The Relationship Between Attitudes and Rape Scenario Interpretations

An Honor Thesis (ED 499)

by

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Rape is a crime of epidemic proportions in our society. It is one of the fastest-growing areas of crime, and yet, has one of the lowest conviction rates. Gager & Schurr (1976) have estimated that as few as three percent of all rapists are convicted of the crime. Although there are many theories as to the causes of rape, the Societal Blame model has generally been accepted as one of the most relevant. The Societal Blame Model asserts that "sexual assault takes place when accumulated cultural and societal attitudes are manifested through the forcible sexual contact of one person on another" (Brodsky & Hobart, 1978, p. 385). In other words, the causality of rape does not lie with a select group of sexually deviant males, but rather in the negative attitudes toward women which currently exist in American society. Thus, as many feminist authors have asserted, many men in the general population could be actual or potential rapists (Brownmiller, 1975; Clark & Lewis, 1977; Griffen, 1975, 1979; Medea & Thompson, 1974; Russell, 1975, 1930).

Cross-Cultural Studies of Rape

Support for the Societal Blame model can be found in several cross-cultural studies on rape-prone and rape-free societies. In a study of 300 societies, Otterbein (1978) found that the frequency of rape in a society can be determined from two factors: amount of punishment incurred for rape, and the presence or absence of fraternal interest groups (i.e. power groups of related males). Thus a society in which the frequency
of rape is low has major punishment for rape and no fraternal interest groups. Conversely, a society which has a high frequency of rape has little or no punishment for rape despite the presence or absence of fraternal interest groups.

In a similar study, Sanday (1981) found that rape-free societies are characterized by sexual equality and the notion that the sexes are complementary. There is great importance attached to the contribution which women make within the society. In rape-prone societies, on the other hand, the sexual assault of women is either culturally allowable or largely overlooked. Sanday also found that the intensity of interpersonal violence in a society is positively correlated with the incidence of rape as is the presence of an ideology which encourages men to be tough and aggressive. Thus, a society which encourages violence and strong traditional sex-role beliefs would be expected to have a high frequency of rape. For the individuals within such a society, such a belief system seems to have a definite effect on the way attributions are made about rape.

Variables Affecting Attributions About Rape

Russell (1975) argues that, in our society, traditional sex-role socialization contributes to the objectification of women and provides the background for attitudes that promote and foster rape. Several recent studies support this view. It has been found that individuals with more conservative
traditionally-oriented values toward women were more inclined to consider the rape victim at fault than those more liberal or profeminist (Feild, 1978; Klemmack & Klemmack, 1976; Thornton, Ryckman, & Robbins, 1982). A traditional sex-role orientation has also been found to affect other observer attributions toward rape victims. Acock & Ireland (1983) found that subjects with a traditional sex-role orientation view the victim as less respectable, blame her more, and blame the rapist less. On the other hand, Howells, Greasely, Robertson, Gloster, & Metcalf (1984) found that liberal males were more likely to perceive the victim as suffering psychological damage, perceived less victim causation, gave more relative blame to the rapist, and blamed the victim less. Less stereotypical, less conservative attitudes about women have also been associated with greater empathy towards the rape victim (Dietz, Blackwell, Daley, & Bentley, 1982), with less aggressiveness toward women (Taylor, & Smith, 1974), and with citing societal reinforcement of male aggression as a reasonable explanation for rape (Krulwitz & Payne, 1978).

Sex-role attitudes can also affect whether a person defines a crime as rape. Krulewitz & Payne (1978) found that women with traditional sex-role attitudes became increasingly convinced that the incident was rape as greater physical force was used by the assailant. Women with less stereotypical
attitudes maintained a relatively high degree of certainty at all degrees of physical force. Thus, sex-role beliefs not only influence the attributions people tend to make about rape, but they even affect an individual's definition of rape.

Sex-role beliefs, however, are not the only variable which seems to influence this definitional process. People seem to share a degree of uncertainty about what comprises rape (Burgess & Holmstrom, 1976; Holmstrom & Burgess, 1978; Krulewitz & Payne, 1978), and seem to take a variety of information into account when attempting to define a situation as rape. Research has shown that perceptions of rape are determined by contextual information concerning the victim (Calhoun, Selby, & Magee, 1981; Smith, Keating, Hester, & Mitchell, 1976), the offender (Barnett & Feild, 1973), and the assault itself (Krulewitz & Payne, 1978).

