

Relationships Among Self-Blame, Acknowledgement Status, Perpetrator Gender, and
Drug and Alcohol Use in Male Victims of Unwanted Sexual Experiences

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ABSTRACT

The current study investigated the relationships among acknowledgement status, three types of self-blame (i.e., characterological, behavioral, overall), alcohol or drug consumption around the time of the experience, and perpetrator gender in men who were victims of rape or an unwanted sexual experience. Participants were 39 male undergraduate college students. Results indicated that behavioral self-blame is more prevalent than characterological self-blame. It also was found that men blamed themselves more when they were victimized by another man than when they were victimized by a woman. Alcohol or drug consumption was not found to be related to acknowledgement status or self-blame. Additionally, acknowledgement status did not differ by perpetrator gender, and there was no relationship with any of the types of self-blame. Information obtained by this study significantly adds to the research investigating unwanted sexual experiences in men and demonstrates the importance of continuing research with this population.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Research on male rape, although it has increased significantly over the last two decades, is still far behind the research with women. Parallel research with women has shown that post-rape correlates, such as self-blame, may contribute negatively to a victim's recovery (Littleton & Breitkopf, 2006; Moor & Farchi, 2011) and that there are factors related to the amount and type of self-blame a victim experiences. Factors such as acknowledgement status in female victims (Frazier & Seales, 1997) and alcohol consumption in male victims (Weiss, 2010) are related to self-blame. Studying male rape victims is different than studying female rape victims, however, because there are other factors, such as perpetrator gender, that also may be related to self-blame. Unfortunately, research studying self-blame and its relationship with perpetrator gender, alcohol consumption, drug use, and acknowledgement status is very limited for male rape victims. The purpose of the current study was to examine the relationships between self-blame and acknowledgement status, self-blame and drug/alcohol use, acknowledgement status and drug/alcohol use, and acknowledgement status and perpetrator gender.

Many people, who are not knowledgeable on the topic of male rape, believe that men become rape victims only during childhood or while incarcerated or that men who are raped must be gay (Singh, 2004). Research has shown, however, that rape occurs in a variety of populations, including male adults who are not incarcerated (Davies, Pollard, & Archer, 2006) and that it is a distressing experience for men (Aosved, Long, & Voller, 2011; Mezey & King, 1989). Although prevalence research varies, the 2010 National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey indicated that approximately 1.6 million

men in the United States have been raped in their lifetime (Black et al., 2011). Research in this area is difficult because of the individual factors associated with rape. Victim characteristics, such as enrollment in college, sexual orientation, relationship to the perpetrator, acknowledgement status, and alcohol/drug use, are all important factors when studying male rape, but the differences among victim experiences complicate the research.

Research has shown that male rape victims often experience long-term negative correlates (Mezey & King, 1989; Walker, Archer, & Davies, 2005). The negative correlates may affect how a victim perceives his experience and how well he is able to recover. These negative correlates, such as self-blame, have been studied more extensively in women than men. Although both men (Walker et al., 2005; Weiss, 2010) and women (Littleton & Breitkopf, 2006) engage in self-blame, self-blame may manifest differently in men than in women. Weiss (2010) suggests that men may engage in self-blame in order to cope with the situation, while at the same time maintain their sense of masculinity. Additionally, male rape is believed to be a crime that is largely under-reported (McLean, 2013), which may be related to societal issues, such as traditional sex role beliefs and male rape myths.

The majority of sex crimes are perpetrated by men (Turchik & Edwards, 2012) against women and children (Singh, 2004), but nevertheless, research has shown that men can be victims of rape and other unwanted sexual experiences, as well (Turchik & Edwards, 2012). Societal recognition and perception of male rape victims, however, are significantly different than that of female rape victims. Specifically, women who are

victims of rape are treated as victims, whereas male rape victims are marginalized. The literature suggests that men may be treated differently because of societal beliefs in male rape myths and sex roles (Turchik & Edwards, 2012) and that male victims may not report their experience for fear of being perceived as weak (Romaniuk, 2012). Although the current study does not specifically address male rape myths and traditional sex roles, it is necessary to review these concepts in order to understand the negative correlates that male rape victims experience, such as self-blame.

Male rape myths are defined as false beliefs about men who are raped and the characteristics of their perpetrators (Struckman-Johnson & Struckman-Johnson, 1992). Although there are many male rape myths, the most highly endorsed are that men cannot be raped outside of incarceration (or at all), men who are raped must be gay, and/or that men are too physically strong to be overpowered (Donnelly & Kenyon, 1996). The belief (of the victim and society) in traditional sex roles also may contribute to a victim's decision to report the rape. In our culture, as described by Herek (1986), masculinity entails being strong, aggressive, and dominant. Therefore, the traditional sex role of masculinity implies that men should be able to ward off attacks and be the pursuer and controller of sexual encounters (Donnelly & Kenyon, 1996). Furthermore, if a man is raped he must have "shown some unmanly weakness to provoke or permit the assault" (Chapleau, Oswald, & Russell, 2008, p. 612). It may be a combination of the aforementioned factors that not only contributes to the distress felt by many men who have experienced a rape, but also to the difficulty of researching rape in men.

Researching and understanding rape in any population is difficult, but men pose several unique challenges. The lack of a consistent definition of what constitutes rape poses a significant problem with identifying male rape victims and obtaining an accurate prevalence estimate in the general population, as well as across subpopulations (e.g., male college students and gay men). Additionally, the various characteristics associated with rape (e.g., self-blame, negative correlates, acknowledgement status) and the lack of research on these characteristics and their relationship to a victim's recovery significantly hinder societal understanding of male rape.

General Prevalence of Rape and Unwanted Sexual Contact

Prevalence estimates of male rape and unwanted sexual experiences are inconsistent, and research indicates that some populations may be at a greater risk of victimization than others. Basile, Chen, Black, and Saltzman (2007) surveyed 4,807 adult men from the general population about occurrences of unwanted sexual experiences over the last 12 months and about forced sex during their lifetime. Unwanted sexual experience was defined as "any sexual activity when you did not want to, including touch that made you uncomfortable" (Basile et al., 2007, p. 440). Forced sex was defined as "any type of vaginal, oral, or anal penetration or intercourse in situations against your will" (Basile et al., 2007, p. 440). Their results indicated that approximately 1% of men had experienced unwanted sexual contact in the last 12 months and that 2% had experienced forced sex at some point during their lifetime. The majority of forced sex victims (69%) had this experience before the age of 18 years old (Basile et al., 2007).

Whether victims of forced sex over the last 12 months were included in the unwanted sexual contact group was not specified.

Sorenson, Stein, Siegel, Golding, and Burnam (1987) also examined male sexual assault in the general population by conducting surveys in conjunction with the Epidemiologic Catchment Area Program. Sexual assault victims were identified by answering "yes" to a question that addressed being pressured or forced to have sexual contact, including touching and intercourse. Sorenson et al. (1987) found that 9% of men who completed the survey had at least one sexual assault in their lifetime. This higher rate, compared to the prevalence found in the general population (Basile et al., 2007), may be related to the population studied (40% Hispanic), as it was not stratified to be representative of the United States. Another possible explanation of the discrepancy could be because of definitional differences (i.e., what the authors identified as sexual assault). Although these rates of sexual assault alone warrant a need for further research, even higher prevalence of rape and unwanted sexual experiences have been found in college student populations.

Conway, Mendelson, Giannopoulos, Csank, and Holm (2004) employed a victimization questionnaire that they developed to assess adult sexual assault. Out of the 100 male students who participated, 8% reported forced attempts, and 5% reported forced acts of adult sexual abuse since the age of 16 years old (Conway et al., 2004). Aosved et al. (2011) also collected data from male college students, but used an extended version of the Sexual Experiences Survey (SES, Koss & Gidycz, 1985). Aosved et al. (2011) classified participants as adult sexual assault survivors if they:

Reported having experienced attempted or completed anal or vaginal intercourse, oral-genital contact, and/or object penetration by use of force or threat of force, by use of drugs or alcohol resulting in the victim's inability to give consent, or by methods of coercion, as well as men who reported completed sexual contact occurring due to use of force or threat of force and by use of drugs or alcohol resulting in the victim's inability to give consent. (p. 289)

The results indicated that 14% of the men surveyed had experienced at least one adult sexual assault since the age of 17 years old (Aosved et al., 2011).

Tewksbury and Mustaine (2001) similarly investigated the prevalence of sexual assault in men enrolled in college ($N = 541$), except that they asked only about the previous 6 months. Sexual assault was split into two categories and was defined as either "general sexual assault" or "serious sexual assault" (Tewksbury & Mustaine, 2001). The sexual assault was classified as serious if the victim experienced force or was threatened with force. If there was not any force involved, actual or threatened, the sexual assault was classified as general. Of the men who participated in this study, 22% were victims of general sexual assault and 8% were victims of serious sexual assault during the previous 6 months (Tewksbury & Mustaine, 2001). Larimer, Lydum, Anderson, and Turner (1999) obtained similar results when looking at fraternity members' sexual activity over the past year. New male members of a campus Greek organization filled out a modified version of the SES (Koss & Oros, 1982). Unwanted sexual contact was defined by Koss and Oros (1982) as answering "yes" to any of the questions on the SES (Larimer et al.,

1999). Of the men surveyed, 21% had reported experiencing at least one type of unwanted sexual contact in the past year.

