

VARIABLES RELATED TO SEXUAL COERCION: A PATH MODEL

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ABSTRACT

Using data gathered through a meta-analysis, this study tests a path model representing variables that relate to sexual coercion. Specifically, sex, attitudes toward women, past/current relationship, alcohol, coercion strategies, victim resistance, and rape justifiability were proposed and their effects examined. Results indicated that the level of actual or perceived coerciveness was a function of the level of coerciveness of the strategy, whether or not a prior relationship existed, whether alcohol was involved, if the victim resisted, if the rape was perceived as justifiable, and the attitude that person has toward women. The results suggest that determinations of whether a particular action is perceived as a rape or coerced depend on the attitudes of the person making the evaluation and the perception of the situation. Personal and social implications of these findings are discussed.

KEY WORDS • meta-analysis • path model • sexual coercion

Sexual coercion and rape are pervasive in our society, with both men and women serving as perpetrators (Sigelman, Berry, & Wiles, 1984) and tar-

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gets (e.g., Muehlenhard & Cook, 1988; Poppen & Segal, 1988; Struckman-Johnson, 1988). According to Poppen and Segal (1988), some studies report as many as 75 percent of women being victimized by sexual coercion and as many as 63 percent of men having engaged in unwanted sex (Muehlenhard & Cook, 1988).

Nevertheless, the majority of studies on sexual coercion examine the man as the perpetrator and the woman as the victim (e.g., Koss, 1988; Muehlenhard, 1988). In a study with a sample of nearly 1500, Koss (1988) found that 71 percent of women reported their date as the perpetrator in instances of sexual contact and 85 percent reported their date as perpetrating sexual coercion. Similarly, 70 percent reported their date as attempting rape and 57 percent reported their date as committing rape. According to Russell (1993) (cited in Kuhn, 1996), between 25 and 60 percent of male students report that they would force a woman to have sex if they could get away with it. The FBI's Uniform Crime Report (1992), based on reports representing 96 percent of the US population, indicates that there were 105,593 reported rapes in 1991 or approximately one rape every 5 minutes (Kuhn, 1996). The FBI report also reveals that, between 1972 and 1991, the frequency of reported rapes had increased 128 percent and there were 1.5 million women who had survived forcible or attempted rape. Although these statistics are staggering, these figures unfortunately only reflect *reported* rapes or rape attempts. According to the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) (1975), for every one rape reported, three to 10 rapes are not reported. In a review of literature on date rape, Pollard (1992) found that many instances of date rape or coercion go unrecognized by the parties involved. As well, the statistics on reported rapes typically do not reflect engagement in unwanted sex. Specifically, women are often coerced into unwanted sex in more subtle ways — ways 'that would not be legally classified as 'rape'' (Muehlenhard & Schrag, 1991, p. 115).

The literature examining sexual coercion suggests that certain variables are reported often or even continually as contributors to sexual coercion (e.g., Bostwick & DeLucia, 1992; Emmers & Allen, 1995; Muehlenhard, 1988; Pollard, 1992). Yet, little exists in the research in terms of an actual model of predictors of sexual coercion. Based on previous research, the purpose of this paper is to cast a path model representative of the variables that predict sexual coercion. By employing meta-analysis and path modeling, a contribution of this work is that it is summative across studies. A goal of this investigation is to increase awareness about sexual coercion and the variables that contribute to it. Second, a rationale is offered to justify and support the use of meta-analysis and path modeling to accomplish our goal. Third, the model is tested, and results and implications are discussed. Although this study will consider men's and women's victimization caused by sexual coercion, its focus lies primarily with women's victimization. Specifically, government definitions of 'rape' in the National Crime Survey limit 'rape' to women and women comprise nearly all of rape victims (Koss, 1988). Finally, the role of communication in sexual situations will be dis-

cussed. As will be seen in the literature review, many predictors of sexual coercion do not involve direct verbal or non-verbal communication. Rather, many predictors involve an individual's assumptions about social rules, relational rules, and/or sexual scripts.

Variables related to sexual coercion

Before we begin, we must first define *coercion*. Coercion exists in the forms of psychological and/or physical pressure (Struckman-Johnson, 1988). Psychological pressure often is conveyed through verbal coercion (e.g., Kanin, 1967; Koss, Gidycz, & Wisniewski, 1987; Mosher & Anderson, 1986; Muehlenhard & Cook, 1988). Potential examples of verbal coercion include 'What's the matter with you? Why won't you have sex?', 'If you don't give in, I'll tell everyone that you're a tease/gay,' 'Considering how much money I've spent on you tonight, you owe me,' 'Come on ... don't be afraid ... you know you want to do this.'

Another form of coercion is physical coercion. Physical coercion involves physical force or threat of physical force or bodily harm if the target does not engage in sexual activity (e.g., Mahoney, Shively, & Traw, 1986; Struckman-Johnson, 1988). Examples of physical force include, 'He forced himself on me and I couldn't get away' or 'I tried to stop him but he physically forced me' (Struckman-Johnson, 1988, pp. 238–239).

