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RAPE MYTHS:
A THEORETICAL AND EMPIRICAL RE-EXAMINATION

BY

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ABSTRACT

Research in the field of sexual violence has increasingly focused on various cultural beliefs that appear to support the existence of rape, first termed *rape myths* in Burt (1980). Burt concluded that rape myth acceptance was strongly related to variables of *adversarial sexual beliefs*, *acceptance of interpersonal violence*, and *sex role stereotyping*. However, her measurement of these three constructs is problematic both theoretically and psychometrically. Most importantly, her scales appear to be saturated with negative and hostile attitudes toward women. Using alternative measures, we demonstrate that this element partially (but not completely) accounts for the strong relationship of the Burt concepts with rape myth acceptance. In addition, the *Hostility Toward Women Scale* exhibits more predictive power among the men than women. The pattern of results suggests (1) that rape myths may function differently for men than for women, and (2) the utility of exploring a more broadly defined construct of misogyny for understanding the acceptance of sexual violence toward women.

INTRODUCTION

There are a multitude of theories attempting to account for the existence and prevalence of rape. However, two ideas about the motivation for rape have historically predominated, i.e., the traditional "sexual theory" and the newer "cultural theory." The sexual theory of rape describes it as a sexual event, in which aggression is incidental to the achievement of sexual gratification. In the mid-1970's a new "cultural theory" of rape etiology came into prominence, a theory that described rape as an act of power and aggression rather than sexuality. It suggested that sexual aggression is justified and condoned by cultural attitudes and beliefs about violence against women. Writers such as Susan Brownmiller indicted our society as a "rape culture," attributing the perpetuation of sexual violence to specific cultural characteristics. Such depictions were supported by evidence that rape is not a universal phenomenon. For example, Sanday (1981) reported that a higher incidence of rape is found in those cultures that endorse attitudinal characteristics of interpersonal violence, male dominance, and sexual separation. In addition, Baron and Straus (1989) demonstrated that the prevalence of rape in a particular geographical area can be predicted from various sociocultural measures of women's relative status. Therefore, it seems clear that both aggressive motivation and cultural supports both play a role in the continuation of rape. Research based on this assumption has increasingly focused on particular cultural characteristics that may support this "rape culture."

Rape Myths

Research attempting to understand the characteristics of our "rape culture," has increasingly concentrated on the complex network of beliefs and attitudes that support sexual assault. One of the most fruitful lines of research in this area has been the examination of those cultural beliefs about rape termed "rape myths" (Burt, 1980). Burt defined rape myths as *prejudicial, stereotyped, or false beliefs about rape, rape victims, and rapists* (Burt, 1980, p. 217). A recent literature review has examined the body of research arising from Burt's original formulations, and proposed a somewhat modified characterization. Lonsway and Fitzgerald (1992) define rape

myths as *beliefs about rape that are generally false yet widely and persistently held, and that serve to deny and rationalize male sexual aggression against women.* Synthesizing their definition from analysis of a variety of disciplinary perspectives, (i.e., psychology, sociology, philosophy, and anthropology), they note that the essential characteristic of a myth is not the degree to which it represents empirical fact (many myths contain some "grain of truth") but rather the function it serves.[1] Lonsway and Fitzgerald (1992) argued that, consonant with other analyses of myth, rape mythology serves to justify current cultural practices, in this case the widespread sexual victimization of women. Therefore, more recent definitions of these myths emphasize their function in society in addition to their more general nature.

Examples of such rape myths include the belief that women lie about rape, that they elicit rape by their dress or behavior, that they enjoy it when it occurs, or that only "certain kinds" of women are raped, such as "loose" women or those with "bad reputations. Others state that only "certain kinds" of men rape, such as psychopathic men, those who are mentally ill, or men from minority groups. Although such characterizations may apply in widely publicized, isolated instances, they are generally untrue. The persistence of such beliefs has been attributed to the function they serve, which has been hypothesized to be the denial of sexual assault (e.g., Brownmiller, 1975). For example, although the most common myth suggests that women (falsely) "cry rape," FBI statistics indicate that the percentage of rape charges deemed to be false is less than 2%, no higher than for any other felony (LeGrand, 1977). In addition, research demonstrates that there are almost no reliably discriminating characteristics between individuals who report experience with sexual violence, and those who do not[2].

Other hypothesized functions of rape myths, include trivialization and justification of the crime (Brownmiller, 1975); oppression and social control (Burt, 1983); and women's denial of personal vulnerability. The evidence clearly suggests that significant acceptance of these rape myths characterizes the general population (Feild, 1978; Giacopassi & Dull, 1986; Gilmartin-Zena, 1987).

Original Conceptualization of Rape Myth Acceptance (RMA)

The first empirical examination of rape myths was reported in Burt (1980), which presented a causal model of rape myth acceptance (RMA) that included background, personality, experiential, and attitudinal variables (See Figure 1). Her analysis indicated that the cluster of attitudinal variables *(Sex Role Stereotyping, Adversarial Sexual Beliefs,* and *Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence)* was the strongest predictor of rape myth acceptance. Among this cluster, the strongest single predictor was *Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence;* background and personality variables only predicted rape myths acceptance when mediated by the attitudinal cluster of variables. Burt suggested that the strong predictive power of these attitudinal variables

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Insert Figure 1 about here

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provided support for feminist theories of rape that implicate cultural forces in the continuation of sexual aggression.

In the decade since Burt (1980) first defined and investigated rape myths, her original 19-item *Rape Myth Acceptance Scale* has remained the most widely utilized instrument. In addition, her measures of the attitudinal constructs related to RMA *(Sex Role Stereotyping, Adversarial Sexual Beliefs,* and *Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence)* are frequently utilized in the rape myth field (see Tables 1, 2, & 3). Studies using these instruments have supported Burt's original findings that adversarial sexual beliefs and acceptance of interpersonal violence are closely related to rape

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Insert Table 1 about here

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myth acceptance (Burt & Albin, 1981; Check & Malamuth, 1985; Quackenbush, 1989; Ward, 1988). There is also a large body of data suggesting that higher levels of rape myth acceptance are related to more negative and stereotypical attitudes toward women, operationalized primarily

by Burt's *Sex Role Stereotyping Scale* or Spence & Helmreich's (1972) *Attitudes Toward Women*

Insert Table 2 about here

Scale. (See, for example, Bunting & Reeves, 1983; Check & Malamuth, 1983; Check & Malamuth, 1985; Costin, 1985; Costin & Schwarz, 1987; Hall, Howard, & Boezio, 1986; Larsen & Long, 1988; Meyerson & Taylor, 1987; Quackenbush, 1989; Utigard, Thalberg, & Wheeler, 1986; Ward, 1988; Weidner, 1983). Only one reported study (Fischer, 1986) has failed to replicate this relationship.

Insert Table 3 about here

Thus, the literature has strongly supported Burt's conclusion that rape myth acceptance is closely related to attitudes regarding interpersonal violence, sex role stereotypes, and adversarial sexual beliefs; most of this research has utilized the measures developed by Burt (1980). Given the relatively wide acceptance of these measures, it is somewhat surprising that research has not specifically examined their structure, psychometric properties, and theoretical basis.