The previous studies did not distinguish between rape and sexual assault; in other words, rape victims were classified in the same group as sexual assault victims. A study conducted by Lehrer, Lehrer, and Koss (2013), however, did distinguish between the two groups. Their results indicated that approximately 10% of the male college student participants experienced forced sex and approximately 18% experienced an unwanted sexual experience since the age of 14 years old. The discrepancy in prevalence rates of unwanted sexual contact and rape among general population samples and other subpopulations, such as college students, is further widened when comparing men from the general population to gay and bisexual men.

Balsam, Rothblum, and Beauchaine (2005) assessed adult victimization in gay, lesbian, and bisexual populations. A modified version of the SES was utilized and results revealed that 28% of gay men and 45% of bisexual men reported an adult sexual victimization. Furthermore, they found that completed rape prevalence was significantly higher for gay (12%) and bisexual (13%) men than for heterosexual men (2%). The large differences in unwanted sexual experience prevalence rates among the general male population (1%; Basile et al., 2007) compared to male college students (8%; Tewksbury & Mustaine, 2001) and gay men (28%; Balsam et al., 2005) support the need for further study in these higher risk populations.

Definitions of Rape and Unwanted Sexual Experience

The definition of what constitutes rape varies and makes it challenging to study rape and unwanted sexual experiences, especially for male victims. Many definitions of rape are based on a state's legal definition, and some states specify that rape must involve sexual intercourse. Sexual intercourse is further defined as vaginal penetration in some states (American Prosecutors Research Institute as cited in Peterson, Voller, Polusny, & Murdoch, 2011); therefore, according to some state laws, men cannot be raped (Peterson et al., 2011). To help address the problem of definitional differences across states, the United States Department of Justice developed a national definition of rape (U.S. Department of Justice, 2012). The new definition is now used by the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Uniform Crime Report and defines rape as "the penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus with any body part or object, or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person, without the consent of the victim" (U.S. Department of Justice, 2012, p. 1).

Older methods of identifying victims were developed using state-specific definitions. The Sexual Experiences Survey's (SES) definition is based on Ohio's former definition of rape (Ohio Revised Code as cited in Koss, Gidycz, & Wisniewski, 1987), and it was defined as:

Vaginal intercourse between male and female, and anal intercourse, fellatio, and cunnilingus between persons regardless of sex. Penetration, however slight, is sufficient to complete vaginal intercourse or anal intercourse. No person shall engage in sexual conduct with another person . . . when any of the following

apply: 1) the offender purposely compels the other person to submit by force or threat of force, 2) for the purpose of preventing resistance the offender substantially impairs the other person's judgment or control by administering any drug or intoxicant to the other person. (p. 166)

Since the original development of the SES (Koss & Oros, 1982), which was gender specific in its questions (e.g., "Has a man ever forced his penis into your vagina when you did not want him to?"), other researchers (e.g., Osman, 2011) have modified the questions and definitions to be gender neutral so that male victims also may be identified.

An important factor in most current definitions of rape is the lack of consent from the victim. Victims may be unable to consent for a variety of reasons, including intoxication and age. Past definitions of rape did not include lack of consent from the victim as a necessary variable, such as the definition used by the National Crime Victimization Survey (Fisher, Cullen, & Turner, 2000). Consent from both people is required for any sexual activities, including those that do not involve sexual intercourse (e.g., sexual touching). Rather than being classified as rape, any sexual contact without consent is often referred to as an unwanted sexual experience. Erickson and Rapkin (1991) were one of the first to use the term unwanted sexual experience, but did not specifically define it. After reviewing the literature, it appears that an unwanted sexual experience is any sexual contact a victim experiences that does not meet the legal definition of rape, but is done without consent or through the use of force or threat of force. The terminology for unwanted sexual experience is used differently throughout the literature (e.g., sexual assault) and whether rape victims also are classified as

unwanted sexual experience victims varies by study. For example, Aosved et al. (2011) included participants who were rape victims in the category of sexual assault victims, but Basile et al. (2007) had separate groups for rape victims and sexual assault victims.

Types of Rape

Rape can be broken down into different types depending on the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator. Stranger rape, as described by Koss and Harvey (1991), occurs when the victim has never had any contact with the perpetrator until the rape. Acquaintance rape, also described by Koss and Harvey (1991), occurs when the victim has had some sort of contact with the perpetrator. Contrary to societal beliefs, the majority of experiences reported by male victims were committed by an acquaintance or in a dating situation (Struckman-Johnson, 1988; Walker et al., 2005). These findings are similar for women (Gross, Winslett, Roberts, & Gohm, 2006), male college students (Basile et al., 2007; Lehrer et al., 2013) and gay/bisexual men (Balsam et al., 2005). Frazier (1993), however, obtained different results indicating that about half of the sample of male victims who reported to an emergency room in Minnesota were assaulted or raped by a stranger. The nature of that study (e.g., how participants were obtained), however, likely contributed to these findings.

Characteristics of Male Rape and Unwanted Sexual Experiences

Female victims of rape and unwanted sexual experiences have been studied extensively. Until recently, men were either excluded from the studies, or their data were not used. Although the number of reports of male rape is believed to be increasing over the last couple of decades (McLean, 2013), reported prevalence rates are still believed to

be a small portion of the actual number of rapes that occur (Walker et al., 2005). Many characteristics of male rape are similar to those of female rape, but others are not. The relationship between perpetrator gender and victim gender is one of the characteristics that differs. The rape of women is committed more often by men than women. Frazier (1993) found that all of the women who reported to the hospital were raped by a person of the opposite sex, whereas all of the men were raped by a person of the same sex. The sexual preferences of these victims were not reported, but Balsam et al. (2005) and Davies (2002) found through a review of the literature that gay and bisexual men were more likely to be victimized by other men than women. In contrast, other studies have found that the rape and sexual assault of heterosexual men are more likely to be perpetrated by a woman than a man (Davies, 2002; Fiebert & Tucci, 1998).

Another characteristic that is often studied is the amount and type of coercion employed by the perpetrator. Coercion tactics used by the perpetrator take many different forms, including psychological intimidation, physical force, and use of weapons (Struckman-Johnson, 1988). Struckman-Johnson (1988) investigated the type(s) of coercion experienced by 23 adult male victims from the general population during their most recent victimization. She found that 52% were coerced using psychological tactics (e.g., blackmail), 10% through physical force (e.g., restraint), and 10% through intoxication (in which the person is unable to give consent).

Fiebert and Tucci (1998) also studied the sexual coercion of men, specifically college students. Sexual coercion was classified as mild, moderate, or severe, and the physical contact ranged from kissing and touching to forced sex. The findings of their

study indicated that 70% of the men had been sexually coerced, in some way, by a woman in the last 5 years. The majority of that 70% was comprised of mild (touch) and moderate (sex without physical force) coercion. Only 3% of the sample reported severe coercion, which involved the use of physical force or threats. Walker et al. (2005) found a higher percentage of physical force than previous studies (Fiebert & Tucci, 1998; Struckman-Johnson, 1988). Their results indicated that 80% of male victims experienced physical or violent force. Although mild and moderate force has been shown to be a common coercive tactic applied by perpetrators of male rape (Fiebert & Tucci, 1998; Struckman-Johnson, 1988), the belief that weapons are frequently used during a rape or unwanted sexual experience is a misconception. Studies show that perpetrators use weapons in less than half the victimizations (Frazier, 1993) and, sometimes, in as few as 10% (Walker et al., 2005).

There is a distinguishing factor among the studies by Walker et al. (2005), Struckman-Johnson (1988), and Fiebert and Tucci (1998) that may account for the large discrepancy in the amount of physical force used. Walker et al. (2005) may have obtained a higher percentage of coercion than Struckman-Johnson (1988) and Fiebert and Tucci (1998) because participants were asked to report characteristics of their experiences that occurred at any point in their lifetime, including childhood sexual assault. Struckman-Johnson (1988) and Fiebert and Tucci (1998), however, only assessed characteristics of adult sexual assaults. The nature of childhood sexual assault is different than adult sexual assault because children can be overpowered physically much easier than adults. Sexual assault perpetrators of adult men may use different coercion

tactics (e.g., intoxication) depending on the size of the victim relative to their own size. Coercion through intoxication may explain the relationship between the use of intoxicating substances and rape in adult male populations.

The consumption of alcohol is associated with male rape (Felton, Gumm, & Pittenger, 2001; Larimer et al., 1999; Lehrer et al., 2013; Struckman-Johnson, 1988). Struckman-Johnson (1988) reported that 10% of the male victims in her study were unable to give consent due to intoxication. Similarly, Lehrer et al. (2013) found that 8.9% of all male participants who reported forced sex had this experience while intoxicated. Tewksbury and Mustaine (2001) also identified some relationships between alcohol use and sexual victimization. They concluded that men who spend their leisure time in places where alcohol/drugs are consumed are at a greater risk of being sexually victimized than men who spend their time elsewhere (Tewksbury & Mustaine, 2001).

In summary, male victims of sexual assault are more likely to be victimized by an acquaintance or partner than a stranger (Struckman-Johnson, 1988; Walker et al., 2005). Research on perpetrator gender is mixed, and other factors (i.e., sample population and sexual orientation) may contribute to the mixed findings. Davies (2002) found through a literature review that heterosexual men are more likely to be victimized by women, but Frazier (1993), whose sample was obtained from an emergency room, reported that the perpetrator was more often another man. Sexual orientation of the victim may be related to perpetrator gender with studies finding that gay and bisexual men are more likely to be raped by another man (Balsam et al., 2005; Davies, 2002). It is clear that in most cases some type of coercion (mild coercion to physical force) is used by the perpetrator (Fiebert

& Tucci, 1998; Frazier, 1993; Struckman-Johnson, 1988; Walker et al., 2005). Lastly, alcohol consumption (Felton et al., 2001; Larimer et al., 1999; Lehrer et al., 2013; Struckman-Johnson, 1988) has been found to be related to male sexual assaults. In addition to identifying characteristics associated with male sexual assault, a number of negative correlates related to recovery from such an experience have been identified.