In addition, perceptions about rape are also influenced by the sex of the perceiver (Calhoun, Selby, & Waring, 1976; Cann, Calhoun, & Selby, 1976; Feldman, Summers, & Linder, 1976; Krulewitz & Nash, 1979). Studies have shown that females were more likely than males to identify with the victim (Howells, Greasely, Robertson, Gloster, & Metcalf, 1984; Malamuth, Haber, & Feshbach, 1980; Smith, Keating, Hester, & Mitchell, 1976; Tieger, 1981), to view rape as a more serious and more violent crime (Tieger, 1981), and to prescribe more serious punishment for the rapist (Howells,
Greasely, Robertson, Gloster, & Metcalf, 1984; Smith, Keating, Hester, & Mitchell, 1976), although conflicting results have also been found (Krulewitz & Payne, 1979). Males, on the other hand, tended to rate the victim as more careless (Smith, Keating, Hester, & Mitchell, 1976), and as acting in a more seductive manner (Tieger, 1981). Males also believed, more strongly than females, that the victim enjoyed the crime (Tieger, 1981). In addition, males tended to attribute a desire for sex as being most rapists' basic motivation for the rape (Barnett & Feild, 1977), whereas women tended to blame societal values more (Krulewitz & Payne, 1978; Resick & Jackson, 1981). Thus, males, as a group, seem to hold more of these negative beliefs about rape than women. This complex of attitudes is known as rape myth beliefs.

**Rape Myth Acceptance and Rape**

Burt (1980) defines rape myths as prejudicial, stereotyped, or false beliefs about rape, rape victims, or rapists. These include beliefs such as "there is no such thing as rape", "she asked for it", or "women want to get raped." According to Burt (1980), rape myth acceptance forms part of a larger and more complex related structure that includes sex-role stereotyping, adversarial sexual beliefs, and interpersonal violence. Adversarial sexual beliefs (ASB) refers to the expectation that sexual relationships are basically exploitative and that everyone involved in such a relationship is manipulative,
sly, cheating, and not to be trusted (Burt, 1980). Burt hypothesizes that to a person who holds these beliefs, rape may seem to be the extreme on a continuum of exploitation, and not an unexpected or horrifying occurrence. Interpersonal violence (IPV) refers to the notion that force and coercion are legitimate ways to gain compliance, and specifically, that they are legitimate in sexual relationships (Burt, 1980). Burt found that acceptance of interpersonal violence was the strongest predictor of rape myth acceptance while Burt & Albin (1981) found that the more accepting an individual was of IPV, the less willing he or she was to convict a rapist. Thus rape myth acceptance is one of several components, each contributing to the global acceptance of rape.

Rape myth acceptance has also been found to have a direct effect on rape definition. The greater the rape myth acceptance, the less likely a respondent is to call a given situation rape (Burt & Albin, 1981). Burt argues that these attitudes are rape-supportive because they deny the reality of many actual rapes.

Rape myths seem to be well-rooted within present American society. In a study by Barnett & Feild (1977), 32% of the males (as compared to 3% of the females) believed it would do some women "some good" to get raped. Giarusso, Johnson, Goodchilds, & Zellman (1979) reported that over 50% of the male high school students they interviewed thought it was acceptable "for a guy to hold a girl down and force her to
have intercourse when she gets him sexually excited or she says she will have sex with him and then changes her mind. Belief in rape myths, however, is not limited exclusively to males. In a study by Kalamuth, Haber, & Feshbach (1980), females estimated that over 25% of the female population would derive some pleasure from being raped.

Burt (1978, 1980) argues that belief in rape myths plays an important role in the causation of rape. She hypothesizes that such beliefs may be used by rapists to justify their behavior and to release inhibitions against injuring others when they want to commit an assault. Studies done with convicted rapists have supported Burt's hypothesis. After reviewing the literature, Kalamuth (1981b) has found experimental support for the notion that rapists tend to have a high belief in rape myths. He states that there are two types of responses that appear to discriminate between rapists and the general population. First, rapists tend to show relatively high levels of sexual arousal to depictions of rape. Second, rapists tend to hold callous attitudes toward rape, and to believe in rape myths. In addition, there is some indication that rape myth beliefs are more likely to be held by rapists than by males in the general population (Clark & Lewis, 1977; Feild, 1978; Gager & Schurr, 1976), and that such beliefs may contribute to the commission of their crimes (Burt, 1973, 1980). Experimental support has also been found for Burt's claim that rapists tend to justify their rapes. Wolfe &
Baker (1980) studied the beliefs and attitudes of 86 convicted rapists, and reported that, despite strong evidence to the contrary, almost all believed that their actions did not constitute rape, or were justified by the circumstances. Radar (1977) found similar results with his sample of 46 convicted rapists.