Re-Examining the Original Conceptualization

In the eleven years since Martha Burt first defined and investigated rape myths, there has been a virtual explosion of research in this field. Literally hundreds of studies have examined the properties and associations of rape myth acceptance, many of them using Burt's (1980) original *Rape Myth Acceptance Scale*. As noted, much of this research has supported her original conclusions that individuals who endorse cultural myths about rape also endorse the use of violence as a means of solving interpersonal problems, believe in traditional roles for women, and tend to think that relationships between the sexes are marked by manipulation and deceit (Burt & Albin, 1981; Check & Malamuth, 1985; Quackenbush, 1989; Ward, 1988). However,

examination of the instruments which underpin this body of research suggests that they suffer from a variety of theoretical and psychometric shortcomings, and that the conclusions drawn from the research may be to some degree artifactual (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1992).

Psychometric Considerations. On the most concrete level, the wording of items in the *Rape Myth Acceptance Scale* is quite problematic with respect to both clarity and complexity. It is a sine qua non of reliability that scale items are written in such a way that all respondents interpret them in the same manner; this is not the case with the *Rape Myth Acceptance Scale*. For example, one item on the *RMAS* states, *A woman who is stuck-up and thinks she is too good to talk to guys on the street deserves to be taught a lesson.* Endorsement of this item does not necessarily provide information about the respondent's level of rape myth acceptance as the phrase "taught a lesson" is unclear in meaning. Possibly, the woman deserves to be harassed, insulted, degraded, or physically attacked; there are a variety of possible interpretations, only a few of which tap into RMA.

Similarly, another item states, *If a woman gets drunk at a party and has intercourse with a man she's just met there, she should be considered 'fair game' to other males at the party who want to have sex with her too, whether she wants to or not.* This scenario is much too narrow and specific to be a common rape myth; more importantly, it is far too complex to be reliable as it is impossible to determine to which of its several ideas the respondent is attending. Similarly problematic is the item, *Many women have an unconscious wish to be raped, and may then unconsciously set up a situation in which they are likely to be attacked*, which contains two separate propositions; it is quite possible to endorse one without the other. For example, respondents may believe that many women have an unconscious wish to be raped without concurrently believing that such women actually "set up" situations in which they are likely to be attacked; the reverse, of course, is also true. Thus it is unclear exactly what is being measured by these items, as respondents may endorse them for a variety of reasons.

Related issues are raised by items that ask for estimated percentages of women who report a

rape *because they are angry and want to get back at the man they accuse* or for some other reason. Such estimation is difficult and unreliable, and appears to assess knowledge of rape statistics rather than rape myth acceptance. A more effective way to word items about false charges would be to state that "most women lie about rape" or " women frequently lie about rape." This alternative wording more accurately reflects the nature of what is generally meant by rape myths, as well as conforming more closely to accepted standards for item writing.

An additional problem with the *Rape Myth Acceptance Scale* is found in the set of items that ask how likely a subject is to believe the following people if they were to report a rape: "your best friend, an Indian woman, a neighborhood woman, a young boy, a black woman, and a white woman." Response sets are highly likely on such an item since it appears as if the individual beliefs constitute one item rather than many. Item and factor analysis results could be skewed by the construction of items that appear as if they are only parts of a larger item. Factor analysis indeed revealed that all of these items clustered into one factor (Briere, Malamuth, & Check, 1985), and it is unclear whether this is due to conceptual similarity or artifactual response sets. This item is also scored differently than the rest of those on the *RMAS*, most of which are scaled using a 7-point Likert scale with responses ranging from *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree*. Two items ask for percentages, and are scaled with five possible responses: *almost all*, *about 3/4*, *about half*, *about 1/4*, and *almost none*. The final six items - concerning the veracity of rape reports by various classes of individuals - also offer five possible responses: *always*, *frequently*, *sometimes*, *rarely*, and *never*. Although explicit directions for scoring the *RMAS* are not described in Burt's (1980) article, the different items are apparently simply combined to provide a total score without taking into account the different scales and item types included.

A final consideration with respect to scale construction of the *Rape Myth Acceptance Scale* has to do with the use of various colloquial phrases such as *fair game*, *taught a lesson*, *asking for it*, *necking*, and so forth. Such phrases mean different things to different people. Equally important, they quickly become outdated and are highly culturally specific, thus precluding their

use with certain populations. Although slang phrases are difficult to avoid completely, as sexual communication often relies on such colloquialisms, they should be avoided to the extent possible. When they are included, care should be taken to pretest them systematically to determine the clarity of their meaning for all groups of respondents. Similar problems are apparent in several of Burt's measures, particularly the *Rape Myth Acceptance Scale*, *Adversarial Sexual Beliefs Scale*, and *Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence Scale*.

Theoretical Issues. There are also theoretical concerns with Burt's (1980) original measurement instruments. In particular, the *Rape Myth Acceptance Scale*, *Adversarial Sexual Beliefs Scale* and *Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence Scale* appear to lack content validity, which can only be established by sampling from the entire specified domain of potential statements. However, in the case of the *RMAS*, the domain itself has never been specified (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1992). Although several instruments have been constructed to assess rape myth acceptance,[3] and RMA has been considered a multidimensional construct (e.g., Briere, Malamuth, & Check, 1985; Burt, 1980; Feild, 1978), current measures vary extensively in the dimensions that are emphasized or neglected. Burt's (1980) *Rape Myth Acceptance Scale* places considerable emphasis on the characteristics and role of rape victims, but neglects other dimensions such as the characteristics of the rapist, the situation in which the crime occurs, or the role of society and community in the perpetuation of sexual assault. As a result, it is unclear which aspects of RMA account for the relationships reported in Burt (1980). If adequate content validity is to be attained, then investigators must specify the domain of possible rape myths and develop a measure that samples systematically from that domain.

A similar lack of content validity characterizes Burt's other measures. For example, examination of the *Adversarial Sexual Beliefs Scale* reveals that most of the items in the scale assess negative beliefs about women rather than adversarial sexual beliefs, per se. Specifically, only two of the items appear to assess hostility toward men, whereas the remaining six reflect negative beliefs about women. Thus, although the verbal definition of the construct states *the*

expectation that sexual relationships are fundamentally exploitative, that each party to them is manipulative, sly, cheating, opaque to the other's understanding, and not to be trusted, its operational definition is almost exclusively concerned with the notion that women are deceitful and manipulative. Therefore, it seems reasonable to raise questions about the construct validity of the *Adversarial Sexual Beliefs Scale*. We suggest that the important relationship here appears to be between rape myth acceptance and *hostility toward women*, a relationship with different theoretical implications than those of the term *adversarial sexual beliefs*. Research on the convergent and discriminant validity of these two concepts would be useful and important for clarifying these issues.

Finally, the construct validity of the *Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence Scale* is not well established since most of the items assess acceptance of *violence against women*. If this scale indeed measures mainly the endorsement of violence against women, the accepted relationship between a more general acceptance of violence and rape myth acceptance is thrown into question. Until a measure of more general attitudes toward interpersonal violence is developed, the relationship with RMA is unclear. This is particularly critical issue as the cultural theory of rape motivation rests on the assumption that rape is an expression of aggression rather than sexuality. Thus, the relationship of general attitudes toward violence to rape myth acceptance is critical to an assessment of the cultural theory.

It is also important to note that many of the items on the *Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence Scale* reflect sexual aggression. A more appropriate operationalization of this construct (general attitudes toward violence) would consist of statements about violence that are devoid of sexual context, and that reflect tolerance of interpersonal violence in a wide variety of situations, contexts, and levels (e.g., corporal punishment, capital punishment, the use of force between nations, as well as to settle disputes between individuals).