Negative Correlates

Experiencing rape or an unwanted sexual experience may have many negative consequences that persist after the experience. Perhaps one of the most severe negative correlates is that of revictimization. Aosved et al. (2011) found that men who were sexually abused as children were more likely to be sexually victimized as adults. Similarly, Frazier (1993) reported that 41% of adult male victims experienced a prior rape in their lifetime.

Depression is one of many psychological problems experienced by men after victimization. Walker et al. (2005) reported that 97.5% of male victims experienced depressive symptomology after being raped. Larimer et al. (1999) also studied depressive symptomology in male victims and compared them to a control group of nonvictims. Results indicated that men who were victims of unwanted sexual contact endorsed approximately 33% more depressive symptoms than nonvictims (Larimer et al., 1999).

Mezey and King (1989) identified other negative correlates, including increased feelings of vulnerability, anger, confusion regarding sexual orientation, self-esteem issues, emotional distancing, sexual dysfunction, and rape phobias. Additionally, some

men experienced flashbacks, social withdrawal, self-harm, abuse of alcohol and/or drugs, and anxiety (Walker et al., 2005). An additional negative correlate that is of particular interest to the current study is self-blame.

Self-Blame

Self-Blame is an overarching term that is used when victims place any blame for their rape or unwanted sexual experience on themselves. Janoff-Bulman (1979) identified two different types of self-blame: characterological and behavioral. Characterological self-blame occurs when the victims attribute the incident to stable characteristics of their personality (e.g., I am too trusting), whereas behavioral self-blame occurs when the victims make attributions in regards to the decisions they perceived as contributing to their sexual victimization (e.g., I should not have gone out at night alone).

Self-Blame has been studied more extensively in female victims. Research with women indicates that increased self-blame has been associated with more psychological problems and poorer recovery (Frazier & Schauben, 1994). The impact of self-blame on a male victim's recovery and postrape psychological problems has not been investigated to as great of an extent as it has been in women. Parallel research in women has shown increased self-blame to be associated with more psychological problems (Moor & Farchi, 2011), maladaptive coping (Littleton & Breitkopf, 2006), and revictimization (Miller, Markman, & Handley, 2007). The two most common types of self-blame studied in women are characterological and behavioral, and research has been conducted to identify if one type is more prevalent than the other. Littleton, Magee, and Axsom (2007) found that behavioral self-blame is more common than characterological self-blame among

female rape victims. There also is research with female rape victims that has studied whether one type of self-blame, characterological or behavioral, is more highly correlated with postrape problems. For example, women who experienced more distress (Koss, Figueredo, & Prince, 2002), as well as more psychological problems, such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (Ullman, Townsend, Filipas, & Starzynski, 2007), had higher levels of characterological self-blame than behavioral self-blame.

Even though specific variables related to self-blame have not been studied in men, there is research indicating that most men do engage in self-blame after being raped. Walker et al. (2005) investigated the negative correlates of male rape through the use of interviews and found that 82.5% of the male participants reported feelings of guilt and engaged in self-blame. Although the researchers do not distinguish between behavioral and characterological self-blame, the common themes reported by male rape victims were related to not being able to prevent the attack or putting themselves in a vulnerable situation (Walker et al., 2005). These ideations can be categorized as behavioral self-blame.

Another factor that is theorized to be related to self-blame in men is disempowerment (Weiss, 2010). Weiss (2010) suggests that failure to uphold their traditional masculine values creates an intrapersonal conflict that results in self-blame, because if they truly were masculine they should have been able to prevent the attack. In order to preserve their masculinity, in keeping with traditional male sex roles, men may self-blame as a way of coping. This is accomplished by taking *some* level of responsibility (self-blaming) for the incident in a way that does not diminish their

masculinity (Weiss, 2010). Through the use of interviews, Weiss (2010) identified that the most common explanation given by male rape victims for the rape was related to alcohol consumption in which victims would use their level of intoxication as a way to cope with their experience in a “manly” way. In other words, by using their intoxication as an explanation, men were behaviorally blaming themselves (e.g., It would not have happened if I had not consumed so much alcohol). Traditional sex roles also are associated with societal conflicts related to how others perceive male victims of sexual assault. Society’s inaccurate perceptions of male rape victims may contribute to fewer resources for male victims than the existing support for women. Furthermore, the resources that are available to assist rape victims in their recovery are often not equipped to help men and, in some cases, may contribute to the problem because of staff insensitivity and stereotypical beliefs in rape myths and sex roles.

Societal Support and Victim Blaming

Rape crisis centers, community counseling centers, and law enforcement agencies are located throughout the United States, but few people are trained in male sexual victimization. In fact, Donnelly and Kenyon (1996) state that out of 30 social service providers included in a study that dealt with rape, 11 did not provide any services to male victims, and out of the remaining 19 that did provide services to male rape victims, only 4 had done so over the past year. The stereotypical beliefs discussed previously were present in many of the agency representatives who participated. Responses such as “We don’t see men because so few get raped” and “Honey, we don’t do men. . . . What would you want to study that for? Men can’t be raped” were given when asked about male rape

(Donnelly & Kenyon, 1996, p. 444). Due to the prejudicial beliefs that exist in society and lack of social support, men are victimized during the rape by the perpetrator and revictimized after the rape by society. This may help explain why so few men report their rape or unwanted sexual experience to authorities.

A descriptive analysis by Walker et al. (2005) revealed that out of 40 men who met the legal definition of rape, the majority (35) did not report their experience to the police. Of those five men who did report their incident, four reported that they felt the police were “unsympathetic, disinterested, and homophobic” (Walker et al., 2005, p. 74). One participant who prosecuted his perpetrator described the court experience as distressing and stated that he often felt treated as the perpetrator rather than the victim (Walker et al., 2005).

Another problem often encountered by men who seek help from society is victim blaming. Davies, Pollard, and Archer (2001) found that men attributed more blame than women to the victim, regardless of the victim’s gender. The authors also found that female victims were blamed less, by both men and women, than male victims (Davies et al., 2001). One theory that is related to victim blaming and self-blaming is the just world hypothesis. The just world hypothesis theorizes that, in general, people get what they deserve because the world is a fair place (Lerner & Miller, 1978). When participants were given a narrative of a rape scenario that either depicted victims as “good” or “bad,” the victims who were depicted as “bad” were blamed more often than the “good” victims, regardless of victim gender (Whatley & Riggio, 1993). Furthermore, men believed more

strongly in a just world and blamed the male or female victims more than women did (Whatley & Riggio, 1993).

Similar to higher rape and unwanted sexual experience prevalence rates for gay and bisexual men, victims within the gay community also have been shown to be blamed more than heterosexual victims. Wakelin and Long (2003) reported that gay male victims were attributed more blame than heterosexual men or lesbians because gay men were perceived to be able to avoid victimization easier than heterosexual victims. Davies and McCartney (2003) obtained similar results, but further indicated that gay male victims were attributed more blame by heterosexual men than gay men. Furthermore, men have been found to blame gay men who were attacked by men more than heterosexual men who were attacked by men (Davies et al., 2006). The lack of societal support and the tendency of some people to blame the victims may be related to self-blaming behaviors, which, in turn, may affect whether the victims acknowledge that they have, in fact, been raped.

Acknowledgement Status

Most research on acknowledgement of male rape examines public acknowledgement (i.e., societal recognition that men are and can be raped). There is very little research that examines acknowledgement patterns of the victim himself. Rape victims are typically classified into one of two categories: acknowledged or unacknowledged. Acknowledged victims are those who have been raped, according to the law, and label themselves as rape victims (Koss, 1985). Unacknowledged victims are

those who also have been raped according to the law, but do not label themselves as rape victims (Koss, 1985).

Parallel literature examining acknowledgement status in women suggests that slightly less than 50% of victims are unacknowledged (Fisher, Daigle, Cullen, & Turner, 2003; Koss, 1985). Several variables, such as alcohol consumption (Layman, Gidycz, & Lynn, 1996) and relationship to the perpetrator (Kahn, Jackson, Kully, Badger, & Halvorsen, 2003), have been found to be associated with acknowledgement status in women. Layman et al. (1996) found that women whose rape involved alcohol consumption were less likely to acknowledge their experience as rape. Furthermore, Littleton and Henderson (2009) found that female victims were less likely to acknowledge their rape if they were in a relationship with the perpetrator. There also is research comparing postrape problems between acknowledgement groups in women, and the results are mixed. Frazier and Seales (1997) found that acknowledged female victims reported less behavioral self-blame than unacknowledged victims, but Layman et al. (1996) did not find any differences. Based on a review of the literature, these variables have not been investigated in men.

There is very little research on acknowledgement status of male victims. Given the previously discussed cultural issues and their influence on other factors involved in male rape, cultural issues also may play a role in acknowledgement status. Romaniuk (2012) suggests that men may be hesitant to acknowledge that they have been sexually victimized by a woman due to the association of being perceived as weak and less masculine (i.e., men should be able to protect themselves, especially against unwanted

advances from women). Romaniuk (2012) does not, however, theorize on the acknowledgement of men who were victimized by other men. As exemplified by the research in women, victim alcohol consumption and the victim's relationship with the perpetrator may be important factors in a male victim's decision to acknowledge (or not acknowledge) his experience as rape. To date, however, there is no research investigating these relationships.

