpetrator blame and less perpetrator blame was associated with less sexual assault acknowledgement. Furthermore, perpetrator blame was found to mediate the relationship between level of resistance and sexual assault acknowledgement;

specifically, greater resistance was associated with more perpetrator blame, which in turn was associated with greater sexual assault acknowledgement.

Other research found that including perpetrator blame as a predictor variable in logistic regression analyses did not significantly predict acknowledgement (Bondurant, 2001). However, it must be noted that both self-blame and perpetrator blame have been assessed inconsistently in the studies reviewed thus far. Perpetrator blame may play an important role in sexual assault acknowledgement, given that perpetrator blame was found to be related to sexual assault acknowledgement and mediated relations between other hypothesized factors (including self-blame) and acknowledgement. Therefore, perpetrator blame was included in the model for the current study and is hypothesized to predict acknowledgement. The odds of acknowledging rape are hypothesized to increase as perpetrator blame increases.

Other important predictor variables

Three additional variables have been investigated in previous research utilizing regression analyses: recency of unwanted sexual experience, age, and prior experiences of forced or threatened intercourse (Botta & Pingree, 1997; Fisher et al., 2003). These studies found that women were less likely to consider recently experienced unwanted sexual encounters as rape and more likely to view past unwanted sexual experiences as rape. Additionally, older women were more likely to acknowledge unwanted sexual experiences as rape. Only Fisher et al. (2003) investigated the third variable (i.e., prior experiences of forced or threatened intercourse). They found that women who had a history of a forced intercourse experience prior to a recent reported unwanted sexual experience were more likely to acknowledge it as rape than women who had not had this previous experience. Unfortunately, they did not explicitly state whether this history included forced sexual experiences from childhood or if they were restricted to experiences past the age of 14. I have accounted for this ambiguity by including both childhood sexual abuse and prior forced sexual experience since the age of 14. Thus, recency of the unwanted sexual experience, age of participant, previous threat of harm/forced sexual experience since age 14, and childhood sexual abuse are hypothesized to predict acknowledgement. More specifically, as recency increases, the odds of acknowledging rape will decrease whereas increases in age and experiences of previous forced sex (both adult and childhood experiences of abuse) will be associated with increased odds of acknowledging rape.

Societal rape myths and rape scripts

A final noteworthy area of research hypothesized to help explain acknowledgement involves societal rape myths (Burt, 1980), e.g., “all women want to be raped,” and rape scripts. While previous research suggested that both acknowledged and unacknowledged victims reject rape myths (Koss, 1985), research has shown that unacknowledged victims have stereotyped rape scripts, i.e., cognitive schemas that include extremely violent characteristics of rape (Kahn et al., 1994; Philips, 2000). Using logistic regression analyses, Bondurant (2001) demonstrated that “rape scripts” do indeed predict acknowledgement; however her rape script questionnaire has not been assessed for validity and reliability. It is important to acknowledge rape scripts, given the topic’s significant presence within published acknowledgement research. However, the research on rape scripts has yet to be fully developed, and for this reason, it was not included in the current study.

Limitations of current acknowledgement research

Acknowledging unwanted sexual experiences as rape has been viewed historically as a preferable and, therefore, more advantageous coping strategy for women. This perspective has been well-documented in prior clinical research literature, (Koss, 1985, 1988). Women who chose not to acknowledge their experiences as rape have been previously perceived as being “in denial” (Gavey, 1999). However, conceptualizing acknowledgement of rape solely as a healthier or more optimal coping strategy seriously limits a comprehensive understanding of women’s experiences within the domains of clinical research and practice. Recent research has suggested that not acknowledging unwanted sexual experiences as rape may actually be an important coping mechanism (Kahn et al., 2003; Kahn, 2004) and, therefore, should not be dismissed (Gavey, 1999).

Past research has illuminated the societal reality that disincentives exist for women who have experienced sexual assault to identify their experiences as rape, due to blame, disbelief, and unsupportive behavior from others, as well as aversive publicity (Kilpatrick, Edmonds, & Seymour, 1992, as cited by Layman et al., 1996). These disincentives can exacerbate the process of acknowledgement of rape, making it less likely for women to do so as a way to protect themselves from further pain. Therefore, in light of these negative outcomes, it is understandable and makes logical sense that women might be reluctant to name and label unwanted sexual experiences as rape. Unfortunately, the possibility that not acknowledging rape may serve a critical, beneficial, and self-protective role for women who have had unwanted sexual experiences has yet to be even partially accepted, let alone adequately researched.

Despite the field’s previously narrow view of acknowledgement as being the optimal strategy in women’s recovery from unwanted sexual experiences, more recent research has begun to offer a more nuanced and complicated picture of rape acknowledgement. Qualitative research (Philips, 2000) revealed two potential benefits of not acknowledging unwanted sexual experiences as rape: maintenance of perceived control and maintaining views of oneself as a strong, “together,” woman; unfortunately, neither of these potentially beneficial coping strategies have been examined quantitatively.

One quantitative study (Shimp, 2000) did test whether acknowledgement has psychological benefits, by investigating the assumption that acknowledging unwanted sexual experiences as rape is related to women’s experience of positive personal growth after trauma (posttraumatic growth). In other words, previous conjecture in the acknowledgement literature assumed that acknowledgement of unwanted sexual experiences as rape would result in experiences of posttraumatic growth. Shimp’s findings, however, revealed that sexual assault acknowledgement was not directly related to posttraumatic growth. These results contradicted previous clinical and feminist literature that has historically encouraged women to acknowledge unwanted sexual experiences as rape due to assumptions that doing so would result in feelings of empowerment or personal/posttraumatic growth.

Aims of current study

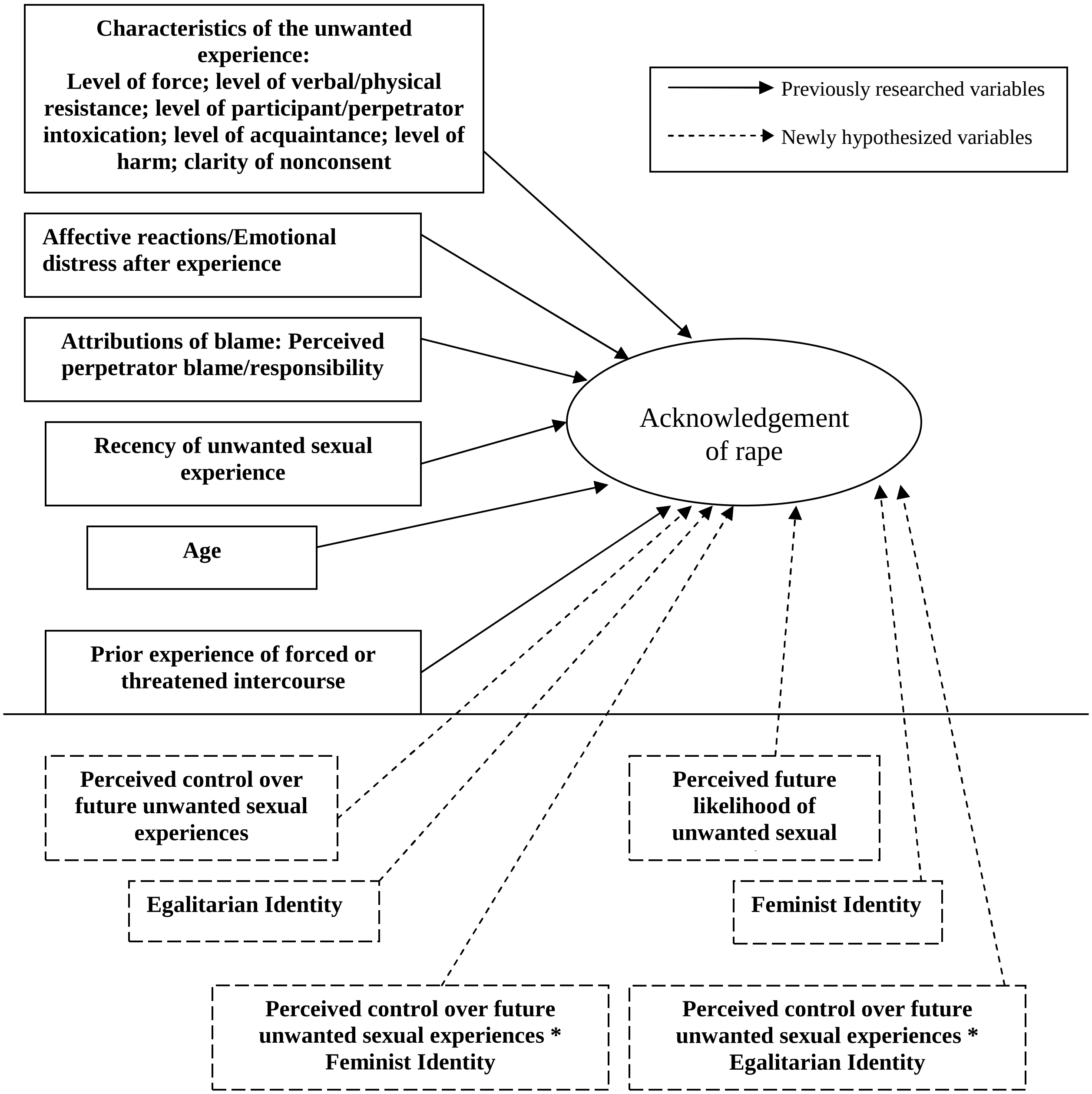
Thus far, I have reviewed the empirical literature investigating the differences between unacknowledged and acknowledged victims of rape and the factors that make it more or less likely for women to acknowledge unwanted sexual experiences as rape. I have also discussed the limitations of this body of research. In the current study, I address these gaps in the literature by building upon the previously conducted research on acknowledgement, while also advancing new conceptualizations of acknowledgement that include the potential benefit that not acknowledging rape may serve as an important coping mechanism despite previously-held views that deemed it as a negative consequence for women.

All of the independent variables that were found to significantly predict acknowledgement have never been examined together in one comprehensive model. Rather they have been investigated separately across different studies, resulting in an incomplete understanding of acknowledgement. The current study aims to rectify this inconsistency across studies and examine a comprehensive multivariate model of acknowledgement that would include previously-researched predictor variables as discussed thus far. This type of statistical analysis can shed light on each independent variable’s unique contribution towards predicting acknowledgement in the context of other predictors. In fact, testing this comprehensive multivariate model may reveal that some previously significant variables may no longer carry the same statistical significance as other predictor variables when they are all included in the model.

In addition to investigating a multivariate model that includes and tests previously-examined independent variables, I introduce two hypothesized constructs that have never been examined in the quantitative acknowledgement research to date but that may significantly predict acknowledgement: perceived future control and categories of feminist identity. The viability of each construct and its possible contribution towards predicting acknowledgement of rape are discussed below. Finally, the third purpose of the current study will be to investigate interactions between some independent variables in order to provide a nuanced understanding of these variables within the context of their predictive capabilities.

Figure 2 highlights the current study's proposed model of rape acknowledgement.

Figure 2: Proposed model of rape acknowledgement


Characteristics of the unwanted experience: Level of force; level of verbal/physical resistance; level of participant/perpetrator intoxication; level of acquaintance; level of harm; clarity of nonconsent
Previously researched variables
Newly hypothesized variables
Affective reactions/Emotional distress after experience
Attributions of blame: Perceived perpetrator blame/responsibility
Recency of unwanted sexual experience
Age
Prior experience of forced or threatened intercourse
Acknowledgement of rape
Perceived control over future unwanted sexual experiences
Egalitarian Identity
Perceived future likelihood of unwanted sexual
Feminist Identity
Perceived control over future unwanted sexual experiences * Feminist Identity
Perceived control over future unwanted sexual experiences * Egalitarian Identity

Perceptions of future control/future likelihood of unwanted sexual experiences. Although some research has found links between perceived control and self efficacy and recovery from rape (Frazier, 2003; Frazier, Steward, & Mortensen, 2004; Regehr, Cadell, & Jansen, 1999), there has been no quantitative research to date that has examined relations between perceptions of control over future experiences of rape and acknowledgement. However, qualitative research findings have highlighted perceived control over future unwanted sexual experiences as an important reason why women may choose to not acknowledge rape even if they have had an unwanted sexual experience that fits its definition (Kahn et al., 2003; Philips, 2000).

Using qualitative data, Kahn et al. (2003) found that women who labeled their experiences as rape or attempted rape described situations where they experienced a lack of sexual agency, power, or control and were helpless to prevent the negative experience. However, women who were too intoxicated to resist unwanted sexual advances did not report the same loss of control or sexual agency, even though these women could arguably be considered to have experienced a loss of both.

Phillips (2000) provided valuable insight into women’s reasons for not labeling unwanted sexual experiences (especially those that involved alcohol and/or drugs) as rape. She found that these women were able to preserve a positive self-image of being mature adults and having control over their bodies and their lives to prevent future unwanted sexual encounters when they did not label their experiences as rape. These women’s refusal to name their experiences as victimization was revealed to be a concerted effort to maintain their beliefs in their own sexual agency in addition to their identity as “strong women.” Furthermore, not acknowledging their experiences as rape reflected these women's investment in believing that they could prevent future assaults as well as their aversion towards being associated with perceived negative connotations of what it means to be a "victim" (e.g., someone who is not "together" or who is immature).

Phillips also found that unacknowledged victims tended to employ counterintuitive strategies to avoid labeling themselves as victims, mainly engaging in self-blame. While unacknowledged victims did not perceive acknowledged victims of rape as being responsible for their own trauma and instead blamed external factors for these women's rapes, unacknowledged victims tended to blame their own unwanted experiences on themselves and their behavior. While this strategy may be interpreted as destructive, Phillips argued

> what may appear to be simple self-blame or denial may actually be an effort to take psychological control of their often uncontrollable circumstances . . . these women's strategies represent active attempts (however partial and problematic) to preserve a sense of self in an alienating social arena that fails to provide frameworks for being both victim and agent" (p.189).

Therefore, self-blame may actually be a mechanism for unacknowledged victims to maintain a sense of perceived control over what happens to them sexually.

As discussed above, previous research investigated differences in reported self-blame between unacknowledged and acknowledged victims with mixed results. Perhaps these inconclusive findings reflect a more complicated picture of self-blame in that both acknowledged and unacknowledged victims report self-blame, but the connotation of self-blame can be different depending upon why it has been employed, i.e., as a coping mechanism to preserve perceived control or as a negative outcome of having been victimized. To date, measures of self-blame have not taken into account its complexity as a construct with potentially different purposes for acknowledged and unacknowledged victims. Using self-blame as a predictor of acknowledgement may not successfully differentiate unacknowledged from acknowledged victims, given that both groups could endorse self-blame for completely different reasons. Therefore, perceived control over future unwanted sexual experiences may be a better candidate than self-blame to more effectively differentiate unacknowledged and acknowledged victims, and therefore, potentially a more powerful predictor of acknowledgement.

Frazier's (2003) work examining perceptions of control has been conducted solely with samples of acknowledged victims and included perceived control of past rape, perceived present control over recovery processes after a rape, perceived control over possible future experiences of rape, and perceived future likelihood of rape occurring again. She posited that past perceived control of rape (e.g., if a woman believes that she could have controlled a past rape) can be conceptualized as engaging in self-blame. Therefore, past perceived control or self-blame will not be utilized in the current study given the reasons already discussed above. Frazier's measure of perceived present control over recovery processes after a rape examined acknowledged victims' beliefs about their ability to cope with and recover from their acknowledged rape experiences. In addition to its lack of appropriateness for women who have not acknowledged their experiences as rape, this construct would not tap into women's belief systems about their sexual agency and their perceived control over future unwanted sexual experiences, as present perceived control was designed to be more reflective of control over coping ability and the recovery process.

However, Frazier's (2003) work examining perceived control over future rape experiences may actually provide a source of measurement for the findings yielded by Phillips' (2000) work. As Phillips revealed, in order to maintain a sense of perceived control over future rape and/or perceived decreased likelihood of a future rape, women may choose not to acknowledge unwanted sexual experiences as rape. Thus, Frazier's measures of perceived control over future rapes and perceived future likelihood of rape provide a way to assess women's perceptions of control. For women who are invested in perceiving themselves as capable of having control over a future rape, it may be difficult to label an unwanted sexual experience from the past as rape, because it would require these women to acknowledge a loss of control in the past. Similarly, women who do not believe it is likely that they would be raped in the future may also not choose to acknowledge a past experience as rape, in an effort to preserve their sense of safety for the future. Therefore, perceived control over future unwanted sexual experiences and perceived future likelihood of unwanted sexual experiences are expected to significantly predict acknowledgement.

Although I hypothesize that perceived control over future unwanted sexual experiences would predict acknowledgement, it is also entirely possible that this relationship may in fact be more likely to develop in the reverse fashion, i.e., acknowledging or not acknowledging rape may actually predict someone's perceived sense of control of their ability to prevent future unwanted sex. However, based upon the ways in which Philips' (2000) participants discussed their unwanted sexual experiences, it seemed as though they had never even considered the question of whether or not their experience had been rape. It was only when they were asked acknowledgement-related questions that they began to think about their experiences differently. Some participants even began to question the way they had always viewed their unwanted sexual experiences while they processed questions of acknowledgement. Thus, it seemed as though perceptions of control over future unwanted sex may have “cancelled out” or negated the concept of even *considering* the question of acknowledgement in these young women’s minds, which in turn provides a viable argument to view perceived control over future unwanted sexual experiences as an independent variable that may predict acknowledgement.

I hypothesize that perceived likelihood of future unwanted sexual experiences will significantly predict acknowledgement, such that the higher the perceived likelihood of future unwanted sexual experiences, the more likely a woman is to be acknowledged. Due to hypotheses regarding interaction terms, I will discuss perceived control over future unwanted sexual experiences and its hypothesized prediction of acknowledgement in a later section of this document that addresses the interaction terms of perceived control over future unwanted sex and feminist/egalitarian identity.

