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How college men describe their understanding of sexual assault

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How College Men Describe their Understanding of Sexual Assault

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Dedication

To my husband, Jeffrey. Thank you for your unwavering belief in me, belly laughs, and all of the cups of coffee. Your integrity and ability to show up in your work, with friends, and with family continue to inspire me to push the reaches of my own growth. And to our daughter, Ellison. Born during a global pandemic, you are light in the darkness. Shine on.

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Abstract

Despite the proliferation of many vital bystander intervention programs across the country, approximately one in four college women will experience sexual violence. Though it was once believed that a small minority of men were responsible for the vast majority of sexual violence, an estimated 12%-25% of college men report having used sexual violence as an undergraduate student. Research across disciplines suggests several factors associated with the perpetration of sexual violence. While numerous studies have explored these constructs quantitatively on and off college campuses, there have been far fewer qualitative studies that provide insight into how men who have perpetrated violence understand their own behavior, and none that have explored undergraduate men's perspectives within the context of hookup and broader United States culture on college campuses. The purpose of the current study was to further an understanding of how heterosexual cisgender undergraduate men account for and describe sexually violent behavior, and to evaluate how these narratives correspond to the constructs heretofore identified as relevant to these behaviors, including attachment needs, gender socialization, and the influence of sociocultural context (alcohol use, hookup culture, precarious manhood). A mixed methods approach was used in order to use quantitative responses as a grouping variable to make comparisons between qualitative responses of participants with different patterns of violence use as well as comparisons between responses to quantitative and qualitative items that asked about related content. Though some of the participants' beliefs were consistent with prior research, there were several novel themes that emerged. There were also discrepancies between how participants responded to qualitative and quantitative items, including

whether participants identified their own behaviors as sexually violent. Emergent themes, as well as implications for college personnel, intervention development, clinicians, and future research are discussed.

Introduction

Initially founded by Tarana Burke in 2006, the iteration of the #MeToo movement of 2017 and 2018 shed a public spotlight on longstanding and widespread prevalence of sexual harassment and violence against women in the workplace. While the scale of public outcry and attention were newfound, the phenomenon of sexual violence, its prevalence, and resistance were not. In a nationally representative 2013 survey published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NIPVS) found that almost half of lesbian (46.4%) and heterosexual (43.3%) women and three-quarters of bisexual (74.9%) women reported that they had experienced sexual violence other than rape in their lifetime, defined as sexual coercion, unwanted sexual contact, and non-contact unwanted sexual experiences (Walters, Chen, & Breiding, 2013). Rather than challenging patriarchal hegemony of previous generations, hookup cultures[1] on college campuses establishes the foreground for sexual violence against women to thrive among undergraduate students. This has taken place despite the proliferation of many bystander intervention programs across the country and a 2014 White House task force developed to address the crisis of sexual violence on college campuses (White House, 2014; White House Council on Women and Girls, 2014). A 2015 climate survey on sexual assault and sexual misconduct organized by the Association of American Universities (AAU), which included a consortium of 27

[1] A hookup culture is one that promotes engagement in sexual encounters without relational connection and devalues emotional experiences, attachment, and the humanity of culture participants. It is largely seen on college campuses in the United States and has also been equated with what is known as a rape culture, one that facilitates opportunities for rape to occur and holds victims accountable for the crimes perpetrated against them. For a more comprehensive review, see Wade (2017).

institutions of higher education, found that 27.2% of senior undergraduate females reported that they had experienced nonconsensual sexual contact (Cantor et al., 2017). Though it was once believed that a small minority of men were responsible for the vast majority of sexual violence,[2] an estimated 12%-43% of college men report having used sexual violence as an undergraduate student (Abbey, McAuslan, & Ross, 1998; Edwards, Bradshaw & Hinsz, 2014; Sutton & Simons, 2015; Thompson, Swartout, & Koss, 2013).