A problem with these studies, however, lies within the restrictedness of the samples. It is highly probable that rapists who are convicted of the crime are systematically different from those rapists who are not (Clark & Louis, 1977). Thus, the samples using convicted rapists may be unrepresentative of rapists as a whole.

In response to this problem, Kalamuth and associates have done a series of experiments using a male college student population. The major independent variable in these studies was the enjoyment of the rape by the victim. This variable was chosen because it has been found that many rapists strongly believe that their victims derive pleasure from being assaulted. The results showed that if a person was portrayed from the rapist's perspective, as becoming involuntarily sexually aroused by the assault, then subjects were as sexually aroused by the rape depictions as they were by the depictions of mutually-consenting sex. If, however, the victim was portrayed as abhorring the assault, then significantly less arousal in relation to the mutually-consenting depictions occurred.
(Malamuth & Check, 1980a, 1980b; Malamuth, Heim, & Feshbach, 1980). These results are in agreement with previous research which has found that nonrapists show relatively little arousal to rape when depictions are used which emphasize the victim's abhorrence (Able, Barlow, Blanchard & Guild, 1977). When rape depictions describe or imply victim arousal, however, the relative arousal level tends to be high (Farkas, 1979 as cited in Malamuth, 1981b).

Malamuth, Feshbach, & Jaffe (1977) suggest that certain elements within rape portrayals may therefore serve to strongly inhibit sexual responsiveness. These elements would include the social inappropriateness of the rape and the victim's suffering. They suggest that the difference between deviates and nondeviates is not primarily what "turns them on", but what "turns them off". Thus, normal subjects may become highly aroused to rape themes in the context of disinhibitory cues (i.e. victim enjoyment). One might further theorize that if a male already believes that rape victims enjoy rape, it would serve to sidestep social sanctions concerning rape. The result, as Burt and Malamuth suggest, would be a male very likely to commit rape.

**Likelihood to Rape and Rape Myth Belief**

A number of studies in recent years have investigated the relationship between rape proclivity, or likelihood to rape (LR), and the belief in rape myths (Briere & Malamuth, 1983; Malamuth & Check, 1980a; Malamuth, Haber, & Feshbach, 1980;
Halamuth, Reisin, & Spinner, 1979; Tieger, 1981). In these studies, college males were asked to indicate the likelihood that they personally would rape if they could be assured of not getting caught or punished. Typically, they were asked to indicate their responses on a five point scale ranging from "1" (not at all likely) to "5" (very likely). Across studies, an average of about 35% of the males indicated any likelihood at all of raping (i.e. a "2" or above), and an average of about 20% indicated higher likelihoods (i.e. a "3" or above), (Halamuth, 1981b).

Halamuth asserts that this LR measure is a reliable measure of rape proclivity, and the research supports this claim. Research has shown that males with high LR scores have a tendency to hold particular beliefs about rape very similar to those of convicted rapists. (Halamuth, & Check, 1980a). For example, men with higher LR reports tend to perceive rape as a sexual act which women enjoy and desire, whereas those with lower LR reports perceive rape more in terms of an act of violence with serious consequences for the victim (Halamuth, & Check, 1980a; Halamuth, Haber, & Feshbach, 1980; Halamuth, Reisin, & Spinner, 1979; Tieger, 1981). Self-reported tendency to rape was also significantly correlated with identification with the rapist (Halamuth, Haber, & Feshbach, 1980; Tieger, 1981). High LR males were also more likely to blame the victim (Tieger, 1981).
It has also been consistently reported that individuals with higher LR scores have more callous attitudes toward rape, and believe in rape myths to a greater degree than those with lower LR scores (Briere & Kalamuth, 1983; Kalamuth & Check, 1980a; Kalamuth, Haber, & Feshbach, 1980; Kalamuth, Reisin, & Spinner, 1979; Tieger, 1981). Using Burt's (1980) scales, Ceniti & Kalamuth (as cited in Kalamuth, 1981b) found that rape myth acceptance (RNA) and interpersonal violence (IPV) were both highly correlated with LR scores. In addition, Briere & Kalamuth (1983) found RNA to be a predictor variable for reported LR. Thus, the research suggests that both LR and RNA are measuring rape-conducive attitudes and theoretically, could be used to predict rape proclivity.