Although both men and women experience sexual coercion within heterosexual relationships, few studies examine men's victimization (Poppen & Segal, 1988). Specifically, of the few studies examining sexual assault of men, most men were assaulted by another man rather than a woman (Muehlenhard, Goggins, Jones, & Satterfield, 1991). One possible contributor to women's victimization, particularly caused by physical coercion, is the likelihood of a woman's inferior bodily strength (versus men's). Another contributor to sexual coercion may be the function of social and gender roles and what men and women are 'supposed' to do. This notion is explored in the following section.

Gender

When considering gender as a variable in regard to sexual coercion, we must consider men's and women's conditioning (e.g., gender roles, attitudes) as well as men's and women's perceptions of what sexual coercion and/or rape are. Embracing a gender identity of being 'masculine' or 'feminine' somewhat impacts perceptions of appropriate and inappropriate sexual behavior (Burke, Stets, & Pirog-Good, 1989).

Both women and men struggle with societal expectations in terms of sex and the personal or relational consequences of not engaging in sex (Anderson & Cummings, 1993). Even more complicated is that societal perceptions of the acceptability of men's and women's sexual behavior are sometimes diametrically opposed. Specifically, a woman who engages in sex is often perceived as a 'slut,' whereas views of a woman who abstains

range from being a good girl to 'frigid' (Muehlenhard & Cook, 1988) or a 'tease' in the eyes of some men (Giarrusso, Johnson, Goodchilds, & Zellman, 1979, cited in Muehlenhard & Schrag, 1991). Conversely, men who pursue women are 'real men,' whereas those who refrain from aggressive pursuit can be perceived as homosexual (Kuhn, 1996) or as refusing to engage in something that is expected of them (Struckman-Johnson, 1988). Thus, the stereotypical dichotomy exists: Men who are real men have sex and women who are ladies do not (e.g., Muehlenhard et al., 1991).

Traditional men (i.e., men who adopt traditional gender roles) hold more traditional values and expectations about dating (e.g., he asks, he pays, he initiates sexual behavior). Research suggests that traditional men, compared with non-traditional men, are more likely to find date rape justifiable (Muehlenhard, Friedman, & Thomas, 1985). Men, particularly traditional men, often perceive women as engaging in token resistance — saying 'no' when she really means 'yes' (Dull & Giacopassi, 1987). Some women actually engage in token resistance to preserve their reputation, whereas men often perceive the resistance as a cue to continue onward, even if the woman truly means 'no' (Muehlenhard & Hollabaugh, 1988). Berger, Searles, Salem, and Pierce (1986) argue that young adults often perceive men's pursuit of sex as part of the dating script and that the woman is at fault if she cannot control her sexually aggressive date.

It is not surprising that men and women often struggle with managing sexuality and sexual boundaries in their relationships. Evidence also suggests that what men and women deem to be 'rape' differ. For example, in a sample of nearly 3000 men, Koss (1988) found that 'most men (88%) who reported an assault that met the legal definition of rape were adamant that their behavior was definitely not rape' (p. 19). Similarly, women may engage in unwanted sexual behavior because of the man's constant badgering for sex (Muehlenhard & Schrag, 1991). Koss et al. (1987) report that 44 percent of women engaged in unwanted sexual intercourse because of constant pressure and arguing. According to Muehlenhard and Falcon (1991), men who adopt traditional gender roles are more likely to exercise verbal sexual coercion. Conversely, non-traditional men and women are more likely to sympathize with the victim (Pollard, 1992).

Attitudes toward women

Measures exist that assess men's and women's attitudes toward women, particularly men's and women's attitudes toward women who have been the target of sexual coercion or rape and the men who perpetrated the acts. As illustrated in the following section, measures of attitudes toward women closely relate to how men and women may view sexual situations. Some of these measures are reviewed below.

Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (RMA) (Burt, 1980; Burt & Albin, 1981). 'Rape myth' assumes little responsibility on the part of the perpetrator. Specifically, those accepting rape myths are inclined to cast responsibility for the unwanted sexual episode on the victim and to assume that the victim

could have avoided the situation if she really wanted to. Examples from the RMA scale include 'a woman who goes to the home or apartment of a man on their first date implies that she is willing to have sex' and 'any healthy woman could resist if she really wants to' (Burt, 1980, p. 223).

Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence (AIV) against Women Scale (Burt, 1980). The AIV assesses the acceptance of using force on a woman in order to obtain sex. Examples of items from the AIV scale include 'being roughed up is sexually stimulating to women' and 'many times a woman will pretend she doesn't want to have intercourse because she doesn't want to seem loose, but she's really hoping the man will force her' (Burt, 1980, p. 222).

Sexual Callousness Scale (Zillman & Bryant, 1982). This scale asks participants to respond to a number of items representing callous or insensitive beliefs regarding sexual activity. Examples of items from the Sexual Callousness Scale include 'pickups should expect to put out' and 'a woman doesn't mean 'no' unless she slaps you' (Zillman & Bryant, 1982, p. 14).