Feminist identity. In addition to perceptions of control, the construct of feminist identity (Buschman & Lenart, 1996; Downing & Roush, 1985; Henley, Meng, O’Brien, McCarthy, & Sockloskie, 1998; Zucker, 2004) may also play an important role in acknowledgement. Research regarding rape myths (Burt, 1980) has found that a more liberal, less traditional stance on sex roles, adversarial sex beliefs, and interpersonal violence is consistent with a rejection of rape myths. In one study, despite finding that feminism related to women’s perception of discrimination against women in general, it was not related to identifying personal experiences of discrimination (Kobrynowicz &

Branscombe, 1997). Interestingly, this finding somewhat mirrors previously discussed work in which unacknowledged victims reject societal myths about rape, but tend to have more stereotyped rape scripts that do not match their personal experiences of sexual assault (Kahn et al., 1994, Koss, 1985). It also parallels Phillips' (2000) qualitative findings regarding unacknowledged victims' refusal to identify as victims but to accept and express empathy towards other women's experiences of sexual victimization, without question.

While the feminist movement in the 1960s and 1970s was successful in promoting rejection of societal rape myths and redefining societal views of rape (Donat & D'Emilio, 1998; Ward, 1995), current generations of young women continue to feel ambivalent about feminism, especially as it pertains to unwanted sexual experiences (Phillips, 2000). Anti-feminist backlash has changed the ways in which young women today are experiencing and accepting feminism (Phillips), such as claiming that feminists actually traumatize women by brainwashing them into being victims (Mardorossian, 2002). Even postmodern feminism has been has been cited by feminists as a source that has negatively altered societal views about rape (Mardorossian). In particular, Mardorossian claimed that a postmodern focus on women's psyches and their construction of their experienced realities pathologizes women, as it excuses the cultural, societal, and political factors that impact sexual assault. This may have the unintentional effect of placing the burden of responsibility and blame for victimization on women rather than their perpetrators.

Phillips' (2000) work revealed a preliminary understanding of unacknowledged victims' attitudes and beliefs about being a feminist and the strong likelihood that these women would not acknowledge their unwanted sexual experiences as rape for two reasons: (1) they did not want to appear weak and not in control of themselves, therefore “un-feminist,” and/or (2) due to feminist theory and activism that has framed rape within the context of violence, they tended to minimize or de-classify their own experiences of assault that often involved murky shades of gray and confusion, due to their belief that stereotyped, brutal victimizations were “true” experiences of rape. In fact Phillips noted that popularized feminist portrayals of consent as being clear-cut (“no means no” and “rape isn’t about sex, it’s about violence”) may perpetuate notions of victims as being powerless and “true rape” as occurring only within violent contexts. The impact of these messages may actually cause women who are uncertain and confused about their unwanted sexual experiences to question their legitimacy in acknowledging these experiences as rape (Phillips).

Although Phillips (2000) addressed generational changes in views about feminism, and explored these issues along with acknowledgement of rape, these data were only obtained within the context of several participants’ qualitative interviews and did not include a quantitative component. Phillips did ask specific questions about feminist identity, e.g., if participants considered themselves to be feminist, the personal significance of identifying as feminist, and reasons why participants chose or chose not to identify as a feminist. However, her measurement of feminism did not account for the complexities of feminist identification that have been more recently researched utilizing quantitative methodologies (e.g., Zucker, 2004). Furthermore, there has been no quantitative research to date that has directly examined the predictive power of feminist identity upon acknowledgement of rape. Thus, I intend to explore these complexities of feminist identification as reported by unacknowledged and acknowledged victims.

Recent research on feminist identity by Zucker (2004) indicated that there are a substantial number of women who identify as falling somewhere between "feminist" and "non-feminist." These women hold feminist beliefs but do not identify as feminist and have been coined as "egalitarians" (Zucker). Claiming a social identity of "feminist" in the current post-feminist climate suggests not only personal attitudes and beliefs of strength and empowerment of women, but also a political stance that recognizes implicit gender imbalances within societal frameworks and structures and encourages participation in public gender activism (Bay-Cheng & Zucker, 2007).

By drawing on a feminist explanatory framework that emphasizes the subordinate role of women in current society, feminist women may come to view themselves as not responsible for unwanted sexual experiences. They may be more likely to blame perpetrators and patriarchal institutions rather than themselves for experiences of sexual victimization. Previous work has discussed the role of feminism in assisting survivors, in terms of broadening the ways in which women can define and label sexual experiences of victimization (Gavey, 1999). Feminism may provide the language for women to own and name their victimization experiences, which can then afford them the right to claim well-deserved social services (e.g., psychological, legal) that they may need (Gavey). Feminists may be less invested in viewing themselves as "in control" of their own destinies and hold a more contextual understanding of society and events that occur in people's lives.

Bay-Cheng and Zucker (2007) suggested that egalitarians appeared to embrace more of a self-serving, individualistic stance towards their own sexuality, but did not endorse support for other women who transgress sexist sexual values, whereas feminists seemed to embrace a more collectivist and accepting stance for both themselves and other women. Furthermore, the work on egalitarians mirrors other research that has addressed the impact of neo-liberalism on current generations of women, influencing women to equate empowerment with the ability to help oneself and overcome obstacles independently and discouraging women to view gender inequality as a collective societal problem for all women (Rich, 2005).

Given these findings, egalitarians may be the most averse towards being labeled a “victim,” as this label may threaten their belief in their own strength, sense of personal empowerment, and their ability to prevent rapes. Additionally, egalitarians may be less likely to view unwanted sexual experiences within a feminist framework that places blame for rape on sexist and disenfranchising patriarchal values in society. Instead, they may be more likely to place blame upon themselves in an effort to distinguish themselves from “powerless victims” and to preserve their own sense of sexual agency. Hypotheses regarding feminist/egalitarian identity will be addressed next within the context of interaction terms comprising feminist/egalitarian identity and perceived control over future unwanted sexual encounters.

Interaction between feminist/egalitarian identity and perceived control over future unwanted sex

I will investigate interactions between feminist identity/egalitarian identity and perceived control over future unwanted sexual experiences. It would make sense for women’s self-identification with feminism to have implications for their sense of sexual agency and perceived ability to control future unwanted sexual experiences, given that both feminist and egalitarian identity involve belief systems that posit women as being capable, strong, and equal to men. In light of Bay-Cheng and Zucker's (2007) findings that egalitarians tended to embrace a self-serving, individualistic stance towards sexuality, egalitarians may be more likely to place a high value on believing that they have the capability to control their own destinies. Furthermore, as discussed above, Phillips' (2000) work provided preliminary evidence to suggest that unacknowledged victims who were self-identified feminists did not want to appear weak, not in control of themselves, and "un-feminist." Therefore, differences in perceptions of control over future unwanted sexual experiences might have different cognitive implications for how egalitarians, feminists, and non-feminists view and make sense of past unwanted sexual experiences.

I hypothesize that the interaction between perceived control over future unwanted sexual experiences and feminist/egalitarian identity will significantly predict acknowledgement above and beyond each main effect that comprises the interaction term. Specifically, I hypothesize that women who identify as egalitarian and have higher levels of perceived control over future unwanted experiences will be less likely to acknowledge unwanted sexual experiences as rape, due to the possibility that they may have more investment in wanting to appear "in control." Women who identify as egalitarian and have lower levels of perceived future control may be more likely to be acknowledged, as their belief that they do not have control over future unwanted experiences may make them more likely to acknowledge times in the past that they had not been able to avoid an unwanted encounter. Given the results from Philips' (2000) qualitative findings, I hypothesize that feminists will follow a similar pattern to egalitarians in which women who identify as feminist and have higher levels of perceived control over future unwanted sexual experiences will be less likely to be acknowledged, due to a reluctance to appear weak. Women who identify as feminist and have lower levels of perceived control over future unwanted sexual experiences will be more likely to be acknowledged, as they would not have as much investment in appearing “strong” and “in control.”

Conversely, women who identify as non-feminist (i.e., hold traditional, conservative views about gender roles and norms) and have higher levels of perceived future control may be more likely to acknowledge rape. Believing in one’s ability to control future unwanted sexual experiences may reflect a perceived sense of personal strength and self-efficacy within the context of a belief system that supports patriarchal values and ideals. This sense of sexual self-efficacy may make it more likely for these women to be able to acknowledge times when they were victimized by males. Non-feminists who have lower levels of perceived control over future unwanted sexual experiences may not have the same sense of sexual self-efficacy that non-feminists with high levels of perceived control over future unwanted sexual encounters may have. As a result, believing that one does not have control over future unwanted sexual experiences may make acknowledgement of rape too threatening for non-feminists, resulting in a decreased likelihood to acknowledge their unwanted sexual experiences as rape.

I hypothesize that the interaction term of perceived control and feminist/egalitarian identity will significantly predict acknowledgement of rape above and beyond the contribution of each individual term as a main effect in the multiple logistic regression model. I also expect that the regression lines predicting acknowledgement will vary across the three identity groups. Specifically I expect that the regression line for feminists will be higher than the regression line for egalitarians, indicating that, as a whole, feminists will be more likely to acknowledge unwanted sexual experiences as rape than egalitarians and non-feminists. As was discussed earlier, feminists are more likely to view society within a patriarchal and sexist framework; therefore this political lens and their identification with feminism may make it more likely for these women to acknowledge unwanted sexual experiences as rape. I expect that egalitarians would be less likely than both feminists and non-feminists to acknowledge unwanted sexual experiences as rape due to their endorsement of beliefs about equality of women and a personal investment to appear strong and "in control." Therefore the regression line for egalitarians is hypothesized to fall below the regression lines for feminists and non-feminists.

Hypotheses

A summary of hypotheses follows.

Ho: The population odds ratio (OR) = 1 or the predictor coefficient = 0 in the population
Ha: The population odds ratio (OR) > 1 or the predictor coefficient > 0 (positive) in the population

I hypothesize that the following variables will predict acknowledgement with odds ratios being greater than one (as the predictor variable increase, the odds of acknowledging an unwanted sexual experience as rape increase): Physical harm sustained by participants, level of physical force used by offender, psychological distress experienced afterwards, presence of a weapon, level of verbal resistance, level of physical resistance, clarity of nonconsent, blame assigned to offender, responsibility assigned to offender, age, previous forced sexual experience after age 14, childhood sexual abuse, and perception of future likelihood of unwanted sexual experiences.

Ho: The population odds ratio (OR) = 1 or the predictor coefficient = 0 in the population
Ha: The population odds ratio (OR) < 1 or the predictor coefficient < 0 (negative) in the population

I hypothesize that the following variables will predict acknowledgement with odds ratios being less than one (as the predictor variable increases, the odds of acknowledging an unwanted sexual experience as sexual assault/rape decrease): Level of intoxication of participant, level of intoxication of offender, level of acquaintance, and recency of incident.

I hypothesize that the interaction comprised of perceived control and egalitarian/feminist identity will significantly predict acknowledgement, such that endorsement of high perceived future control will result in a decreased likelihood of acknowledging rape for Egalitarians and Feminists. Low perceived future control will result in an increased likelihood of acknowledging rape for Egalitarians and Feminists. In Non-feminists, I hypothesize an opposite phenomenon, in which endorsement of high perceived control will result in an increased likelihood of acknowledging rape, whereas endorsement of low perceived control will result in a decreased likelihood of acknowledging rape.

Chapter 2: Method

Power analysis

Hsieh's (1989) method for determining sample sizes required for univariate logistic regression involves utilizing tables to estimate both the overall event proportion *P* and an odds ratio *r* at one standard deviation above the mean of the covariate. Multiple logistic regression sample sizes are further computed by dividing the number obtained from the sample size table by a factor of $1 - \rho^2$, where ρ is the multiple regression coefficient relating the specific covariate to the remaining covariates. Three studies have used logistic regression techniques to predict acknowledgement (Bondurant, 2001; Fisher et al., 2003; McMullin & White, 2006). Estimates for overall event proportion *P*, odds ratio *r*, and ρ were approximated based on the findings obtained from this previous research. Therefore, the power analysis presented below was calculated in an informed, educated manner and yielded a desired sample size that fell in line with previous acknowledgement studies that used multiple logistic regression.

Calculating prevalence rates of acknowledgement in previously studied "Victimized" college samples was rather complicated, as there was some variation in what constituted victimization (rape, attempted rape, and/or sexual assault) and how descriptive statistics were reported (percentages at the incident level versus at the individual level). The following calculations, based on number of respondents rather than number of incidents, attempted to take these discrepancies into account. Two studies obtained samples that included nonvictims, acknowledged victims, and unacknowledged victims; prevalence rates for acknowledgement in the overall sample ranged from approximately 5% to 18%. Prevalence rates of acknowledgement for the "Victimized" samples (including only acknowledged and unacknowledged victims) across all three studies (Bondurant, 2001; Fisher et al., 2003; McMullin & White, 2006) were calculated to fall within a range of 30% to 53.7%. Both prevalence rate ranges were utilized in order to calculate the desired sample size for this study. The range for sample size obtained in the first calculation reflected how many total participants (both “Victimized” and “Nonvictimized”) were needed for the current study. The range for sample size obtained in the second calculation reflected how many “Victimized” participants were needed.

Power analysis: Overall sample

The mean of the range of rates for acknowledgement (5% to 18%) in the overall samples was 11.5% (P = 0.115 or P = 0.12). In order to err on the conservative side, an estimated overall event proportion P = 0.1 was used. Estimations for the odds ratio r were also based upon previously obtained findings. Of the three studies using multiple logistic regression to predict acknowledgement, statistically significant odds ratios ranged from 1.07 to 14.45 (for those predictor variables that increased the likelihood of acknowledgement) and 0.09 to 0.68 (for those predictor variables that decreased the likelihood of acknowledgement). Hsieh (1989) noted that the sample size for an odds ratio r is the same as that required for an odds ratio $1/r$. Therefore, the odds ratio estimate was based on the range obtained by the predictor variables increasing the likelihood of acknowledgement (1.07 – 14.45). Because of the wide range of the odds ratios, the median odds ratio was used as a benchmark for the estimated odds ratio, i.e., 3.25. Even though an overwhelming majority of odds ratios obtained in the three studies were greater than 2.0, in order to err on the side of being more conservative, a range of desired sample sizes was presented, based upon calculations of the odds ratio at a minimum of

1.5, a value chosen by Hsieh in a hypothetical, illustrative example, and a maximum of 2.0, a realistic estimation of *r* for the current study.

With $\alpha = 0.05$ (one-tailed), $1 - \beta$ (or power) = 80%, estimated $r = 1.5$, and estimated $P = 0.10$, Hsieh's (1989) table yielded 457. With $\alpha = 0.05$ (one-tailed), $1 - \beta$ (or power) = 80%, estimated $r = 2.0$, and estimated $P = 0.20$, Hsieh's table yielded 166. However these calculations represented sample size estimates for univariate logistic regression. Therefore, additional calculations had to be performed in order to obtain sample sizes for multiple logistic regression. According to Hsieh, the sample size yielded from the table should be divided by a factor of $1 - \rho^2$, where ρ is the multiple regression coefficient relating a specific covariate to the remaining covariates. Only one study reported descriptive statistics of intercorrelations between the predictor variables in the model (Bondurant, 2001); these ranged from small (0.02 to 0.29) to moderate (0.30 to 0.60). Several predictor variables (e.g., levels of physical and verbal resistance) were highly correlated (ranging from 0.70 to 0.84) which prompted Bondurant (2001) to collapse these into one composite variable. Given the range of intercorrelation values that were obtained in this study (from extremely high to extremely low), a somewhat moderate estimate for ρ was calculated to be 0.60. Although it is on the higher end of the moderate range, this estimate fell in line with this study's adherence to the usage of conservative estimates. Calculations of the range in sample size were:

$457 / 1 - (0.6)^2 = \sim 714$ participants and

$166 / 1 - (0.6)^2 = \sim 259$ participants

Thus, the total number of participants (that is, women who experienced sexual assault, attempted rape, and/or rape *and* women who had not experienced sexual victimization) required for the current proposed study ranged from 259 to 714.

Power analysis: "Victimized" sample

As was discussed above, the lower end of the prevalence rate of acknowledgement among victims was 30% ($P = 0.3$). However, to err on the conservative side, an estimated overall event proportion $P = 0.2$ was used. The same values that were obtained above in calculating estimated r were used for the "Victimized" sample as well. With $\alpha = 0.05$ (one-tailed), $1 - \beta$ (or power) = 80%, estimated $r = 1.5$, and estimated $P = 0.20$, Hsieh's (1989) table yielded 274. With $\alpha = 0.05$ (one-tailed), $1 - \beta$ (or power) = 80%, estimated $r = 2.0$, and estimated $P = 0.20$, Hsieh's table yielded 106. Using the same value of $1 - \rho^2$ that was used above, calculations of sample sizes for multiple logistic regression were:

$274 / 1 - (0.6)^2 = \sim 428$ participants and

$106 / 1 - (0.6)^2 = \sim 165$ participants

Thus the total number of participants (that is, women who experienced sexual assault, attempted rape, and/or rape) required for the "Victimized" sample ranged from 165 to 428.

Participants and Procedures

Consistent with previous scholarly practice that has supported the utilization of college students for studies of sexual victimization, (Bondurant, 2001; Botta & Pingree, 1997; Fisher et al., 2000; Fisher et al., 2003; Koss, 1998; McMullin & White, 2006), participants were recruited from an undergraduate female student population of a private university in a metropolitan setting. In order to facilitate recruitment of participants and ensure that all female undergraduates were notified of the opportunity to participate in the current study, advertisements were disseminated to the entire undergraduate student body via email addresses provided by the University Registrar. Due to confidentiality restrictions, email addresses were not separated by gender; therefore, the recruitment email was sent to both male and female students, with the body and subject of the email highlighting that the study was targeted for female undergraduate students.

Participation in the study entailed completion of an online survey that participants could access by clicking on a link contained within the recruitment email. This method of administration was thought to increase the respondent's anonymity and convenience as the female undergraduate students could fill out the survey in the comfort and privacy of their own homes. The computer survey program, *Survey Monkey*, was used in this study. *Survey Monkey* is housed within a secured website, such that the physical servers of the website are locked in a location staffed 24/7 under digital surveillance. Entry to this website requires a pass-card and biometric recognition. The network has multiple forms of security as well. Thus access to the data was restricted to those individuals authorized to do so. Due to the sensitive nature of the study and the potential for experiencing distress in answering the questions, all participants were required to read an informed consent screen that informed them ahead of time of the potential risk of distress or anxiety that the survey could elicit. The principal investigator also included statements within the informed consent screen that indicated her willingness to make herself available to the participants via phone, email, or a scheduled meeting in person before they took part in the survey.