In summary, the research points to several conclusions. First, previous research has shown a distinct relationship between sex-role beliefs and rape definition. The more traditional and conservative a person's sex-role beliefs, the more likely he or she is to consider the rape victim as responsible for her own victimization, and thus, are less likely to define a situation as rape. Second, there seems to be a strong sex difference. Males, as a group, tend to view rape as less serious, and tend to have a higher belief in rape myths. Burt (1973, 1980) suggests that such beliefs are used by rapists to justify their behavior, and disinhibit themselves from societal sanctions. This claim is supported by studies using both convicted rapists and college students. Furthermore,
in a series of studies by Malamuth and his associates, a strong belief in rape myths has been linked to self-reported likelihood to rape, thus providing a theoretical "yardstick" for rape proclivity.

It is the aim of the present study to examine these issues. First, the relationship between Burt's (1930) scales and how people tend to define a situation as rape will be examined. A measure of rape definition was determined through the use of four ambiguous rape scenarios. It was predicted that the more a person accepts rape myths, interpersonal violence, and adversarial sexual beliefs, the less likely he or she would be to believe that the women in the scenarios had been raped. Furthermore, since Burt & Albin (1931) found that interpersonal violence was the strongest predictor of willingness to convict a rapist, it was predicted that IPV would play a more significant role in rape definition than R.A or A.J.B. In addition, since previous research has shown an effect of sex-role beliefs and gender, it was predicted that males and those with more traditional sex-role beliefs would also tend to show more doubt that a rape had been committed.

Second, the relationship between LR and rape myth definition will be examined. Since LR has been linked with a strong belief in rape myths, it was predicted that the belief in the rapists' justification for the crimes would vary in accordance to LR. The higher a male's LR report, the more he should believe that the rapists' actions were justified.
by the behaviors of the victims in the scenarios.

In addition, the effects of rape education on belief in rape myths will be examined. Research has shown that subjects presented with depicted rapes (as compared to those presented with nonrape depictions) were less likely to believe that rape results from the victim's behavior or desire to be raped when the depictions were followed by a debriefing (Malamuth & Check, 1984; Check & Malamuth, 1984). Malamuth and Check speculate that debriefing serves to "innoculate" the individual, thereby at least temporarily reducing the belief in rape myths, and the likelihood that an individual will rape. Consequently, it was predicted that individuals receiving a series of educational materials on rape should show a lower acceptance of rape myths and report less likelihood to rape than individuals who did not receive these materials.

Method

Subjects

Eleven males and thirteen females who were enrolled in undergraduate psychology classes participated in the study. Depending on the class in which they were enrolled, some subjects participated to gain extra credit, and others participated as part of a class requirement.

Stimuli

The stimulus booklets used during the first experimental session consisted of four 55 to 62 word scenarios, and three
questionnaires. The rape scenarios were four ambiguous
depictions of rape which differed from each other only in
situational factors. These included a date rape, a marital
rape, a stranger rape, and a war rape. Each scenario was
followed by a series of questions which required the subject
to give his/her opinion on the believability of the victim,
the amount of physical or emotional harm incurred by the
victim, the avoidability of the rape, the motivation of the
attacker, the amount of enjoyment felt by the victim, the
seductiveness of the victim, and the justification of the
rapist's attack. (See Appendix A).

The first questionnaire consisted of the Attitudes
Toward Women Scale (Spence & Helmreich, 1972). The second
questionnaire consisted of items from Burt's (1980) scales
of Adversarial Sexual Beliefs, Acceptance of Interpersonal
Violence, and Rape Myth Acceptance. The items were presented
in a randomized order. To control for social desirability
effects, a third questionnaire, the Social Desirability Scale
(Crowne & Marlow, 1964), was included.

The stimulus booklets for the second experimental session
consisted of the ATW scales and Burt's (1980) scales. The
rape scenarios and the SD scale, which were presented in the
experimental session, were omitted in the second session.