Summary

Overall, the prevalence of rape and unwanted sexual experiences varies by the population studied. In the general population, Basile et al. (2007) found that 2% of men had experienced forced sex in their lifetime, and Sorenson et al. (1987) found 9% had experienced a sexual assault. Prevalence rates differ, however, with certain populations, such as college students (Larimer et al., 1999) and gay/bisexual men (Balsam et al., 2005), who experience higher rates of rape and unwanted sexual experiences. With regards to unwanted sexual experiences, Larimer et al. (1999) found that 20.7% of college fraternity men had been the victim of an unwanted sexual contact. Balsam et al. (2005) found that 45% of bisexual men and 28% of gay men had been the victim of coerced nonintercourse sexual activity. Percentages of rape also vary among these populations. Lehrer et al. (2013) found that 10% of male college students have experienced forced sex, and Balsam et al. (2005) found that 13% of bisexual men and 12% of gay men have experienced forced sex. The specific characteristics associated with these populations that place them at a higher risk, however, have rarely been examined.

There are a number of characteristics and factors that have been studied in relation to male rape, such as perpetrator gender. Research indicates that the gender of the perpetrator may be related to the victim's sexual orientation. For example, gay and bisexual men are victimized more often by men, whereas heterosexual men are more likely to be victimized by women (Davies, 2002). This is in contrast to findings with female victims who are almost always raped by men (Frazier, 1993). Another area that has been studied in male rape victims is the relationship between the victim and perpetrator. Although the research is mixed, most studies find that men (Balsam et al., 2005; Basile et al., 2007; Lehrer et al., 2013; Struckman-Johnson, 1988; Walker et al., 2005) and women (Gross et al., 2006) are more likely to be sexually victimized by an acquaintance than a stranger. Furthermore, their perpetrators rarely use severe physical force or weapons, but are more likely to use psychological coercion (Fiebert & Tucci, 1998; Struckman-Johnson, 1988). Additionally, in some instances, male victims are unable to give consent due to alcohol use (Felton et al., 2001; Larimer et al., 1999; Lehrer et al., 2013; Struckman-Johnson, 1988). Experiencing rape is not only distressing (psychologically and physically) at the time of the rape, but many male victims experience postrape problems, such as self-blame, that persist long after the initial experience (Walker et al., 2005).

Unlike the research with female victims, there is very little research that addresses whether one type of self-blame (characterological or behavioral) is more prevalent in male victims, but it is evident that male victims do engage in self-blaming behaviors (Walker et al., 2005). Similar research with women, however, indicates that behavioral

self-blame is more prevalent than characterological self-blame (Littleton et al., 2007). Self-blaming behaviors may manifest differently and may be caused by different factors for men than women. According to traditional sex roles, women are passive and taught to be dependent upon men, whereas men are supposed to be aggressive and strong (Walker, 1981). Therefore, the victimization of women is more culturally aligned with their sex role than the victimization of men. Weiss (2010) suggests that men may engage in self-blame in order to cope with the situation without losing their sense of masculinity. Lastly, the lack of resources for male rape victims (Donnelly & Kenyon, 1996) and the tendency for members of society to blame the victim (Davies & McCartney, 2003; Davies et al., 2001) also may be related to self-blame, but these relationships have not been explicitly investigated.

Although there is no current research regarding the extent of societal support for male victims of rape, Donnelly and Kenyon (1996) report that there are far fewer social services in the community for men than for women. Furthermore, when gathering information about the available resources, Donnelly and Kenyon (1996) found that stereotypical beliefs regarding male rape myths and sex roles were often present in these resources. Another issue encountered by male rape victims in society is the tendency for people to blame the victim. Davies et al. (2001) found that male victims were attributed more blame, by both men and women, than female victims. These tendencies of society may result in male victims engaging in self-blaming behaviors and not acknowledging their experience as rape.

The research on male rape victims' acknowledgement status patterns is almost nonexistent. There is, however, a large body of research concerning the acknowledgement patterns of women. The parallel research indicates that there are several characteristics associated with acknowledgement status, such as relationship to the perpetrator (Kahn et al., 2003) and alcohol consumption (Layman et al., 1996). With regards to the relationship between self-blame and acknowledgement status, Frazier and Seales (1997) found that acknowledged victims engaged in behavioral blame less often than unacknowledged victims, but Layman et al. (1996) did not find any significant differences in types of self-blame between acknowledgement groups.

In summary, research has shown that the rape and sexual assault of men is a serious problem and needs not only recognition, but more research (Graham, 2006). The negative correlates associated with male rape victims, such as depression and self-blame (Walker et al., 2005), have been demonstrated to be significant problems that men experience after being victimized. Unfortunately, there are many gaps in the literature. There is little to no empirical research examining self-blame in male rape and unwanted sexual experience victims. Therefore, there is no empirical research that examines whether one type of self-blame is more common than the other. There is, however, parallel research examining this relationship with women. Littleton et al. (2007) found that female victims engaged in more behavioral self-blame than characterological self-blame. Furthermore, there is no empirical research examining the relationship between acknowledgement status and self-blame in male victims. Frazier and Seales (1997) examined this relationship with female victims and found that acknowledged female

victims engaged in less behavioral self-blame than unacknowledged victims. Another study, however, did not find any relationship between acknowledgement status and self-blame (Layman et al., 1996). Additionally, the relationship between alcohol consumption and acknowledgement status in men also is understudied. Examining the research with female victims, however, indicates that female victims who report alcohol consumption around the time of the rape were less likely to acknowledge that they had been raped (Layman et al., 1996).

There are two areas of self-blame and acknowledgement status in men that do have available research. One area is the relationship between behavioral self-blame and intoxication. Men were found, through the use of interviews, to engage in behavioral self-blame by using their intoxication during the rape as an explanation for their victimization (Weiss, 2010). Next, a factor that is more exclusive to male victims than female victims is the relationship between perpetrator gender and acknowledgement status. The rape and victimization of women is almost always committed by men (Frazier, 1993). This relationship, however, is more complicated for male victims. For example, gay and bisexual men have been found to be victimized more often by other men (Balsam et al., 2005; Davies, 2002), but heterosexual men are more likely to be victimized by a woman (Davies, 2002). Romaniuk (2012) proposed that men may be less likely to acknowledge that they have been victimized by a woman due to the fear of being perceived as weak and less masculine. Therefore, there may be a significant relationship between acknowledgement status and perpetrator gender. There is no research, however, on the acknowledgement status of men who were victimized by other men.

Purpose of the Current Study

The main purpose of the current study was to examine self-blame in male victims of rape and unwanted sexual experiences. Specifically, this study examined whether behavioral self-blame was more common than characterological self-blame. Parallel research with women has found that female victims were more likely to engage in behavioral self-blame than characterological self-blame (Littleton et al., 2007). The current study also was interested in the relationship between self-blame and alcohol and drug use. Using interviews, Weiss (2010) identified that male victims often used alcohol consumption as an explanation for their victimization, which could be classified as behavioral self-blame. The current study also was interested in the relationship between acknowledgement status and self-blame. Although this relationship had not been previously investigated with men, there is similar research with women. Parallel research with women has found that acknowledged victims engage in lower levels of behavioral self-blame than unacknowledged victims (Frazier & Seales, 1997), but Layman et al. (1996) did not find any significant relationship.

In addition to examining the relationship between self-blame and acknowledgement status, the current study also was interested in factors that contributed to acknowledgement status. One factor the current study addressed was the relationship between perpetrator gender and acknowledgement status. Cultural factors suggest that men may be less likely to acknowledge that they have been victimized by a woman due to the fear of being labeled as weak and less masculine (Romaniuk, 2012). Another factor related to acknowledgement status that this study investigated was the use of drugs

or alcohol. Parallel research with women indicated that women who reported alcohol use during the rape or unwanted sexual experience were less likely to acknowledge that they had been victimized (Layman et al., 1996). Lastly, the current study provided descriptive information and expands the existing literature on male victims of unwanted sexual experiences and rape.

Hypotheses

1. It was hypothesized that male victims of an unwanted sexual experience or rape would have higher scores on the behavioral self-blame subscale than the characterological self-blame subscale.
2. It was hypothesized that male victims who reported using any amount of drugs or alcohol around the time of the rape or unwanted sexual experience would have higher scores on the behavioral self-blame subscale and the combined self-blame scale than men who did not report drug or alcohol use. There would be no differences on the characterological self-blame subscale.
3. It was hypothesized that unacknowledged male victims of an unwanted sexual experience or rape would have higher scores on the behavioral self-blame subscale, characterological self-blame subscale, and combined self-blame scale than acknowledged male victims.
4. It was hypothesized that men who were victimized by women would have lower rates of acknowledgement than men who were victimized by men.
5. It was hypothesized that male victims who reported using any amount of drugs or alcohol around the time of the rape or unwanted sexual experience

would be less likely to acknowledge that they had been victimized than male victims who did not report drug or alcohol use.

CHAPTER II

METHOD

Participants

Participants were recruited from the psychology research pool at a university in the United States. There were 440 participants (67% women and 33% men). For the purpose of the current study, only data from men who had been raped or had an unwanted sexual experience ($N = 39$) were used in data analysis. Demographic information for the 39 male participants is presented in Table 1. Participants were given either course credit or extra credit for their participation. Approval for the study was obtained from the Institutional Review Board of Middle Tennessee State University (See Appendix A). Further approval was obtained to increase the number of participants from 400 to 500 (See Appendix B) and to continue work on the current project for an additional year (See Appendix C).