All of the students who accepted the informed consent completed a screening measure to determine whether they qualified for the study: the Sexual Experiences Survey-Short Form for Victims (SES-SFV; see below for more on these measures). If respondents did not endorse an item on the SES-SFV, they were considered "Nonvictims" and removed from the rest of the study by being automatically taken to the Debriefing Screen that thanked them for their time followed by the Resources Screen that provided a detailed list of campus and city-wide rape crisis centers, website addresses, and 24-hour hotlines as well as important resource and referral information for other mental health services and community agencies.

If respondents endorsed an item on the SES-SFV, indicating they had experienced an unwanted sexual encounter with a male, they were automatically entered into the study, considered to be a part of the "Victims" group, and were taken to additional survey screens with the measures outlined below. The principal investigator designed the online survey to include a statement that appeared at the top of each individual screen that read: "IF YOU BEGIN TO EXPERIENCE ANY DISTRESS DURING THIS SURVEY, PLEASE CONTACT US IMMEDIATELY." Following this sentence was another sentence in which the principal investigator listed her personal cellular telephone number along with the study's email address. The principal investigator was "on-call" throughout the duration of the study and even for a period of time after the study was closed to answer emergency calls, regardless of the time or day. The principal investigator also created a special voicemail message for the study in the event that the principal investigator could not answer her telephone immediately. This message instructed the caller to leave her name and telephone number with the assurance that the principal investigator would contact the caller as soon as possible. The message also included important emergency information outlining the steps that a caller needed to take if she felt she was in crisis (i.e., to call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room).

Once this “Victims” group had completed the survey, they were then taken to their own Debriefing Screen that contained a special, personal letter from the principal investigator. The letter normalized and validated any possible distressed reactions that the participants may have experienced and encouraged them to contact the principal investigator at any time in the future if they needed any kind of additional support. The principal investigator included her personal cell phone number and the study’s email address again, inviting participants to contact her if they needed to. However throughout the course of the study, there were no phone calls or emails received by the principal investigator from study participants in crisis.

The “Victims” group was then taken to the Resources Screen, the same one that was accessed by the “Nonvictims” group. Both groups of women (i.e., those that had identified experiencing an unwanted sexual encounter with a male and those that had not) were taken to the Resources Screen as part of their participation with the study in order to increase all of the female students’ access to general mental health resources covering different relevant personal topics (e.g., drug/alcohol abuse, sexually transmitted diseases, sexual and domestic violence) in addition to providing the “Victims” group with immediate access to support services.

Measures

The use of self-report measures has been identified as a valid and useful manner of collecting data for sexual assault victims, as significant correlations have been found between women's self-reported sexual experiences and their level of victimization as assessed by interviewers (Koss, 1998). Therefore, the following self-report measures were used in the current research study; please see Appendix A for measures.

Demographics Questionnaire. This measure assessed basic demographic information about participants such as race, ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic status, year in college, sexual orientation, and sexual history.

Sexual Experiences Survey. Sexual assault experiences were assessed with a modified version of the Sexual Experiences Survey (SES; Koss & Oros, 1982). The SES has been widely used to capture a thorough range of sexual victimization from intercourse achieved through verbal coercion to physical force. The original measure consists of 12 yes/no items assessing whether or not participants have experienced sexual victimization. Previous research on the SES measure indicated internal consistency (Cronbach alpha) was 0.74, and with regards to test-retest reliability, the mean item agreement between two administrations of the measure that were a week apart was 93 % (Koss & Gidycz, 1985). Koss et al. (2006) maintained that "over time the SES has fulfilled many research roles including serving as a measure of prevalence, selection tool, predictor variable, and outcome measure in psychological, criminological, and health research settings" (p. 3). The original SES items were demonstrated to map onto legal definitions of sexual victimization as intended in research with prosecuting attorneys (Gylys & McNamara, 1996 as cited by Koss et al., 2006).

Recent empirical work addressed critiques by some researchers that Koss's measure overestimated the phenomenon of unreported rapes and the prevalence of unacknowledged victims, by utilizing a different measurement approach to assess acknowledgement (Fisher et al, 2003). The estimates obtained by Fisher et al. were similar to those found by Koss and other researchers using her measure and provided support for assertions of these researchers that acknowledgement is indeed a prevalent problem. In fact, results indicated higher rates of victimized individuals than Koss's (1982; 1985) original work. Thus, validity of the original SES has been widely accepted across many settings, and the SES has set a precedent for standardizing the measurement of sexual victimization (Koss et al.).

While communicating with Koss to receive permission to utilize her measure, Koss provided the principal investigator with a new version of the SES believed to better capture the range of unwanted sexual experiences and requested that it be used in place of the original SES. This new measure (SES-SFV; Koss et al., 2007) was the product of a three-year collaboration by nine researchers who have all used the original SES extensively in their own work. Koss et al. (2007) recognized that the original SES has since become significantly outdated. This new version reflects a concerted effort to update the measure as well as address various critiques of the original SES.

The SES-SFV used in the current study was closely modeled after the original SES. It contains 10 items, seven assessing specific unwanted sexual experiences with 5 response choices that ask how many times this happened in the past year and since the participant was 14 years of age (i.e., since the participant's 14th birthday). The eighth question asks for the participant's gender and age. The ninth question assesses multiple victimization and gender of the person who engaged in unwanted sexual contact with the participant. Finally, the last question assesses if the participant has ever been raped, allowing the participant to utilize her own definition of rape.

Koss et al. (2007) argued that the new SES-SFV reflects a qualitative improvement from the original in the following areas: the variance obtained by a new response format (Likert scale instead of yes/no), the specification of exact calculation of age by instructing participants to consider experiences since their 14th birthday, and phrasing of nonconsent (addition of phrase “without my consent”). In order to address reliability concerns, Koss et al. (2007) maintained that their measure is based on an induced rather than latent measurement model, where “the observed variables combine to form a new variable that represents a category or set of experiences” (p.363). Using a latent model, in which reliability measures would be appropriate, would assume “that sexual victimization causes the experiences (i.e., scale items) and that the experiences are *necessarily* interrelated” (Koss et al., 2007, p. 363). Koss et al. asserted that no work to date has demonstrated any reasoning for two or more of women’s unwanted sexual experiences to be *necessarily* related to one another. Thus, these researchers argued that a sexual victimization measure, such as the SES-SFV, should be based upon an induced measurement model. Using this particular measurement model does not require the items to correlate with one another (since the items span different categories of experience), and therefore measures of internal reliability are deemed inappropriate for the SES-SFV. Participants’ responses for the SES-SFV were scored and classified into one of five victimization categories (Nonvictim; Sexual Contact; Sexual Coercion; Attempted Rape; Rape) according to the instructions outlined by Koss et al. (2007).

Victimization categories for acknowledgement. The definition of rape used in the current study was that used by the US Department of Justice's 2003 NCVS in order to be as inclusive to victims as possible[2]:

> RAPE is forced sexual intercourse, including both psychological coercion and physical force. Forced sexual intercourse means vaginal, anal or oral penetration by the offender(s). This category includes incidents where the penetration is from a foreign object such as a bottle. This definition includes attempted rapes, male and female victims, and heterosexual and homosexual rape. (USDOJ-BJS, 2004).

The resultant classifications for participants from Koss et al.'s (2007) measure were mapped onto the NCVS definitions of rape. Participants were categorized as "Nonvictims" if their score on the Koss et al. (2007) measure placed them in the "Nonvictims" category. According to the NCVS definitions of rape, Koss et al.'s categories of Sexual Coercion, Attempted Rape, and Rape fall under the "Victimization" category. Therefore, participants were categorized as "victims" if their scores placed them in one of these three categories. (For a detailed explanation of the scoring procedure used to create the three "Victimization" categories, please refer to the Sexual Experiences Survey presented in Appendix A.) Thus, the sample was divided into Nonvictims and Victims. Those participants falling under "Victims" were then further categorized according to level of acknowledgement (see next section). For the current study, only the data obtained from the “Victims” sample were utilized for the main analyses. Those individuals whose responses fell under the Nonvictimized category were automatically directed to the Debriefing and Resource Screens of the study. Thus, their participation included having completed only the Demographics section and the SES-SFV.

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[2] Although it is critically important to note that both women and men can be victims of sexual violence and that both groups deserve attention, for the purposes of the current research study, further use of the term victims will be used to specifically refer to female victims. Although sexual assault can occur in same-sex intimate and non-intimate sexual encounters, this work focuses specifically on the experience of heterosexual sexual assault, in which the perpetrator is male and the victim is female. Most, if not all, of the previous work on acknowledgement has focused on female victims of male-perpetrated rape/sexual trauma (Kahn, 2004; Kahn, Jackson, Kully, Badger, & Halvorsen, 2003; Kahn & Mathie, 2000; Koss, 1985; Koss, Dinero, Seibel, & Cox, 1988; Layman, Gidycz, & Lynn, 1996). Therefore, the current study will follow this definition based upon previous research on acknowledgement.

Acknowledgement. Participants’ acknowledgement of rape in the sample of “Victims” was further measured. Previous researchers have used various measures for acknowledgement, both in terms of question and response formats (Bondurant, 2001; Botta & Pingree, 1997; Fisher et al, 2003; Kahn et al., 2003; Koss & Oros, 1982; Koss, 1985, 1998; McMullin & White, 2006; Shimp, 2000). This practice presents a particularly onerous methodological challenge for creating a standardized measure of acknowledgement and can make comparison across studies extremely difficult (Fisher et al., 2003). For the current study, the suggestions that came from Fisher et al.’s (2003) work (e.g., asking about attempted rape as well as rape) were used as a way to address the critiques of previous operationalizations of acknowledgement, specifically with regards to the variability in question formats for acknowledgement across different studies. Participants were asked to consider rape and attempted rape separately, given they may have different definitions and connotations for women who have experienced unwanted sexual experiences. The phrase “at or after the age of 14” was added to these questions along with a question about sexual victimization experienced “before the age of 14” in order to disentangle experiences prior to and after the age of 14. This distinction directly maps onto the SES, since the SES asks about sexual victimization that occurred since the age of 14, i.e., experiences of adult sexual assault rather than childhood sexual abuse.

Although it was not raised by Fisher et al.'s (2003) comprehensive examination of the acknowledgement research, response formats for acknowledgement have also varied widely among researchers. For example, Kahn et al. (2003) included responses of "yes, no, and uncertain;" however, only a negligible percentage of the participants endorsed "uncertain." Botta and Pingree (1997) achieved greater response variability with participants' endorsement of a third category "maybe." Shimp (2000) found an even wider distribution of responses when she utilized a 5-point Likert scale, enabling her to divide the participants into three categories: unacknowledged victims (those who had endorsed a 1 or 2), uncertain victims (those who had endorsed a 3), and acknowledged victims (those who had endorsed a 4 or 5). Because the majority of acknowledgement researchers (Bondurant, 2001; Fisher et al., 2003; McMullin & White, 2006) do follow Koss's (1985) original response format (a forced-choice dichotomous measure where participants answer yes or no), the current study continued this practice as well.

Thus participants were asked three questions after[3] the SES:

1. Have you ever experienced sexual assault, sexual abuse, molestation, or rape **before the age of 14**? yes no
2. Have you ever been raped **at or after the age of 14** ? yes no
3. Have you ever experienced attempted rape **at or after the age of 14**? yes no

These questions supplemented Koss et al.'s (2007) question after the SES-SFV ("Have you ever been raped?" yes/no) as Koss et al.'s question does not distinguish among the various kinds of sexual victimization or whether the victimization occurred as a child or since the age of 14.

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[3] Asking these questions after those that assess the specific unwanted sexual encounters is the most common practice of acknowledgement researchers (e.g., Bondurant, 2001; McMullin & White, 2006; Fisher et al., 2003)

Those individuals who fell within the SES Victimization categories and endorsed ***a yes response to either*** of the acknowledgement items 2 or 3 were considered “Acknowledged Victims,” whereas those who fell within the SES Victimization categories and endorsed a ***no response to both*** of the acknowledgement items 2 and 3 were considered “Unacknowledged Victims.” The dependent variable was a dichotomous variable coded as: “Acknowledged” (1) and “Unacknowledged” (0).

Characteristics of the unwanted sexual experience[4]. Unfortunately there is no standardized measure to date that assesses the critical variables capturing the characteristics of the unwanted sexual experience. Acknowledgement researchers using logistic regression techniques (Bondurant, 2001; Fisher et al., 2003; McMullin & White 2006) differed greatly in their measurement of the characteristics of the unwanted sexual experience (e.g., “Were any injuries sustained?” with yes/no response format versus rating the degree of physical harm suffered on a Likert scale from 1 = not at all to 5 = a great deal). Furthermore, these researchers often did not publish their questions verbatim when discussing their measures. Thus, determining the specific wording for questions was virtually impossible for some of the items. Koss (1985) published work that included an inventory of questions assessing characteristics of the unwanted sexual experience that were asked during face-to-face interviews with participants in her sample. However, these items were not tested for reliability or validity, and the response format included Likert scales with anchor points from 1 to 9. The items were also not provided verbatim. Shimp (2000) utilized Koss’ (1985) inventory but changed the response format to include a 5-point Likert scale and reworded the qualitative descriptions of the anchor points. Thus, deciding on the best measure for this portion of the survey was extremely difficult.

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[4] Instructions preceding this measure asked the participant to identify those SES-SFV items that occurred with a male. Subsequent questions about characteristics of the unwanted sexual experiences referred only to those in which a male was the offender. Experiences of revictimization were also addressed in the instructions.

The following questions/response formats represented as close an approximation as possible to Koss' (1985) work as well as the work of acknowledgement researchers who used logistic regression techniques. I used a 5-point Likert scale; the qualitative descriptions followed those used by Koss (1985) and Shimp (2000), except where indicated. For level of acquaintance, Shimp's (2000) question "How well did you know him?" was asked with response choices 1 (*Not at all*); 2 (*Slightly acquainted*); 3 (*Moderately acquainted*); 4 (*Very well acquainted*); 5 (*Extremely well acquainted*). Shimp's question assessing whether the offender and participant had been using substances during the incident was utilized: "Were you (was the male) using any alcohol or drugs on this occasion?" with response choices (*Alcohol; drugs; both; neither; don't know*). The level of perceived intoxication was adapted from McMullin and White's (2006) measure: "Assess how much you remember being intoxicated or high; assess how much you remember the male being intoxicated or high (1 = *Not at all*; 2 = *A little*; 3 = *Somewhat*; 4 = *Quite a bit*; 5 = *Extremely intoxicated/high*). The measure assessing presence of a weapon, "Was a weapon present during the incident," used a yes/no response format and came from the work of Fisher et al. (2003).

Three variables, clarity of nonconsent, physical resistance, and verbal resistance, assess the participant's level of resistance. Clarity of nonconsent was assessed by Shimp's (2000) measure to provide insight into how well the participant felt she expressed nonconsent, with nonconsent being interpreted as verbal, physical, or both: "How clear do you think you made it to the male that you didn't want to participate in the sexual activity?" with responses ranging from 1 (*Not at all*) to 5 (*Extremely clear*). Bondurant's (2001) questions, "To what degree did you physically resist?" and "To what degree did you verbally resist," were adapted to assess level of participant's resistance; response choices ranged from 1 (*Not at all*) to 5 (*A great deal*), and her original qualitative descriptions were utilized.

Variances in participants' experience of offender force and sustained injury were captured by three variables: physical force, physical harm, and emotional distress experienced (to be discussed below). "How much physical force did he use during the incident?" assessed level of offender force from 1 (*Not at all*) to 5 (*Extremely forceful/aggressive*) and was adapted from Fisher et al.'s (2003) measure. "To what degree did you suffer from physical harm after the incident?" assessed level of physical harm with responses ranging from 1 (*Not at all*) to 5 (*A great deal*). This measure and the qualitative descriptors for the Likert scale came from the work of Bondurant (2001).

Emotional distress experienced after unwanted sexual experience. Emotional distress after women's experience of the endorsed SES item(s) was assessed using Schwartz and Leggett's (1999) single-item measure of emotional distress. Participants were asked to report how they were affected by that unwanted sexual experience. Responses were categorized according to a 4-point Likert scale ranging from not affected to very much affected. Although Schwartz and Leggett did not report on reliability or validity, their single-item measure of emotional distress represented a very concise measure of psychological distress that participants could answer with regards to their unwanted sexual experiences. Given the retrospective nature of asking questions about experiences of past trauma, participants may find it difficult to complete a full PTSD screening measure, e.g., the Impact of Events Scale-Revised (IES-R; Weiss & Marmar, 1997) while thinking about how they felt after their unwanted sexual experience. PTSD measures can be quite detailed as they assess for clinical symptoms of post-trauma stress (re-experiencing, avoidance, and arousal), and participants may possibly struggle to remember specifics about their psychological or emotional distress after their reported unwanted sexual experience, especially if the incident happened years ago. A global assessment of emotional distress was believed to be a better measure for the purposes of this study; therefore, Schwartz and Leggett's single-item measure was used.

Blame Questionnaire. Psychometrics for various measures of attributions of blame have not been conducted, with the exception of Shimp's (2000) work. Therefore, assessment of both external and personal blame was measured via the Blame Questionnaire developed by Shimp. Shimp's Blame Questionnaire consists of five subscales of 13 items rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*Not at all*) to 5 (*Most of the time; Totally; Highly Likely*[5]). *Self-blame* (alpha=0.87) consists of six items (e.g., "Have you spent a lot of time blaming yourself for what happened to you?"), *Societal Blame* (alpha=0.78) consists of three items (e.g., "How much do you believe that the values and beliefs of society are to blame for what occurred?"), *Perpetrator Blame* (alpha=0.71) consists of two items (e.g., "How much do you believe the man involved was to blame for what happened?"), and *Fate Blame* consists of one item (e.g., "How likely is it that it could have happened to anyone?"). The item "How much do you think the circumstances surrounding the incident (i.e., the situation) are to blame for what happened (e.g., party, intoxication, date/partner, etc.)?" was considered to reflect

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[5] Depending upon the wording of the question, different word responses are used; however all responses fall on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1-5.