Bystander interventions are indispensable to the work of sexual violence reduction, a complex and deeply-rooted problem; but however necessary, on their own they are also insufficient. Bystander interventions identify witnesses to sexually violent behavior as the targets of intervention, rather than the individuals who use violence and the systems (and their constituents) that sustain and reinforce sexually violent cultures and behaviors. Given the prevalence of sexual assault on college campuses and beyond, there is value in continued research with individuals at high risk to use sexual violence as well as research that elucidates the interacting systemic levels of sociocultural context that set the stage for the persistence of rape culture on college campuses. In order to address sexual violence on college campuses, cultural change, in addition to individual change, is needed. Said differently:

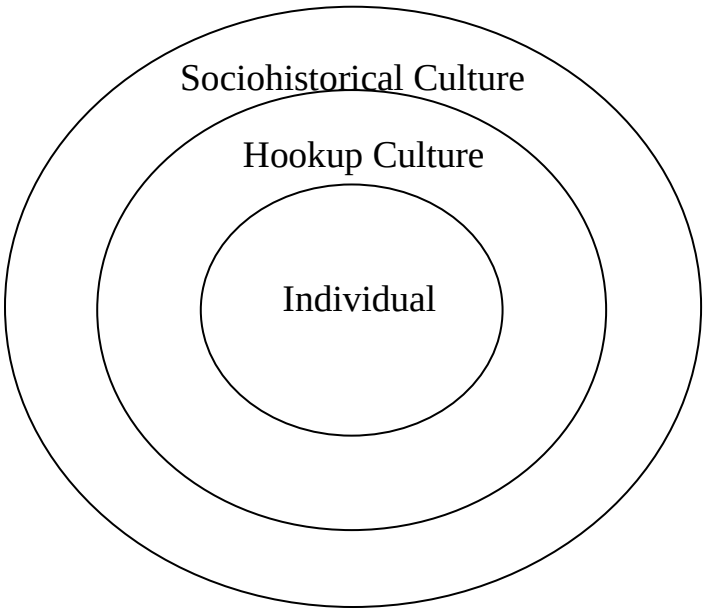
Fundamental culture change around sexual assault is inhibited by several crucial factors;

> The first, interventions primarily focused around individual, educational remediation that do not acknowledge social-ecological factors, the second,

[2] The current study derives a definition of sexual violence from the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN) that defines sexual violence as rape and sexual assault, which includes attempted rape, unwanted sexual touching, and forcing a victim to engage in sexual acts, such as oral sex or penetration of the perpetrator's or victim's body (RAINN, n.d.).

> prevention models focused on harm reduction rather than culture shift, and the third, accountability driven in part by media attention rather than consistency (Oppenheimer, 2015, p. 1).

One way to frame key levels of analysis that pertain to high rates of sexual violence is to borrow from the Bronfenbrenner Ecological Systems framework, which describes an individual's development as a dynamic interaction between the individual and spheres of social environments ranging from proximal to distal, as well as time (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Carter and McGoldrick (1999) further extend this model to include horizontal stressors, such as trauma and developmental transitions over time, as well as vertical stressors that include family patterns and myths. A modified version of the Bronfenbrenner ecological systems theory model provides an organizing frame to understand the relationships between three different levels of analysis: the individual, proximal (hookup) culture, and broader culture (see Figure 1).



Sociohistorical Culture includes sexual behavior scripts in media and pornography, gender role stress, socialization of masculinity, and precarious manhood.

Hookup Culture includes heavy alcohol consumption, pressure from peers, and the need for belonging.

Individual factors include early life exposure to trauma and abuse, attachment, and developmental trajectory

Figure 1. Modified Bronfenbrenner model. This figure illustrates three interacting levels of analysis that may be used to understand sexual violence on college campuses.

Factors associated with the perpetration of sexual violence at the first level of analysis include early life exposure to violence and abuse, as well as avoidant and anxious attachment styles. At the level of proximal culture is hookup (or rape) culture on college campuses, which includes heavy alcohol consumption, pressure from peers, and the need for belonging. The outermost level of sociocultural context includes factors such as sexual behavior scripts in media and pornography, gender role stress, socialization of masculinity, and a construct termed precarious manhood.

With roots in attachment theory (Bowlby, 1958), an overarching theory to account for the interrelationship between these three levels of analysis is that the socialization of boys and men into traditionally masculine roles deprives individuals from accessing socioemotional needs for intimacy, relatedness, and belonging (Gilligan, 2017). Condoned avenues to meet these needs--both in connection with other men and with romantic partners--include sexually intimate relationships, even those that are forced, in the service of achieving a sense of belonging within the category of men and of meeting needs for proximity to women, with whom exposure of vulnerability is believed to be more safe than with other men (Smith, Parrott, Swartout, & Tharp, 2015). Through a developmental lens, experiences in early life (such as the attachment style developed in relation to primary caretakers and exposure to early life trauma and abuse) and beyond influence an individual's susceptibility to the traps of socialization into traditionally masculine roles that deprive an individual from meeting emotional needs in ways that do not simultaneously cause harm to self and others.