It is reasonable to suggest, therefore, that the *Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence Scale* and the *Adversarial Sexual Beliefs Scale* commonly used in investigations of rape myth acceptance are

actually assessing a basic *hostility toward women*. Such a distinction has important theoretical implications for a re-examination of the original conceptualization of rape myth acceptance and the nomological net of its correlates. In addition to this major theoretical distinction, there are a number of psychometric considerations discussed above that limit the potential of Burt's (1980) measurement instruments and conclusions.

Reconceptualization of Burt's Model

The present paper provides evidence for our contention that the measurement instruments presented in Burt (1980), and utilized in the majority of studies in the rape myth field, are theoretically problematic and psychometrically weak. Despite such criticisms, we emphasize that the significance of this research cannot be overstated, as it has immense potential for the understanding of sexual assault. As Bunting and Reeves (1983) declared,

> As long as we allow these misconceptions [rape myths] to cloud our vision, we will not be able to develop treatment and prevention programs to deal adequately with victims and offenders, nor will our laws adequately deal with the crime of rape (p. 282).

Research must investigate these myths and develop strategies to uncloud our vision. As Burt's (1980) work with rape myths has been the most influential in this field, a reconceptualization of her theoretical model and a modified replication of her study appears overdue. Such a re-examination would strengthen the theoretical and empirical underpinnings of the rape myth field. To begin, we specifically propose to separate hostility toward women from the other constructs defined by Burt, i.e., adversarial sexual beliefs and acceptance of interpersonal violence. This will be accomplished by revising these two measures (*ASBS* and *AIVS*) to be gender neutral and to more closely parallel their respective constructs as theoretically defined. A separate scale assessing hostility toward women will also be included. Finally, an alternative measure of rape

myth acceptance will be utilized, one derived from a careful specification of the rape myth domain (Fitzgerald, Payne, Tanaka, & Hesson-McGinnis, 1992) and whose items are clear, concise, and easily interpretable. These procedures will allow a direct test of our hypothesis that the relationship of Burt's variables to rape myth acceptance was mostly attributable to the relationship of RMA to hostility toward women.

We hypothesize the following:

1. Scores on the *Hostility Toward Women Scale* will be more highly correlated with Burt's measures of adversarial sexual beliefs and acceptance of interpersonal violence than they are with "neutral" measures of these constructs.

2. The Burt measures will bear a stronger relation to RMA than alternative, gender neutral measures.

3. Hostility toward women will add little if any power to the ability of Burt's measures of adversarial sexual beliefs and acceptance of interpersonal violence to predict rape myth acceptance; but it will significantly improve the ability of "neutral" measures of adversarial sexual beliefs and acceptance of interpersonal violence to predict rape myth acceptance.

Simply stated, we believe that the critical construct in understanding rape myth acceptance is a basic *hostility toward women;* the strength of correlation and prediction of all other variables should pale in comparison.

METHODS

Overview

The study was conducted in three phases. The first involved a pilot sample of subjects, whose responses were used for *preliminary scale development;* a second group of subjects participated in the *scale development phase*, to examine the reliability and validity of the revised instruments. A final group of participants constituted the *core sample*, and generated correlation and regression data to test our hypotheses. These subsamples are described more fully below.

Subjects

A total of 429 University of Illinois students (199 male and 230 female) participated in the three phases of this study.

Phase 1: Pilot sample. The participation of 51 students for preliminary pilot analysis was obtained by offering money on a sign-up sheet posted in the psychology building. Thirty-six students were female and 15 were male.

Phase 2: Scale development sample. Responses from 200 students (100 female and 100 male) were used in scale development. Participation of these students was obtained through either introductory psychology or educational psychology courses; they received course credit for their participation. Average age of the students was 18.64.

Phase 3: Core sample. The core sample consisted of 176 students (92 women and 84 men). Their participation was also obtained through psychology or educational psychology, in exchange for course credit. Participants' average age was 18.14.

Instruments

Burt's Scales. To test our hypotheses, participants in the core sample (n = 176; 92 female and 84 male) were asked to complete three of the scales presented in Burt (1980). Participants responded to the 6-item *Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence Scale* (see Table 1), the 9-item *Adversarial Sexual Beliefs Scale* (see Table 2), and the 9-item *Sex Role Stereotyping Scale* (see Table 3). Coefficient *alphas*, as reported in Burt (1980) were: .80 for the *ASBS*, .59 for the

AIVS, and .66 for the *SRSS*. Analysis of the core sample in the present study yielded similar *alpha* coefficients for each of the scales: .79 for the *ASBS* .62 for the *AIVS*, and .66 for the *SRSS*.

Attitudes Toward Violence Scale (ATVS). All participants responded to a measure of attitudes toward violence consisting of 20 items derived from the 47-item *Attitudes Toward Violence Scale* presented in Velicer, Huckel, and Hansen (1989). This measure was included to assess information relevant to Burt's (1980) construct: "the notion that force and coercion are legitimate

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Insert Table 4 about here

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ways to gain compliance and specifically that they are legitimate in intimate relationships" (p. 218). We presented participants in the pilot (n=51; 36 women and 15 men) and development sample (n=200; 100 women and 100 men) with 20 items that were chosen to represent the theoretical domains described in Velicer, Huckel, and Hansen (1989): war, capital punishment, corporal punishment, interpersonal disputes, etc. Of these 20 items, 10 statements constitute a subscale that assesses attitudes toward violence in interpersonal relationships, and a subscale of 10 items assess attitudes toward violence in other domains.

Wording of several of Velicer, Huckel, & Hansen's (1989) items was modified to reflect lower levels of violence to reduce possible social desirability effects. Items were selected which did not over-emphasize sexual violence or violence against women. Typical items are "The death penalty should be part of every penal code," or "It is all right for a partner to hit the other if they are unfaithful." Items are written only in a positive direction; that is, higher scores reflect more accepting attitudes toward violence.

Analysis of pilot data (n=51; 36 female and 15 male) yielded Cronbach's *alpha* of .82. Data from the development sample (n=200; 100 female and 100 male) yielded an *alpha* of .87. Items were presented to participants in eight different randomized orders, and are provided in Table 4

along with additional psychometric information about the scale.

Adversarial Heterosexual Beliefs Scale (AHBS). Developed for the present study, this scale consists of 15 items written to reflect Burt's (1980) original definition of adversarial sexual beliefs: "the expectation that sexual relationships are fundamentally exploitative, that each party to them is manipulative, sly, cheating, opaque to the other's understanding, and not to be trusted" (p. 218). Thus, care was taken to ensure that the items focused on the *nature of the relationship* between the sexes, rather than on stereotypical characteristics of either sex. In addition to items assessing beliefs about heterosexual relationships, we included statements concerning the adversarial nature of working relationships, platonic friendships, and societal structure. To address this question, a pool of seventeen items was presented to the pilot sample (N = 50; 36 women and 15 men) and development sample (N = 200; 100 women and 100 men). These items sampled from several domains; for example, the adversarial nature of dating relationships, sexual

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Insert Table 5 about here

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situations, the workplace, societal structure, platonic friendships, etc. The items were presented to the pilot participants in eight different randomized orders.