Situational Blame. Pilot study work on this questionnaire found the following: expert raters perceived that the items measured the intended construct; analysis of various items were found to have positive relationships with other conceptually related variables; and factor analyses generally supported the hypothesized scales (Shimp, 2000).

Perceived future likelihood / future control. Perceived control was measured in two ways by Frazier's (2003) measure of perceived future control over/likelihood of rape. Frazier's original measure consisted of twenty-five items that comprised five different subscales of five items each: behavioral self-blame and perpetrator blame (also referred to as personal and vicarious past control by Frazier), control over the recovery process (present control), and perceived future likelihood of and perceived future control over rape. Because blame was assessed comprehensively using Shimp's (2000) measure and present control was deemed irrelevant for the current proposal, only ten items assessing perceived future control from Frazier's measure were used. These ten items comprised two subscales (perceived control over assaults that could happen in the future and perceived likelihood of assaults occurring again in the future). Items included "It is not very likely that I will be assaulted again" (perceived future likelihood) and "I have changed certain behaviors to try to avoid being assaulted again" (perceived future control). All items were rated on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (*Strongly disagree*) to 5 (*Strongly agree*). Internal consistencies of these subscales were: Alpha = 0.70 (future control) and Alpha = 0.83 (future likelihood) (Frazier, 2003). Test-retest reliability coefficients were: 0.52 (future control) and 0.72 (future likelihood) (Frazier, 2003). Because the current study assessed acknowledgement and it was expected that unacknowledged victims would not view their unwanted experiences as rapes or sexual assaults, the wording of rape/assault was altered to reflect more ambiguous terminology, i.e., “It is not very likely that I will experience this again.”

Feminist Identity. Feminist identity was assessed via Zucker’s (2004) measure of feminist identity that operationalized this construct in terms of two components: holding feminist beliefs (i.e., “cardinal beliefs of feminists”) and accepting the label “feminist.” The first component was measured by an assessment of participants’ agreement with the following feminist statements: “Girls and women have not been treated as well as boys and men in our society,” “Women and men should be paid equally for the same work,” and “Women’s unpaid work should be more socially valued.” Each of these items had a yes/no response format. The second component was assessed with a forced-choice behavioral measure where participants were asked to answer a series of questions if they consider themselves feminists and another similar series of questions if they consider themselves to be non-feminists. Three groups were extracted from the overall measure: feminists (those who endorse all three feminist beliefs and identify as feminists), non-feminists (those who reject at least one feminist belief and identify as non-feminists), and egalitarians (those who endorse all three feminist beliefs but do not identify as feminists). Zucker performed a MANOVA to compare her measure to existing measures of feminist identity that have been widely used. The overall test was significant, and, for the most part, each univariate test was significant. Results followed the expected pattern and did indeed reveal three distinct groups: feminists, egalitarians, and non-feminists. Because feminist identity is a categorical variable containing three levels, I created two dummy variables to quantify feminists and egalitarians. Thus, the feminist dummy variable contained two possible response choices (1 and 0), with one choice indicating endorsement of feminist identity and the other choice indicating endorsement of the two other categories (non-feminist or egalitarian). Similarly, the egalitarian dummy variable's two response choices indicated endorsement of egalitarian identity as well as all other responses (non-feminists or feminists). Participant responses of 0 for both feminist and egalitarian identity dummy variables indicated non-feminists.

Chapter 3: Results

Demographic information: Overall undergraduate student population

Demographic information about the general undergraduate student population was accessible through reports on the university website. The demographic information on the website is published based on enrollment for the fall semesters of each academic year only. The total number of undergraduates enrolled in the fall semester of 2006 was 10,813.

Within this general population, there were approximately 4,702 male students and 5,791 female students. Most statistics reported were based on the entire population of undergraduate students, both male and female. Sixty-six percent of the undergraduate students lived in college-owned, college-operated, or college-affiliated housing, while thirty-four percent lived off-campus or commuted to university classes. The average age of all of the undergraduate students was 20. Approximately 6% of undergraduate students were 25 and older. Specific statistics that were reported separating males and females were available for the ethnic breakdown of the students. Within the female undergraduate student population, 4% were International Students, 7% were Black, 0.24% were Native American, 10% were Asian, 6% were Hispanic, 63% were White, and the ethnicity of 10% was Unknown.

Demographic information: Study sample

While the data above were obtained from the university website, the University Registrar provided information about the sample of students whose email addresses were provided for the study which was conducted during the 2007 spring semester. This additional information was gathered due to enrollment changes that occurred between the fall and spring semesters (e.g., students transferring in or out of the university, etc.). The total number of undergraduate students with university email addresses was 9,920, of whom 5,560 (56%) were female students

Of the 5,560 female students who could have participated in the study, 1,463 students (26%) indicated interest in the study by responding to the survey. Of the sample of female students who responded to the survey (N = 1,463), 504 responses (34%) contained either invalid or missing data and could not be included for further analysis. Therefore a total of 959 responses (66% of respondents to the survey; 17% of the overall female student population) were deemed to be valid and comprised the study sample that was used in the final reported analyses.

Within the total study sample (N = 959), 704 (73%) female participants did not endorse an unwanted sexual experience on the SES-SFV, leaving 255 (27%) female participants who had endorsed an unwanted sexual experience. Within this “Victims” group of 255 respondents, 195 respondents reported having had experienced rape according to the FBI definition of the term. Participants who endorsed an unwanted sexual experience that did not fall under the FBI definition of rape were excluded from the study, due to the focus on examining acknowledgement of rape as defined by the FBI. Therefore, this left a total of 899 participants in the study, with 704 participants in the “Nonvictims” group and 195 participants in the “Victims” group. Because the main analyses for the current study only involved examining the “Victims” group, results presenting demographics of “Victims” are presented in Appendix C.

Table 1 presents the data from the demographic variables for the two study sample categories: Unacknowledged Rape Victims and Acknowledged Rape Victims. For the demographic variables of Race/Ethnicity, Religion/Spirituality, Sexual Orientation, Current Residence, and whether they had ever had sex, chi-square analyses showed there were no significant differences between the sample groups. Table 2 presents independent samples *t* tests for the remaining three demographic variables: Age, Year in College, and Current Socioeconomic Status (SES). Results revealed no significant differences between the groups when comparing Current Socioeconomic Status; both groups reported having "more than enough to get by." However, *t* tests yielded significant differences between the groups with regards to Age and Year in College. The median age of the sample for Unacknowledged Rape Victims was 20 years while the median age for Acknowledged Rape Victims was 21 years. Similarly, with regards to median year of college, Unacknowledged Rape Victims were in their 2nd year of college, while the Acknowledged Rape Victims were in their 3rd year of college.

Descriptive data for predictor variables

Table 3 and Table 4 present descriptive data for the predictor variables included in the multiple logistic regression analyses. Results of independent samples t tests and χ^2 tests are presented in these tables respectively. Significant mean differences between unacknowledged and acknowledged victims emerged for the following predictor variables: Age, Physical Force Experienced, Degree of Physical Harm/Injuries, Degree of Being Affected/Distressed, Perceived Responsibility of Offender, Perceived Future Likelihood of Unwanted Sex, and Perceived Control over Future Unwanted Sex. On average acknowledged victims were older and reported experiencing more physical force, a higher degree of physical harm/injuries, a higher degree of feeling affected/distressed by the unwanted sexual experience, greater perceived responsibility of the male involved, less perceived future likelihood of unwanted sex, and more perceived control over future unwanted sex. No significant differences were found for the predictor variables included in the χ^2 tests (e.g., Childhood Sexual Abuse; Prior Experience of Unwanted Sex Since Age 14; Recency of Unwanted Sexual Experience; and Feminist/Egalitarian Identity).

As a preliminary analysis, I conducted a confirmatory factor analysis in order to create a parsimonious model for the main multiple logistic regression analyses. Eight predictor variables were included in the confirmatory analysis. Specifically, I hypothesized that these eight items could be reduced into four factors that assessed for prior experience of unwanted sexual experience, perceived offender blame/responsibility, level of physical force/resistance, and level of verbal resistance/clarity of nonconsent. Results revealed a model that fit well: χ^2 (14) = 22.79, $p = 0.06$, GFI = 0.97, AGI = 0.93, RMR = 0.04, and NFI = 0.93. Therefore, as a result, the eight items were reduced to the four hypothesized factors, with two items comprising each factor: Prior Experience of Unwanted Sex (childhood sexual abuse and past unwanted sexual experience since age 14), Perceived Offender Blame/Responsibility (perceived offender blame and responsibility), Level of Physical Force and Resistance (physical force experienced and level of physical resistance), and Level of Verbal Nonconsent (level of verbal resistance and clarity of nonconsent). Each factor index was created by standardizing the component variables and calculating the mean of the items. The resultant indexes were utilized in the following multiple logistic regression analysis.

Bivariate logistic regression analyses

Table 5 contains results from a series of bivariate logistic regression analyses in which each predictor variable was regressed separately on acknowledgement, without controlling for any other independent variables. Results from this series of individual analyses yielded a number of statistically significant independent variables: Age, Prior Experience of Unwanted Sex, Perceived Offender Blame/Responsibility, Perceived Future Likelihood of Unwanted Sex, Perceived Control over Future Unwanted Sex, Level of Physical Force & Resistance, Degree of Physical Harm, and Degree of Being Affected/Distressed by the Unwanted Sexual Experience. For all of the variables except for Perceived Future Likelihood of Unwanted Sex, the regression coefficients were positive with associated odds ratios greater than 1. Therefore, as these independent variables increased, the odds of acknowledging an unwanted sexual experience as rape also increased. Perceived Future Likelihood of Unwanted Sex yielded a negative regression coefficient with an associated odds ratio of less than 1. Table 5 presents the data for bivariate analyses in which the predictor variables were examined in isolation.

Multiple logistic regression analyses

A multiple logistic regression analysis was conducted using SAS software in order to test the study hypotheses. Statistics evaluating the overall multiple logistic regression model were examined, including the likelihood ratio, Score, and Wald tests. The null hypothesis for these tests states that all βs equal zero, thereby indicating that the model contains no predictors. Rejecting the null hypothesis implies that at least one β does not equal zero in the population, thereby indicating the presence of at least one predictor in the model. The results of the multiple logistic regression analysis led to a rejection of the null hypothesis, indicating at least one β did not equal zero (Likelihood Ratio $\chi^2 = 81.81$, d.f. = 17, $p < 0.0001$; Score $\chi^2 = 66.48$, d.f. = 17, $p < 0.0001$; Wald $\chi^2 = 43.41$, d.f. = 17, $p < 0.001$).

Given these significant findings, statistical tests of the individual predictors utilizing the Wald χ^2 statistic were subsequently examined. Results from these analyses indicated the statistical significance of the individual regression coefficients and are presented in Table 6. The null hypothesis for this test states that the predictor coefficient (β) equals 0 in the population, while rejecting the null hypothesis implies that β is something other than 0 in the population. For the current study, the hypotheses for specific estimates of the values of the predictor coefficients (b) are directional in nature. Therefore the p values presented in these tables have been divided in half prior to comparing it against $\alpha = 0.05$. Values of the predictor coefficient (b) yield additional important information about the direction of the relationship between X (the predictor variable) and the logit of Y. When $b > 0$, this indicates that as values of X increase (or decrease), there is an associated increase (or decrease) of the logits of Y. When $b < 0$, this indicates that as values of X increase (or decrease), there is an associated decrease (or increase) of the logits of Y. The results of the Wald χ^2 test identify those individual independent variables that are significant predictors of acknowledgement of rape, with the direction of the regression coefficient (either positive or negative) indicating whether it will increase or decrease the odds of acknowledgement.

As indicated in Table 6, results for the Wald χ^2 tests yielded seven regression coefficients in the model that were statistically significant ($p<0.05$) and that were directionally consistent with the study hypotheses: Age, Prior Experience of Unwanted Sex, Level of Offender Intoxication, Level of Physical Force and Resistance, Degree of Being Affected/Distressed by the Unwanted Sexual Experience, and the two multiplicative terms comprising the interaction of Egalitarian/Feminist Identity and

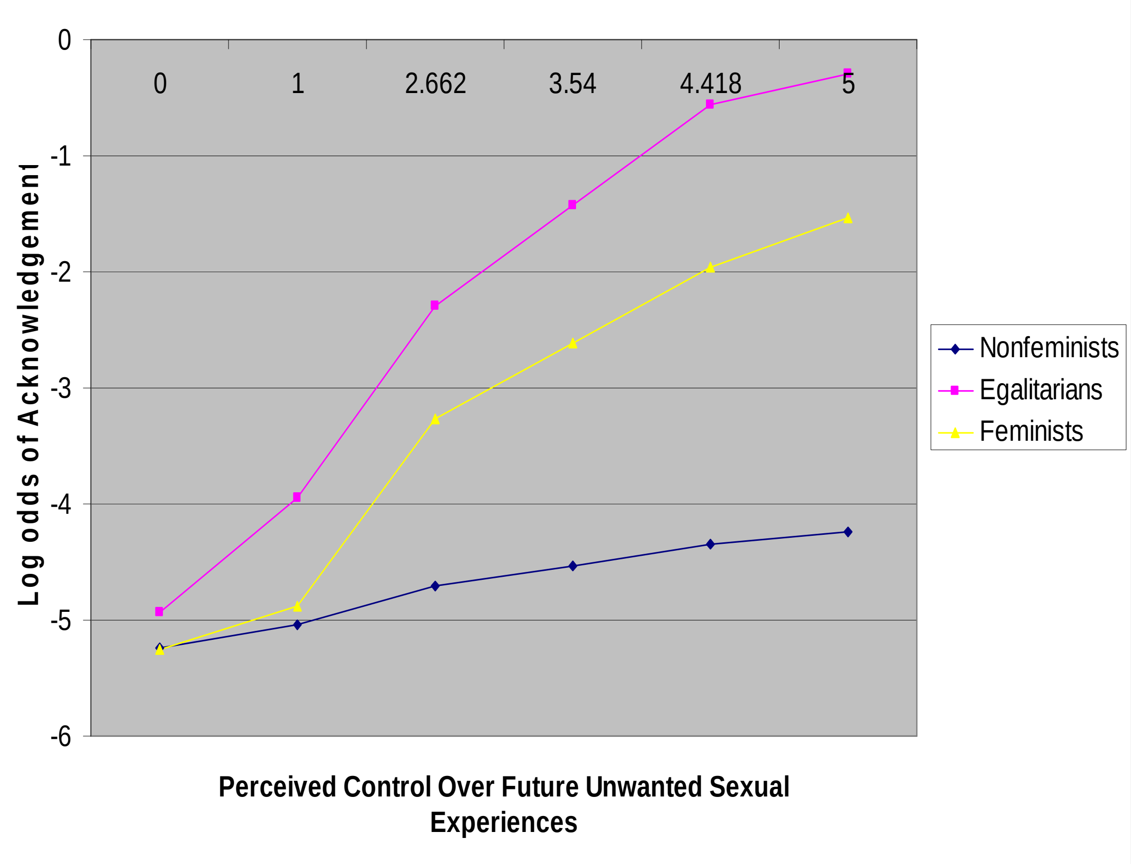
Perceived Control Over Future Unwanted Sex. As hypothesized earlier, values of the regression coefficients for Age, Prior Experience of Unwanted Sex, Level of Physical Force and Resistance, and Degree of Being Affected/Distressed by the Unwanted Sexual Experience were positive, indicating that as values for these predictor variables increase, the odds of acknowledgement increase. Consistent with the study hypotheses, the regression coefficient for Level of Offender Intoxication was negative, indicating that as the values for this predictor variables increase, the odds of acknowledgement decrease.

Table 6 also includes the odds ratios for each of the predictor variables. Odds Ratios (ORs) are considered to be more easily interpreted than predictor coefficients (Wright, 2004) and have been included in the presentation of results for each multiple logistic regression analysis. In multiple logistic regression, “the estimated OR for a given independent variable is often said to be ‘controlled for’ or ‘adjusted for’ the other independent variables in the model” (Morgan et al., 2003, p. 995). The null hypothesis states that the value of OR is 1.0 and indicates random association (Morgan et al.). Rejecting the null hypothesis implies that OR is something other than 1.0 and indicates non-random association. More specifically, the OR increases from 1 to infinity when a positive association increases, and the OR decreases from 1 to 0 when a negative association increases (Morgan et al.). Thus, consistent with the study hypotheses, Age, Prior Experience of Unwanted Sex, Level of Physical Force and Resistance, and Degree of Being Affected/Distressed by the Unwanted Sexual Experience yielded positive regression coefficients with associated odds ratios greater than 1. The regression coefficients for Level of Offender Intoxication yielded a negative value and an associated odds ratios less than 1.

Four predictor variables yielded non-significant results due to a violation of at least one condition of the two-step directional procedure used to test the study hypotheses. Contrary to the study hypotheses, Level of Physical Harm and Recency did not yield *p* values that were statistically significant in the multiple logistic regression model. Although Level of Perceived Future Likelihood of Unwanted Sex and Level of Verbal Nonconsent yielded *p* values < 0.05, the direction of the regression coefficient and associated odds ratios were inconsistent with what had been hypothesized earlier. Rather than finding that increased values of Perceived Future Likelihood of Unwanted Sex and Level of Verbal Nonconsent resulted in increased odds of acknowledging unwanted sexual experiences as rape, the opposite was true. Both variables yielded negative regression coefficients with associated odds ratios less than 1, indicating that as each of these variables increases, the odds of acknowledgement decreases. Thus, due to the negative regression coefficients, these results were non-significant and did not support the study hypotheses.