While numerous studies have quantitatively examined the constructs previously mentioned both on and off college campuses (McDermott & Lopez, 2012; Chong, 2018;

Sutton & Simons, 2015), there have been far fewer qualitative studies that provide insight into how men who have perpetrated sexual violence understand their own behavior (Hipp et al, 2015; Dagirmanjian et al., 2017), and none that have explored undergraduate men's perspectives within the context of hookup culture on college campuses. The purpose of the current mixed methods study is to further an understanding of how heterosexual cisgender undergraduate men describe their own sexually violent behavior, and to evaluate how these narratives correspond to the constructs heretofore identified as relevant to these behaviors, including attachment needs and the influence of sociocultural context (alcohol use, hookup culture, and gender socialization).

Literature Review

Inclusion criteria for the current literature review included research studies and theoretical articles that investigated and explored factors, broadly defined, that are associated with aggression and violence perpetration by men toward women. Articles with overlapping findings and contributions were excluded with preference given to works that focused on sexual violence, that account for more than one factor, as well as those that consider these behaviors as enacted within a cultural context, principally hookup culture on college campuses. In particular, the literature review focuses on research that draws connections between sexual violence and attachment styles, early exposure to violence and abuse, alcohol use, belonging needs, sexual scripts from pornography, gender role stress, and precarious manhood. Given the wide range of constructs addressed, and the broad disciplines from which literature was gathered (including social and clinical psychologies, gender studies, sociology, counseling, and family systems), the current review seeks to contextualize the socio-historical context, to

articulate the rationale for the study, and to situate the current research within a broader landscape of completed and ongoing scholarly work, rather than to provide an in-depth distillation of each piece that interacts with the whole.

Moving beyond the myth of "a few bad apples"

The evolution of rape mythology on college campuses has followed a similar trajectory to that of rape mythology in the broader public. Though it was once believed that most rapes were perpetrated serially by strangers, it is now well known that most individuals who commit rape are known to their victims (Department of Justice, 2017). In a similar vein, research on college campuses initially suggested that most sexual violence was perpetrated by a small minority of undergraduate men. In a 2002 study oft-cited as support for this theory, Lisak and Miller pooled data from four samples in order to investigate the percentage of men who committed acts that met the legal definition of rape on more than one occasion in a college sample at an urban commuter university. Participants were nominally compensated to complete and return surveys distributed at tables on campus. Surveys consisted of the Abuse-Perpetration Inventory (API), which asked questions in a behaviorally descriptive way (rather than labeling behavior with terms such as "rape" and "assault") about participant history of rape and sexual assault against adults, battery of adult intimate partners, and physical and sexual abuse of children.

Of a total sample of 1,882 students, 120 participants (6.4%) self-reported perpetration of at least one rape before or during college. Lisak and Miller suggest that the reason a substantially larger proportion of women report sexual victimization than the proportion of men who report sexual violence perpetration is that a small minority are

repeat offenders. While Lisak and Miller's study utilized a large sample size with relatively diverse demographics (Mean Age = 26.5 with SD = 8.28 and range = 18-71; 20% of sample older than age 30; close to 8% older than age 40; 9.6% = African American, 8.6% = Asian, 4.1% = Mixed Race, 3.3% = Hispanic), there may be alternative explanations of the researchers' findings. Though Lisak and Miller suggest that their identified prevalence rates are consistent with those found in other community and college samples in their discussion, they also acknowledge that due to the "nonrandom nature" of their sampling procedures, the findings should not be interpreted as estimates of prevalence rates of rape and other forms of sexual violence. Lisak and Miller delineate three categories of participants in their study: non-rapists, those who report a history of one non-consensual act, and repeat rapists. In order to do so, Lisak and Miller aggregated self-reported behavior from before and during college, and they included attempted and completed acts of sexual intercourse or oral sex by threats or physical force as well as sexual intercourse with someone too intoxicated to resist. The researchers draw an equivalency between those who report a history of more than one non-consensual act and "serial rapists," which presumably implies that the same perpetrator committed more than one similar offense against multiple victims, and conclude that their findings lend support for the hypothesis that most campus rapes are committed by a small minority of men. However, both a cross-sectional design and conflation of definitions make it difficult to draw definitive interpretations from the data.