Adversarial Sexual Beliefs (ASB) Scale (Burt, 1980). The ASB contains items that assess a man's reported acceptability of using force on females in male/female relationships and beliefs that such behaviors lead to sexual gratification. Items from the ASB include 'men are only out for one thing' and 'a woman will only respect a man who will lay down the law to her' (Burt, 1980, p. 222).

Although this list of measures is certainly not exhaustive, they are well-known and often-used measures in research on sexual coercion. As illustrated, items on the various scales share common characteristics: (i) rape is not considered to be a serious crime, (ii) men acting as aggressors are only doing what 'men do' or what women 'expect or even want men to do', (iii) women often engage in token resistance (i.e., say 'no' when they mean 'yes') in an effort to preserve their reputation, and (iv) if a woman truly does not want to engage in sex, she could get out of the situation if she *really* wanted to.

Clearly, acceptance of such attitudes likely plays a role in both men's and women's behavior in relational or potentially sexual situations. Specifically, the man believes that he *should* persist and that the woman really wants him to, even if that 'want' is not voiced. Similarly, the woman believes that she should 'put out' because it's expected, she deserves to be treated in that way because she is a woman, or she could get away if she really did not want to have sex.

Past/current relationship

When rape is considered, stranger rape is typically thought of. Koss (1988) found that 60–75 percent of the rapes reported in the National Crime Survey were stranger rapes; however, 84 percent of the assaulted women in Koss' sample reported being assaulted by close acquaintances or dates. It is

possible that many do not report acquaintance or date rape to law enforcement officials as readily as they would stranger rape because the boundaries are less clear. Specifically, a woman who is the victim of date rape may be more likely to question herself (e.g., 'Maybe I asked for it? Maybe I sent mixed signals?') than a woman who is attacked and raped by a stranger. Whereas the latter is more easily identifiable as rape, many women involved in date rape often do not recognize that a rape actually occurred (Koss, 1985; Pollard, 1992).

Shotland (1992) argues that five forms of courtship rape exist, depending on the level of the relationship. The first three levels assume that no sexual activity has occurred in the relationship outside of the rape:

- (1) *Beginning date rape* occurs within the couples' first few dates;
- (2) *Early date rape* involves individuals who have been out a few times, but have yet to negotiate relational rules;
- (3) *Relational date rape* occurs when the individuals in the couple have negotiated their relational rules and believe that they know one another and have reduced uncertainty about one another;
- (4) *Rape within sexually active couples — no physical abuse or force*; and,
- (5) *Rape within sexually active couples — use of physical force*.

Similarly, some research suggests that a forced sex episode is less likely to be viewed as coercive or as date rape if the woman had engaged in sex with the man before. For example, Shotland and Goodstein (1992) found that individuals were less likely to acknowledge coercive sex as date rape if the woman had engaged in sex with the man 10 times prior to the episode (as opposed to once or twice). Additional research also suggests that women and men are less likely to view unwanted sex on a traditional date or a date in a closer relationship (versus with a stranger or pickup date) as rape (e.g., Jenkins & Dambrot, 1987; Koss, 1985; Pollard, 1992).

Alcohol and/or drugs

Research indicates that one-third to two-thirds of perpetrators and victims are under the influence of alcohol at the time of sexual assault (e.g., Koss & Dinero, 1989). Often, men will use drugs or alcohol to lower the inhibitions of their victims (Muehlenhard et al., 1991). Mosher and Andersen (1986) found that 75 percent of men in their sample used drugs or alcohol to persuade unwilling women to engage in sex. As well, perpetrators often use being under the influence as an excuse for their behavior (Levine & Kanin, 1987). Similarly, other findings support the notion that alcohol and drugs are used as coercive tools with unwilling partners (Christopher & Frandsen, 1990; Struckman-Johnson, 1988).

In instances of sexual contact, sexual coercion, and rape, alcohol and drugs also play a role for both the perpetrator and the victim. In a sample of nearly 1500, Koss (1988) found that a man's use of alcohol or drugs played a role in sexual contact 35 percent of the time, in sexual coercion 64 percent of the time, in attempted rape 54 percent of the time, and 73 per-

cent of the time in the case of actual rape. Similarly, Koss found that women had been using alcohol or drugs in 29 percent of the sexual contact incidents, in 31 percent of the sexual coercion incidents, in 58 percent of the attempted rape incidents, and in 55 percent of the actual rapes.

Coerciveness of strategy

Various forms of coercion exist (see Muehlenhard & Schrag, 1991 for a thorough review of more non-traditional forms of 'coercion'). For the purposes of this article, and as mentioned earlier, our focus will primarily be physical (e.g., pushing, holding person down, hitting, actual rape) (e.g., Koss, 1988; Struckman-Johnson, 1988) and verbal coercion (e.g., persuading, arguing, verbal pressure, threats, use of guilt tactics, use of degradation tactics) (e.g., Muehlenhard & Schrag, 1991).