The interaction term was probed further in order to shed additional light upon the results that were obtained in the multiple logistic regression analysis. Simple slopes were calculated for each identity category (Aiken & West, 1991) yielding the following values: 0.201 for Nonfeminists, 0.989 for Egalitarians, and 0.744 for Feminists. Tests of the simple slopes of the regression equations for each identity group yielded the following *t* scores: 0.679 for Nonfeminists, 1.85 for Egalitarians, and 1.43 for Feminists. Although the result for Egalitarians achieved marginal significance, the null hypotheses for each group (the simple slopes are something other than 0) could not be rejected. The regression equations for each identity category (Egalitarian Identity, Feminist Identity, and Nonfeminist Identity) were calculated and plotted to visually represent the effects changes in Perceived Control upon the Logit of Y (Acknowledgement) at varying levels of identity. This graph is presented in Figure 3 and indicates that Egalitarians are the identity group most likely to acknowledge unwanted sexual experiences as rape, with Feminists being more likely than Non-feminists but less likely than Egalitarians to acknowledge rape and Non-feminists being the identity group that is least likely to acknowledge rape. The pattern for Egalitarians indicated that as these women’s perceived control over future unwanted sexual experiences increased, their likelihood of acknowledging unwanted sexual experiences as rape greatly increased. The pattern for Feminists indicated that as these women’s perceived control over future unwanted sexual experiences increased, their likelihood of acknowledging unwanted sexual experiences as rape moderately increased. Nonfeminists indicated a different pattern in that as these women’s perceived control over future unwanted sexual experiences increased, odds of acknowledging rape only slightly increased. However it must be noted that only the Egalitarians achieved moderate statistical significance in the tests of simple slopes.

Figure 3: Graph of Regression Equations of Perceived Control over Future Unwanted Sexual Experiences Predicting Acknowledgement at Varying Levels of Identity



Chapter 4: Discussion

Results from this study yielded a number of findings that were consistent with the current study's hypotheses. The following variables were statistically significant predictors of acknowledgement of rape when controlling for all other variables in a multiple logistic regression model and yielded results that were consistent with the study hypotheses: Age, Prior Experience of Unwanted Sex, Level of Offender Intoxication, Level of Physical Force/Resistance, Degree of Being Affected/Distressed by the Experience, and the Interaction of Egalitarian/Feminist Identity and Perceived Control over Future Unwanted Sexual Experiences. As was hypothesized, results indicated that as these variables increased, the associated odds of acknowledging an unwanted sexual experience as rape also increased. Additionally, results obtained for Level of Offender Intoxication was also consistent with study hypotheses, that is, as Level of Offender Intoxication increased, odds of acknowledging rape decreased.

These results were consistent with other multiple logistic regression and multivariate hierarchical regression analyses that identified variables such as Age, Prior Experience of Unwanted Sex, and Level of Physical Force/Resistance as statistically significant predictors of acknowledgement (Bondurant, 2001; Botta & Pingree, 1997; Fisher et al., 2003) and in the expected direction (as these variables increased, the likelihood of acknowledgement increased). Furthermore, the current study's results for Level of Acquaintance (e.g., that it was not a statistically significant predictor of acknowledgement) was also consistent with previous research utilizing multivariate regression analyses (Fisher et al., 2003; McMullin & White, 2006).

However, the results for Level of Intoxication of Offender and Participant represented a departure from what had been found in other studies. Two studies found that variables assessing alcohol use or intoxication by the participant and offender were not statistically significant predictors of acknowledgement (Fisher et al., 2003; Botta & Pinagree, 1997), whereas the current study found that Level of Offender Intoxication was statistically significant in the final multiple logistic regression model. However, this discrepancy may be explained more by measurement differences. The studies that did not find level of intoxication to be significant compiled participant and offender intoxication into one variable, rather than treating them as separate predictors. By parceling these items out into two separate variables, the current study found that Offender Intoxication was statistically significant, whereas Participant Intoxication was not statistically significant in the final multiple logistic regression model. Thus, the composite variables utilized by other studies may have masked the individual effects of each of these component items in statistical tests of significance for predicting acknowledgement of rape.

While in the current study, Level of Intoxication of Participant was not statistically significant in the final multiple logistic regression model, McMullin and White (2006) found that Level of Participant Intoxication was a significant predictor of acknowledgement of rape. Perhaps the notion that a woman cannot be raped if she is intoxicated no longer holds relevance for how current generations of women view alcohol/drug use and sexual encounters. In fact, it is possible that this may represent a shift in women’s attitudes about rape such that they do recognize rape as occurring within contexts of alcohol/drug use. Furthermore, perhaps with campus-wide educational efforts targeted towards raising awareness about date rape drugs and the potential vulnerability of women when they are drinking in social situations, women may be increasingly able to see how unwanted sexual experiences occurring while the woman is intoxicated represent a loss of control and therefore, an experience of rape.

However, this is not the case with how women view offender's level of intoxication. In the current study, Level of Offender Intoxication did follow the original hypotheses, such that as males were reported to be increasingly intoxicated, the likelihood of acknowledging the experience as rape decreased. One possible explanation for this phenomenon is that women who experienced unwanted sex with a male who was intoxicated may be more likely to dismiss the encounter by interpreting the male as having been too drunk or "out of it" to know what he was doing. Maybe by sheer virtue of the male being intoxicated, it became more difficult for women to know for certain if the male had indeed mistreated and abused them. Women may be especially confused if they view rape as an act that would involve prior intent to harm; that is, they may feel that if the male was intoxicated, he would be less "in control" of his own actions and perhaps less aware of how much force he was using during a sexual encounter.

Perceived Offender Blame/Responsibility has not been included as a predictor variable in previously published studies utilizing multiple logistic regression analysis; however, in the current study, it was not a statistically significant predictor of acknowledgement when included in the final multiple logistic regression model. Perhaps these findings are indicative of the fact that acknowledged victims and unacknowledged victims both reported approximately comparable levels of offender blame/responsibility. The mean for both acknowledged and unacknowledged victims reflected a somewhat similar endorsement of level of blame/responsibility, which may have skewed the results of the multiple logistic regression analysis. The finding for Level of Offender Intoxication may also tap into women's beliefs about how much the male involved was to blame for the unwanted sexual encounter. It is possible that women's Perceived Offender Blame/Responsibility may be affected by whether or not the male involved was intoxicated. Given that Level of Offender Intoxication was a statistically significant predictor, perhaps this variable served to suppress any effect that Perceived Offender Blame/Responsibility may have had upon prediction of acknowledgement. This may indicate that as women reported a higher level of offender intoxication, their views of the responsibility/blame of the offender may become more muddled. Thus, the Level of Offender Intoxication may actually supercede any results that could be obtained for offender blame/responsibility.

Results obtained for Level of Verbal Nonconsent and Perceived Future Likelihood of Unwanted Sexual Experiences indicated that the more women reported engaging in verbal tactics to communicate nonconsent, the less likely they were to acknowledge unwanted sexual experiences as rape. Similarly, the more that women perceived that unwanted sexual experiences were likely to occur again in the future, the less likely they were to acknowledge unwanted sexual experiences as rape. These results were contrary to what was originally hypothesized, i.e., as both variables increased, it was hypothesized that acknowledging rape would also increase

The finding for Level of Verbal Nonconsent obtained in the current study was discrepant with Bondurant (2001) and Fisher et al.'s (2003) work. Rather than increasing levels of verbal nonconsent being predictive of an increased likelihood of acknowledgement of rape, I found that young women were less likely to acknowledge rape when they felt that they had made their verbal nonconsent clearly known. This is quite puzzling not only when considering other researchers' findings, but also when considering the current study's finding for Level of Physical Force/Resistance. The more women reported engaging in physical resistance to communicate nonconsent, the more likely these women were to acknowledge rape.

This discrepancy may possibly be indicative of how nonconsent is perceived and/or conceptualized by women. Perhaps, the lack of offender's appropriate response to more physical acts of resistance was perceived by these women to be more indicative of a sexual assault. If women remembered pushing back against offenders and offenders responding with increased physical force, it may provide more clarity and concrete evidence for women that can subsequently increase their likelihood of acknowledging the experience as rape. Experiencing a complete lack of regard by the offender to the women's clear verbal nonconsent such that an unwanted sexual experience still occurred may be confusing for women to make sense of and process, making them much less likely to name the experience as rape.

Another alternative explanation may be that clear verbal nonconsent during an unwanted sexual experience could tap into the notion of women's perceptions of sexual agency and personal strength. If women felt that they had engaged in more verbal resistance that clearly communicated nonconsent and an unwanted sexual experience still occurred, this experience may threaten their perceived sense of personal safety as well as their perceptions of themselves as being "strong" or "in control." Women may find it harder to accept that a rape still occurred despite their substantial verbal efforts to avoid or fend off the unwanted sexual experience, thereby decreasing the likelihood that they would acknowledge the experience as rape.

Results of the current study indicated that as Perceived Future Likelihood of Unwanted Sexual Experiences increased, acknowledgement of rape decreased, which was opposite to the original study hypothesis. Rather than a perceived future likelihood of unwanted sexual experiences indicating an acceptance that these incidents can occur and making it “safer” to acknowledge past experiences as rape, the opposite appears to be true. If women do not think they are likely to experience a similar unwanted sexual experience, then this belief actually increases their likelihood of acknowledging a past unwanted sexual experience as rape. Perhaps this finding is due to women’s sense of safety and their belief in their own ability to protect themselves. For example, if women believe that a similar unwanted sexual experience is likely to occur, this may be threatening to their sense of safety. They may be more reluctant to acknowledge that they had indeed experienced rape, because if they were to do so, then their beliefs about their future safety and their future ability to protect themselves would be threatened or compromised. Conversely if women feel that another unwanted sexual experience is less likely to occur, they may feel safer to acknowledge a past experience as rape. Thus, although counterintuitive to the original hypothesis of the current study, the belief in the experience occurring again appears to be an important factor that may indeed shed light upon unacknowledged victims’ thought process and therefore, their subsequent reluctance to label and name their unwanted sexual experience as rape.

While other researchers (Bondurant, 2001; Fisher et al., 2003; McMullin & White, 2006) had found that Physical Harm/Injury and Recency were significant predictors of acknowledgement, this was not the case in the current study. Further examination of the descriptive data for the sample may provide an explanation for this discrepancy. Although the mean physical harm/injury experienced by the acknowledged victims for the current study was significantly higher than the unacknowledged victims, the median score for each group reflected, in general, minimal experiences of physical harm/injury. Thus, although there may have been some acknowledged victims in the sample who endorsed high levels of physical harm/injury, overall most of the acknowledged victims and the unacknowledged victims had experienced low levels of harm/injury from their unwanted sexual encounters.

Similarly, with regards to Recency of the Unwanted Sexual Experience, for *both* unacknowledged and acknowledged victims, there was an almost even split of women who reported their unwanted sexual experiences as being recent versus not recent (~55% versus 45%). This sample characteristic may have subsequently affected the multiple logistic regression analyses. One prior study (Fisher et al., 2003) found Recency to be statistically significant; however it must be noted that these researchers conducted their study with a larger random sample of college-aged women from different universities. Thus, it is possible that the study sample itself was skewed towards an overall group of women who had experienced minimal physical harm from their unwanted sexual experience as well as a group of women whose unwanted sexual experiences were evenly divided into both recent and not recent encounters.

The discrepant findings may also reflect the relevance of the current study's newly proposed variables. More specifically, when Degree of Being Affected/Distressed and the interaction term of Egalitarian/Feminist Identity and Perceived Control over

Future Unwanted Sex by the experience were included in the analyses, they explained much more of the variance in predicting acknowledgement than Level of Physical Harm and Recency. Thus, these two newly-proposed variables may be more powerful predictors of acknowledgement of rape above and beyond how recent the unwanted sexual encounter was or how much physical harm the women experienced.

Multiple logistic regression analyses revealed that the interaction term of Egalitarian/Feminist Identity and Perceived Future Control was a statistically significant predictor of acknowledgement. Graphing and examining the interaction term of Perceived Control over Future Unwanted Sexual Experiences and Feminist/Egalitarian Identity revealed an interesting pattern. As Egalitarians' perceived control over future unwanted sexual experiences increased, their likelihood of acknowledgement of rape greatly increased. For Feminists, as perceived control over future unwanted sexual experiences increased, their likelihood of acknowledgement of rape moderately increased. Finally for Nonfeminists, as perceived control over future unwanted sexual experiences increased, their likelihood of acknowledging rape barely increased. However, due to the lack of statistically significant results for Feminists and Non-feminists with regards to the simple slopes of their regression lines, only the results for Egalitarians will be discussed below, given that they reached moderate statistical significance.

The data suggest that Egalitarians are greatly affected by perceptions of control over future unwanted sexual experiences and much more so than Feminists or Non-feminists. This makes sense when considering the belief systems associated with being an Egalitarian. High levels of perceived control over future unwanted sexual experiences is actually quite consistent with the belief system of what it means to have an Egalitarian identity; that is, an individualistic, self-serving belief system that women should be able to change their destinies despite societal or cultural oppressive factors. Thus, having a high sense of perceived control over unwanted sex may be consistent with Egalitarian women's own belief system about women being strong and "in control." As Egalitarians increase in their perceptions of control over future unwanted experiences, they may actually feel safe enough to acknowledge a past experience as a rape. A strong sense of perceived control over unwanted sexual experiences in an Egalitarian may be indicative of a sense of security in self that is then likely to promote acknowledgement. High levels of perceived over future unwanted sexual experiences may result in Egalitarians feeling less threatened to admit to having experienced rape. Therefore, ironically, high levels of perceived control over unwanted sex can assist Egalitarian women with acknowledgement rape.

Alternatively, Egalitarians with low perceived control over unwanted sex were less likely to acknowledge rape. These women may find it more threatening to acknowledge that they had experienced rape because of fears that such an encounter may happen again. Furthermore, if Egalitarians feel that they cannot control future unwanted sexual encounters, their sense of personal competence and sexual agency may be compromised if they acknowledge having experienced rape in the past. Believing that they cannot control a future unwanted sexual experience also runs contrary to their own belief system that a woman should be able to change her destiny, regardless of the obstacles along the way. Thus, it makes sense that acknowledgement of rape would be much more threatening for an Egalitarian with a low perceived control over future unwanted sexual experiences than Nonfeminists or Feminists.

Implications of the Current Study's Findings

The current study's findings provide useful information to both support and refute the findings from previous research efforts. Namely, this study yielded results that indicate a number of variables to be consistent predictors of acknowledgement across studies, although not necessarily in the expected direction, and several newly-proposed variables to be additionally important in acknowledging rape. This research also provides some initial evidence to begin exploring a new way of viewing acknowledgement within the field of clinical research, that is, acknowledgement of unwanted sexual experiences as rape may be dependent on the situational factors of women's unique experiences as well as their self-identification with feminism and perceived self-efficacy to prevent future unwanted experiences. In fact, a dynamic and multi-faceted investigation of acknowledgement may provide useful information to better understand women's ambivalence about naming and labeling their unwanted sexual experiences as rape. Kahn and Mathie (2000) supported this idea, stating that "from the quantitative research perspective there may be additional variables not yet identified that are important predictors of rape acknowledgement" (p. 398). McMullin and White's (2006) work yielded results that countered the notion that acknowledgement of rape is necessarily beneficial for women. These researchers suggested that a shift in nomenclature of the field of acknowledgement was warranted and implemented this shift by utilizing "labelers" for acknowledged rape victims and "nonlabelers" for unacknowledged rape victims.

Although McMullin and White's work did provide some evidence to suggest that both "labelers" and "nonlabelers" experienced long-term effects of their unwanted sexual encounters, they did not examine variables that could reveal the ways women benefit from *not* acknowledging unwanted sexual experiences as rape. By examining more variables that tap into these potential benefits, such as women's perceived future likelihood of unwanted sex, their belief systems about gender roles and relationships, and their perceived control over future unwanted sexual experiences, research may come closer to revealing a full picture of the factors that play a role in acknowledgement. This study aimed to address this gap in the acknowledgement literature and contributed some preliminary evidence as to a possible protective aspect of some factors that would make a woman less likely to acknowledge rape.

Viewing women's lack of acknowledgement as a potential coping mechanism depending upon unique personal factors has implications not only for clinical researchers, but also for mental health practitioners. Findings that reveal some positive benefit for not acknowledging rape within the context of women's individual differences can inform the work of mental health practitioners by assisting clinicians in appropriately pacing therapeutic interventions aimed at helping women make sense of unwanted sexual experiences. By understanding women's belief systems about their perceived likelihood of future unwanted sexual experiences, their ability to control future unwanted sexual experiences, and their identification with feminism (or lack thereof), mental health professionals can gain insight into the psychological consequences in addition to the benefits of acknowledgement. With this added sensitivity towards understanding the barriers towards acknowledging rape, mental health professionals can be better prepared to work with the cognitive roadblocks of clients who struggle to label and make sense of an unwanted sexual experience as rape. Clinicians may also need to examine and adjust their own biases and belief systems about acknowledgement. Rather than believing that acknowledgement is necessarily important for women's recovery from rape, clinicians need to understand the consequences and benefits of acknowledging and not acknowledging rape and the meaning of these strategies for a particular client.

As a result of this increased awareness and insight about acknowledgement, clinicians can more effectively tailor their interventions to the pace of their clients such that the process of acknowledgement can take into account clients' perceptions of what is more relevant for their mental health at a particular moment in time (i.e., whether acknowledgement would be beneficial or detrimental) depending on their belief systems, their perceptions of the likelihood of future unwanted sexual experiences, their self-efficacy, and their identification (of lack thereof) with feminism. Clinicians can be more sensitive to women's recovery from unwanted sexual experiences and more understanding of the complications that prevent them from labeling unwanted sexual experiences as rape.