As a result of preliminary analysis with the pilot sample (36 women and 15 men), one item was eliminated to strengthen internal consistency; analysis of data from the development sample (100 women and 100 men) resulted in the deletion of an additional item for similar reasons. Cronbach's *alpha* for the resulting 15-item scale was .78 on the development sample; items and item-to-total correlations are reported in Table 5. A typical item of the *AHBS* reads "It's impossible for men and women to truly understand each other," or " In all societies it is inevitable that one sex is dominant." Twelve of the items reflect an adversarial relationship between the sexes, whereas three reflect a non-adversarial relationship and are reversed for scoring.

Sexism Scale (SS). All participants responded to the 20-item *Sexism Scale* presented in

Rombough and Ventimighlia (1981); these authors report an *alpha* of .94 based on a sample of college students, working adults, and members of social and church clubs. This scale was included in the present study to assess the construct Burt (1980) termed "sex role stereotyping."

Insert Table 6 about here

A typical item reads, "Men make better engineers than women," or "Women should stay home and care for the children." Fourteen of the items were written to reflect traditional and restrictive beliefs about sex differences and sex roles, whereas six were written to reflect nontraditional, progressive beliefs about gender. Analysis of responses from the pilot sample (n=51; 36 women and 15 men) yielded a coefficient *alpha* of .87. Data from the development sample (n=200; 100 female and 100 male) yielded a similar *alpha* of .88. Item-to-total correlations for the scale are reported in Table 6. Items were presented to the participants in the original order as described in Rombough and Ventimighlia (1981).

Hostility Toward Women Scale (HTWS). Nineteen items derived from Check, Malamuth, Elias, & Barton's (1985) *Hostility Toward Women Scale* were presented to participants in the pilot sample (n=51; 36 female and 15 male). The 19 items were sampled from the original scale, and wording of several items was modified for clarification and sex-neutrality. Slightly different wording was provided for the male and female participants.[4] As a result of preliminary analysis, nine items were dropped to strengthen internal reliability, and the wording of several items was

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Insert Table 7 about here

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further modified to reduce the number of items requiring reverse scoring. Ten items were then presented to the development sample of 100 women and 100 men (n=200); this analysis yielded a coefficient *alpha* for the final scale of .83. Typical items include, "I am easily angered by

(other) women," or "Sometimes (other) women bother me just by being around." Items and item-to-total correlations for this scale are included in Table 7.

Rape Myth Scale (RMS). A *Rape Myth Scale* was developed from analysis of an item pool containing 95 reflecting the definition described earlier, i.e., *beliefs about rape which are generally false but widely and persistently held, and which function to deny and justify male sexual aggression.* Analysis of psychometric information from the development sample (n=200; 100 female and 100 male) and examination of item content and wording resulted in the selection of 19 statements for the final scale. The original item pool was developed to reflect the 19 facets of the rape myth domain identified by Fitzgerald, Payne, Tanaka, & Hesson-McGinnis (1992); one item was chosen to represent each facet, including myths about the victim's behavior and characteristics, the perpetrator's behavior and characteristics, characteristics of the rape scenario, etc. See Table 8 for a brief description of the 19 domains. Items were selected based on three

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Insert Table 8 about here

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criteria: clarity of wording and reference to sexual assault; least overlap of content with items in other domains; and psychometric considerations, such as mean level of endorsement and item variance. Coefficient *alpha* for the resulting 19-item *Rape Myth Scale* was .93 in the core sample (N=176; 92 women and 84 men), and is reported along with items and item-to-total correlations in Table 9.

The rape myth statements were presented in eight different constrained randomized orders:

Insert Table 9 about here

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specifically, item order was modified to insure that the first three statements in any presentation order clearly referred to sexual assault and one of the first five statements was reverse scored to

decrease risk of response bias.

Additional information. Participants provided information regarding sex, age, year in school, Greek affiliation, parental income, political identification, sexual orientation, and current dating status.

Procedure

All three phases of the present study were conducted using the same procedure. Subjects participated in same-sex groups of eight or fewer individuals that were run by a same-sex experimenter. Both verbal and written instructions were provided, and participants provided informed consent. All experimental items were presented on a computer monitor, and participants responded using numeric keys. The items *within* most of the questionnaires were randomized by a computerized program, and presented in eight different orders to the subjects. The ordering *between* questionnaires, however, was identical for all participants.

Responses and response latency were recorded by the computer. Participants with response times under 1.5 seconds were informed by the sound of a low-frequency tone that they had responded too quickly and reminded to consider each item carefully. Participants were provided with the option of responding to an alternative set of items (from the *Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory*) if the experimental materials were problematic or offensive in any way. No subjects exercised this option.

A written and verbal debriefing was provided, along with the opportunity to discuss concerns with the experimenter in a private setting after completing the experimental session. Subjects were thanked for their participation and provided resources to acquire information about the experiment or the issues involved (e.g., phone numbers of the local rape crisis center, student counseling center, etc.).

RESULTS

Scale means, standard deviations, and alphas for all scales are reported in Table 10. Our investigation was devised to test the general hypothesis that Burt's *Adversarial Sexual Beliefs Scale* and *Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence Scale* are saturated with negative attitudes toward women. Furthermore, we proposed that this was not true for the alternative measures. Thus, our first hypothesis suggested that Burt's scales would exhibit a stronger relationship with hostility toward women than would the alternative measures. The correlation matrix in Table 11 provides initial support for this idea. Hostility toward women was somewhat more strongly correlated with Burt's *Adversarial Sexual Beliefs Scale* (.52) than the alternative *Adversarial Heterosexual Beliefs Scale* (.49). Also, Burt's *Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence Scale* was more strongly correlated

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Insert Table 10 about here

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with hostility toward women (.40) than with the more general measure of attitudes toward violence (.34). Our second hypothesis stated that Burt's scales would bear a stronger relationship to rape myth acceptance than would the alternative measures; this was also supported by our data. Of the two measures of *adversarial sexual beliefs*, Burt's scale was more strongly correlated with rape myth acceptance (.70) than was the alternative measure (.59). Burt's *Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence Scale* was also more strongly correlated with RMA (.66) than was the alternative measure (.47). [The two measures of sex role stereotyping exhibited relationships with rape myth acceptance that were virtually equivalent (.49 vs. .46); however, we held no *a priori* expectations regarding these two scales.]

Insert Table 11 about here

Our final hypothesis predicted that the *Hostility Toward Women Scale* would <u>not</u> account for

any unique variance in rape myth acceptance. However, *HTWS* should increase the predictive power of these alternative measures in a regression of RMA. (We had no specific expectations for the measurement of sex role stereotyping.) As Table 12 demonstrates, our third hypothesis was supported by the data. When Burt's measures of *adversarial sexual beliefs* and *acceptance of interpersonal violence* were included in a regression predicting rape myth acceptance, the *Hostility Toward Women Scale* did not remain as a significant predictor. However, when the alternative measures of these two constructs were used as predictors, the *HTWS* did account for

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Insert Table 12 about here

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unique variance in rape myth acceptance. Further analysis also demonstrated that when scores on the *Hostility Toward Women Scale* were included as the first predictor in a regression, the addition of Burt's scales accounted for more variance than did the alternative measures.