Victim resistance

Resistance can take several forms, such as token resistance (e.g., saying 'no' when what really is meant is 'yes;' Muehlenhard & Hollabaugh, 1988), verbal resistance (e.g., 'No'), and physical resistance (e.g., fighting, hitting, slapping). As noted earlier, token resistance has typically been defined as an individual saying 'no' to sex when the individual has every intention of engaging in sex (Muehlenhard & Hollabaugh, 1988). Although evidence exists that both men and women engage in token resistance behaviors (Sprecher, Hatfield, Cortese, Potapova, & Levitskaya, 1994), the notion of token resistance is often focused on women (Muehlenhard & Rodgers, 1998). The following scenario indicates the equivocality conveyed by token resistance behavior: 'Tammy immediately pulled away from Dave and told him that she did not want them to get carried away. After she said this she placed Dave's hand on her breast' (Burgoyne & Spitzberg, 1992, p. 33).

Muehlenhard and Hollabaugh (1988) found that as many as 39 percent of women have admitted to engaging in token resistance at least once and 17 percent have admitted to making a practice of it. Problematically, many men interpret a woman's 'no' to mean 'yes' (Check & Malamuth, 1983). Specifically, men often interpret a woman's initial refusal as being coy, a tease, or as a bluff to protect her reputation. More recent research, however, provides additional support that token resistance is not specific to women (Muehlenhard & Rodgers, 1998). Muehlenhard and Rodgers examined 65 women's and 64 men's narratives describing experiences that were guided by long-used definitions of 'token resistance' in past research. Although their results indicate that both men and women engage in token resistance, the authors found that most men and women truly mean 'no' when they say 'no' to sex. These findings are consistent with previous research, because research to date has continually indicated that the majority of men and women do not engage in token resistance. Nevertheless, because research findings suggest that token resistance is practiced to a degree (e.g., Muehlenhard & Hollabaugh, 1988; Muehlenhard & Rodgers, 1998), it will be considered in this investigation.

Findings on verbal or physical resistance to sexual coercion have not been consistent (e.g., Atkeson, Calhoun, & Morris, 1989; Bart & O'Brien,

1985; Brady, Chrisler, Hosdale, Osowiecki, & Veal, 1991). Moreover, disagreement exists regarding whether to resist an attack or to acquiesce. Some research indicates that men or women who resist an attack are less likely to have a rape committed against them (Kleck & Sayles, 1990). Emmers and Allen (1995) found that men and women did not differ in overall resistance behaviors but that women engaged in more physical resistance behaviors than men.

Regarding the effectiveness of physical and verbal strategies, the findings are also mixed. Specifically, Ullman and Knight (1993) found that physical resistance strategies were most effective, whereas others found that they instigated contact (Siegel, Sorenson, Golding, Burnam, & Stein, 1989). Siegel et al. found that verbal resistance strategies were a more effective tool in resisting sexual coercion. Conversely, MacDonald (1971) found that a combination of physical and verbal strategies was most effective.

Rape justifiability

Numerous studies have examined a perpetrator's justifiability for date rape and/or victim willingness (e.g., Bostwick & DeLucia, 1992; Muehlenhard, 1988; Muehlenhard et al., 1985; Pollard, 1992). Several situations can contribute to perceived justifiability for the sexual act and victim willingness. Men and women who adopt beliefs that forced sex is acceptable in certain circumstances or that the woman is to blame if sex occurs are more likely to accept rape justifiable attitudes (Parrot, 1990).

To add to the ambiguousness of many dating situations, much research exists suggesting that either traditional or non-traditional dating scripts can lead to perceptions of rape justifiability or victim willingness. For example, research regarding who initiates and pays for a date suggests that the woman is in an awkward position regardless of whether she is the initiator or the receiver of the date proposal. Often times, the woman is the receiver of a date proposal because modern day dating rituals typically follow traditional dating scripts (Check & Malamuth, 1983). Unfortunately, some men perceive a woman's willing acceptance of his date proposal, his transportation, and his expenses as justification to be sexually aggressive (e.g., Harney & Muehlenhard, 1991). For example, Muehlenhard et al. (1985) found that, if a woman allows a man to pay for the date, the man may perceive the woman as being interested in sex. Similarly, research also suggests that, if the man paid for the date, men perceive a woman as being more willing to engage in sex and are also more likely to justify their pursuing sex without her consent (Muehlenhard, 1988). In a word, these findings support the notion that the man feels as though he is 'owed' something and the woman may feel as though she 'owes' him as well (Korman, 1983; Parrot, 1990).

Conversely, findings also suggest that women who initiate dates and/or pay for them are perceived as willing to engage in sex. Specifically, men may assume that such women are 'experienced,' 'loose,' or interested in sex. According to Muehlenhard (1988), men often interpret a woman's date invitation as an invitation for sex. For example, Muehlenhard and Scardino

(1985) found that men enter into first dates with particularly high sexual expectations when the woman initiated the date. As well, men often perceive the female as willing to engage in sex if she invites him to her apartment or place of residence during a date (e.g., Muehlenhard, 1988; Muehlenhard et al., 1985; Parrot, 1990). Other research has found similar results (Bostwick & DeLucia, 1992; Mongeau & Carey, 1996; Mongeau, Hale, Johnson, & Hillis, 1993).