The educational stimuli consisted of a lecture and a film.
The lecture consisted of a discussion of rape myths, and the
trauma which rape victims often go through after the incident. The movie, "Rape: Face to Face" involved actual rape victims discussing their experiences, and later confronting a group of convicted rapists.

Procedure

The subjects were tested in small groups of two to six people. During the first experimental session, the questionnaires and scenarios were given to subjects in one complete packet. The order in which subjects completed the questionnaires and scenarios was determined by a Latin Square. The subjects were given as long as they needed to complete the stimulus materials. After completing the stimulus booklets, the subjects in the experimental condition saw the film. This session lasted approximately two hours. The subjects in the control group were dismissed. The session for the control group lasted approximately one hour.

During the second experimental session, subjects in the experimental group listened to a 20 minute lecture given by a female Ball State University faculty member, and were given the opportunity to ask questions. The experimental group then completed the ATQ scale and Burt's scales. This session lasted approximately 50 minutes.

The order of presentation of these two events was reversed for the control group. Subjects in the control
group were required to complete the AT&T scale and Burt's scales. After completion of this task, subjects were given the opportunity to listen to the lecture. This lecture was identical to that given to the experimental group. This session lasted approximately 50 minutes.

Results

Scoring

For each subject, a separate score was calculated for each of the measuring instruments. For each scenario, a mean score was calculated using the seven questions which followed each of the scenarios. A low score (1) indicated a low belief in rape myths, whereas a high score (5) indicated a greater belief. In addition, a separate mean was calculated across scenarios for the rapist-justification question (item #7 on each scenario—see Appendix A). A low mean (1) indicated little belief that the rapist was justified in his actions, whereas a higher mean (5) indicated a greater belief.

For Burt's (1980) scales, a separate mean was calculated for each subject's scores on the RMA, IPV, and ASB scales. The RMA was broken down into two components—RMAI and RMAII. RMAI included items testing beliefs in common rape myths such as "Women who get raped are promiscuous," "she asked for it," etc. RMAII included
items which assessed a more generalized attitude toward rape. RMAII asked questions concerning the believability of the victim. For RMAI and RMAII, a separate mean was derived and the data was scored according to the system described by Burt (1980). Consequently, for each of the two measures, a low score (0) indicated a high rape myth belief, and a high score (6) indicated a low rape myth belief. The IPV and ASB scales were also scored according to Burt's (1980) system, and an individual mean score was calculated for each. A low score (0) indicated a high acceptance of interpersonal violence or adversarial sexual beliefs, whereas a high score (6) indicated little or no acceptance of these beliefs.

For the ATS scale, the standard scoring system given by Spence & Helmeich (1972) was used. With this system, a low score (0) indicated sex-role conservatism, whereas a higher score (3) indicated a more liberal attitude toward sex-roles. A mean for all items was calculated for each subject.

The LR measure was presented with the RMAII items. A raw score was taken for this question, with a low score (1) indicating little likelihood to rape, and a high score (5) indicating a higher likelihood.

The SD scale was scored according to Crowne & Marlow's
(1964) specifications, with a low score (0) indicating little concern for social desirability and a high score (1) indicating greater concern for social desirability.

**Comparison of the Effects of the Hypothesized Predictor Variables With Scenario Scores**

The following analyses were conducted on data from 24 subjects. One subject's data was dropped from the analyses due to failure to complete all of the questionnaire materials. In addition, due to an insufficient number of subjects, analysis of the effects of education on rape myth beliefs was not possible. In each analysis, F-level restrictions (F-to-enter equals 4.0, F-to-remove equals 3.9) were used to limit unnecessary steps in the regression analysis.

Ten stepwise regression analyses were performed. Two analyses were performed for each of the scenarios. One analysis utilized the data of male subjects only. The other analysis utilized the data of both genders. The rapist-justification item was analyzed in a similar fashion. One analysis was conducted for each of the following criterion variables: Scenario I (Date Rape), Scenario II (Marital Rape), Scenario III (Stranger Rape), Scenario IV (War Rape), and Rapist-Justification. In each analysis, the following predictor variables were entered: AT, RIAI, RIAI, LPV, A:B, age, sex, and SD. For the males-only analyses, LR was also entered as a predictor variable.
During each analyses, social desirability was always entered first.