In response to the "campus serial rapist assumption" (Swartout et al., 2015, p. 1149) forwarded by Lisak and Miller's (2002) study, and following widespread political and media attention, Swartout and colleagues (2015) sought to systematically refute the

assumption that most acts of sexual violence are committed by serial rapists using two large-scale longitudinal data sets of sexual violence on college campuses. Utilizing the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) definition of rape (in short, penetration without consent), Swartout and colleagues were specifically interested to understand whether the clusters of men identified in Lisak's and Miller's study would be found in a larger and longitudinal data set. That is, Swartout and colleagues sought to investigate whether their data revealed a consistent pattern of a small group of men who raped consistently from high school through college and a larger group of men who did not rape at all.

The researchers used a data set of 847 men from three incoming classes at a large southeastern university surveyed once during orientation (to assess precollege behavior) and four subsequent times each spring semester (to assess behavior since the previous survey administration) in order to derive a best-fitting trajectory model. Participants in their first data set had a mean age of 18.5 (SD = 0.97) at the start of college and self-reported as 68.3% White, 25.8% Black, and 5.9% Other. Swartout and colleagues utilized a second data set of 795 men from one incoming class at a different large southeastern university surveyed each spring semester (four times total). Participants in the second data set had a mean age of 18.6 (SD = 0.51) at the start of college and self-reported as 89.7% White, 7.1% Black, and 3.3% Other. Surveys consisted of questions from the Sexual Experiences Survey (SES) and items analyzed included those that met the FBI definition of rape.

The researchers found that 10.8% of men surveyed endorsed having committed rape between age 14 and their fourth year of college, a figure nearly twice as large as that previously reported in Lisak and Miller's (2002) study. Through latent class growth

analysis of their derivation and validation data sets, Swartout and colleagues evaluated whether latent trajectory structures (based on the likelihood that men would commit rape across time) most closely fit models ranging from two to four trajectories. That is, they sought to identify whether a best fit model for their data mapped onto those predicted by Lisak and Miller's findings that there would be one small group likely to commit many rapes and one larger group unlikely to commit any rapes. Swartout and colleagues found that a 3-trajectory model was the strongest fit. Among combined data sets, the first trajectory included men with a low likelihood of committing rape across time. A second trajectory reflected men with an increasing likelihood of committing rape; out of 129 men who reported that they did not commit rape before college, 94 (72.9%) reported that they committed rape during college. A third trajectory reflected men with a decreasing likelihood of committing rape; out of 84 men who reported that they committed rape before college, 49 (58.3%) reported that they did not commit rape during college. Swartout and colleagues believed that their findings refute previously maintained assumptions about a small group of men (i.e., "serial rapists") that consistently commit rape across emerging adulthood. Additionally, Swartout and colleagues forwarded that by focusing solely on men who perpetrate rape across time in college, four out of five men who perpetrate rape on college campuses would be missed.

The findings from Swartout and colleagues (2015) study provide a clear numerical argument for why attending to repeat rapists alone on college campuses is problematic in the service of developing comprehensive interventions, an argument that is further supported by Pascoe and Hollander's (2016) theoretical paper. Pascoe and

Hollander reflect on an "identity dilemma" emergent in a "rape culture" that depathologizes and normalizes rape. They write:

> Feminist theorists depathologized rape through the notion of rape culture, reconceptualizing it as something *any* man, not just pathological monsters, could commit. When men distance themselves from rape, they repathologize rape as something a *bad* man does, not something that informs all gendered relationships between men and women (Pascoe & Hollander, 2016, p. 74).

Further,

> In a rape culture, sexual assault is not caused by a few deviant or depraved bad guys; "normal" men can be rapists… In a rape culture where rape is increasingly stigmatized and where any man is a potential rapist, how can a man distance himself from rape while still doing the dominance work demanded by cultural expectations of normative masculinity? (Pascoe & Hollander, 2016; pp. 70-71).