Furthermore, if a woman later begins to question her understanding of a past unwanted sexual experience and to come to terms with the reality that what happened to her was indeed rape, clinicians can have greater insight into the cognitive schemas that may prevent or hinder successful resolution of a woman's recovery process. Based on the results from the current study, it appears as though level of perceived control over future unwanted sexual experiences may be particularly relevant for Egalitarians. For example, if an Egalitarian believes she has no control over future unwanted sexual experiences and she begins to consider labeling a past unwanted experience as rape, she may become emotionally affected by negative thoughts about her own identity, (e.g., "if it was indeed rape, then I was weak and I lacked sexual control over my body, which makes me a 'victim,' and, therefore, not the strong, 'in control' woman that I thought I was"). Additionally, in light of her belief that she would have no control over future unwanted sexual experiences, she may then lose her perceived sense of self-efficacy or sexual agency while engaging in future sexual relationships.

Alternatively for Feminists and Non-feminists, the therapeutic process of coming to terms with an experience of rape may more likely tap into their political and personal belief systems about gender roles and power dynamics between men and women, as opposed to perceptions of control over future unwanted sex. Non-feminists may be threatened by acknowledging they were mistreated and abused, considering that acknowledgement of rape may challenge their notions of what constitutes acceptable practices in heterosexual relationships. Feminists may experience some difficulty in acknowledgement related to their sense of being a strong women; however their feminist belief systems may actually serve to assist them with acknowledging rape. Although it was not investigated in the current study, Feminists may be more likely to embrace an identity of "rape survivor," as this identity has often been associated and linked with Feminist political movements (e.g., Take Back the Night rallies that were originally created by Feminists in which women are encouraged to speak out about personal experiences of victimization). Thus, perhaps a feminist clinical orientation could be greatly beneficial in assisting Feminists who have been raped but who struggle to acknowledge these unwanted sexual experiences.

In addition to the clinical implications of the current research, this study is one of the first in the acknowledgement literature to utilize an online survey to reach participants and to collect data. However, more importantly, using online survey tools can be conceptualized as an important community outreach tactic for participants. Not only were the women who chose to participate in the study able to contribute their unique experiences for research purposes, but they were also able to immediately access important community resources that could assist not only themselves, but potentially their peers. Each participant was taken to the same Resources Screen after completion of the study, regardless of whether or not she endorsed an unwanted sexual experience. This increased the chances that women would learn about important community resources targeting not only sexual violence, but also domestic violence, suicide, drug abuse, and sexually transmitted diseases.

Additionally, if the study participants encountered a situation in the future in which they needed to contact a crisis hotline or find out more information about alcohol or drug abuse resources, whether for themselves or for someone else, they could do so easily given the wide variety of resources that were provided to them after completion of the study. Although it was not possible to follow-up after the study to track if resources had been contacted, what is interesting to note is the principal investigator never received a crisis call or email from a study participant. While there are many reasons why this may have occurred, one possibility could be that participants who were in crisis were able connect themselves directly to rape crisis centers and crisis hotlines because they had the telephone numbers readily available to them. Thus, in addition to contributing to the rape acknowledgement literature and providing women with a space to lend voice to their intimate personal experiences with unwanted sexual encounters, it is hoped that the current study may have also been an important community outreach effort that linked participants to important mental health resources.

Understanding acknowledgement of rape also provides valuable information that may be utilized in psychoeducation efforts on college campuses. Peer health education programs that raise awareness about sexual assault and rape may be enhanced by addressing the issue of acknowledgement of rape and opening a dialogue amongst college students about the consequences and benefits of acknowledging rape. In fact, this addition into peer health education curricula may reveal college students' hidden stereotyped attitudes and beliefs about "victims." Through these group discussions, college students can work through their own negative attitudes about what it means to be a "rape victim" or what they believe to be a "prototypical rape victim." By aiming psychoeducation efforts at shifting negative attitudes and beliefs about rape victims, these facilitated discussions can help to de-stigmatize rape victimization. Furthermore, peer health education programs could also raise awareness about the range of unwanted sexual experiences that fall under the legal definition of rape, thereby expanding people's cognitive understanding of what truly constitutes rape. These efforts may make it less stigmatizing and/or distressing for unacknowledged victims to acknowledge rape.

Finally, it is imperative that sexual assault peer health education efforts continue to educate college students about the importance of obtaining consent from sexual partners. The current study revealed that rape occurred even when women reported utilizing verbal nonconsent strategies. Thus, more work needs to be done on college campuses to educate students about what constitutes adequate consent and to teach more effective communication strategies between sexual partners to ensure that both partners feel comfortable with all aspects of shared sexual activity.

Limitations of the Current Study

Despite prior research providing valid arguments for the usage of college students (Bondurant, 2001; Botta & Pingree, 1997; Fisher et al., 2000; Fisher et al., 2003; Koss, 1998; McMullin & White, 2006), an obvious limitation of the current study is the nature of the sample used, i.e., college students, not a community sample. Previous work has criticized researchers' reliance upon college samples, which seriously limit the generalizability of findings (Sears, 1986). College samples lack adequate diversity with regards to ethnicity/race, socioeconomic status, and sexual orientation. This critique can be also applied to the current study, as the demographics results demonstrated this limitation. In addition, the current study limited participation to female undergraduate students and within that group, measurement of unwanted sexual experiences were restricted to heterosexual encounters. Thus, although the current study's methodology reflects a continuation of the past research on acknowledgement, it is still limited by gender, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status.

A second limitation is that of the recruitment of participants. Although efforts were made to ensure that recruitment strategies did not reveal that the study's purpose was to examine unwanted sexual experiences, it still advertised a study involving assessment of sexual and romantic experiences of women. Therefore, those women who participated were essentially self-selected students interested in communicating about these particular experiences. As a result, the participants were already a special group of women who were open to disclosing sexual experiences and perhaps with a vested interest or personal agenda in telling their personal experiences. Women who are less willing to be open about such experiences may have not participated. Despite the principal investigator's attempts to make disclosure of personal experiences as anonymous and private as possible, if a woman did not feel comfortable with disclosure at all, she would not have participated.

A related issue involved the response rate to the recruitment email, which was only 26% for the current study. Response rates for previously-published acknowledgement studies using multiple logistic regression analyses were much higher than the current study. Fisher et al. (2003) employed a telephone interview methodology and administered the survey to a national random sample of female college students; the response rate for this study was 85.6% with a sample size of 691 rape victims. Botta and Pinagree (1997) utilized a written survey, asking women to complete it and return in within two weeks. Their response rate was reported to be 48% with a sample size of 123 women who had experienced rape. The other two studies conducting multiple regression analyses to investigate acknowledgement did not report response rates (Bondurant, 2001; McMullin & White, 2003). Bondurant's methodology included recruiting female undergraduate psychology students who received course credit for their participation and reported a sample size of 109 women who had experienced rape. McMullin and White conducted a longitudinal study with an initial sample size consisting of 189 nonvictims and 96 rape victims. The overall sample of rape victims from each of these studies was further broken down into acknowledged and unacknowledged rape victims.

It may be possible that the majority of female undergraduates were not interested in participating in the current study. However it is important to note that recruitment occurred towards the end of the spring semester, during a time when students were mainly focused on studying for final examinations. Although the timing for recruitment could not be avoided due to necessary administrative procedures required by the Institutional Review Board before initiating the study, it presented a confounding factor in participants' availability to complete the survey. Perhaps, if the study had been initiated earlier in the semester, more women would have had time to participate.

Despite only a quarter percent of the female population responding to the current study, it must be noted that the sample size obtained was comparable and even higher than the studies discussed above, with 195 rape victims (116 unacknowledged and 79 acknowledged victims). Therefore, while the current study had a lower response rate in comparison to other studies of acknowledgement, the target group of interest was actually much higher than most of the other studies. Furthermore, the target group had not even been explicitly primed to participate, as the recruitment strategy did not explicitly mention rape or sexual assault. Rather, advertisements of the current study explicitly stated its purpose was to understand sexual experiences of women in general. Perhaps the women who had experienced unwanted sex were more encouraged to participate in the current study due to the anonymous nature of it being an online survey. Thus, although response rates in general were higher for other studies that involved more traditional recruitment strategies, the response rate in the current study for rape victims in particular was actually higher than was found in previous studies.

A third limitation to this study was the measurement of several important constructs. Attempts were made by the principal investigator to consolidate all of the measurement tools utilized in past acknowledgement research and to create measures of constructs that would be consistent with prior studies. However, since measurement had been so variable across so many of the studies, it was difficult to create a protocol that included measures that achieved a level of scientific rigor in terms of answering validity and reliability concerns. Furthermore, several of the constructs that were examined in the current study were measured using single-item measures. The reliance on a single item to capture an underlying construct presents threats to construct validity and content validity, in that single items may not accurately reflect the construct they are intended to measure or they may not comprehensively capture all of the relevant aspects of the construct of interest. Although this was a substantial concern for the current study, this decision was superceded by consideration of factors affecting the respondents. In the interests of reducing participant fatigue and minimization of potential distress that the participant could have experienced while completing the survey, single-item measures were deemed necessary for the sake of ease and in reducing the time that participants would have to spend completing the survey.

Finally it is entirely possible that there are other predictor variables that were not considered in the current study. For instance, as was discussed earlier, variables assessing women’s rape scripts or their rape myths may predict acknowledgement above and beyond those variables that were found to predict acknowledgement in the current study. Furthermore, there may be other variables not yet identified that could significantly predict acknowledgement.

Areas of Future Research

Several exciting avenues of future research still await the field of acknowledgement. The current study offered an initial glimpse into the possible intertwining of self-blame, perceptions of control, and acknowledgement. The relationship between self-blame and perceived control needs further exploration, as self-blame may be a more complicated construct than previously considered. In particular, self-blame may reflect a self-preserving tactic for unacknowledged victims to maintain a sense of perceived control and sexual agency, while it may have destructive qualities of re-victimization in acknowledged victims.

This difference is imperative to understand within a clinical setting, as challenging women who engage in self-blame due to misperceptions that all self-blame is a destructive way to re-victimize oneself can actually hurt women rather than help them. Clinicians need to take into account clients' own descriptions and labels of their unwanted sexual experiences in order to further understand clients' possible reported self-blame; if clients are unacknowledged, then the self-blame may be an attempt to maintain a sense of control over what had happened during reported unwanted sexual experiences. Clinicians would then need to utilize more sensitive interventions that would take this cognitive process into account in order to assist women with processing their understanding and meaning-making of unwanted sexual experiences.

A second area of research that can be explored with the data obtained by the current study is the possible acknowledgement of unwanted sexual experiences that fit the legal definition of rape as "sexual assault" rather than "rape." It is hypothesized that within the unacknowledged victims sample, women may have endorsed "yes" to inquiry about reported experiences of sexual assault rather than inquiry utilizing the word "rape." Perhaps women may find it safer to use sexual assault to describe their experiences, given the negative connotations and perceptions surrounding the label of rape.

Another area of research worth exploring further is that of women's perceptions of significant others' views of rape myths. While rejection of rape myths, as discussed earlier, did not distinguish between women who are acknowledged and unacknowledged (Koss, 1985), other cognitive processes such as victims' *perceptions* of others' attitudes/beliefs about rape may impact decisions about whether or not to acknowledge unwanted sexual experiences as rape. Thus, although women who have been raped do not endorse acceptance of rape myths or negative attitudes towards rape victims, they may believe that society and their significant others do endorse negative or stereotypical attitudes and beliefs regarding rape and rape victims. This may affect what they believe constitutes "real rape," which in turn may shape their rape script.

Research conducted on victims' perceptions of societal and significant others' attitudes towards rape victims (ATRV) and rape myth acceptance (RMA) has found that these variables, as opposed to variables assessing *their own perceptions* of ATRV and RMA, are associated with acknowledgement of sexual assault and rape (Shimp, 2000). Although these results were small effects, increased negative perceptions of significant others' ATRV were found to be associated with decreased sexual assault acknowledgement, while increased negative perceptions of societal ATRV was associated with increased sexual assault acknowledgement.

While the research regarding women's perceptions of significant others' ATRV did not fall within the scope of the current study, it may be a valuable topic to pursue further. In fact, Philips' (2000) work revealed that women are very aware of how others in their lives perceive rape victims who have been discussed in the media or anecdotally. Perhaps additional variables assessing women's *perceptions* of how others may treat them if they report rape would in fact yield important information about women's decisions to acknowledge or to not acknowledge their own unwanted sexual experiences.

No research to date has specifically examined racial differences in acknowledgement. Not only do women of color struggle against significant sociocultural barriers in seeking services for abuse, but there is also a greater stigma for minority victims of violence to openly acknowledge their experiences as such within their own ethnic communities (Dasgupta, 1998; Kanuha, 1994; Pierce-Baker, 1998; Sorenson, 1996). It is expected that there would be significant differences in acknowledgment, such that participants who are of color are less likely to acknowledge unwanted sexual experiences as sexual assault or rape than White participants. The previously published acknowledgement research often had samples that were predominantly White and recruited from university samples. Unfortunately the current study also encountered the same problem. Although attempts were made to obtain as racially diverse a sample as possible, this still did not occur. Future research must make more concerted efforts to find ways to incorporate a more ethnically diverse sample in order to investigate this hypothesis.

Finally future research efforts in acknowledgement should include acknowledgement of unwanted sexual experiences in male and non-heterosexual populations. All of the prior published research on acknowledgement has focused on females only and heterosexual relationships at that. Prevalence rates indicating higher numbers of males as perpetrators and females as victims have been well-documented (USDOJ-BJS, 2004). However, assuming that only women in heterosexual relationships have unwanted sexual experiences is harmful and can taint society's expectations of sexual relationships between males and females. This assumption further negates the reality that unwanted sexual encounters can occur in same-sex relationships/encounters and that males do experience unwanted heterosexual encounters.

Koss’ (2006) recent work enhancing her original Sexual Experiences Survey measure is a promising and exciting first step in addressing these under-researched areas. Her improvements to her original acknowledgement measure include assumptions of gender neutrality in that both men and women can report unwanted sexual experiences and that participants can identify male, female, or both female and male perpetrators. Koss’ recent work is one of the only attempts to include the voices of victims who may have been previously marginalized and ignored.

The impact of understanding multiple forms of experiences of unwanted sexual encounters perpetrated by both males and females and experienced by both males and females, may in fact be beneficial for female victims of male-perpetrated sexual assault. By only focusing on male-perpetrated assaults against females, societal myths of rape that include erroneous beliefs that men cannot be raped and that females can never be perpetrators can be debunked. Female victims may then realize that unwanted sexual experiences do not solely occur within the confines of male-perpetrated violence, but rather, unwanted sexual experiences occur as a result of power, control, and violence perpetrated by people, regardless of gender.

Opening up the definitions of what constitutes a victim and a perpetrator may assist with challenging societal views of victims as “weak” and “not strong,” thereby providing a more expansive understanding of the realities of sexual assault and rape and placing less punitive focus on heterosexual males as the sole perpetrators or potential perpetrators of sexual violence. Heterosexual women who are victims may be relieved to know that both sexual abuse and assault occur to males as well as females and may find comfort in the knowledge that men also can experience unwanted sexual encounters. Furthermore, in light of the women's movement and subsequent changes in women's belief patterns of themselves as "strong" and "capable," and given harmful societal stereotypes of men as having to "always be strong," the mechanisms of rape acknowledgement in females may have become more similar to those utilized by males than previously imagined.

Prior research has not adequately made attempts to consider the voices of male survivors. Perhaps with the resulting increase in feelings of self-efficacy and self-esteem in women as a whole, experiences of victimization for both women and men can be given full credence and importance, as societal beliefs about what constitutes "strength" would be challenged if the voices of both men and women who have had unwanted sexual experiences were heard. It is hoped that in the future, gender differences would still be considered and honored, but that similarities among victims' lived experiences, be they male or female, may dramatically assist with breaking down society's negative perceptions of rape and sexual assault victims and increase societal empathy for people's experience of abuse and victimization in general.

Conclusion

The research on acknowledgement has yet to achieve the insight and understanding required to fully make sense of the reasons why women do not acknowledge unwanted sexual encounters that fit the legal definition of rape. The current study contributed to this literature by incorporating prior published findings with newly proposed variables to create a comprehensive multiple logistic regression model that yielded information about the factors that predict acknowledgement of unwanted sexual experiences as rape. It is hoped that the findings from this study can shed more light upon the phenomenon of acknowledgement and provide a deeper understanding of the reasons why women may or may not choose to acknowledge unwanted sexual experiences as rape.

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Appendix A: Measures

Demographics Questionnaire (DEMOG)

1. Age: _______
2. Please indicate your Race/Ethnicity below. If you identify as “Biracial” or “Mixed,” please choose “Other” and list the groups which comprise your identity.
    a. African American or Black; East/South/Southeast Asian; Latino/Hispanic; Middle Eastern; Arab; Native American or American Indian; White/Caucasian; Other: ____________; Mixed: parents from 2 or more groups—List groups: _________________________________
3. How would you best describe your spirituality or religion? If you religion is not represented below or you follow more than one religion, please choose “Other” and list the religions in the space provided
    a. Protestant; Muslim; Catholic; Judaism; Hindu; Sikh; Buddhist; Atheist; Agnostic; Spiritual but not affiliated with any particular religion; Other: __________________________
4. Are you an American citizen? (yes/no)
5. Are you an international student? (yes/no)
6. What year are you in college?
    a. Freshman; Sophomore; Junior; Senior; Other: ______________
7. Where do you live currently?
    a. On campus, dormitory; On campus, apartment; Off campus, apartment; Off campus, house; Other: _________________
8. Please answer the following question if you are currently employed:
    a. Do you work: Full time; part time (hours/week)
9. How would you describe your economic resources?
    a. When you were growing up (0-16 years old):
    b. Currently:
        i. Very poor, not enough to get by; Barely enough to get by; Had enough to get by but no extras; Had more than enough to get by; Well to do; Extremely well to do
10. What is your family’s total yearly household income (includes gross income from all sources)?
        i. Range from “< $20,000” to “$220,001 and above”
11. If you had to pick a label to describe your sexual orientation, which of the following would it be?
        i. Heterosexual; lesbian; bisexual; questioning (not sure); other (please specify: _____________________)
12. Have you ever been diagnosed with Post-traumatic Stress Disorder in your lifetime? (yes/no)
13. Do you have a history of self-harm (e.g., hospitalization due to suicide attempt)? (yes/no)
14. Have you ever had sex (please apply your own definition of sex)? Yes/no
15. If so, what was your age the first time you engaged in sex? ______

16. Please mark the following sexual behavior(s) that you have engaged in (you may indicate more than one)

☐ I have never engaged in any of the sexual behaviors listed below

☐ Kissing

☐ Erotic touching (touching of body parts)

☐ Genital contact with another person over clothes (without oral sex, anal sex, or vaginal intercourse)

☐ Genital contact with another person without clothes (without oral sex, anal sex, or vaginal intercourse)

☐ Oral sex (receiving)

☐ Oral sex (giving)

☐ Anal sex (receiving)

☐ Anal sex (giving)

☐ Vaginal intercourse

☐ Group sexual activity (any sexual activity with two or more partners at one time)

☐ Other (please specify)

Sexual Experiences Survey Short Form Victimization (SES-SFV)

The following questions concern sexual experiences that you may have had that were unwanted. We know that these are personal questions, so we do not ask your name or other identifying information. Your information is completely confidential. We hope that this helps you to feel comfortable answering each question honestly. Please mark the circle showing the number of times each experience has happened to you. If several experiences occurred on the same occasion--for example, if one night someone told you some lies and had sex with you when you were drunk, you would check both boxes a and c. The past 12 months refers to the past year going back from today. Since age 14 refers to your life starting on your 14th birthday and stopping one year ago from today.