Rationale for the model

To date, there have been several studies investigating key variables as they relate to sexual coercion. Pollard (1992), for example, examined many of the variables investigated in this present study (e.g., past/current relationship, rape justifiability, gender). Similar to past studies, Pollard found that date rape is often indirectly condoned in many situations. Specifically, factors such as traditional beliefs, victim attire, victim's controlling of the perpetrator, victim resistance, and nature of the perpetrator/victim relationship all play a role in who is perceived to be at fault and the seriousness of the act. Pollard did not, however, examine these variables with a modeling technique. The purpose of this present investigation is to go one step further and examine the predictive relationships among these variables as they relate to sexual coercion. As shown in Figure 1 and as explained below, a model is proposed that attempts to predict level of sexual coercion.

It was expected that sex would relate to attitudes toward women. Specifically, past research suggests that traditional men have less favorable attitudes toward women than women do (e.g., Pollard, 1992). Thus, it was expected that men would have less favorable attitudes toward women than women.

Attitudes toward women were expected to affect level of perceived coercion such that the more negative the attitudes an individual had about women, the less likely the individual would perceive that coercion took place. Those who view women negatively will be more inclined to find 'roughing up a woman' or 'laying down the law' to a woman as acceptable behaviors (Burt, 1980, p. 222; Zillmann & Bryant, 1982). Similarly, attitudes toward women were also expected to predict rape justifiability such that those who view women negatively would be more inclined to believe that the perpetrator's actions were justified and that the target could have resisted if necessary (Burt, 1980).

Alcohol usage was expected to predict rape justifiability as well as the level of coercion that took place. As reviewed earlier, past research indicates that perpetrators often use being under the influence of alcohol or drugs as justification for their behavior (e.g., Koss & Dinero, 1989; Levine & Kanin, 1987; Mosher & Anderson, 1986; Muehlenhard et al., 1991). Similarly, research indicates that alcohol consumption is related to the coerciveness of strategy used against the target. Thus, we expected that perpetrators who used alcohol would be more sexually coercive (e.g., Koss, 1988).

Based on previous research, past/current relationship was expected to predict the coerciveness of the strategy or strategies that were used. Specifically, if the perpetrator and the target had or have a current relationship, it was expected that coercive attempts would be more prevalent and perceived as more acceptable (e.g., Jenkins & Dambrot, 1997; Koss, 1985; Pollard, 1992; Shotland, 1992; Shotland & Goodstein, 1992).

Coerciveness of strategy was expected to predict victim resistance such that the more coercive the strategy used, the more inclined the target would be to resist. Similarly, coerciveness of strategy was also expected to predict the level of coercion that would take place such that the more coercive the strategy, the more likely the perpetrator would be to perceive that the coercion occurred (e.g., Koss, 1988; Muehlenhard & Schrag, 1991; Struckman-Johnson, 1988).

Victim resistance was expected to predict justifiability and level of coercion. Specifically, the more a target resisted, the less the perpetrator would feel the actions were justified. As noted in the literature on attitudes toward women, perpetrators often believe that they are justified in their actions until the target fights back (e.g., Burt, 1980). Such action by the target will likely lead the perpetrator to perceive his actions as unjustified. Similarly, the more the target resists, the more likely the perpetrator is to believe that coercion occurred.

Finally, justification was expected to predict the level of sexual coercion. Specifically, the more the perpetrator feels justified in his actions, the less likely he will be to perceive that coercion actually took place (e.g., Koss, 1988; Parrot, 1990).

Method

Literature collection

The data were collected by using electronic data bases (i.e., PsychInfo, FirstSearch, Article1st, ERIC, FastDoc) and a search of the reference sections in applicable articles. The search generated hundreds of articles that were examined for possible data relevant to this investigation. An article was considered relevant if there was an estimate of an effect that could be calculated between any of the eight relevant variables in this analysis. Studies examined for possible inclusion in the analysis involved either: (i) participants' responses to vignettes and scenarios, or (ii) participants' reports of actual experiences with sexually coercive situations.

We tried to find all the relevant studies that could contribute to this analysis to build a correlation matrix where each separate entry combined the relevant data. Across studies, the ability to find a correlation between each pair of variables indicated that we could conduct a complete test of the causal model. By using combined data sets, the sample size was substantially increased, making our test of the model more powerful. The analysis presented in this article should be considered preliminary, despite the examination of numerous studies. Specifically, several articles were examined but eventually coded as non-useable because (i) the study was a literature review or was qualitative in nature, (ii) the study did not contain useable data (e.g., multivariate methods

were used and a zero-order correlation matrix was not provided by the authors), (iii) the article did not meet the coding criteria (e.g., the study involved scenarios of a stranger jumping out of the bushes and raping a target), (iv) the study involved assessments of ways to resist coercion, or (v) the article involved data that were published in another article. As a result of the search, the authors were able to build a correlation matrix for the following variables: (1) sex, (2) attitudes toward women, (3) past/current relationship, (4) alcohol, (5) coerciveness of strategy, (6) victim resistance; (7) rape justifiability; and, (8) level of coercion. The coding for each of the eight variables is described below.

Sex of perpetrator. The sex of the perpetrator was coded as 0 = female or unknown or 1 = male.