Through the process of othering serial rapists as the bad guys, young men on college campuses are able to project proclivity toward sexual violence onto those accused of rape and sexual assault and to decry themselves as "good guys" even as they engage in other elements of rape culture, such as symbolic dominance consistent with traditional notions of masculinity in hookup culture. Rather than owning the problem of sexual violence as pervasive, these processes regress our communities to foster scapegoating dynamics in which the myth of a "few bad apples" (Oppenheimer, 2015) precludes necessary reckoning with culture as it stands today. Rather than rewriting scripts for masculinity, the myth of serial rapists serves to reinforce an othering that prevents interventions that address pervasive, rather than isolated, sexual violence.

Socialization of women

It is also important to note college women's roles in rape cultures, ones that facilitate opportunities for rape to occur and holds victims accountable for the crimes perpetrated against them (Wade, 2017). In an ethnographic study that sought to explicitly explore sexual assault on college campuses, Armstrong, Hamilton, and Sweeney (2006) conducted observations, in-depth interviews with 42 residents of a women's "party dorm," and 16 group interviews at a large Midwestern university primarily during the 2004-2005 academic year. Armstrong et al. found that an interaction between individual characteristics, gendered selves, organizational arrangements, and interactional expectations contributed to sexual assault. Many women students described feeling as though they were "supposed" to party in college in order to fit into the culture, one stating that you are "supposed to hook up with guys" (p. 487), which intensified the importance of partying in order to make friends. Partying was seen as a primary way for women to meet men, and alcohol violations within residence halls were heavily enforced on campus, which resulted in parties being shifted primarily to fraternity houses, bars, and off-campus residences. [Notably, though fraternal organizations are allowed to hold parties with alcohol for those older than 21, sororities are not (Franklin, 2015).] Some fraternities provided transportation from residence halls to parties, but transportation home was less certain.

Armstrong et al. found that the schema for college partying entailed getting ready, pre-gaming, getting to the party, getting drunk, flirtation and sexual interaction, getting home, and sharing stories. The gendered nature of expectations include that women are supposed to look "hot" but not "slutty" (p. 488) and to be deferential and gracious toward

their party hosts, a vulnerability that may be taken advantage of. Armstrong et al. described college men, alternatively, attend parties with the intention of engaging in casual sex whereas women are assigned the roles of sexual "gatekeepers" (p. 491), relieving men of the obligation to set boundaries such that failure to resist coercion may be interpreted as consensual. Alcohol is intentionally used to further intensify these dynamics. Additionally, many prevention strategies that focus on equipping women with best practices contribute to victim-blaming in which women are accountable for being the recipients of violent behavior. Armstrong et al. also found that many students lacked the resources or networks to opt out of the party scene and to still have a robust social life. This study develops a rich account of how undergraduate students understand the dynamic relationship between individuals and hookup culture to result in sexual assault, as well as one that begs further study into men's perspectives.

Systems Models of Sexual Violence Perpetration

Returning to the modified Bronfenbrenner frame, numerous scholars have investigated and explored the relationship between individual-level factors, proximal and distal culture, and sexual violence perpetration. In order to develop what is now known as a robustly examined theoretical model of sexual aggression etiology, Malamuth, Sockloskie, Kross, and Tanaka (1991) utilized structural equal modeling with data from a survey of 2,656 college men. Malamuth et al.'s confluence model describes the convergence of two paths, both influenced by adolescent delinquency, that lead to men's perpetration of sexual assault: hostile masculinity and impersonal sex. Hostile masculinity refers to forms of masculine gender identity that are defined by their subjugation of and dominance over women. The first path described by the convergence

model entails early life exposure to abuse and violence and is marked by high levels of hostility toward women and a need for dominance. The second pathway reflected high levels of sexual activity without regard for intimacy or emotional attachment to a sexual partner. According to the model, the confluence of hostile masculinity and impersonal sex leads to motivation, predisposition, and a higher likelihood of opportunity to perpetrate sexual assault.

Following a review (Tharp et al., 2013) of 191 empirical studies of risk and protective factors for sexual violence perpetration, Casey and colleagues (2017) argued that the predominance of research with adjudicated samples and convenience samples of college students warranted further study in a community sample. Casey et al. sought to explicitly delineate the mechanism by which childhood maltreatment confers higher levels of hostile masculinity and higher risk of sexual assault perpetration later in life in a community sample. In order to do so, the researchers developed an online survey advertised through Craigslist and recruited a sample of 555 men with a range of racial identities (African American = 19.8%; European American = 20.9%; Asian American = 19.1%, Latino = 21.8%), SES and educational backgrounds (63% had personal incomes less than $12,000 per year and close to 56% of the sample was enrolled in undergraduate education at the time of survey completion).