The best linear combination for the prediction of rape myth acceptance is Burt's *Adversarial Sexual Beliefs Scale* and *Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence Scale*. These two variables combine to predict 58.1% of the variance in RMA. Indeed, when all of the experimental variables are included into the equation, only Burt's *ASBS* and *AIVS* remain significant as predictors. The figure of 58.1% is significantly higher than the 46.6% reported in Burt (1980), using the same three measures.[3] Interestingly, of all variables examined, hostility toward women is the single least powerful predictor of rape myth acceptance. Scores on the *Hostility Toward Women Scale* predict 20.4% of the variance of scores on the *Rape Myth Scale*.

Neither of the measures of sex-role stereotyping accounted for any unique variance in rape myth acceptance. However, there are relatively strong correlations between sex-role stereotyping and relevant variables. Clearly, an individual's acceptance of traditional sex-role stereotypes is an important variable in the nomological net surrounding rape myth acceptance. However, conceptual overlap of this construct with others appears to obscure its importance when utilizing

regression analysis.

When the core sample was separated by sex, most of the relationships were similar to those found for the combined sample (see Table 13). Among the men, Burt's measures of *adversarial sexual beliefs* and *acceptance of interpersonal violence* were more highly correlated with hostility

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Insert Table 13 about here

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toward women than were the alternative measures of these two constructs. However, responses from the women were somewhat different; our *Adversarial Heterosexual Beliefs Scale* was more highly correlated with hostility toward women than was Burt's *Adversarial Sexual Beliefs Scale*.

Our second hypothesis was supported when the sample was separated by sex. Specifically, responses from both the men and the women suggested that each of Burt's scales was more highly correlated with rape myth acceptance than were the alternative measures.

In general, the results of regression analysis of each sex supported the findings in the entire core sample (see Table 14). Among the women, the *Hostility Toward Women Scale* did not account for any unique variance in rape myth acceptance when Burt's variables were included as

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Insert Table 14 about here

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predictors; when the alternative measures were used as predictors, hostility toward women did increase the predictive power of the regression. However, the best linear combination of predictors for RMA among women was Burt's *Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence Scale* and *Adversarial Sexual Beliefs Scale* ($R^2 = .39$).

Among the men, the addition of hostility toward women as a predictor increased the predictive power of regression equations with both Burt's measures and the alternative scales. In addition, when hostility toward women was used as a single predictor of rape myth acceptance for the men,

it accounted for 40% of the variance; this figure is almost exactly twice that for the women ($R^2 = .21$). The best linear combination of predictors for the men were Burt's *AIVS* and *ASBS*, along with the *Hostility Toward Women Scale* ($R^2 = .59$).

DISCUSSION

Burt's central conclusion in her (1980) article suggested that her three measures (the *Adversarial Sexual Beliefs Scale*, *Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence*, and *Sex Role Stereotyping Scale*) predicted almost 50% of the variance in rape myth acceptance. Using our new *Rape Myth Scale*, Burt's conclusion was supported; in our experimental sample, her three scales predicted almost 60% of the variance in rape myth acceptance.

With respect to our specific predictions, the primary hypothesis was that two of Burt's scales (the *Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence Scale* and the *Adversarial Sexual Beliefs Scale*) were permeated with a component of hostility toward women. Correlation analysis supported this assumption; Burt's scales were more closely related to the *Hostility Toward Women Scale* than were the alternative measures. Regressions of rape myth acceptance scores provided additional support for this hypothesis, since the *Hostility Toward Women Scale* did not increase the predictive power of Burt's measures, whereas they did for the alternative measures. As predicted, the use of alternative, sex-neutral scales to measure Burt's constructs (*adversarial sexual beliefs*, *acceptance of interpersonal violence*, and *sex role stereotyping*) significantly decreases the predictive power of these constructs with rape myth acceptance. In our sample, Burt's (1980) three scales predicted almost 60% of the variance in rape myth acceptance. However, our alternative measures could account for only 42.% of the variance in RMA. Such a difference suggests that there is some element present in Burt's scales that increases their power for predicting rape myth acceptance above and beyond the constructs she has defined. Second, gender-neutral measurement of the constructs defined in Burt (1980) still manifested significant power for predicting rape myth acceptance. The power of adversarial sexual beliefs, attitudes toward violence, and sex role stereotyping in predicting 40-50% of the variance in RMA suggests that these are important variables to address in educational interventions.

We initially predicted that hostility toward women was the critical variable when studying rape myth acceptance; we assumed that the strong relationship between the two would be prominent

in both correlation and regression analysis. However, the absolute values of correlations between Burt's scales and the *hostility toward women* were somewhat lower than anticipated, ranging from .38 to .52. This suggests one of two things: either the construct of *hostility toward women* is not as closely related to Burt's measures as we had believed, or the *Hostility Toward Women Scale* may lack construct validity. An examination of this second idea will be possible only after theoretical psychometric work has been focused on the *HTWS*. It might be important for future work to examine a multidimensional construct of *misogyny* that includes acceptance of violence against women (*AIVS*), beliefs in traditional and restrictive roles for women (*SRSS*), adversarial attitudes toward women (*ASBS*), beliefs that women are responsible for rape (*RMS*), a basic hostility toward the entire sex (*HTWS*), and other elements as yet undiscovered.

Our most important finding was that the relationship between hostility toward women and rape myth acceptance appears to be more powerful for men than for women. The correlation between the two variables was significantly higher for men than women, and hostility toward women was more significant as a predictor of RMA for men than women. In fact, the best linear combination of predictors for men included scores on the *Hostility Toward Women Scale*. This is a significant finding since it bears on the question of sex-related differences in the nature and function of rape myth acceptance. We suggest that rape myth acceptance functions differently for men and women; that its critical function for men is to justify male sexual violence whereas for women it is to deny personal vulnerability. Our finding that correlation and regression analyses of rape myth acceptance differs by sex provides some of the first evidence in support of such an idea, particularly since it has revealed that hostility toward women might be more important in its relation to rape myth acceptance for men than for women. Such a result is in congruence with the theory of different functioning of rape myths for men and women; that is, hostility toward women would be a much more effective means of justifying male violence than denying it.

In summary, it appears that individuals who believe that the nature of the relationship of the sexes is adversarial in nature, who accept traditional sex roles, and who are relatively accepting

of violence are indeed more likely to accept common rape myths. Individuals who exhibit a basic hostility toward women are also more likely to accept rape myths, and this is especially true for men. However, this study was conducted exclusively with participants from a midwestern university, and our hypotheses require examination in other populations. College students have been targeted for educational interventions regarding these issues and it is reasonable to assume that any relationships discovered this population might be even more pronounced among more general groups. However, future work must examine such an idea.

In addition, future research should begin to focus on the function of these myths, especially in light of our suggestion that this may differ by sex. In particular, evidence might be brought to bear on this issue from investigation of the different domains of rape myths. Researchers have examined the relative levels of rape myth acceptance with each of the sexes, however this has only been done in absolute terms, i.e., total scores on some global measures of RMA. To date, no study has examined the acceptance of specific subsets of these myths in each of the sexes; for example, it is reasonable to assume that men are more accepting of myths that function to justify male perpetuation of sexual violence, whereas women are more accepting of myths that function to deny their personal vulnerability. Differing patterns of rape myth acceptance could then be re-examined in relation to the constructs in this particular project.