Measures

Demographic information form. The demographic information form asked the participants' gender, age range (i.e., 18 - 21, 22 - 25, 26 - 29, 30 - 33, and over 33 years old), and ethnicity (Caucasian, African American, or other) (See Appendix D).

Sexual Experiences Survey. The revised Sexual Experiences Survey (SES) was developed by Koss et al. (2007) to assess for victimization and perpetration, and this survey includes questions that ask about the participant's sexual experiences. The questions assess both rape and unwanted sexual experiences. An example of a question from the SES is "Even though it didn't happen, a man TRIED to put his penis in my butt,

Table 1

Demographic Information of Male Participants with Unwanted Sexual Experiences

	%	<i>n</i>
Age		
18-21 years	74	29
22-25 years	21	8
26-29 years	0	0
30-33 years	0	0
Over 33 years	5	2
Ethnicity		
African-American	41	16
Caucasian	46	18
Other	13	5

Note: N = 39.

or someone tried to stick in objects or fingers without my consent. . . :” (Koss et al., 2007, p. 369). The participant was asked to indicate the number of times (0, 1, 2, 3+) he has experienced the described scenario in the last 12 months and also since the age of 14 years old. There were a total of seven different scenarios. At the end of the scenarios, there is a question that asks the participant to indicate if he has ever been raped. The current study added a second question that asks the participant to indicate if he has ever had an unwanted sexual experience. Some questions on the revised SES were removed for the purpose of the current study because of redundancy (e.g., age).

Participants were classified as unwanted sexual experience victims if they indicated having experienced any of the scenarios (in the last 12 months or since the age of 14 years old) without their consent or through the use of force that did not meet the legal definition of rape. Participants were classified as rape victims if they indicated having experienced (in the last 12 months or since the age of 14 years old) any of the scenarios describing anal penetration or oral sex without their consent or through the use of force. Acknowledgement status also was determined by participants’ answers to questions on the SES. If participants indicated having experienced any of the scenarios describing an unwanted sexual experience or rape, but did not answer “yes” to the questions that asked if they had ever had an unwanted sexual experience or were raped, they were considered unacknowledged. Conversely, participants were considered acknowledged if they answered “yes” to the questions that asked if they had ever had an unwanted sexual experience or were raped and had indicated having experienced any of the scenarios describing unwanted sexual experiences or rape.

A study conducted by Osman (2011) assessed the reliability of the SES. Osman (2011) employed a gender neutral version of the SES victimization questionnaire and reported a Cronbach's alpha of .75 for a sample of male and female victims. This figure suggests that the SES is at a level of acceptable reliability for use with both male and female victims. The current study assessed the reliability of the version of the SES that was used and obtained a Cronbach's alpha of .92. This suggests that the SES is at a level of acceptable reliability for use with male victims.

Modified Assault Characteristics Questionnaire. The Assault Characteristics Questionnaire (ACQ) (Littleton, Axsom, Breitkopf, & Berenson, 2006) is based on a measure developed by Layman et al. (1996) that is used to obtain information regarding the circumstances surrounding a victim's rape or unwanted sexual experience. The original questionnaire is 21 questions, but the current study modified the measure by removing many of the questions because of redundancy or irrelevance to the current study. The modified questionnaire included questions that addressed the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator, perpetrator gender, alcohol and drug consumption, and type of force used during the experience. In order for both victims and nonvictims to be able to fill out this questionnaire, the current study created two separate sets of directions. Participants who had been raped or had any unwanted sexual experiences were asked to fill out the survey according to their own personal experience, and if they have had more than one, to fill it out regarding the experience that they found most upsetting. Participants who had not been raped nor had any unwanted sexual experiences were asked to identify characteristics that they believe most victims would

have experienced. The reason for this adjustment to the directions on all of the remaining questionnaires was to protect the confidentiality of the participants. If nonvictims were advised to stop after filling out the SES, they would finish the survey much faster than victims. Therefore, the researchers and other participants may have been able to observe which participants were victims and nonvictims during the study. Furthermore, this study changed the wording of questions to be gender neutral.

Rape Attribution Questionnaire. The Rape Attribution Questionnaire (RAQ) is a 25-item questionnaire with five attributions that measure behavioral and characterological self-blame, perpetrator blame, societal blame, and chance blame (Frazier, 2004). Each scale contains five items, and for the purpose of the current study, only the behavioral and characterological scales were used in analyses. The items include statements that ask how often the participant has had thoughts similar to the ones listed. For example, a behavioral self-blame question is “I should have been more cautious” (Frazier, 2004, p. 1), and a characterological self-blame question is “I am a careless person” (Frazier, 2004, p. 1). Participants answered on a 5-point scale (1 = *never* to 5 = *very often*). This study also combined the behavioral and characterological self-blame scales into an overall self-blame scale, making it a total of 10 items. The current study modified the directions of the questionnaire. Participants who were not victims of an unwanted sexual experience or rape were instructed to fill out the questionnaire according to how often they believed victims of unwanted sexual experiences or rape had these thoughts.

Frazier (2004) conducted two studies to assess the validity of the RAQ. The first study included 171 female sexual assault victims who were administered the RAQ four different times posttrauma (2 weeks, 2 months, 6 months, and 12 months). Overall, the measure obtained internal consistency alpha coefficients of .68 (moderate) to .92 (high). The RAQ obtained mean alpha coefficients of .89 for the overall self-blame scale (characterological and behavioral self-blame combined), .87 for the behavioral self-blame scale, and .82 for the characterological self-blame scale. The second study included 135 female sexual assault victims. The RAQ was administered to female victims one time and obtained moderate to high alpha coefficients. Frazier (2004) reported Cronbach's alpha coefficients of .87 for the behavioral self-blame scale, .78 for the characterological self-blame scale, and a combined alpha of .88.

Frazier (2004) also assessed the test-retest reliability of the RAQ. The study included 171 female sexual assault victims who were given the RAQ two times in one of two timeframes (2 weeks to 6 weeks or 6 months to 12 months). The levels of reliability achieved were moderate. The first timeframe (2 weeks to 6 weeks) obtained reliability coefficients of .72 for the overall self-blame scale, .75 for the characterological self-blame scale, and .68 for the behavioral self-blame scale. The second timeframe (6 months to 12 months) obtained reliability coefficients of .68 for the overall self-blame, .70 for the characterological self-blame scale, and .62 for the behavioral self-blame scale. The current study obtained reliability coefficients for the behavioral, characterological, and overall self-blame scales. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the behavioral self-

blame scale (.76), characterological self-blame scale (.75), and overall self-blame scale (.85) were all at acceptable levels for the current study.

Procedure

First, participants were given two consent forms (See Appendix E) to read and fill out before the questionnaire packet was passed out. Researchers then informed the participants that the purpose of the study was to gather information about unwanted sexual experiences. Next, participants filled out five anonymous surveys. The first survey asked demographic questions (gender, age, and ethnicity), followed by the Blitz Script Questionnaire (Bondurant, 2001), which was not used in the current study, the Sexual Experiences Survey (SES; Koss et al., 2007), the Modified Assault Characteristics Questionnaire (Littleton et al., 2006), and the Rape Attribution Questionnaire (Frazier, 2003, 2004). After the participant completed the SES, there were two sets of directions that allowed both victims and nonvictims to complete the remaining surveys. After the questionnaire packets were collected, participants were given a debriefing sheet (See Appendix F) that further explained the purpose of the current study and contained resources that participants could contact if desired. Lastly, participants who were interested in obtaining the overall results of the study were advised to fill out a self-addressed envelope and told that the results would be mailed to the address listed once analyses were complete.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

Descriptive Data

Out of the 139 male participants, 39 were classified as unwanted sexual experience or rape victims. One participant, however, was included only in the descriptive analyses because he did not follow some of the instructions on the questionnaire. There were a total of 26 unwanted sexual experience only victims and 13 rape victims. Due to the small sample size of the rape victim group, rape and unwanted sexual experience victims were combined for all analyses. Of the victims, 26 (67%) were classified as acknowledged and 13 (33%) as unacknowledged. As can be seen in Table 2, the descriptive statistics revealed that the majority of acknowledged (92%) and unacknowledged (100%) victims knew the perpetrator. Many of the acknowledged and unacknowledged victims experienced no coercion and the use of a weapon only occurred in one case total (See Table 2).

Correlations among the study variables (i.e., acknowledgement status, perpetrator gender, characterological self-blame, behavioral self-blame, overall self-blame, and drug or alcohol use) are presented in Table 3. There were no significant correlations found among the variables for either acknowledgement status or drug or alcohol use. Perpetrator gender, however, was negatively correlated with characterological and overall self-blame. These findings suggest that when the perpetrator was a man, male victims blamed themselves more characterologically and overall. Furthermore, the three types of

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables by Acknowledgement Status

	Acknowledged Victims		Unacknowledged Victims		Total	
	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>
Relationship to Perpetrator						
Stranger	8	2	0	0	5	2
Just met	23	6	33	4	26	10
Acquaintance	27	7	17	2	24	9
Friend	27	7	25	3	26	10
Dating casually	4	1	25	3	11	4
Steady date	4	1	0	0	3	1
Romantic partner	19	5	8	1	16	6
Relative	4	1	0	0	3	1
Level of Coercion						
None	31	8	46	5	35	13
Non-verbal threats, intimidation	31	8	9	1	24	9
Verbal threats to harm victim or others	23	6	9	1	19	7
Twisting arm or holding down	19	5	27	3	22	8
Hitting or slapping	12	3	0	0	8	3
Choking or beating	4	1	0	0	3	1
Showing or using a weapon	4	1	0	0	3	1
Other	19	5	18	2	19	7

Note: $N = 38$ for Relationship to Perpetrator. $N = 37$ for Level of Coercion.