Scenario I (Date Rape)

Analysis of the males-only data for the date rape scenario indicated that the more a male tended to accept interpersonal violence, the more likely he was to hold negative beliefs about the rape victim in the scenario. After social desirability was entered into the equation, only IPV contributed significantly to the prediction of the first scenario scores, $R = 0.75$, $R^2 = 0.57$, increase in $R^2$ equals $0.57$, $F(2, 8) = 10.47$. All other variables were found to be nonsignificant predictors.

Analysis of the data of both genders revealed slightly different results. It was found that the more a person accepted interpersonal violence, and the less he or she believed rape victims in general, the more likely he or she was to hold negative beliefs about the rape victim. After social desirability was entered into the equation, IPV significantly predicted scores on scenario I, $R = 0.68$, $R^2 = 0.46$, increase in $R^2$ equals $0.38$, $F(5, 21) = 14.55$. RNAI also significantly predicted first scenario scores $R = 0.74$, $R^2 = 0.55$, increase in $R^2$ equals $0.0915$, $F(3, 20)$
equals 4.07. All other variables were insignificant predictors.

Scenario II (Marital Rape)

Analysis of the males-only data for the marital rape scenario again indicated high predictive power for IPV. The more a male tended to accept IPV, the more likely he was to hold negative beliefs about the marital rape victim. After social desirability was entered into the equation, only IPV contributed significantly to the prediction of the second scenario scores, $R^2 = .71$, $R^2 = .50$, increase in $R^2 = .49$, $F(2, 21) = 7.36$. All other variables were found to be insignificant predictors.

Analysis of the data of both genders for the marital rape scenario revealed differing results than the males-only analysis. The more a person tended to believe rape victims in general, the less likely he or she was to hold negative beliefs about the marital rape victim. After social desirability was entered into the equation, only $R^2$ significantly predicted scores on Scenario II, $R^2 = .48$, $R^2 = .23$, increase in $R^2 = .21$, $F(2, 21) = 5.70$. All other variables were found to be nonsignificant predictors.

Scenario III (Stranger Rape)

Analysis of the males-only data for the stranger-rape scenario indicated that the more males accepted interpersonal violence and rape myths, the more likely he was to hold
negative beliefs about the victim of the stranger rape. After social desirability was entered into the equation, IPV contributed significantly to the prediction of the third scenario scores, $R^2=.77$, $R^2=.59$, increase in $R^2=.51$, $F(2,3)=10.08$. RMAI also significantly predicted third scenario scores for males, $R^2=.36$, $R^2=.75$, increase in $R^2=.15$, $F(3,7)=4.26$.

Analysis of the data of both genders indicated that, like scenarios I and II, the more an individual believed rape victims in general, the less likely he or she was to hold negative beliefs about the victim of the stranger rape. After social desirability was entered into the equation, only RMAI significantly predicted scores on scenario III, $R^2=.51$, $R^2=.26$, increase in $R^2=.16$, $F(2,21)=4.56$.

**Scenario IV: (War Rape)**

Analysis of the males-only data for the war rape scenario indicated that the more a male tended to accept interpersonal violence, the more likely he was to hold negative beliefs about the victim of the war rape. After social desirability was entered into the equation, only IPV contributed significantly to the prediction of the fourth scenario score for males, $R^2=.34$, $R^2=.65$, increase in $R^2=.65$, $F(2,3)=18.61$. All other variables were insignificant predictors.
Analysis of the data of both genders indicated that the more an individual believed in rape myths, the more likely he or she was to hold negative beliefs about the war rape victim. In addition, males tended to express those negative beliefs about the victim to a greater extent than females. When social desirability was entered into the equation, RMAI significantly predicted scores for Scenario IV, R=.60, R-squared=.36, increase in R-squared=.31, F (2, 21) = 13.61. All other variables were insignificant predictors.

Justification of the Rapist Across Scenarios

The Rapist-Justification item, which involved the believed justification of the rapist across scenarios, was analyzed in a similar fashion to the scenarios. Analysis of the males-only data for the rapist-justification item indicated that the more a male believed in rape myths, the more likely he was to believe that the rapists were justified in their actions against the rape victims. After social desirability was entered into the equation, only RMAI contributed significantly to the prediction of the Rapist-Justification scores for males, R=.73, R-squared=.54, increase in R=.51, F (2, 8) = 3.70. All other variables were found to be nonsignificant predictors.