Attitudes toward women. As mentioned earlier in the review, attitudes toward women were coded by examining each study's use of instruments that measured this variable. Participants' scores for measures such as the RMA, AIV, ASB, and Sexual Callousness scales were appropriately coded and included. Higher scores reflect more negative attitudes toward women.

Past/current relationship. Past/current relationship was coded according to each article's reporting of the relational status between the perpetrator and the target. Specifically, relational status was coded as acquaintance (1), casually dated in the past (2), casually dating presently (3), seriously dated in the past (4), seriously dating presently (5), engaged in the past (6), engaged presently (7), or married (8). Higher scores reflect more advanced relationships.

Alcohol. Alcohol was coded according to whether the perpetrator did not use alcohol (0) or did use alcohol (1).

Coerciveness of strategy. Coerciveness of strategy was coded according to each article's reporting of the perpetrator's use of no coercion (0), verbal coercion (e.g., persuading, verbal pressure, threats, use of guilt tactics, use of degradation tactics) (1) or physical coercion (e.g., pushing, holding the person down, hitting, actual rape) (2). Higher scores reflect more severe coercion.

Victim resistance. Victim resistance was coded according to the article's mention of tactics used by the target in coercive situations. Specifically, resistance was coded as no resistance (0), token resistance (1), verbal resistance (e.g., 'No') (2), or physical resistance (e.g., hitting, slapping, pushing the perpetrator away) (3). Token resistance was measured by the article's use of instruments that examined token resistance (e.g., Muehlenhard & Hollabaugh, 1988). Higher scores reflect higher levels of resistance.

Rape justifiability. Several studies examined the perpetrator's justifiability for date rape, sexually coercive behavior, or perceptions of the target's willingness (e.g., Bostwick & DeLucia, 1992; Muehlenhard, 1988; Muehlenhard et al., 1985). Many studies examined both perpetrator justifiability and target willingness because a perpetrator's perception of a target's willingness influenced his justifiability for the act. Many studies used 1–7 scales to examine both constructs, with some asking participants to respond to vignettes. Examples of items from the scales include, 'Given this information, do you think Mary wants to have intercourse with John?' to assess victim willingness and, 'If it turned out

that Mary did not want to have intercourse with John, would John be justified in doing it against her wishes?' to assess justifiability (Muehlenhard, 1988, p. 23). In this study, higher scores reflect the perception that the coercive behavior was justified.

Level of coercion. Coercion was coded according to the article's reports of actual outcomes or participants' perceived outcomes of the situation. Specifically, attempted sexual behavior, actual sexual behavior, and actual rape were coded. However, many articles did not contain a clear description of the specific level of coercion that took place and just reported if it occurred. Therefore, in the present analysis, coercion was coded as not occurring (0) or as occurring (1).

Statistical analysis

In the first step of the analysis, the authors conducted a meta-analysis on the existing eight variables. Hundreds of articles were analyzed and over 100 ($k = 121$) cases were eventually extracted and used, yielding an overall sample size of 40,043. Given the magnitude of the task, meta-analysis is the appropriate technique for the first step in this project and is explained in depth below.

Overview of meta-analysis. Meta-analysis is a systematic quantitative technique used to examine relationships among variables. Although not without its limitations, meta-analysis continues to grow in popularity among researchers as a useful and valuable research tool. Given that the goal of this project was to provide a path analysis among the variables, meta-analysis offered a solid first step. Allen, D'Alessio, and Brezgel (1995) argue that meta-analysis provides the 'best prospect of providing an eventual consensus about what relationships exist ... establishing the existence of a particular effect represents a giant leap forward' (p. 260).

Another advantage of meta-analysis is that it guards against the occurrence of Type II error (i.e., failing to reject the null hypothesis when it is false). Social scientific studies experience approximately a 50 percent Type II error rate (Allen et al., 1995). Type II error is managed by either increasing alpha or increasing sample size. Meta-analytic summaries increase sample sizes such that effects that succumbed to weak power in solitary studies emerge when samples are combined.

Meta-analytic procedure. The first step in the analysis was the extraction of effects by a conversion to a common metric. After converting the effects to a common metric, the effects were then averaged to provide an entry into the second part of the analysis when testing the causal model. The procedures for extraction of effects and the averaging of the information are found in Hunter and Schmidt's (1990) work. The procedures are a standard part of meta-analysis and have been used in previous investigations (e.g., Allen, Bourhis, Emmers-Sommer, & Sahlstein, 1998).

Effects were corrected for attenuated measurement when reliability information was provided in the investigation. This correction is important because if the reliabilities among the variables are different, then the subsequent paths will not be accurate because some correlations will be differentially affected by the variation in the reliability of the measurement. That is, variables whose measures are lower in reliability would systematically produce lower correla-

tions and therefore underestimates of the relationship with other variables. This is contrasted with measures such as the self-report of sex where the expectation is of virtually perfect reliability (even when using a single item). For such measures, there would be little attenuation and therefore no reduction in the size of the effect observed based on a lack of reliability.