Malamuth et al.'s (1991) confluence model informed Casey and colleagues' selection of their constructs of interest, which included three items from the Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) scale (childhood physical abuse, childhood sexual abuse, witnessing intimate partner violence in childhood), traditional masculinity, negative attitudes to women, number of sex partners and casual sex, attitudes toward casual sex,

binge drinking, problems due to substance use, sex and drinking concurrency, and sexual assault perpetration. Using structural equation modeling, and confirmatory factor analysis, the researchers tested a full structural path model. Their analysis found statistically significant paths between childhood sexual abuse and sexual assault perpetration with hostile masculinity as an intermediate variable. Childhood physical abuse and witnessing intimate partner violence (IPV) were not found to be related to sexual violence perpetration.

There are several methodological considerations worthy of note with respect to the measures in Casey and colleagues' study. While the researchers' measure of ACEs has been used to evaluate childhood trauma in previous studies, the scale asks participants to respond to questions about exposure to abuse or violence on a scale of 0 (never) to 4 (very often). The frequency of "often" or "very often" may vary considerably from person to person, such that the data provided may not even be ordinal, let alone interval, even though it is treated as such in their analyses. While it is arguable that an individual's subjective account of whether abuse was often or very often is of central importance, this argument is not made explicit. A similar issue emerged with the researchers' measure of alcohol use concurrent with sexual activity; frequency was rated on a scale of 0 (never) to 4 (always). Another consideration pertains to the use of a scale of traditional masculinity developed for adolescent men aged 12-18 when Casey and colleagues' sample consisted of men aged 18-25 ($M = 20.6$; $SD = 2$). Lastly, in the seven items that the researchers used to measure sexual assault perpetration, six of their chosen items asked participants about women in general, with a seventh question asking about sexual violence toward a most recent "committed" sexual partner. In their analysis, the

researchers combine data from all items without delineating between sexual assault toward a committed partner (IPV) and sexual assault toward an unspecified sexual partner without providing justification for this decision. Even with these considerations, the heterogeneity captured by Casey and colleagues' community sample offers considerable insight into the constructs that underpin patterns of sexual assault perpetration in the broader population. At the same time, it is also important to account for the embedded nature of behavior within a cultural context.

Describing another model, Krahé (2018) identified three levels to explain violence against women within and outside of the context of intimate relationships: the macro level of society, the micro level of dyadic relationships and interaction patterns between partners, and the individual level of the perpetrator. At the macro level, Krahé contends that patriarchal societies provide a context that supports male aggression and dominance over women. With respect to the micro level, Krahé points to satisfaction levels within the relationship and alcohol use by one or both partners. Finally, at the level of the individual, Krahé cites research that suggests that younger, less educated, less affluent men, those diagnosed with personality disorders or mental illness, men who endorse traditional masculine gender roles, as well as those with attachment insecurity are more likely to abuse intimate partners. She concludes by asserting that these factors are not in and of themselves predictive; rather, "it is the combination and interaction of these different risk factors" (Krahé, 2018, p. 7) that results in sexual violence.

How are these interacting factors relevant to college students? In a commentary on McDermott, Kilmartin, McKelvey, and Kridel's (2015) narrative review of 121 articles published between 1950 and 2015, Schwartz (2015) called for future research that

accounts for multiple interacting levels of analysis relevant to the perpetration of sexual assault by college men. In their review, McDermott and colleagues argued that future research must investigate the heterogeneity of masculine identities (rather than assume dichotomous gender identities), further examine whether hostile masculinity attitudes (i.e., callous attitudes toward women and sexual assault) are "the cause, consequence, or covariate of sexual assault perpetration" (McDermott et al., 2015, p. 359), and build upon the prior research into the relationship between hostile masculinity and gender role strain. As a next step, Schwartz (2015) argued for future investigation of how "multiple systems influence socialized masculinity" (p. 367) as well as an understanding of "the dynamic interaction between the individuality of socialized masculinity and how it is expressed situationally" (p. 368). Finally, Schwartz called for a "move away from quantitative surveys to qualitative" as well as observational and experimental designs (p. 368), a call that lends support for the current study.