Analysis of the data of both genders indicated that the older an individual was, the more likely he or she was
to believe that the rapists were justified in their actions against the rape victims. After social desirability was entered into the equation, only age significantly predicted Rapist-Justification scores, $R^2 = .45$, $R$-squared $= .20$, increase in $R$-squared $= .20$, $F(2, 21) = 5.34$. All other variables were nonsignificant predictors.

**Discussion**

As discussed in the Introduction, the Societal Blame model asserts that the causality for rape lies within the attitudes and values of a particular culture. Attitudes toward sex-roles, violence, male-female relationships, and the concept of rape itself have all been found to affect the way an individual defines rape. This core cluster of beliefs has been demonstrated in the literature time and time again, and their interrelatedness is undisputed. The findings do not, however, seem as clear when it comes to the relative importance of each of these variables in relationship to rape. Burt (1980) has formulated a complex model which shows the interdependencies of these attitudes, and the model has been supported empirically.

The present study partially supports Burt's (1980) work. The results showed that particular kinds of attitudes do seem to cluster together. In particular, acceptance of interpersonal violence within the context of male-female relationships, and rape myth acceptance were both correlated with rape scenario interpretation. Gender also seems to be included in this attitudinal cluster, with males defining a rape situation in a very different way than do females.
The most significant finding here was that IPV and RMA do predict whether people interpret rape scenarios in a way consistent with common rape myth beliefs. This provides direct support for Burt's (1980) model. IPV and RMA do seem to be part of a global cluster of rape-conducive attitudes. However, Burt's model is supported by the IPV and RMA scales only. Adversarial sexual beliefs do not appear to be a significant factor in the way people defined the scenarios. Although this effect could be due to the limited sample size of the present study, ADL appears to be relatively unimportant in relation to the variables of IPV and RMA when looking at the global pattern of rape-conducive attitudes.

Another interesting finding was the strong predictive power of IPV for male scenario score. In a related study, Candal (1971) found that the intensity of interpersonal violence in a society is positively correlated with the incidence of rape as is the presence of a "macho" ideology. Thus, her findings would predict that men who had a high acceptance of violence should be more accepting of rape. The results of the present study show a lot of support for this idea.

For males alone, as compared to both genders combined, IPV was the strongest predictor of all the criterion variables. This suggests that perhaps males and females utilize a different criterion when defining a situation as rape, and that violence within the context of male-female relationships is more acceptable for males, as many feminist authors assert (e.g.)
Brownmiller, 1975; Clark & Lewis, 1979; Criffen, 1975, 1979; Loers & Thompson, 1974; Russell, 1975, 1980).

The present results also showed differences in the predictive powers of RAI I and RAI II. RAI I tended to have more predictive power for males, whereas RAI II was a particularly strong predictor for the scenario scores of both sexes combined.

One possible explanation for the relatively strong predictive power of RAI II for the entire sample is its similarity to the scenarios. It is feasible that these two instruments are tapping similar underlying values or processes. With regard to RAI I, the criterion which males use to define a rape situation appears to be influenced more by general belief in rape myth. This again points to gender differences in the rape definition process.

One of the more surprising results of the present study was the lack of predictive power provided by the likelihood to rape measure. Previous research had found a strong relationship between RAI I and belief in rape myths, but the present study does not support this hypothesis. Since this relationship has been strongly upheld in the literature, it is highly likely that the non-significant findings of the present study are due to methodological differences within the experimental procedure. In the present experiment, for example, small groups were tested rather than large groups, as Halaschek did in his studies (e.g., Halaschek & Check, 1980a; Halaschek, Haber, & Feshbach, 1980). It is possible that subjects in small groups would feel less free to express their true likelihood to rape due to its
socially undesirable nature, than subjects in larger groups. In addition, the small sample size of the present study have masked a possible effect for the hA measure.

The present study also found that sex-role beliefs had no significant effect on scenario interpretations. Since this effect has also been documented in the literature, a nonsignificant result was unexpected. It is possible, however, that sex-role beliefs which affect rape definition are more specific than the more global measure given by the Attitudes Toward Women scale.

In any case, the present study tend to support previous research on attitudes relevant to rape. It was found that acceptance of interpersonal violence and rape myths do affect the way an individual defines a situation as rape. This effect was particularly strong for males. Surprisingly, i.e., sex-role beliefs and adversarial sexual beliefs were not related to rape definition. These results suggest that the cluster of attitudes which have been correlated with rape in the past may need to be redefined and narrowed. It may also be concluded that these basic attitudes about rape vary with respect to gender. Thus, the attitudes which lead to beliefs about rape may be different for males and females, and this sex difference should be addressed in future research.
27.