Effects were not tested for homogeneity. This produces the possibility that there are moderator or additional variables that may influence the nature of the system. While such a consideration deserves exploration, it should be pointed out that in a single study the correlations produced for analysis would be subject to the same possibilities. The results, however, should be interpreted with some caution, because the generalizability of the model may change if, and when, additional sources of variability are identified and included in the analysis. This possibility, however, is not unique to the use of meta-analysis and takes place whenever a causal modeling procedure is used. Other potential variables, by non-inclusion, may make any representation misleading.

Ordinary least squares (OLS) path-analysis overview. The OLS method of causal modeling takes the hypothesized model and treats the correlations as constrained. The technique assumes that the constrained correlations (and path coefficients derived) are accurate. The procedure then creates an expected matrix of correlations for the unconstrained relations (Duncan, 1975). This is similar to the procedure for confirmatory factor analysis where the procedure creates an expected matrix based on the hypothesized measurement model (Burrell, Donohue, & Allen, 1990; Hunter, 1980; Levine & McCroskey, 1990). The discrepancy from the hypothesized model is measured by summing the squares of the deviations from the expected model divided by the average variance of the correlation matrix. This is distributed as a chi-square statistic. The chi-square test is a measure of goodness-of-fit between the hypothesized model and the actual correlation matrix. The model under scrutiny in this investigation is non-recursive, because there is no 'loop' in the data where one variable ultimately both predicts and is predicted by the value of another variable. The model was tested using the OLS solution generated by Path (Hamilton & Hunter, 1989).

What the outcome of a path analysis provides is a test of whether the structure or relationships existing in the data are consistent with the hypothesized model. A significant chi-square would indicate that the hypothesized structure is inconsistent with the data. A non-significant chi-square does not provide proof that the model 'works,' because a large number of other models may also not be inconsistent with the data. A model that is not inconsistent does not provide proof of causality among the variables. The observed structural relationships may exist for reasons other than the hypothesized causality.

Results

Data summary

A summary of the data appears in Table 1. Table 1 indicates the number of studies (k), the size of the sample for the effect (n), and the average effect measured by a correlation coefficient. The effects were not tested for variability and, therefore, no assumptions about the homogeneity or lack thereof can be assumed. The summary correlation matrix serves as the basis for the test of the proposed model.

TABLE 1
Summary of effect sizes from studies

1. Sex	2. Attitudes toward women	3. Past/current	4. Alcohol	5. Coer.	6. VR	7. RJ	8. Level of coercion
1. Sex	.25 14 6317	.16 5 1585	.25 4 1995	.09 3 829	.03 2 617	.17 13 4502	.16 9 3648
2. Attitudes toward women		.05 3 961	.09 2 708	.11 4 1085	.35 1 417	.26 6 1926	-.25 11 2504
3. Past/current rel.			X	.15 1 357	.15 1 357	.17 4 1151	-.18 5 1888
4. Alcohol				.23 3 1390	X 1 132	.20 1 1728	-.10 3 1728
5. Coerciveness					.19 3 527	.091 6 1591	.22 7 1643
6. Victim resistance (VR)						-.26 2 407	.25 3 502
7. Rape justifiability (RJ)						-.24	5 1276
8. Level of sexual coercion							

Note. * All effects significant at $p < .05$. 'X' indicates no useable data available

The first row of the matrix indicates the average effect measured by a correlation coefficient (r)

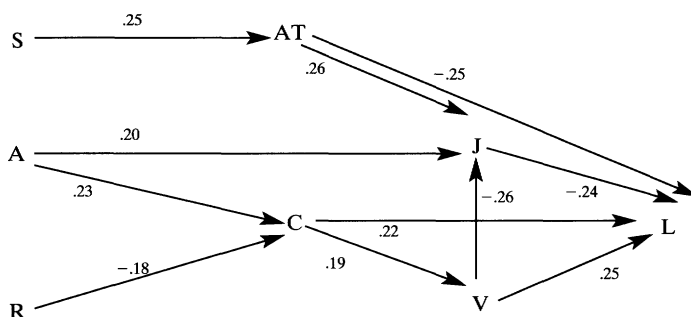
The second row of the matrix indicates the number of studies (k)

The third row of the matrix indicates the size of the sample for the effect (n)

Test of model

As shown in Figure 1, the results of the test indicate that the model is not inconsistent with the data $\chi^2(12, N = 1546) = 11.96, p > .05$. The model considers both perceptions of actions and retrospective reports of actions. The model suggests that men had more negative attitudes toward women than women (path = .25), that holding negative attitudes toward women was related to perceiving the rape as more justifiable (path = .26), and that those who view women negatively were less likely to perceive that coercion took place (path = -.25). Individuals who had a past or current relationship with the victim viewed the coerciveness of strategy as less harsh (path = -.18). Individuals under the influence of alcohol were more likely to be coercive (path = .23) and viewed the rape as more justifiable (path = .20). The coerciveness of a strategy to obtain sex related to victim resistance (path = .19) such that the more coercive the strategy, the more the victim resisted. Similarly, the more coercive the attempts were, the more likely that an individual perceived that sexual coercion occurred (path = .22). How much the victim resists was related to the perpetrator's justifying the act, such that the more the victim resisted, the less justified the perpetrator felt (path = -.26). Similarly, the more the victim resisted,

FIGURE 1
Tested path model.