Unacknowledged victims $n = 12$; Acknowledged victims $n = 26$.

Table 3

Intercorrelations Among Study Variables

Variable	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.
1. Acknowledgement Status	---	-0.15	-0.07	0.16	0.28	0.05
2. Drug or Alcohol Use		---	-0.15	0.14	0.14	0.12
3. Perpetrator gender			---	-0.36*	-0.35*	-0.31
4. Overall Self-Blame				---	0.90**	0.94**
5. Characterological Self-Blame					---	0.70**
6. Behavioral Self-Blame						---

Note: For coding purposes 1 = Male, 2 = Female; Unacknowledged victims = 1, Acknowledged victims = 2; Drug/Alcohol = 2, No Drug/Alcohol = 1.

N ranged from 36 to 38.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .0001$.

self-blame were positively correlated with each other. This suggests that as one type of self-blame increases, so do the other two.

Hypotheses Testing

Self-Blame and variables associated with self-blame were the main focus of the current study. The first hypothesis tested the assumption that male victims would obtain higher scores on the behavioral self-blame scale than the characterological self-blame scale. Hypotheses one was tested using a one sample dependent *t* test with an alpha of .05. Results of the one sample dependent *t* test indicated that male victims engaged in more behavioral self-blame than characterological self-blame, $t(37) = 4.93, p < .0001, \eta^2 = .40$. See Table 4.

Hypothesis two stated that male victims who reported alcohol or drug use around the time of the rape or unwanted sexual experience would obtain higher scores (than those who did not report alcohol or drug use) on the behavioral and combined self-blame scales, but there would be no difference on the characterological self-blame scale. There were unequal numbers of participants in the groups; therefore, the Satterthwaite Approximation was used. Results indicated that male victims who reported alcohol or drug use did not score higher on the behavioral self-blame, $t(23.71) = -0.85, p = .40, \eta^2 = .03$, characterological self-blame, $t(15.20) = -0.84, p = .41, \eta^2 = .04$, or the overall self-blame scales, $t(18.78) = -0.92, p = .37, \eta^2 = .04$. See Table 5.

Hypothesis three tested the assumption that unacknowledged male victims would obtain higher scores on the behavioral, characterological, and combined self-blame scales

Table 4

Comparison of Behavioral and Characterological Self-Blame

Variable	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i>
Self-Blame				37	4.93*
Behavioral	38	13.58	5.03		
Characterological	38	10.66	4.07		

Note: * $p < .0001$.

Table 5

Differences in Self-Blame Between Victims Who Did and Did Not Consume Drugs or Alcohol

Variable	Drug or Alcohol Use						<i>df</i>	<i>t</i>
	Yes			No				
	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>		
Self-Blame								
Behavioral	28	13.93	5.45	10	12.60	3.69	23.71	-0.85
Characterological	28	11.00	4.03	10	9.70	4.24	15.20	-0.84
Overall	28	24.93	8.75	10	22.30	7.36	18.78	-0.92

Note. Significance evaluated using Bonferonni adjusted alpha of .0167.

* $p < .0167$.

than acknowledged victims (See Table 6). The Satterthwaite Approximation also was used for hypothesis three. Results indicated that there was no difference in amount of self-blame between acknowledged and unacknowledged victims for behavioral self-blame, $t(15.79) = -0.23$, $p = .82$, $\eta^2 < .01$, characterological self-blame, $t(23.14) = -1.81$, $p = .08$, $\eta^2 = .12$, or overall self-blame, $t(17.73) = -0.91$, $p = .38$, $\eta^2 = .05$. Hypotheses two and three each were analyzed using t tests with an alpha of .0167 (.05/3) to control for type 1 errors due to conducting three t tests on self-blame.

Hypotheses four and five were analyzed using the chi-square test with an alpha of .05 (See Table 7). Hypothesis four addressed the relationship between acknowledgement status and perpetrator gender. Specifically, men who were victimized by women were hypothesized to have lower rates of acknowledgement than men who were victimized by men. The likelihood ratio chi-square was used to determine significance due to one of the cells having an expected frequency less than five. There was no significant association between perpetrator gender and acknowledgement status, $\chi^2(1) = 0.15$, $p = .70$. The last hypothesis addressed a possible association in acknowledgement status dependent upon whether a victim had consumed alcohol or used drugs prior to the rape or unwanted sexual experience. Specifically, it was hypothesized that unacknowledged male victims were more likely to report having used drugs or alcohol at the time of the rape or unwanted sexual experience than acknowledged victims. See Table 7. There was not a statistically significant difference in acknowledgement patterns between male victims who did and did not report alcohol or drug use at the time of the rape or unwanted sexual experience, $\chi^2(1) = 0.89$, $p = .35$.

Table 6

Differences in Self-Blame Between Acknowledged and Unacknowledged Victims

Variable	Acknowledgement						df	t
	Yes			No				
	n	M	SD	n	M	SD		
Self-Blame								
Behavioral	26	13.73	4.36	12	13.25	6.47	15.79	-0.23
Characterological	26	11.42	4.05	12	9.00	3.74	23.14	-1.81
Overall	26	25.15	7.74	12	22.25	9.72	17.73	-0.91

Note. Significance evaluated using Bonferonni adjusted alpha of .0167.

* $p < .0167$.

Table 7

Chi-Square Analyses of Selected Study Variables by Acknowledgement Status

	Acknowledged Victims		Unacknowledged Victims		$\chi^2(1)$
	%	n	%	n	
Perpetrator Gender					0.15
Male	75	6	25	2	
Female	68	19	32	9	
Use of alcohol or drugs					0.89
Yes	64	18	36	10	
No	80	8	20	2	

Note. N ranged from 36 to 38.

* $p < .05$.

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

Although there is little research investigating the impact that rape and unwanted sexual experiences have on male victims, there is evidence that it is a distressing experience (Aosved et al., 2011; Walker et al., 2005). Several studies have indicated that sexual victimization is prevalent among college men (e.g., Conway et al., 2004; Larimer et al., 1999; Lehrer et al., 2013; Tewksbury & Mustaine, 2001). Exceeding the prevalence rates reported in previous studies with college students (e.g., Larimer et al., 1999), the current study found that out of 139 college men surveyed, 28% had experienced an unwanted sexual experience or rape. One reason the current study may have obtained such a high percentage could be due to definitional differences as to what constitutes an unwanted sexual experience. For example, Conway et al. (2004) separately classified forced attempts and forced acts of adult sexual assault, whereas the current study combined any attempt or act as an unwanted sexual experience. An additional reason this study may have obtained a higher prevalence rate could be due to the timeframe in which victims were asked to report their unwanted sexual experiences or rape. The current study included any sexual victimization from the age of 14 years old, whereas Larimer et al. (1999) only inquired about experiences during the last year.

The majority of the male victims knew their perpetrator, which is consistent with other studies in both men (Walker et al., 2005) and women (Gross et al., 2006). Additionally, the majority of unwanted sexual experiences were committed by women, which also is consistent with some previous research (Davies, 2002; Fiebert & Tucci,

1998; Struckman-Johnson, 1988), but not all previous research (Balsam et al., 2005). This study did not inquire about sexual orientation, however, and this factor may be related to perpetrator gender. The level of force experienced by male victims was found to be minimal, with the majority of male victims experiencing no physical coercion. Furthermore, male victims endorsed questions regarding the use of weapons or severe physical force the least. These findings also are consistent with previous research (Fiebert & Tucci, 1998; Struckman-Johnson, 1988). Alcohol or drug use around the time of the unwanted sexual experience was found to be prevalent. Almost 3 times as many male victims ($n = 28$) reported using drugs or alcohol around the time of the victimization than those who did not ($n = 10$). Previous research has found up to 10% of male victims are unable to give consent due to being intoxicated (Lehrer et al., 2013; Struckman-Johnson, 1988), however, the current study found 74% of victims reported alcohol or drug use. This large difference could be because the current study considered any alcohol or drug use, even one drink. Other studies classified participants as unable to consent due to alcohol or drug consumption only if they were intoxicated (e.g., Lehrer et al., 2013). Furthermore, the current study combined any alcohol or drug use together to form one group to run the analyses, whereas other studies (e.g., Lehrer et al., 2013) only used the term intoxicated and did not explicitly describe what types of intoxication or how much intake of a substance was required to be considered intoxicated.

In previous research, the use of drugs or alcohol around the time of an unwanted sexual experience has been found to be related to at least two variables of victimization. One of these variables is acknowledgement status. Layman et al. (1996) found that

women who were under the influence around the time of the rape or unwanted sexual experience were less likely to acknowledge. The current study investigated this relationship to identify if the same pattern was present in male rape and unwanted sexual experience victims. The hypothesis was not supported, indicating that men who consumed alcohol or drugs around the time of the rape or unwanted sexual experience were equally as likely to acknowledge as those who had not consumed alcohol or drugs. The use of drugs or alcohol also has been associated with self-blame in male victims (Weiss, 2010). This hypothesis also was not supported, indicating that male victims did not differ in the amount or type of self-blame when comparing the groups based on alcohol or drug consumption. The statistical nonsignificance of alcohol or drug consumption with acknowledgement status and self-blame could be due to the current study classifying any amount of alcohol or drug consumption into the drug or alcohol group.