Distal and Proximal Culture and the Socialization of Masculinity

Furthermore, several scholars have called for and provided evidence to support a multiple systems approach in order to hold the complexity and interactive dynamics that lead to sexual violence on college campuses specifically. For example, results from Thompson, Swartout, and Koss's (2013) empirical, longitudinal study suggest that across the four years of college, high levels of hostile masculinity (Krahé's macro level) and peer norms (more proximal culture) were the greatest temporal risk factors associated with the perpetration of sexual aggression by college men. Thompson et al. surveyed 795 men (Mean age = 18.56 with SD = 0.51 at first year; 89% = White) at the end of each of their four years at a large southeastern university. Announcements were made through

the school newspaper, flyers distributed throughout campus, and participants were invited via email to go to the student health center in order to complete a survey that consisted of items from the revised Sexual Experiences Survey to assess for sexual aggression, items from the Hostility Toward Women Scale and Rape Supportive Beliefs Scale, items pertaining to perceptions of current friend group's approval of coercive strategies to engage in sexual intercourse, as well as questions that asked participants to report on the number of times they had been drunk and the number of partners with whom they had previously had sexual intercourse. The researchers utilized a latent class growth analysis (LCGA) in order to derive a best fit model that was found to be consistent with the results above.

In another empirical study of undergraduate men investigating factors pertaining to proximal and distal culture associated with sexual aggression, Mikorski and Szymanski (2017) administered an online survey to 329 heterosexually identified men (Mean age = 18.93 with SD = 1.57; 75% identified as White, 11% African American/Black; 69% first year students, 17% sophomores, 9% juniors, and 6% seniors) in order to assess adherence to traditional masculine norms, peer group abuse, pornography and Facebook use, and sexual objectification of women. Mikorski and Szymanski's measure of endorsement of traditional masculine norms specifically pertained to men's attitudes toward the notion of a man as a "playboy" (e.g., items such as "If I could, I would frequently change sexual partners;" p. 260), power over women, and violence. Peer group abuse was assessed through three items asking participants how many of their male friends had engaged in physically forceful behavior in conflict or in an attempt to engage in sexual activity, or verbally abusive behavior to engage in sexual activity. Pornography use was assessed

through the Pornography Use Scale, which asked men to report on the number of hours per week and per sitting. The Facebook Questionnaire asked participants about use of socially interactive (rather than passive) use on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (about once a month or less) to 7 (many times per day).

Lastly, sexual objectification and unwanted sexual advances were both assessed via a modified version of the Interpersonal Objectification Scale, a scale initially developed to measure women's experiences of being sexually objectified. For example, items such as "How often have you noticed yourself staring at a woman's breasts when you are talking to them?" were used to assess objectification, whereas items such as "How often have you grabbed or pinched a woman's private body parts against her will?" were used to assess unwanted sexual advances, for which Mikorski and Szymanski found alphas of .87 and .78 for objectification and unwanted sexual advances respectively. Mikorski's and Szymanski's novel approach to assessment of what they described as "less extreme forms of sexual aggression" (p. 263), is worthy of additional study as an alternative measure of sexual violence perpetration. Taking this consideration into account, the researchers found that pornography use, Facebook use, and the interaction between association with abusive male peers and the three dimensions of traditional masculine gender norms (playboy, power over women, and violence) uniquely predicted unwanted sexual advances toward women. While these findings lend support to a multiple systems model that accounts for the relationship between sexual aggression and the socialization of men into traditional masculine roles, Mikorski's and Szymanski's study supports the need for follow up research that evaluates sexual violence more directly, rather than sexual aggression as a proxy.

Before delving further into research that explores the relationships between the socialization of masculinity and violence perpetration more specifically, it is worth taking an interlude into research that has sought to elucidate the relationship between pornography consumption and undergraduate men's experiences in sexual encounters. In a 2016 study of 487 heterosexual male college students (Mean age = 19.98 with SD = 1.88; 91.4% White), Sun, Bridges, Johnson, and Ezzell surveyed participants on measures of pornography use frequency, type of materials, amount of money spent monthly, age of first exposure, sexual insecurities, reliance on pornography for sexual excitement, integration of pornography with sexual partners, and enjoyment of sexual intimacy. Sun and colleagues found that 13.2% of respondents viewed pornography either daily or almost daily. Results confirmed their prediction that pornography use was significantly and negatively associated with enjoyment with intimate behaviors with a sexual partner, such as cuddling, kissing, and caressing. Furthermore, use of pornography was associated with use of pornography during sex with a partner as well as reliance on pornography during sex with a partner to obtain or maintain sexual excitement. Sun and colleagues suggest that their findings were consistent with sexual script theory; scripts embedded in pornography "serve as a heuristic model for understanding and making decisions during intimate sexual behavior" (Sun et al., 2016, p. 985).