It seems clear that any reductions in the public acceptance of rape myths will create an increasingly compassionate atmosphere for survivors of sexual violence and an increasingly punitive one for perpetrators of such violence. In addition, such efforts would be aided immeasurably by an understanding of rape myth acceptance and the surrounding constellation of cultural beliefs and attitudes, as they relate and function differently for each of the sexes. Therefore, this area of research should continue to be a fruitful one for some time to come. The consequences of such work will not only contribute to the scientific body of knowledge surrounding these issues but can contribute to a reduction of those characteristics that make ours a "rape culture."

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NOTES

[1]Although we define rape myths as generally false, it is perhaps best to conceptualize them as stereotypes. As with other stereotypes, particular incidents of rape may or may not conform to the myths about them. Attitudes and actions toward individuals based on stereotypes, or myths, about that group are generally indefensible. The importance of these myths lies in the direct or indirect translation into actions and attitudes that may be socially undesirable.

[2]Studies have been unable to identify any reliably discriminating characteristics of rape survivors (Koss, 1985; Koss & Dinero, 1989). However, one study reported that women with more sexual experience may be at higher risk of being sexually assaulted than women with less experience (Koss, 1985). In addition, one study has reported that younger women are statistically more likely to be raped than older women (Hegemen & Meikle, 1980). Using a sexual experience inventory, Koss et. al. (1985) identified nonincarcerated rapists and found that this group of men could be discriminated from others only on the basis of differences in attitudes and sexual experience; measures of psychopathic tendencies did not discriminate between the groups (Koss, Leonard, Beezley, & Oros, 1985).

[3]The other measure that is commonly used to assess rape myth acceptance is the *Attitudes Toward Rape Scale* presented in Feild (1978). However, a multitude of other scales have been utilized, including: the *Rape Belief Scale* (Bunting & Reeves, 1983), the *Rape Attitudes Scale* (Utigard, Thalberg, & Wheeler, 1986), the *Acceptance of Rape Myths Scale* (Gilmartin-Zena, 1987), the *General Attitudes Toward Rape Scale* (Larsen & Long, 1988), and the *Attitudes Toward Rape Victims Scale* (Ward, 1988).

[4]For example, one item is written, "Sometimes women bother me just by being around" in the male version. The same item in the female version is written, "Sometimes other women bother me just by being around."

[5]Burt's regression predicting rape myth acceptance included several variables in addition to the three attitudinal variables: educational level, age, occupational status, experience of violence, media exposure to sexual assault, "romantic self image," and level of self-esteem.

Table 1

ACCEPTANCE OF INTERPERSONAL VIOLENCE SCALE (Burt, 1980)

	Burt's Sample alpha = .59	Present Study Our Sample alpha = .68
1. People today should not use "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth" as a rule for living.	.206	.518
2. Being roughed up is sexually stimulating to many women.	.363	.658
3. 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.	.345	.676
4. A wife should move out of the house if her husband hits her.	.254	.581
5. Sometimes the only way man can get a cold woman turned on is to use force.	.396	.635
6. A man is never justified in hitting his wife.	.318	.555

Note. Psychometric information reported in Burt (1980) are based on a sample of "598 Minnesota adults, aged 18 and over, during the moths of February-April, 1977" (Burt, 1980, p. 220). Information reported from the present study are based on responses of 100 female 100 male University students.

Table 2

ADVERSARIAL SEXUAL BELIEFS SCALE (Burt, 1980)

	Burt's Sample *alpha* = .80	Present Study Case Sample *alpha* = .79
1. A woman will only respect a man who will lay down the law to her.	.489	.591
2. Many women are so demanding sexually that a man just can't satisfy them.	.432	.615
3. A man's got to show the woman who's boss right from the start or he'll end up henpecked.	.566	.700
4. Women are usually sweet until they've caught a man, but then they let their true self show.	.562	.748
5. A lot of men talk big, but when it comes down to it, they can't perform well sexually.	.420	.357
6. In a dating relationship a woman is largely out to take advantage of a man.	.580	.628
7. Men are out for only one thing.	.452	.450
8. Most women are sly and manipulating when they are out to attract a man.	.578	.747
9. A lot of women seem to get pleasure in putting men down.	.381	.655

Note. Psychometric information reported in Burt (1980) are based on a sample of "598 Minnesota adults, aged 18 and over, during the mothe of February-April, 1977" (Burt, 1980, p. 220). Information reported from the present study are based on responses of 100 female 100 male University students.

Table 3

SEX ROLE STEREOTYPING SCALE (Burt, 1980)

	Burt's Sample	Present Study One Sample
	alpha = .80	*alpha* = .67
1. A man should fight when the woman he's with is insulted by another man.	.345	.509
2. It is acceptable for the woman to pay for the date.	.440	.344
3. A woman should be a virgin when she marries.	.631	.382
4. There is something wrong with a woman who doesn't want to marry and raise a family.	.435	.637
5. A wife should never contradict her husband in public.	.549	.625
6. It is better for a woman to use her feminine charm to get what she wants rather than ask for it outright.	.389	.474
7. It is acceptable for a woman to have a career, but marriage and family should come first.	.431	.644
8. It looks worse for a woman to be drunk than for a man to be drunk.	.466	.583
9. There is nothing wrong with a woman going to a bar alone.	.469	.488

Note. Psychometric information reported in Burt (1980) are based on a sample of "598 Minnesota adults, aged 18 and over, during the moths of February-April, 1977" (Burt, 1980, p. 220). Information reported from the present study are based on responses of 100 female 100 male University students.

Table 4

ATTITUDES TOWARD VIOLENCE SCALE (Velicer, Huckel, & Hansen, 1989)

(Cronbach's *alpha* = .873)

	Item-to-total Correlations
1. Violent crimes should be punished violently.	624
2. The death penalty should be part of every penal code.	.601
3 Any prisoner deserves to be mistreated by other prisoners in jail	486
4. Any nation should be ready with a strong military at all times.	570
5 The manufacture of weapons is necessary.	.601
6. War is often necessary.	545
7. The government should send armed soldiers to control violent university riots.	492
8. Our country should be aggressive with its military internationally.	624
9. Killing of civilians should be accepted as an unavoidable part of war.	544
10. Our country has the right to protect its borders forcefully.	.577
11. A child's habitual disobedience should be punished physically.	.649
12. Giving mischievous children a quick slap is the best way to quickly end trouble.	.638
13. Children should be spanked for temper tantrums.	.583
14. Punishing children physically when they deserve it will make them responsible and mature adults.	.638
15. Young children who refuse to obey should be whipped.	.575
16. It is all right for a partner to hit the other if they are unfaithful.	.319
17. It is all right for a partner to slap the other if insulted or ridiculed.	.356
18. It is all right for a partner to slap the other's face if challenged.	.362
19. An adult should whip a child for breaking the law.	.603
20. It is all right for a partner to hit the other if they flirt with others.	.361

Note. Psychometric information for scales is based on data from the development sample in the present study (n = 200; 100 men and 100 women).

Table 5

ADVERSARIAL HETEROSEXUAL BELIEFS SCALE (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1992)

(Cronbach's *alpha* = .777)

	Item-to-total Correlations
1. In dating relationships people are mostly out to take advantage of each other	543
2. If you don't show who's boss in the beginning of a relationship you will be taken advantage of later.	.545
3. Most people are pretty devious and manipulative when they are trying to attract someone of the opposite sex.	.483
4. Men and women are generally out to use each other.	.666
5 It's impossible for men and women to truly understand each other.	.463
6. In the work force any gain by one sex necessitates a loss for the other.	.493
7. When women enter the work force they are taking jobs away from men.	.565
8. Men and women cannot really be friends.	.413
9. Sex is like a game where one person "wins" and the other "loses."	.417
10. In all societies it is inevitable that one sex is dominant.	.538
11. It is natural for one spouse to be in control of the other.	.545
12. When it comes to sex, most people are just trying to use the other person.	.509
13. It is possible for the sexes to be equal in society.	.476
14 Men and women share more similarities than differences.	.444
15. It is possible for a man and a woman to be "just friends."	.373

Note. Psychometric information for scales is based on data from the development sample in the present study (n=200; 100 men and 100 women).