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Appendix A

Scenario I: Date Rape

Tom and Sherrie got back from the movies around midnight. Although it was rather late, Sherrie invited Tom up to her apartment to have a few drinks and watch TV. As Sherrie was pouring the wine, Tom grabbed her by the arm. He pushed her down and forced her to have sex with him.

For each of the questions below, choose the answer which best expresses your opinion.

1. Would you believe Sherrie if she said she had been raped?
   a. Not At All   b. Probably Not   c. Uncertain   d. Probably   e. Certainly

2. How much mental and physical harm do you think Sherrie experienced?

3. If Sherrie had acted differently, could she have avoided this incident?

4. Do you think that Tom was sexually motivated to act this way?
   a. Not At All   b. Probably Not   c. Uncertain   d. Probably   e. Certainly

5. Do you think that Sherrie enjoyed having sex in this way?

6. Do you think that seductiveness on Sherrie's part encouraged Tom to behave the way he did?

7. If you were Tom, would you feel that Sherrie's conduct justified your behavior toward her?

Note: High rape myth belief
Scenarioll: Marital Rape

Mary was putting laundry away when Brian, her husband, came home. He had gone bowling with his friends, and had come home intoxicated. Mary and Brian began to argue over his drinking when suddenly Brian grabbed her by the arm. He pushed her down and forced her to have sex with him.

For each of the questions below, choose the answer which best expresses your opinion.

1. Would you believe Mary if she said she had been raped?
   a. Not At All  b. Probably Not  c. Uncertain  d. Probably  e. Certainly **

2. How much mental and physical harm do you think Mary experienced?

3. If Mary had acted differently, could she have avoided this incident?

4. Do you think that Brian was sexually motivated to act this way?
   ** a. Not At All  b. Probably Not  c. Uncertain  d. Probably  e. Certainly

5. Do you think Mary enjoyed having sex in this way?

6. Do you think that seductiveness on Mary's part encouraged Brian to behave the way he did?

7. If you were Brian, would you feel that Mary's conduct justified your behavior toward her?

**Note: high rape myth belief
Scenario III: Stranger Rape

Melissa was walking back to the dorm after her night class. To save some time, she decided to take a short-cut through a poorly-lit and rather isolated section of campus. Suddenly, a man darted out from behind some bushes and grabbed her by the arm. He pushed her down, and forced her to have sex with him.

For each of the questions below, choose the answer which best expresses your opinion.

1. Would you believe Melissa if she said she had been raped?
   a. Not At All  b. Probably Not  c. Uncertain  d. Probably  e. Certainly**

2. How much mental and physical harm do you think Melissa experienced?

3. If Melissa had acted differently, could she have avoided this incident?

4. Do you think that this man was sexually motivated to act in this way?
   a. Not At All  b. Probably Not  c. Somewhat  d. Probably  e. Certainly

5. Do you think that Melissa enjoyed having sex in this way?

6. Do you think that seductiveness on Melissa's part encouraged this man to behave the way he did?

7. If you were this man, would you feel that Melissa's conduct justified your behavior toward her?

**Note: high rape/mutilation belief
Seun Lei was walking through the village on her way to the river to get water when a group of American soldiers appeared. They began to searching the huts, looking for Viet Cong. As she reached the outskirts of the village, one of the soldiers grabbed her by the arm. He pushed her down, and forced her to have sex with him.

For each of the questions below, choose the answer which best expresses your opinion.

1. Would you believe Seun Lei if she said she had been raped?
   a. Not At All   b. Probably Not   c. Uncertain   d. Probably   e. Certainly

2. How much mental and physical harm do you think Seun Lei experienced?
   a. None   b. Not Very Much   c. Uncertain   d. Quite a Bit   e. A Great Deal

3. If Seun Lei had acted differently, could she have avoided this incident?

4. Do you think that this soldier was sexually motivated to act in this way?
   a. Not At All   b. Probably Not   c. Uncertain   d. Probably   e. Certainly

5. Do you think Seun Lei enjoyed having sex in this way?

6. Do you think that seductiveness on Seun Lei's part encouraged this soldier to behave the way he did?

7. If you were this soldier, would you feel that Seun Lei's conduct justified your behavior towards her?

**Note: high rape myth Belief**