Note. All paths significant at $p < .05$.

Key: S = sex, AT = attitudes toward women, R = past/current relationship, A = alcohol, C = coerciveness of strategy, V = victim resistance, J = rape justifiability, L = level of sexual coercion.

the more inclined the perpetrator was to believe that coercion took place (path = .25). Finally, the more the perpetrator justified the rape, the less likely he was to perceive that the coercion occurred (path = -.24). The results of the model are consistent with expectations derived from the proposed model.

Discussion

The results indicate a model that fits the available data. The model suggests that there is a contribution of various factors to the incidence of the assault or the perceptions of the attack. The sex of the person perceiving the actions does contribute to a difference in the model. Men have a more negative attitude toward women than do women. This is consistent with past research that found that women and non-traditional men typically support the woman in sexually coercive or date rape situations as opposed to traditional men (e.g., Pollard, 1992). It should be pointed out that the scales are targeted at attitudes about sexual behaviors and the treatment of women as sexual objects. Similarly, attitudes toward women relate to the coerciveness of the strategy used and rape justifiability. Individuals holding such attitudes believe that women enjoy being roughed up, that an unwilling woman would resist if she really wanted to refuse sex, and that it is acceptable and justifiable for a man to sexually coerce a woman (Burt, 1980).

Results of the model also indicate that alcohol impacts justifying the rape as well as the coerciveness of the strategy used, supporting past research that found that perpetrators often use alcohol to persuade unwilling victims

(e.g., Mosher & Anderson, 1986; Muehlenhard et al., 1991; Struckman-Johnson, 1990) as well as increase their level of coercion used as alcohol consumption increases (e.g., Koss, 1988). The model also supports the argument that perpetrators use being under the influence to justify their sexually coercive behavior (e.g., Levine & Kanin, 1987). The model indicates that the more a victim resists, the less justified the perpetrator will feel his actions are. This finding is consistent with much of the research on attitudes toward women, which suggests that a woman does not really mean 'no' unless she physically resists the perpetrator and that, if she really does not want to have sex, she will try every effort possible to get away (Burt, 1980). Coerciveness of strategy, victim resistance, and rape justifiability all impact the level or perceived level of sexual coercion that took place. Thus, the model indicates that the more coercive the perpetrator was and the more resistant the victim was, the greater the perception that sexual coercion occurred (e.g., Burt, 1980). Conversely, the more justified the perpetrator felt his actions were, the less likely he was to have perceived that coercion occurred (e.g., Koss, 1988). Finally, the model indicates that the more advanced the relational stage between the perpetrator and the victim, the more likely that coercive behavior will be used. This, too, supports past research regarding the impact of the relationship on perceptions of sexual situations (e.g., Koss, 1985; Pollard, 1992; Shotland & Goodstein, 1992).

The results of the meta-analysis and path model in this study allow us to draw several conclusions and implications. First, one of the greatest contributions of these findings is the understanding of how people perceive the acts of coercion in the context of a date, relationship, or setting that defines the application of the term 'rape.' The differences in perception, particularly by sex, indicate that acts are viewed as less coercive and probably less serious by men than women. The implications are vast, from men involved in dating relationships to men serving on juries. The results demonstrate that men are more likely to view coercion as acceptable and are less likely to view coerciveness as rape in an established relationship than in a new or casual relationship. Thus, men involved in a serious relationship who exercise sexual coercion are less likely to perceive themselves as doing anything wrong. Similarly, men serving on juries for trials involving date rape may be less inclined to perceive that coercion actually occurred in an established relationship. Established relationships typically involve high levels of self-disclosure, intimacy, and trust. Yet, an act of unwanted sexual coercion will leave the target feeling betrayed and confused while the perpetrator is confused by his partner's confusion; that is, he does not understand why she feels violated because he believes he has done nothing untoward. Future research and educational programs need to focus on communication between partners and their negotiation of sexual scripts and sexual activity within their relationship. As suggested by the findings in this study, making assumptions about sexual activity due to the nature of the relationship or generalizations made about women can be harmful.

Second, implications exist in terms of educational programs, training, and interventions for college students. It is important that students under-

stand that certain attitudes, expectations, and assumptions exist. Given the prevalence of alcohol use on college campuses, it is important for students to understand that alcohol predicts using coercion in dating situations. Moreover, alcohol use predicts the man justifying his actions and the more justified he believes he is, the less likely he is to feel that he has coerced his partner. It is particularly important for women to be informed that men hold more negative attitudes toward them than their female counterparts do, that this attitude predicts using coercive strategies on them, and that this attitude predicts the man feeling justified in his actions. Thus, it is imperative that women are made aware of certain cues and are not naive to the fact that being in an established relationship does not reduce the chance that coercive behavior will be exercised against them. To the contrary; the results of this study confirm that being in an established relationship is related to greater coercion. Thus, for men and women, it is important that partners communicate and establish negotiated rules early in their relationship and keep lines of communication open as the relationship progresses.

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