The discrepancy in the findings of the current study and the previous studies could be due to a number of variables. For instance, the unacknowledged group of male victims contained a small sample size of 12 men for most of the analyses. Similarly, the current study's small sample size of rape victims could be related to the lack of support for the hypotheses because rape is, by definition, more severe than unwanted sexual experiences. There is the possibility the variables are significantly related to victims of rape, but not victims of unwanted sexual experiences.

Research with women has identified several types of self-blame, but the current study only investigated behavioral and characterological self-blame. Studies that have

examined these two types of self-blame in women have found that behavioral self-blame is more prevalent than characterological self-blame (Littleton et al., 2007). The differences in behavioral and characterological self-blame, however, have not been investigated in men until the current study. Similar to the findings with women, the current study found that male victims more often engaged in behavioral self-blame than characterological self-blame. These findings are consistent with the research conducted by Weiss (2010), who found that some men used alcohol consumption as an explanation for their victimization. By doing so, these men were engaging in behavioral self-blame. Weiss (2010) hypothesized that traditional sex roles, specifically masculinity, may be related to these findings. Traditional sex roles depict men as pursuers and controllers of sex (Donnelly & Kenyon, 1996); therefore, having an unwanted sexual experience may defy their core beliefs. Becoming a man who is a victim of an unwanted sexual experience means that he was not in control of the sexual encounter. Using alcohol consumption, and intoxication, as an explanation and placing the blame on their behavior rather than their character may resolve some of the conflict for men who believe in traditional sex roles.

A factor that has been shown to be related to self-blame in female victims (e.g., Frazier & Seales, 1997), but has not been studied in connection to self-blame in male victims, is acknowledgement status. The current study investigated whether acknowledgement status was related to the amount and type of self-blame a victim was experiencing. The hypothesis was not supported, indicating that unlike women (Frazier & Seales, 1997), acknowledged and unacknowledged men did not differ in the amount or

type of self-blame. Similar to a previous hypothesis, the limited number of participants in the unacknowledged and rape groups could be related to the statistically nonsignificant results.

An additional aspect that the current study investigated was perpetrator gender. Previous research has indicated that women are mostly victimized by men (Frazier, 1993), but men are victimized by both men (Frazier, 1993) and women (Davies, 2002). The current study hypothesized that men who were victimized by women would be less likely to acknowledge their experience, possibly due to traditional sex roles. This hypothesis was not supported. Men who were victimized by women were equally as likely to acknowledge their rape or unwanted sexual experience as men who were victimized by men. The lack of support for this hypothesis could be due to the small number of men who were victimized by other men. An interesting significant finding that was not hypothesized was found between perpetrator gender and self-blame. Men who were victimized by other men blamed themselves more characterologically and overall than men who were victimized by women. These results should be interpreted with caution, however, due to the small sample size of men who were victimized by men ($n = 8$). These findings, too, could be related to traditional sex roles. Not only are men supposed to be in control of their sexual endeavors (Donnelly & Kenyon, 1996), but also physically strong, aggressive, and dominant (Herek, 1986). Therefore, a man who was unable to protect himself against another man may blame himself more (than a man attacked by a woman) because he was not masculine enough to ward off his attacker.

Conversely, men who are victimized by women should not blame themselves, according to traditional sex roles, because they are supposed to desire sex with women.

As with any study, the current study has several limitations. The first limitation is that the data collected came from a restricted population. Participants were all enrolled in an undergraduate psychology class at a major university in the southeastern United States. The majority of the participants were African American or Caucasian between the ages of 18 and 21 years old. Therefore, to generalize these findings to other geographic locations or populations would be inappropriate.

Another issue with the current study is related to how certain variables were measured and the measures used. Definitional differences are a common problem when researching rape and unwanted sexual experiences. The current study defined victim as a person who has had any unwanted sexual experience, ranging from unwanted touching to rape. Other studies, however, separate victims who have had more severe encounters (rape) and less severe encounters (unwanted touch) (e.g., Basile et al., 2007). Another limitation is that the current study combined any alcohol or drug use, even just one drink, to create the consumption group. Further, the measures that were used, although all were determined to be valid, were originally developed for use with women. This could be problematic because it is possible that important questions that pertain to male victimization have been left out (e.g., sexual orientation and sex role beliefs).

In addition to the demographic variables and measurement issues that limit the current study, there also are two variables that were not investigated that may be related to unwanted sexual experiences in male victims. Gay and bisexual men have been found

to be victimized more than heterosexual men (e.g., Balsam et al., 2005), and there may be important differences in perpetrator gender that are related to sexual orientation.

Traditional sex roles also may be important when investigating male sexual victimization.

Men who believe strongly in traditional sex roles may acknowledge less and engage in

more self-blame than men who do not. Additionally, the current study only inquired

about unwanted sexual experiences that had occurred since the age of 14 years old;

therefore, the current study did not include information from victims whose experience

occurred before the age of 14 years old. Another limitation is that of the small sample

size of rape victims compared to unwanted sexual experience victims. Unwanted sexual

experiences are typically less severe than rape; therefore, the unsupported hypotheses

could be due to including victims who did not have experiences as severe as rape victims

typically do.

Future research would benefit the population of male unwanted sexual experience victims. To improve the body of literature, there are several directions that it should take.

The variables explored in this study should be re-examined with a larger sample

population. The small number of rape victims versus unwanted sexual experience

victims may have contributed to the lack of statistically significant results for the

majority of the hypotheses. Future research should focus on broader populations,

including a variety of ethnicities and ages. Future researchers may want to expand the

location from which the sample size is obtained in order to better generalize the findings

across geographical areas. Two important aspects that need to be studied in conjunction

with the variables from this study are sexual orientation and belief in traditional sex roles.

Research has identified that gay and bisexual men are at a greater risk of being victimized than heterosexual men (Balsam et al., 2005), which supports the need for more investigation with this population. Belief in traditional sex roles may be an important factor that this study failed to address and also one that previous studies have never explored in relation to self-blame and acknowledgement status.

The current study does, however, add significantly to the body of research involving male unwanted sexual experience and rape victims. Most importantly, the current study reaffirmed that men can be and are victimized at a significant rate. The current study also provided descriptive information regarding the level of force that is typically experienced by victims, as well as confirmed that most victims know their perpetrator. Additionally, the current study found that male college students are victimized at a high rate. The finding that behavioral self-blame is more prevalent than characterological self-blame is important because it supports the need for research with traditional sex roles. The current study also found that perpetrator gender plays a significant role in the amount and type of self-blame, which is something that previous studies have not yet investigated. The finding that men who are victimized by men blame themselves more than men who were victimized by women further supports the need to investigate these relationships with traditional sex roles, such as masculinity.

The unsupported hypotheses also add significantly to the literature. The impact that alcohol consumption has been shown to have on women's and men's acknowledgement patterns was not found in the current study. The inclusion of any alcohol use, rather than an amount that leads to intoxication, could be the reason for the

lack of statistical significance. This suggests that consuming alcohol at low levels may not affect acknowledgement status, but further investigation is needed to determine if larger amounts of alcohol do affect these variables. Alcohol and drug consumption also was not found to be related to the amount or type of self-blame. The lack of support for this hypothesis is surprising given the support in the literature (Weiss, 2010), and again may be related to the inclusion of any alcohol or drug use versus a large enough amount to impair the victim's functioning.

The current study also did not find any statistically significant relationship between self-blame and acknowledgement status, indicating that men who do not acknowledge their experience do not necessarily blame themselves more than those who do acknowledge. This finding is important because it may be the inclusion of any sexual victimization, even fondling, that contributed to the results. Future studies need to investigate this relationship in victims who have experienced more severe forms of sexual assault, such as attempted and completed rape, because men who are victimized less severely may engage in less self-blame, regardless of acknowledgement status. The lack of a statistically significant relationship between acknowledgement status and perpetrator gender in male victims also has important implications. Future research investigating the association between these two variables needs to include variables on belief in traditional sex roles. It may be possible that men who believe more strongly in traditional sex roles may be less likely to acknowledge victimization by women than men, but the current study had a small sample of men who were victimized by men. Statistical significance may not have been reached due to this factor.

Despite the limitations and lack of support for four out of five hypotheses, the current study adds significantly to the current research in male victims of unwanted sexual experiences and rape. The current study has given direction to future researchers in this area and identified the importance of studying variables such as self-blame, acknowledgement status, perpetrator gender, and alcohol and drug use. Lastly, this study demonstrated that male college students are sexually victimized at a high rate and suggests the need for improved education on the subject of male rape and unwanted sexual experiences.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Middle Tennessee State University Institutional Review Board Approval Letter

December 19, 2012

Caitlin Orman and Jaquelyn Mallett

cro2f@mtmail.mtsu.edu

Protocol Title: "Unwanted sexual experiences in college students"

Protocol Number: 13-133

The MTSU Institutional Review Board has reviewed the research proposal identified above. The MTSU IRB has determined that the study meets the criteria for approval under 45 CFR 46.110 and 21 CFR 56.110, and you have satisfactorily addressed all of the points brought up during the review.

Approval is granted for one (1) year from the date of this letter for **400** participants. Please use the version of the consent form with the compliance office stamp on it.

Please note that any unanticipated harms to participants or adverse events must be reported to the Office of Compliance at (615) 494-8918. Any change to the protocol must be submitted to the IRB before implementing this change.