Table 6

SEXISM SCALE (Rombouts & Ventimiglia, 1981)

(Cronbach's *alpha* = .875)

	Item-to-total Correlations
1. The job of plumber is equally suitable for men and women.	.402
2. It's all right for the woman to have a career and the man to stay at home.	.556
3. Men make better engineers than women.	.678
4. Working women are too independent.	.613
5. Women should not be discriminated against in getting manual labor jobs.	.385
6. Driving a truck is equally suitable for men and women.	.575
7. It is more important for a wife to help her husband than to have a career herself.	.754
8. A woman should willingly take her husband's name at marriage.	.546
9. The husband should make the major decisions.	.711
10. The husband should handle the money.	.749
11. A woman should wait until her children are out of school before she goes to work.	.520
12. A woman's purpose in life should be to take care of her family.	.621
13. Women should stay home and care for the children.	.636
14. The major responsibility of the wife is to keep her husband and children happy.	.634
15. Women should have the same sexual freedom as men.	.408
16. Men are more emotionally suited for politics than are women.	.570
17. Young girls are entitled to as much independence as young boys.	.336
18. Men are better leaders than women.	.698
19. Women are more envious than men.	.454
20. Women have more intuition than men.	.125

Note. Psychometric information for scales is based on data from the development sample in the present study (n=200; 100 men and 100 women).

Table 7

HOSTILITY TOWARD WOMEN (Check, Malamuth, Elias, & Barton, 1985)

(Cronbach's *alpha* = .830)

	Item-to-total Correlations
1. I feel that many times women flirt with men just to tease them or hurt them.	.583
2. I believe that most women tell the truth.	.484
3. I usually find myself agreeing with (other) women.	.529
4. I think that most women would lie just to get ahead.	.682
5. (M) Generally, it is safer not to trust women. (F) It is generally safer not to trust women too much.	.773
6. When it really comes down to it, a lot of women are deceitful.	.763
7. I am easily angered by (other) women.	.702
8. I am sure I get a raw deal from the (other) women in my life.	.705
9. Sometimes (other) women bother me by just being around.	594
10. (Other) Women are responsible for most of my troubles.	.651

Note. Psychometric information for scales is based on data from the development sample in the present study (n=200; 100 men and 100 women).

Table 8

Outline of Theoretical Domains of Rape Myths

I. THE GENERAL NATURE OF RAPE

A. Rape is really "no big deal."

B. Rape is purely a sexual event, not an act of violence.

C. Rape is an inevitable, natural event.

D. Only certain types of men rape.

E. Only certain types of women are raped.

F. Rape only happens in very specific places/situations.

G. Women lie about rape.

II. RAPE IN SPECIFIC INSTANCES

A. DENIAL

It couldn't have been a rape because...

1. she didn't fight back enough.
2. there was no violence involved.
3. she implicitly agreed to have sex.
4. she miscommunicated her lack of consent.

B. JUSTIFICATION

It might have been a rape, but...

1. she asked for it by acting seductively.
2. she caused it by her own carelessness/stupidity.
3. she deserved it.
4. she led him on.
5. he didn't really mean to do it.
6. she really wanted it to happen.
7. she enjoyed it.

Table 9

RAPE MYTH SCALE (Fitzgerald, Payne, Tanaka, & Hesson-McGinnis, 1992)

(Cronbach's *alpha* = .891)

	Item-to-total Correlations
1. When women talk and act sexy, they are inviting rape.	.684
2. When a woman is raped, she usually did something careless to put herself in that situation.	.587
3. Any woman who teases a man sexually and doesn't finish what she started realistically deserves anything she gets.	.655
4. Many rapes happen because women lead men on.	.720
5. Men don't usually intend to force sex on a woman, but sometimes they get too sexually carried away.	.567
6. In some rape cases, the woman actually wanted it to happen.	.636
7. Even though the woman may call it rape, she probably enjoyed it.	.569
8. If a woman doesn't physically fight back, you can't really say that it was a rape.	.592
9. A rape probably didn't happen if the woman has no bruises or marks.	.552
10. When a woman allows petting to get to a certain point, she is implicitly agreeing to have sex.	.725
11. If a woman is raped, often it's because she didn't say "no" clearly enough.	.563
12. Women tend to exaggerate how much rape affects them.	.579
13. When men rape, it is because of their strong desire for sex.	.524
14. It is just part of human nature for men to take sex from women who let their guard down.	.497
15. A rapist is more likely to be Black or Hispanic than White.	.383
16. In any rape case one would have to question whether the victim is promiscuous or has a bad reputation	.637

- TABLE CONTINUES -

	Item-to-total Correlations
17. Rape mainly occurs on the "bad" side of town.	.419
18. Many so-called rape victims are actually women who had sex and "changed their minds" afterwards.	.680
19. If a husband pays all the bills, he has the right to sex with his wife whenever he wants.	.536

Note. Psychometric information for scales is based on data from the development sample in the present study (n = 200; 100 men and 100 women).

Table 10

Psychometric Information on Measurement Instruments

Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence Scale (Burt, 1980)	
Coefficient alpha	.625
Mean Response	2.274
Standard Deviation	.907

Attitudes Toward Violence Scale (Velicer, Huckel, & Hansen, 1989)	
Coefficient alpha	.873
Mean Response	2.881
Standard Deviation	.893

Adversarial Sexual Beliefs Scale (Burt, 1980)	
Coefficient alpha	.788
Mean Response	2.872
Standard Deviation	.917

Adversarial Heterosexual Beliefs Scale (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1992)	
Coefficient alpha	.777
Mean Response	2.598
Standard Deviation	.759

Sex Role Stereotyping Scale (Burt, 1980)	
Coefficient alpha	.657
Mean Response	2.991
Standard Deviation	.904

Sexism Scale (Rombough & Ventimiglia, 1981)	
Coefficient alpha	.875
Mean Response	2.712
Standard Deviation	.911

- TABLE CONTINUES -

Hostility Toward Women Scale (Check, Malamuth, Elias, & Barton, 1985)		*Rape Myth Scale* (Fitzgerald, Payne, Tanaka, & McGinnis, 1992)	
Coefficient alpha	.830	Coefficient alpha	.891
Mean Response	3.081	Mean Response	2.386
Standard Deviation	1.100	Standard Deviation	.873

Note. Psychometric information for scales is based on data from the development sample in the present study (n=200; 100 men and 100 women).