Sexual Experiences

		How many times in the past 12 months?				**How many times since age 14?**			
1.	**Someone fondled, kissed, or rubbed up against the private areas of my body (lips, breast/chest, crotch or butt) or removed some of my clothes without my consent *(but did not attempt sexual penetration)* by:**	0	1	2	3+	0	1	2	3+
	a. Telling lies, threatening to end the relationship, threatening to spread rumors about me, making promises I knew were untrue, or continually verbally pressuring me after I said I didn't want to.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	b. Showing displeasure, criticizing my sexuality or attractiveness, getting angry but not using physical force, after I said I didn't want to.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	c. Taking advantage of me when I was too drunk or out of it to stop what was happening.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	d. Threatening to physically harm me or someone close to me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	e. Using force, for example holding me down with their body weight, pinning my arms, or having a weapon.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

2.	**Someone had oral sex with me or made me have oral sex with them without my consent by:**	0	1	2	3+	0	1	2	3+
	a. Telling lies, threatening to end the relationship, threatening to spread rumors about me, making promises I knew were untrue, or continually verbally pressuring me after I said I didn't want to.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	b. Showing displeasure, criticizing my sexuality or attractiveness, getting angry but not using physical force, after I said I didn't want to.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	c. Taking advantage of me when I was too drunk or out of it to stop what was happening.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	d. Threatening to physically harm me or someone close to me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	e. Using force, for example holding me down with their body weight, pinning my arms, or having a weapon.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

		How many times in the past 12 months?				**How many times since age 14?**			
3.	**A man put his penis into my vagina, or someone inserted fingers or objects without my consent by:**	0	1	2	3+	0	1	2	3+
	a. Telling lies, threatening to end the relationship, threatening to spread rumors about me, making promises I knew were untrue, or continually verbally pressuring me after I said I didn't want to.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	b. Showing displeasure, criticizing my sexuality or attractiveness, getting angry but not using physical force, after I said I didn't want to.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	c.	Taking advantage of me when I was too drunk or out of it to stop what was happening.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	d.	Threatening to physically harm me or someone close to me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	e.	Using force, for example holding me down with their body weight, pinning my arms, or having a weapon.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

4.	**A man put his penis into my butt, or someone inserted fingers or objects without my consent by:**		0	1	2	3+	0	1	2	3+
	a.	Telling lies, threatening to end the relationship, threatening to spread rumors about me, making promises I knew were untrue, or continually verbally pressuring me after I said I didn't want to.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	b.	Showing displeasure, criticizing my sexuality or attractiveness, getting angry but not using physical force, after I said I didn't want to.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	c.	Taking advantage of me when I was too drunk or out of it to stop what was happening.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	d.	Threatening to physically harm me or someone close to me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	e.	Using force, for example holding me down with their body weight, pinning my arms, or having a weapon.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

5.	**Even though it did not happen, someone TRIED to have oral sex with me, or make me have oral sex with them without my consent by:**		0	1	2	3+	0	1	2	3+
	a.	Telling lies, threatening to end the relationship, threatening to spread rumors about me, making promises I knew were untrue, or continually verbally pressuring me after I said I didn't want to.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	b.	Showing displeasure, criticizing my sexuality or attractiveness, getting angry but not using physical force, after I said I didn't want to.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	c.	Taking advantage of me when I was too drunk or out of it to stop what was happening.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	d.	Threatening to physically harm me or someone close to me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	e.	Using force, for example holding me down with their body weight, pinning my arms, or having a weapon.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

			How many times in the past 12 months?				**How many times since age 14?**			
6.	**Even though it did not happen, a man TRIED to put his penis into my vagina, or someone tried to stick in fingers or objects without my consent by:**		0	1	2	3+	0	1	2	3+
	a.	Telling lies, threatening to end the relationship, threatening to spread rumors about me, making promises I knew were untrue, or continually verbally pressuring me after I said I didn't want to.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	b.	Showing displeasure, criticizing my sexuality or attractiveness, getting angry but not using physical force, after I said I didn't want to.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	c.	Taking advantage of me when I was too drunk or out of it to stop what was happening.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	d.	Threatening to physically harm me or someone close to me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	e.	Using force, for example holding me down with their body weight, pinning my arms, or having a weapon.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

7.	**Even though it did not happen, a man TRIED to put his penis into my butt, or someone tried to stick in objects or fingers without my consent by:**		0	1	2	3+	0	1	2	3+
	a.	Telling lies, threatening to end the relationship, threatening to spread rumors about me, making promises I knew were untrue, or continually verbally pressuring me after I said I didn't want to.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	b.	Showing displeasure, criticizing my sexuality or attractiveness, getting angry but not using physical force, after I said I didn't want to.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	c.	Taking advantage of me when I was too drunk or out of it to stop what was happening.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	d.	Threatening to physically harm me or someone close to me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
	e.	Using force, for example holding me down with their body weight, pinning my arms, or having a weapon.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

9. Did any of the experiences described in this survey happen to you 1 or more times? Yes ☐ No ☐

What was the sex of the person or persons who did them to you?

Female only ☐
Male only ☐
Both females and males ☐
I reported no experiences ☐

10. Have you ever been raped? Yes ☐ No ☐

Have you ever experienced sexual assault, sexual abuse, molestation, or rape before the age of 14? yes no
Have you ever been raped at or after the age of 14? yes no
Have you ever experienced attempted rape at or after the age of 14? yes no
Have you ever experienced sexual assault at or after the age of 14? yes no

Scoring Rules for the SES-SFV

1. Non-victims: all items checked 0.
2. Sexual coercion: any item 2 through 7 checked any number of times > 0 on a or b.
3. Attempted rape: items 5, 6, or 7 checked any number of times > 0 to c, d, or e.

4. Rape: items 3, 4, or 5 checked any number of times > 0 to c, d, or e.

Sexual Experiences Inventory (SEI)

Of the item(s) that you endorsed for the previous questionnaire, indicate which item(s) involved someone who was a male: _______________

We would like to ask you more questions about that experience. If you have had this experience (with a male) more than once, then think of the incident that you remember the best. If you identified experiencing more than one item (with males), please choose the item that has caused you the most distress. (If more than one male was involved, answer the questions as best as you can with regards to the group.)

1. How well did you know him?
    a. Not at all; Slightly acquainted; Moderately acquainted; Very well acquainted; Extremely well acquainted
2. Was the male using any alcohol or drugs on this occasion?
    a. Alcohol; drugs; both; neither; don’t know
3. Assess how much you think he was intoxicated or high?
    a. Not at all; A little; Somewhat; Quite a bit; Extremely intoxicated/high
4. Were you using any alcohol or drugs on this occasion?
    a. Alcohol; drugs; both; neither; don’t know
5. Assess how much you remember being intoxicated or high:
    a. Not at all; A little; Somewhat; Quite a bit; Extremely intoxicated/high
6. How much physical force did he use during the incident?
    a. Not at all; A little; Somewhat; Quite a bit; Extremely forceful/aggressive
7. Did he use a weapon?
    a. Yes; no
8. How much did you verbally resist?
    a. Not at all; A little; Somewhat; Quite a bit; Extreme verbal resistance
9. How much did you physically resist?
    a. Not at all; A little; Somewhat; Quite a bit; Extreme physical resistance
10. How clear do you think you made it to the male that you didn’t want to participate in the sexual activity?
    a. Not at all; A little; Somewhat; Quite a bit; Extremely clear
11. To what degree did you suffer from physical harm after the incident
    a. Not at all; A little; Somewhat; Quite a bit; Extreme physical harm/injury

Schwartz & Leggett’s assessment of psychological/emotional distress

How much were you affected by this experience?

- b. It was not very important to me; I was not much affected. (Not affected)
- c. It did not bother me for very long; I bounced back fairly quickly. (Somewhat affected)

d. It affected me. I changed as a person (e.g., not as trusting, depressed, unhappy, or some other reaction). (Affected)
e. It deeply affected me and caused me emotional pain. (Deeply affected)

Blame Questionnaire & Perceptions of Control (BQ/POC)

One of the things we are interested in is how people who had the type of experience you identified in the previous page understand what happened to them.

Please answer each question below to reflect your thoughts and beliefs about the experience you identified on the previous page.

1. Have you spent a lot of time blaming yourself for what happened to you (circle one number)
   a. None at all 1 2 3 4 5 Most of the time
2. How much do you believe that the male involved was to blame for what happened?
   a. Not at all; A little; Somewhat; Quite a bit; Totally
3. How much do you believe that you were to blame for what happened?
   a. Not at all; A little; Somewhat; Quite a bit; Totally
4. How much do you believe that values and beliefs of society are to blame for occurred?
   a. Not at all; A little; Somewhat; Quite a bit; Totally
5. How much do you believe that the way men are socialized/raised in our society is to blame for what happened?
   a. Not at all; A little; Somewhat; Quite a bit; Totally
6. How much do you think that society’s acceptance of violence is to blame for what happened?
   a. Not at all; A little; Somewhat; Quite a bit; Totally
7. How much do you think the circumstances surrounding the incident (i.e., the situation) are to blame for what happened (e.g., party, intoxication, date/partner, etc.)?
   a. Not at all; A little; Somewhat; Quite a bit; Totally

How often have you had these thoughts regarding what happened? (circle one number)

8. I put myself in a situation I couldn’t get out of

   Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost always

9. I was somewhere I should not have been

   Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost always

10. I’m a bad person

Never 1 2 3 4 5 Almost always

11. How much do you feel responsible for what happened?
    a. Not at all; A little; Somewhat; Quite a bit; Very much
12. How responsible is he for what happened?
    a. Not at all; A little; Somewhat; Quite a bit; Very much

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Disagree somewhat; 3 = Neither agree nor disagree; 4 = Agree somewhat; 5 = Strongly agree

[Future likelihood of unwanted sexual experiencec]

1. I am afraid that I will experience something like this* again.(reversed)
2. It is not likely that I will experience something like this* again.
3. Now that I have experienced this*, the odds are it won't happen again.
4. I feel pretty sure that I won't experience something like this* again.
5. No matter what steps I take, I could experience something like this* again. (reversed)

[Future control over unwanted sexual experiences]

1. I have changed certain behaviors to try to avoid having an experience like this* again.
2. Since this experience*, I try not to put myself in potentially dangerous situations.
3. I do not take any special precautions since the experience* occurred. (reversed)
4. I have taken steps to protect myself since this experience*.
5. I have made a change in my living situation since this experience*.

Please note: *The original measure of perceptions of control included the words "assault" and "assaulted." In order to assess unacknowledged victims' perceptions of control, the terminology was changed to be more ambiguous: "the/this experience" and "experience(d) something like this."

Beliefs and Behavior (Zucker Feminist Identity Measure)

1. Girls and women have not been treated as well as boy and men in our society.
   NO YES
2. Men are born with more drive to be ambitious and successful than women.
   NO YES
3. Women and men should be paid equally for the same work.
   NO YES

4. A woman's place is in the home.

NO YES

5. Women's unpaid work should be more socially-valued.

NO YES

6. I identify as a feminist

Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 Very much

7. If you consider yourself to be a feminist, please answer the following question, If you do not consider yourself to be a feminist, please skip to Part B.

   Part A. What factors do you think contributed to your decision to call yourself a feminist (check all that apply)

   I've always been one
   Experiences in college classes
   Reading books
   Wanting equal rights for women
   Wanting power for women
   Being angry about traditional gender roles
   Experiences with feminist friends
   Experiences with feminist family members
   Experiences with non-feminist friends
   Experiences with non-feminist family members
   Other – Please describe
   ____

8. If you do not consider yourself to be a feminist, please answer the following question, please answer the following question. If you do consider yourself to be a feminist, please skip to the next question

   Part B. What factors do you think contributed to your decision to NOT call yourself a feminist (check all that apply)

   Feminism isn't interesting to me
   Feminists are too extreme
   Experiences with feminist family members
   Feminism is not necessary
   Feminists are male-bashers
   Experiences with non-feminist friends
   Women can succeed on their own individual merit
   Feminists complain too much
   Experiences with non-feminist family members
   I like traditional gender roles
   Feminism is not inclusive
   Experiences in college classes
   Experiences with feminist friends
   Other – Please describe
   ____

Appendix B: Information Sheet, Debriefing, and Resource Screens

Information Sheet

INTRODUCTION

We invite you to take part in a research study under the direction of Dr. Alyssa Zucker of the Department of Psychology and Women's Studies Program at the George Washington University. The sub-investigator for this study is Sapana Donde, a 6th year doctoral candidate in the Clinical Psychology Ph.D. program at GWU.

First, we want you to know that: **Taking part in research is entirely voluntary** You may choose not to take part, or you may withdraw from the study at any time. Your academic standing will not, in any way, be affected should you choose not to participate or if you decide to withdraw from the study at any time.

Now we will describe this research study. Before you decide to take part, please take as much time as you need to ask any questions and discuss this study with anyone at GWU, or with family, friends, or your personal physical or other health professional. Before you click "I Agree" to participate in the study, be sure you understand what the study is about, including the risks and possible benefits to you.

WHY IS THIS STUDY BEING DONE?

You are being asked to take part in this study because we would like to learn more about the unique, personal experiences of undergraduate women. The purpose of this study is to better understand wanted, unwanted, and traumatic sexual experiences that young women may have had as well as their feelings about and perceptions of these experiences. Furthermore we are interested in all sexual experiences that young women may have had, including engaging in kissing, erotic touching, oral sex, anal sex, or vaginal intercourse.

The research will be conducted at the following location: ONLINE, AT THE COMPUTER OF YOUR CHOICE.
This is a campus-wide study for GWU UNDERGRADUATE FEMALES ONLY. Therefore the GWU female undergraduate student population, which includes a total of approximately 5,000 students, will be asked to participate in this study. You are one of approximately 5,000 female students asked to take part at GWU.

WHAT IS INVOLVED IN THE STUDY?

If you choose to take part in this study, this is what will happen: You will go to the computer of your choice at the time of your choice.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS SURVEY WORKS BEST WHEN YOU COMPLETE IT ALL IN ONE SETTING AND AT THE SAME COMPUTER. YOU WILL NOT BE ABLE TO RETURN TO THE SURVEY AFTER YOU LOGOUT.

If you read and agree with this information sheet, you will click on “I Agree.” Then you will click on the “I would like to continue” button at the bottom of the screen to proceed with the online study asking questions about a number of subjects, including specific sexual experiences that you may or may not have had. Everyone who participates will be answering some initial questions. Some people will be asked to continue with more questions, while others will be finished shortly. The length of time for you to complete this survey will depend upon your own personal experiences and what you choose to share. We anticipate that it will take you at least 5-10 minutes but no more than 25-30 minutes to finish the survey. Your anonymity will be protected because we can never link your name, e-mail, or computer IP address to your actual survey responses.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS OF THE STUDY?

Be aware that you will be asked explicit questions about sexual encounters that you may or may not have experienced. Although we have made every effort to minimize risks arising from this study, possible risks and discomforts you could experience during this study include: embarrassment or distress resulting from being asked questions about specific sexual experiences that you may or may not have had. Some of the questions may also be stressful or upsetting to you. As a result, you may experience emotional trauma or flashbacks depending upon your personal history.

****If this happens, we want you to know that we can support you in a number of ways****:

(1) When you complete the survey, you will automatically be taken to a screen that will have important telephone numbers and hotlines for resources in the DC metropolitan area.

(2) Sapana Donde, who is the sub-investigator of this study, is a 6th year doctoral graduate student in the Clinical Psychology Ph.D. program at GWU. She has had approximately 5 years of experience working with children, adolescents, college students, and adults in a variety of clinical contexts, including individual therapy, group therapy, clinical interviewing, and psychological assessment. She has also been trained as a crisis counselor in the areas of sexual trauma and domestic violence. Her telephone number is: 202-365-9335. This number is her cellular phone number. You are encouraged to call her at any time if you are experiencing distress and need to speak with a trained counselor. If you would like to send her an email, her address is: gwusurvey@yahoo.com

(3) Ms. Donde will also be available to meet with you in person and assist you with contacting any of the resources that are provided at the end of the study.

ARE THERE BENEFITS TO TAKING PART IN THE STUDY?

You will not receive any personal financial benefit from taking part in the study. However, you may benefit from the chance to review some of your past experiences and perhaps gain new insights about them as well as yourself. In addition to this personal benefit to you, this is an opportunity to contribute to what we -- researchers and the general public -- understand about the personal experiences of young women. We hope that this potential for personal insight and societal contribution will be of value to you.

WHAT ARE MY OTHER OPTIONS?

** You do not have to be in this study if you do not want to **

Should you decide to participate and later change your mind, you can do so at anytime.

WHAT IF I CHANGE MY MIND?

** You may stop taking part in this study at any time **
Your academic standing will not, in any way, be affected should you choose not to participate or if you decide to withdraw from the study at any time.