You will need to submit an end-of-project report to the Office of Compliance upon completion of your research. Complete research means that you have finished collecting and analyzing data. Should you not finish your research within the one (1) year period, you must submit a Progress Report and request a continuation prior to the expiration date. Please allow time for review and requested revisions. Failure to submit a Progress Report and request for continuation will automatically result in cancellation of your research study. Therefore, you will NOT be able to use any data and/or collect any data.

According to MTSU Policy, a researcher is defined as anyone who works with data or has contact with participants. Anyone meeting this definition needs to be listed on the protocol and needs to provide a certificate of training to the Office of Compliance. If you add researchers to an approved project, please forward an updated list of researchers to the Office of Compliance before they begin to work on the project.

All research materials must be retained by the PI or faculty advisor (if the PI is a student) for at least three (3) years after study completion and then destroyed in a manner that maintains confidentiality and anonymity.

Sincerely,

William Langston

Chair, MTSU Institutional Review Board

APPENDIX B**Addendum to IRB Approval Letter: Permission to Increase Maximum Participants to 500**

Research Compliance Office [compliance@mtsu.edu]

Actions

To:

Caitlin R. Orman

Cc:

Mary Ellen Fromuth [MaryEllen.Fromuth@mtsu.edu]; Jaquelyn M. Mallett

Inbox

Friday, April 19, 2013 12:13 PM

Caitlin,

Thanks for the update. Your change was approved and I added it to your protocol.

Andrew

Caitlin R. Orman

Sent Items

Wednesday, April 17, 2013 1:47 PM

Andrew,

We are getting close to reaching the maximum number of participants we had indicated on our IRB application (IRB protocol #13-133). Initially, we were approved to collect data from 400 participants. We are requesting to change that number to 500 maximum participants.

Thank you for your time,

Caitlin Orman

APPENDIX C

Addendum to IRB Approval Letter: Permission to Continue the Study for One Year

February 10, 2014

Caitlin Orman, Jaquelyn Mallett, Dr. Mary Ellen Fromuth
Department of Psychology
cro2f@mtmail.mtsu.edu, jmm8h@mtmail.mtsu.edu, MaryEllen.Fromuth@mtsu.edu

Protocol Title: "Unwanted sexual experiences in college students"

Protocol Number: **13-133**

Dear Investigator(s),

I have reviewed your research proposal identified above and your request for continuation. Approval for continuation is granted for one (1) year from the date of this letter. Any changes to the originally approved protocol must be provided to and approved by the research compliance office.

You will need to submit an end-of-project report to the Office of Compliance upon completion of your research. Should the research not be complete by the expiration date, **February 10, 2015**, please submit a Progress Report for continued review prior to the expiration date.

According to MTSU Policy and Procedure, a researcher is defined as anyone who works with data or has contact with participants. Therefore, should **any individuals be added to the protocol that would constitute them as being a researcher, please identify them and provide their certificate of training to the Office of Compliance.** Any change to the protocol must be submitted to the IRB before implementing this change.

Please note that any unanticipated harms to subjects or adverse events must be reported to the Office of Compliance at (615) 494-8918.

Also, all research materials must be retained in a secure location by the PI or **faculty advisor (if the PI is a student) for at least three (3) years** after study completion. Should you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Kellie Hilker
Compliance Officer
Research Compliance Office
494-8918
Compliance@mtsu.edu

APPENDIX D**Demographic information form**

Please circle the number under each question that best describes you.

1) Gender

1. Male

2. Female

2) Ethnicity

1. African-American

2. Caucasian

3. Other

3) Age

a. 18-21

b. 22-25

c. 26-29

d. 30-33

e. Over 33

APPENDIX E

Middle Tennessee University Institutional Review Board Informed Consent Document for Research

<p>Middle Tennessee State University Institutional Review Board Informed Consent Document for Research</p> <p>Principal Investigators: Caitlin R. Orman and Jaquelyn M. Mallett Study Title: Unwanted Sexual Experiences in College Students Institution: Middle Tennessee State University</p>	<p style="color: blue; font-size: small;">MTSU IRB Approved Date: 12/19/2012</p>
<p>Name of participant: _____ Age: _____</p> <p>The following information is provided to inform you about the research project and your participation in it. Please read this form carefully and feel free to ask any questions you may have about this study and the information given below. You will be given an opportunity to ask questions, and your questions will be answered. Also, you will be given a copy of this consent form.</p> <p>Your participation in this research study is voluntary. You are also free to withdraw from this study at any time. In the event new information becomes available that may affect the risks or benefits associated with this research study or your willingness to participate in it, you will be notified so that you can make an informed decision whether or not to continue your participation in this study.</p> <p>For additional information about giving consent or your rights as a participant in this study, please feel free to contact the MTSU Office of Compliance at (615) 494-8918.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Purpose of the study: You are being asked to participate in a research study, because relationships between some aspects of unwanted sexual experiences and perceptions afterwards have not been explored. We would like to investigate how victims and nonvictims perceive unwanted sexual experiences and the impact of those perceptions. An additional purpose of the study is to gain more information about unwanted sexual experiences in men. 2. Description of procedures to be followed and approximate duration of the study: All participants will fill out a series of questionnaires. The first two surveys will ask about basic demographic information and general perceptions of rape. Next, the questionnaires will ask about unwanted sexual experiences that the participants might have had since the age of 14. Finally, participants will be asked about their perceptions of unwanted sexual experiences. Participants who have had an unwanted sexual experience will be asked about perceptions of their own experiences. Participants who did not indicate any unwanted sexual experiences will fill out the questionnaires according to their general perceptions of unwanted sexual experiences. Participants do not have to have an unwanted sexual experience to participate in the current study. There will be no identifying information in any of the surveys the participants complete. All of the responses on the surveys by participants are anonymous. The approximate duration of the study will be between 40 and 55 minutes. 3. Expected costs: There is no cost to participate. 4. Description of the discomforts, inconveniences, and/or risks that can be reasonably expected as a result of participation in this study: Some participants may feel distress when filling out the surveys due to bringing up negative memories about unwanted sexual experiences. 5. Compensation in case of study-related injury: MTSU will not provide compensation in the case of study related injury. 6. Anticipated benefits from this study: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) One potential benefit to science and humankind that may result from this study is that more will be known about perceptions of unwanted sexual experiences. Knowing more about how victims perceive the experience could lead to a better understanding of how they cope after an unwanted sexual experience. b) The potential benefits to you from this study are learning more about the field of psychology and psychological studies that are conducted at MTSU. A second potential benefit is that the resource list may be beneficial to the participants or their acquaintances. 7. Alternative treatments available: N/A 8. Compensation for participation: 	

The participant will receive two research credits for their participation in the study.

9. Circumstances under which the Principal Investigator may withdraw you from study participation:
None

10. What happens if you choose to withdraw from study participation:
There are no consequences if the participant chooses to withdraw from the study. The participant will still receive course credit. If the participant chooses to withdraw, the participant may stay for the duration of the study and turn in the survey with the other participants.

11. Contact Information. If you should have any questions about this research study or possible injury, please feel free to contact Caitlin Orman at cro2f@mtmail.mtsu.edu or Jaqulyn Mallett at jmm8h@mtmail.mtsu.edu or our Faculty Advisor, **Dr. Mary Ellen Fromuth** at (615) 898-2548 or MaryEllen.Fromuth@mtsu.edu.

12. Confidentiality. All efforts, within reason, will be made to keep the personal information in your research record private but total privacy cannot be promised. Your information may be shared with MTSU or the government, such as the Middle Tennessee State University Institutional Review Board, Federal Government Office for Human Research Protections if you or someone else is in danger or if we are required to do so by law.

13. STATEMENT BY PERSON AGREEING TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY
I have read this informed consent document and the material contained in it has been explained to me verbally. I understand each part of the document, all my questions have been answered, and I freely and voluntarily choose to participate in this study.

Date

Signature of patient/volunteer

Consent obtained by:

Date

Signature

Printed Name and Title

APPENDIX F

Debriefing Information

Please keep for your own use.

Rape and unwanted sexual experiences are distressing for women and men. They have been found to be associated with symptoms such as post-traumatic stress disorder and depression. Additionally, they have been found to be associated with lower school performance and a greater use of substances such as alcohol and drugs. The purpose of the current study was to investigate experiences with rape and unwanted sexual experiences among university students. We are looking at variables such as how a person labels unwanted sexual experiences, the level of blame the person feels due to the unwanted sexual experience, and people's thoughts on what happens during a rape or an unwanted sexual experience.

Sometimes, people may feel distress when thinking about past experiences with unwanted sexual experiences or rape. If you would like to talk to someone about your experiences or feelings, counseling and crisis services are available by contacting the following:

On Campus: **Counseling Services**, ext. 2670

Off Campus: **The Guidance Center**, (615) 895-6051 (fee-based)
Domestic Violence Program and Sexual Assault Services, (615) 494-9881 or 24-hour crisis line (615) 494-9262 (Murfreesboro, TN)
National Sexual Assault Hotline, (1-800-656-HOPE) or
<https://ohl.rainn.org/online/>
Rape Recovery & Prevention Center, (615) 217-2354 (Murfreesboro, TN)
Rape and Sexual Abuse Center, (615) 259-9055 (Nashville, TN)

If you would like more information about this study or your rights as a participant, please feel free to contact me at cro2f@mtmail.mtsu.edu or my faculty advisor, Dr. Mary Ellen Fromuth, at MaryEllen.Fromuth@mtsu.edu. Unfortunately, it will not be possible to immediately provide you with the results of this project. Arrangements, however, may be made so you can obtain those results once they become available.

Thank you for your time and patience in helping us with this project.

Caitlin Orman
 Graduate Student, Clinical Psychology
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