Table 11

Pearson Correlation Matrix of Scale Scores

CORE SAMPLE: n = 176 (92 Women and 84 Men)

	AIVS	ASBS	SRSS	ATVS	AHBS	SS	HTWS	RMS
AIVS	1.000							
ASBS	0.613	1.000						
SRSS	0.420	0.536	1.000					
ATVS	0.476	0.511	0.509	1.000				
AHBS	0.543	0.698	0.381	0.453	1.000			
SS	0.468	0.495	0.621	0.515	0.424	1.000		
HTWS	0.407	0.520	0.380	0.337	0.494	0.344	1.000	
RMS	0.663	0.704	0.491	0.470	0.589	0.456	0.452	1.000

Note. AIVS = Burt's *Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence Scale*, ASBS = Burt's *Adversarial Sexual Beliefs Scale*, SRSS = Burt's *Sex Role Stereotyping Scale*, ATVS = Velicer, Huckel, and Hansen's (*Attitudes Toward Violence Scale*, AHBS = Lonsway and Fitzgerald's *Adversarial Heterosexual Beliefs Scale*, SS = Rombough and Ventimiglia's *Sexism Scale*, HTWS = Check, Malamuth, Elias, and Barton's *Hostility Toward Women Scale*, RMS = Payne, Fitzgerald, and Lonsway's *Rape Myth Scale*.

Table 12

Regression Analysis of Core Sample: 92 women and 84 men

VARIABLE	STANDARD COEFFICIENT	P (2-TAIL)	SQUARED MULTIPLE R
1. CONSTANT	0.000	0.012	
2. AIVS	0.370	0.000	
3. ASBS	0.478	0.000	581
1. CONSTANT	0.000	0.220	
2. AIVS	0.359	0.000	
3. ASBS	0 446	0.000	
4. HTWS	0.074	0.206	.585
1. CONSTANT	0.000	0.382	
2. ATVS	0.255	0 000	
3. AHBS	0.474	0.000	.399
1. CONSTANT	0.000	0.099	
2. ATVS	0 230	0.001	
3. AHBS	0.398	0.000	
4. HTWS	0.178	0.009	.423
1. CONSTANT	0.000	0.000	
2. HTWS	0.452	0.000	.204

- TABLE CONTINUES -

VARIABLE	STANDARD COEFFICIENT	P (2-TAIL)	SQUARED MULTIPLE R
1. CONSTANT	0.000	0.012	
2. ASBS	0.478	0.000	
3. AIVS	0.370	0.000	0.581

Note. AIVS = Burt's *Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence Scale*, ASBS = Burt's *Adversarial Sexual Beliefs Scale*, SRSS = Burt's *Sex Role Stereotyping Scale*, ATVS = Velicer, Huckel, and Hansen's (*Attitudes Toward Violence Scale*, AHBS = Lonsway and Fitzgerald's *Adversarial Heterosexual Beliefs Scale*, SS = Rombough and Ventimiglia's *Sexism Scale*, HTWS = Check, Malamuth, Elias, and Barton's *Hostility Toward Women Scale*, RMS = Payne, Fitzgerald, and Lonsway's *Rape Myth Scale*.

Table 13

Pearson Correlation Matrix of Scale Scores by Sex

CORE SAMPLE: WOMEN (n=92)

	AIVS	ASBS	SRSS	ATVS	AHBS	SS	HTWS	RMS
AIVS	1.000							
ASBS	0.544	1.000						
SRSS	0.513	0.519	1.000					
ATVS	0.419	0.366	0.420	1.000				
AHBS	0.421	0.523	0.312	0.301	1.000			
SS	0.575	0.368	0.597	0.362	0.317	1.000		
HTWS	0.510	0.534	0.418	0.339	0.561	0.451	1.000	
RMS	0.625	0.567	0.449	0.330	0.399	0.427	0.459	1.000

CORE SAMPLE: MEN (n=84)

	AIVS	ASBS	SRSS	ATVS	AHBS	SS	HTWS	RMS
AIVS	1.000							
ASBS	0.562	1.000						
SRSS	0.294	0.516	1.000					
ATVS	0.452	0.552	0.553	1.000				
AHBS	0.507	0.739	0.375	0.487	1.000			
SS	0.335	0.511	0.622	0.568	0.413	1.000		
HTWS	0.410	0.624	0.366	0.376	0.549	0.300	1.000	
RMS	0.584	0.698	0.501	0.489	0.563	0.395	0.632	1.000

- TABLE CONTINUES -

Note. AIVS = Burt's *Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence Scale*, ASBS = Burt's *Adversarial Sexual Beliefs Scale*, SRSS = Burt's *Sex Role Stereotyping Scale*, ATVS = Velicer, Huckel, and Hansen's (*Attitudes Toward Violence Scale*, AHBS = Lonsway and Fitzgerald's *Adversarial Heterosexual Beliefs Scale*, SS = Rombough and Ventimiglia's *Sexism Scale*, HTWS = Check, Malamuth, Elias, and Barton's *Hostility Toward Women Scale*, RMS = Payne, Fitzgerald, and Lonsway's *Rape Myth Scale*.

Table 14

Regression Analyses of Core Sample Separated by Sex

REGRESSION ANALYSIS OF CORE SUBSAMPLE: 92 WOMEN

VARIABLE	STANDARD COEFFICIENT	P (2-TAIL)	SQUARED MULTIPLE R
1. CONSTANT	0.000	0.000	
2. AIVS	0.450	0.000	
3. ASBS	0.322	0.001	.464
1. CONSTANT	0.000	0.006	
2. AIVS	0.423	0.000	
3. ASBS	0.290	0.004	
4. HTWS	0.089	0.361	.469
1. CONSTANT	0.000	0.182	
2. ATVS	0.230	0.022	
3. AHBS	0.330	0.001	.208
1. CONSTANT	0.000	0.262	
2. ATVS	0.174	0.079	
3. AHBS	0.179	0.112	
4. HTWS	0.299	0.010	.266
1. CONSTANT	0.000	0.000	
2. HTWS	0.459	0.000	.211

- TABLE CONTINUES -

REGRESSION ANALYSIS OF CORE SUBSAMPLE: 84 MEN

VARIABLE	STANDARD COEFFICIENT	P (2-TAIL)	SQUARED MULTIPLE R
1. CONSTANT	0.000	0.018	
2. AIVS	0.280	0.003	
3. ASBS	0.540	0.000	.541
1. CONSTANT	0.000	0.633	
2. AIVS	0.255	0.004	
3. ASBS	0.370	0.000	
4. HTWS	0.296	0.002	.594
1. CONSTANT	0.000	0.558	
2. ATVS	0.282	0.006	
3. AHBS	0.426	0.000	.378
1. CONSTANT	0.000	0.606	
2. ATVS	0.221	0.018	
3. AHBS	0.221	0.032	
4. HTWS	0.427	0.000	.502
1. CONSTANT	0.000	0.029	
2. HTWB	0.632	0.000	.399

- TABLE CONTINUES -

Note. AIVS = Burt's *Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence Scale*, ASBS = Burt's *Adversarial Sexual Beliefs Scale*, SRSS = Burt's *Sex Role Stereotyping Scale*, ATVS = Velicer, Huckel, and Hansen's (*Attitudes Toward Violence Scale*, AHBS = Lonsway and Fitzgerald's *Adversarial Heterosexual Beliefs Scale*, SS = Rombough and Ventimig[illegible]'s *Sexism Scale*, HTWS = Check, Malamuth, Elias[illegible]d Barton's *Hostility Toward Women Scale*, RMS = Payne, Fitzgerald, and Lonsway's *Rape Myth Scale*.

Figure 1

Causal relationships of rape myth acceptance with variables of: background, beliefs/attitudes, personality, and experience (Burt, 1980).