WILL I RECEIVE PAYMENT FOR BEING IN THIS STUDY?

You will not be paid for taking part in this study.

WHAT ARE THE COSTS FOR TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?

There are no costs associated with this study.

OTHER INFORMATION YOU NEED TO KNOW

Confidentiality When the results of this research study are reported in journals or at scientific meetings, the people who take part are not named and identified. In most cases, GWU will not release any information about your research involvement without your written permission, unless required by law.

Problems or Questions The Office of Human Research of GWU at telephone number (202)994-2715, can provide further information about your rights as a research subject.

**Research related injury should be reported to the Principal Investigator of this study

** Further information regarding this study can be obtained by contacting Alyssa Zucker (Principal Investigator), at telephone number (202) 994-1260.

Consent Document Please print a copy of this document in case you want to read it again.

DOCUMENTATION OF CONSENT

To ensure anonymity, your signature is not required in this document. Your willingness to participate in this research is implied if you proceed with completing the survey.

I understand the information printed on this screen. By clicking "I Agree" below indicates my willingness to participate in this study and my understanding that I can withdraw at any time.

If you agree to participate in this study and you are a female who is at least 18 years old, please click on the "I Agree" button below. Otherwise please click on the "I Decline" button below.

1. Please click on one of the following:

☐ I AGREE ☐ I DECLINE

Debriefing Form for Women who Identified Experiencing an Unwanted Sexual Encounter

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this online survey! Although this project is generally focused on exploring identity and sexual experiences in undergraduate women, its main purpose is to gain some insight into sexual experiences that are unwanted and that occur without consent. My goal for this research was to better understand not only how young women view these unwanted experiences, but also the factors that may have an influence in shaping how they label what they have experienced.

Your responses to the survey indicated that one or more of your sexual experience(s) had involved unwanted sexual activity. Thank you for your decision to share your experience(s) and for your forthcoming responses. It takes a lot of courage and strength to share sexual experiences in general, so I am truly honored by your willingness to answer sensitive, personal questions. I also appreciate your generosity in assisting with my dissertation research. Your unique contribution to this study is extremely valuable and important.

The questions you were asked throughout the survey have the potential to bring up memories or feelings that are upsetting and/or distressing. People can experience a range of emotions after having experienced an unwanted sexual encounter, including confusion about what happened, anger, sadness, depression, fear, anxiety, and even numbness or a lack of feeling about the experience. Please know that you are not alone and that there are support services available to you. I am a trained therapist and have worked with children, adolescents, college students, and adults in individual, family, and group therapy. I also have been trained as a crisis counselor and peer health educator in the areas of sexual violence and domestic violence. If you would like to talk about your experience with this study or about any feelings or memories that you experienced as a result of taking this survey, please do not hesitate to contact me. My email address is gwusurvey@yahoo.com, and my cell phone number is 202-365-9335. You are welcome to contact me anytime. Please do not hesitate to call me if you need support.

I have also compiled a list of important resources for you that I have included on the next page. If you run into any problems accessing these resources or if you would like to have support while you call these resources, please feel free to contact me. Your participation in this research study has been tremendously helpful to me. I am more than happy to make myself available to assist and support you in whatever way I can.

If you have any general questions about the study or your participation with the project, you are welcome to contact me or Dr. Alyssa Zucker, who is the professor in charge of this project. You can reach her via her email address, azucker@gwu.edu, or at her office number 202-994-1260.

Thank you again for your contribution to my dissertation research. I am grateful to you for taking the time out of your busy schedule to fill out my survey. I wish you the best of luck with your undergraduate studies.

Best regards,
Sapana D. Donde

Debriefing Form for Nonvictims

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this online survey! You have completed all of your questions for the study. I want to thank you for your time and for your forthcoming responses.

If you would like to talk about your experience with this study, please do not hesitate to contact me, either via my email address, gwusurvey@yahoo.com, or my cell phone, 202-365-9335. If you wish to contact my research advisor, Dr. Alyssa Zucker, who is the professor in charge of this project, you can reach her via her email address, azucker@gwu.edu, or at her office number 202-994-1260.

Some of the questions in this survey were very sensitive and have the potential to bring up feelings that are upsetting and/or distressing. For this reason, I have compiled a list of important resources for you and included this list on the next page. These resources cover a wide range of issues and concerns and are available to you should you need them.

Thank you again for your participation in my dissertation research. I wish you the best of luck with your undergraduate studies.

Best regards,

Sapana D. Donde, Trainee Investigator
Telephone Number: 202/365-9335

Alyssa Zucker, Ph.D., Principal Investigator
Telephone Number: 202/994-1260

Resources Screen

List of resources in the D.C. Metro Area

GWU Resources:
George Washington University Counseling Center – (202) 994-5300; http://gwired.gwu.edu/counsel/ (academic support; short-term counseling)
Meltzer Center, George Washington University Psychology Department – 202-994-9072 (brief and long-term therapy, psychoeducational assessments)
Rape/Sexual Assault Resources:
DC Rape Crisis Center - (202) 333-RAPE (24 hours)
Montgomery County Crisis Center Sexual Assault Crisis Line- (240) 777-4357
Sexual Assault Response & Awareness Program - (703) 683-7273
Alexandria Sexual Assault - (703) 683-7273
Physical and Sexual Abuse Resources:
Domestic Violence Hotline - (202) 347-2777 (24 hours)
Family Crisis Center of Prince George's County (301) 731-1203 (hotline)
Victim Assistance Network - (703) 360-7273 (24 hours - domestic violence & sexual assault)
Psychiatric Institute of Washington (PIW) - (202) 885-5600
Domestic Violence Shelters:
My Sister's Place - (202) 529-5991
House of Ruth - (202) 667-7001
Bethany House - (703) 658-7273
Other Resources:
National Organization for Victim Assistance – 1 (800) TRY-NOVA (879-6682) (24 hours); (703) 535-NOVA (6682)
D.C. Hate Crimes Hotline - (202) 727-0500
D.C. Office for Victims of Crimes – (202) 307-5983
Alexandria Victim Assistance Program - (703) 838-4100
Arlington Victim/Witness Services - (703) 228-4558
Fairfax Victim/Witness Assistance - (703)246-2141
Child Abuse Hotline – 1 (800) 4-A-CHILD (1-800-422-4453)
Gay & Lesbian National Help Center – 1 (888) THE-GLNH (843-4564)
Whitman Walker Clinic: Elizabeth Taylor Medical Center
(202) 745-7000 General Number
(202) 939-7690 HIV Counseling and Testing; Primary Medical Care
Gay & Lesbian Switchboard of Washington, DC - (202) 628-4667
CDC National HIV & AIDS Hotline - 1(800) 342-AIDS (24 hours)
1(800) CDC-INFO Information, referral, education
1(800) 344-7432 Spanish services
AIDS Hotline – 1 (800) 322-7432 (D.C. Metro Area); (202) 332-2437 (D.C.)
Sexually Transmitted Disease Information Line - 1(800) 661-4337 Information, referral, education

Drugs and Alcohol Resources:

Alcoholics Anonymous - (202) 966-9115 (10 am-10 pm)
Al Anon - (202) 882-1334
Narcotics Anonymous - (202) 399-5316
Cocaine Hotline - 1(800) COCAINE (262-2463); 24-hour Cocaine Hotline – 1 (800) 992-9239
Narcotics Abuse 24 Hour Helpline & Treatment - 1(800) 675-2041
Drug & Alcohol Treatment Referral National Hotline – 1(800) 662-4357
Poison Control Center - (202) 625-3333 (24 hours - overdose information)

Appendix C: Tables and Figures

Table 1

Frequency Data for Race/Ethnicity, Religion/Spirituality, Sexual Orientation, Current Residence, and Had Sex (N = 195)

Characteristic	Unacknowledged Rape (n = 116)	Acknowledged Rape (n = 79)	χ^2	df	*p*
Race/Ethnicity			1.36	1	n.s.
White/Caucasian	84 (72%)	63 (80%)			
Other	32 (28%)	16 (20%)			
Religion/Spirituality			1.46	5	n.s
Protestant	23 (20%)	12 (15%)			
Catholic	32 (28%)	27 (34%)			
Atheist	6 (5%)	5 (6%)			
Agnostic	13 (11%)	8 (10%)			
Spiritual but no particular religion	17 (15%)	11 (14%)			
Other	25 (22%)	16 (20%)			
Sexual Orientation			0.08	1	n.s.
Heterosexual	107 (92%)	72 (91%)			
Other	9 (8%)	7 (9%)			
Current Residence			4.35	2	n.s.
On campus residence	93 (80%)	53 (67%)			
Off campus residence	16 (14%)	19 (24%)			
On study abroad	7 (6%)	7 (9%)			
Have you ever had sex?			3.31	1	n.s.
No	23 (20%)	8 (10%)			
Yes	93 (80%)	71 (90%)			

Table 2

Descriptive Data for Age, Year in College, and Current SES (N = 195)

Predictor	Acknowledgement Group Unacknowledged (n = 116)	 Acknowledged (n = 79)	*t* (193)
Age			-2.39*
M	19.98_b	20.46_a	
SD	1.39	1.31	
SE	0.13	0.15	
Mdn	20	21	
25%	19	19	
75%	21	21	
Year in College			-2.85**
M	2.4_b	2.9_a	
SD	1.12	1.06	
SE	0.10	0.12	
Mdn	2	3	
25%	1	2	
75%	3	4	

(*Table 2 continues*)

(*Table 2 continued*)

Predictor	Acknowledgement Group Unacknowledged (n = 116)	 Acknowledged (n = 79)	*t* (193)
Current SES			0.51
M	3.98	3.91	
SD	0.93	0.99	
SE	0.09	0.11	
Mdn	4	4	
25%	3	3	
75%	4.75	5	

Note. Means in a row sharing subscripts are significantly different.
*p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

SES Values = 1 Very poor, not enough to get by; 2 Barely enough to get by; 3 Had enough to get by but no extras; 4 Had more than enough to get by; 5 Well to do; 6 Extremely well to do.

Table 3

Descriptive Data for Predictor Variables in Multiple Logistic Regression Model (N = 195)

Predictor	Acknowledgement Group Unacknowledged (n = 116)	 Acknowledged (79)	*t* (193)
Age			-2.39**
M	19.98	20.46	
SD	1.39	1.31	
SE	0.13	0.15	
Mdn	20.00	21.00	
25%	19.00	19.00	
75%	21.00	21.00	
Level of acquaintance			1.45
M	3.29	3.03	
SD	1.22	1.33	
SE	0.11	0.15	
Mdn	3.00	3.00	
25%	2.00	2.00	
75%	4.00	4.00	
Level of intoxication (male)			1.44
M	2.84	2.58	
SD	1.27	1.22	

**p* < .05. ***p* < .01. ****p* < .001.

(*Table 3 continues*)

(*Table 3 continued*)

Predictor	Acknowledgement Group Unacknowledged (n = 116)	 Acknowledged (79)	*t* (193)
SE	0.12	0.14	
Mdn	3.00	3.00	
25%	1.00	1.00	
75%	4.00	4.00	
Level of intoxication (participant)			-0.98
M	2.69	2.91	
SD	1.51	1.60	
SE	0.14	0.18	
Mdn	3.00	3.00	
25%	1.00	1.00	
75%	4.00	4.00	
Physical force experienced			-6.13***
M	1.95	2.87	
SD	0.96	1.14	
SE	0.09	0.13	
Mdn	2.00	3.00	
25%	1.00	2.00	
75%	2.75	4.00	

**p* < .05. ***p* < .01. ****p* < .001.

(*Table 3 continues*)

(*Table 3 continued*)

	Acknowledgement Group		
Predictor	Unacknowledged (n = 116)	Acknowledged (79)	*t* (193)
Level of verbal resistance			0.059
M	3.03	3.03	
SD	1.06	1.07	
SE	0.10	0.12	
Mdn	3.00	3.00	
25%	2.00	2.00	
75%	4.00	4.00	
Level of physical resistance			-1.87
M	2.51	2.82	
SD	1.19	1.10	
SE	0.11	0.12	
Mdn	2.00	3.00	
25%	1.25	2.00	
75%	3.00	4.00	
Clarity of nonconsent			0.29
M	3.59	3.53	
SD	1.25	1.30	
SE	0.12	0.15	

**p* < .05. ***p* < .01. ****p* < .001.

(*Table 3 continues*)

(*Table 3 continued*)

	Acknowledgement Group		
Predictor	Unacknowledged (n = 116)	Acknowledged (79)	*t* (193)
Mdn	4.00	4.00	
25%	3.00	2.00	
75%	5.00	5.00	
Degree of physical harm/injuries			-3.61***
M	1.29	1.73	
SD	0.66	1.05	
SE	0.06	0.12	
Mdn	1.00	1.00	
25%	1.00	1.00	
75%	1.00	2.00	
Degree of being affected/distressed			-5.79***
M	2.02	2.70	
SD	0.76	0.87	
SE	0.07	0.10	
Mdn	2.00	3.00	
25%	2.00	2.00	
75%	2.00	3.00	

**p* < .05. ***p* < .01. ****p* < .001.

(*Table 3 continues*)

(*Table 3 continued*)

Predictor	Acknowledgement Group Unacknowledged (n = 116)	 Acknowledged (79)	*t* (193)
Perceived blame of male			-1.91
M	1.71	1.99	
SD	0.99	1.03	
SE	0.09	0.12	
Mdn	1.00	2.00	
25%	1.00	1.00	
75%	2.00	3.00	
Perceived responsibility of male			-1.98*
M	3.77	4.08	
SD	1.15	0.94	
SE	0.11	0.11	
Mdn	4.00	4.00	
25%	3.00	4.00	
75%	5.00	5.00	
Perceived future likelihood of unwanted sex			3.36**
M	3.41	2.93	
SD	1.04	0.91	
SE	0.10	0.10	

**p* < .05. ***p* < .01. ****p* < .001.

(*Table 3 continues*)

(*Table 3 continued*)

Predictor	Acknowledgement Group Unacknowledged (n = 116)	 Acknowledged (79)	*t* (193)
Mdn	3.40	2.80	
25%	2.60	2.20	
75%	4.40	3.60	
Perceived control over future unwanted sex			-2.11*
M	3.43	3.70	
SD	0.89	0.84	
SE	0.08	0.10	
Mdn	3.40	3.60	
25%	2.80	3.00	
75%	4.15	4.40	

*p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

Table 4

Frequency Data for Childhood Sexual Abuse, Prior Experience of Unwanted Sex, Recency, Feminist/Egalitarian Identity (N = 195)

Characteristic	Unacknowledged Rape (116)	Acknowledged Rape (79)	χ^2 (1)	*p*
Childhood sexual abuse			2.85	n.s.
No	105 (90%)	65 (82%)		
Yes	11 (10%)	14 (18%)		
Prior experience of unwanted sex			2.96	n.s.
No	33 (28%)	14 (18%)		
Yes	83 (72%)	65 (82%)		
Recency of incident (within past 12 months)			0.06	n.s.
No	52 (45%)	34 (43%)		
Yes	64 (55%)	45 (57%)		
Feminist/Egalitarian Identity			1.66	n.s.
Non-feminist	32 (28%)	16 (20%)		
Egalitarian	31 (27%)	26 (33%)		
Feminist	53 (46%)	37 (47%)		

Table 5

Bivariate Logistic Regression Analyses Predicting Acknowledgement

Variable	*b*	*SE*	Odds Ratio	Wald statistic
Age	0.26	0.11	1.29	5.45*
Prior experience of unwanted sex	0.49	0.21	1.64	5.40*
Perceived offender blame/responsibility	0.52	0.21	1.68	6.41*
Perceived future likelihood of unwanted sex	-0.50	0.15	0.61	10.35**
Perceived control over future unwanted sex	0.36	0.17	1.43	4.31*
Recency of incident (within past 12 months)	0.04	0.15	1.08	0.06
Level of acquaintance	-0.17	0.12	0.85	2.08
Level of intoxication (offender)	-0.17	0.12	0.84	2.07
Level of intoxication (participant)	0.09	0.09	1.10	0.97
Level of physical force & resistance	0.74	0.18	2.10	16.62***
Level of verbal nonconsent	-0.03	0.16	0.97	0.04
Degree of physical harm/injuries	0.63	0.19	1.87	10.68**
Degree of being affected/distressed	1.01	0.20	2.76	25.10***
Egalitarian Identity	0.15	0.16	1.35	0.87
Feminist Identity	0.02	0.15	1.05	0.02
Egalitarian identity*Perceived control	0.10	0.17	1.11	0.39
Feminist identity*Perceived control	0.16	0.17	1.17	0.93

Note. p values presented in table are directional.

**p* < .05. ***p* < .01. ****p* < .001.

Table 6

Multiple Logistic Regression Analysis Predicting Acknowledgement

Variable	*b*	*SE*	Odds Ratio	Wald statistic
Age	0.32	0.16	1.37	4.03*
Prior experience of unwanted sex	0.52	0.27	1.68	3.64*
Perceived offender blame/responsibility	0.45	0.29	1.57	2.36
Perceived future likelihood of unwanted sex	-0.80	0.23	0.45	12.24
Perceived control over future unwanted sex	0.20	0.30	1.22	0.46
Recency of incident (within past 12 months)	-0.11	0.44	0.90	0.06
Level of acquaintance	-0.19	0.15	0.82	1.66
Level of intoxication (offender)	-0.31	0.18	0.74	2.94*
Level of intoxication (participant)	0.23	0.16	1.26	2.15
Level of physical force & resistance	0.90	0.30	2.47	9.29**
Level of verbal nonconsent	-0.80	0.27	0.45	8.77
Degree of physical harm/injuries	0.03	0.27	1.03	0.01
Degree of being affected/distressed	0.79	0.26	2.20	8.94**
Egalitarian Identity	0.31	0.26	1.36	1.44
Feminist Identity	-0.01	0.24	0.99	0.002
Egalitarian identity*Perceived control	0.79	0.34	2.20	5.33**
Feminist identity*Perceived control	0.54	0.33	1.72	2.72*

Note. p values presented in table are directional.

**p* < .05. ***p* < .01. ****p* < .001.