The pervasive nature of pornographic material in undergraduate men's sexual scripts is of particular concern with consideration to content. Sexual aggression, alcohol consumption, ambiguous communications strategies (e.g., "mock resistance") are normalized components of sexual scripts for even consensual sexual interactions (Krahé,

Bieneck, & Scheinberger-Olwig, 2007). Many adolescents, particularly boys, garner much of their sexual education and scripts from the multi-billion-dollar pornography industry, which has been made enormously accessible by the advent of the internet (Cooper, 1998). The messages and scripts that boys internalize from pornography include acceptance of sexual violence and more traditional roles of men as dominant and women as subservient, as well as the denigration of women (Malamuth & Impett, 2001). Furthermore, online mainstream pornography focuses on acts of violence and degradation toward women, neglecting acts of intimacy, connectedness, and mutuality in the encounters it portrays (Sun et al., 2016).

Socialization Prior to College

It may therefore be unsurprising that empirical research has found associations between sexual violence perpetration by college students and consumption of pornography. In a longitudinal study of 1,144 undergraduate men recruited during their freshman year at one of 30 four-year colleges or universities in the state of Georgia (Mean Age = 18.3; 19.6% African American, 15.8% Asian/Pacific Islander; 7% Hispanic), Salazar et al. (2018) surveyed participants on measures of sexual violence perpetration, and precollege heavy episodic drinking, drug use, use of sexual media, rape myths, hypermasculinity, and peer support for sexual violence. Salazar and colleagues utilized weighted multiple logistic regression in order to identify significant covariates. The researchers were particularly interested to assess to what extent socialization and behavior prior to college influenced rates of sexual violence before starting college, and they found that higher scores on pornography consumption, hypermasculinity, peer support for sexual violence, and heavy episodic drinking were all positively and

significantly associated with the likelihood of violence perpetration prior to the start of college.

Lending further empirical support for the detrimental effects of socialization into traditional masculinity, Swartout (2013) found that men with less dense peer networks prior to college endorsed high levels of hostility toward women. In a web-based survey of 341 college men at a medium-sized public university (Mean age = 18.9; 60.9% Caucasian, 20.6% African American, 7.5% Asian or Pacific Islander, 4.6% Hispanic), participants completed measures of delinquency (including items from the Self-reported Delinquency Scale), attitudes supporting violence (items from Adversarial Sexual Beliefs, Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence, and Rape Myth Acceptance scales), hostile masculinity (items from the Sexual Dominance Scale, the Hostility Toward Women Scale, and the Adversarial Sexual Beliefs Scale), impersonal sex, peer network density, perceived peer attitudes (items from the Justification of Rape Scale and the Date Rape Attitudes Survey), and sexual aggression (revised version of the Sexual Experiences Survey for perpetration). Peer network density reflected the strength of relationship ties among participants' closest friends and was measured by first asking participants to list five male peers with whom they most often associated in high school, followed by asking men to rate the relationship strength of all 10 possible pairs of the five listed peers on a scale of zero (never met) to 100 (extremely close), and a calculation of the average relationship strength.

Swartout found that close to 25% of participants reported some form of sexual aggression, with 11.4% reporting behavior that met the legal definition of attempted or completed rape. Through structural equation modeling, Swartout found that a positive

relationship between perceived peer attitudes and hostile masculinity was mediated by attitudes supporting violence, and that an interaction between perceived peer attitudes and network density positively predicted hostile masculinity. Importantly, Swartout also found that peer network density negatively predicted hostile masculinity. That is, the greater extent to which an individual rated their high school group of friends as close knit, the more likely that individual was to report lower levels of hostile masculinity. Swartout concludes that these findings suggest that tightly knit peer groups may function as a protective factor against the development of high levels of hostile masculinity, thereby reducing the likelihood of sexual aggression perpetration. In discussion of limitations, Swartout acknowledges that while the results may appear to suggest that peer groups strongly influence individual attitudes, it is equally likely that like-minded individuals find themselves in similar peer groups, or that third variables (such as general aggression, or alcohol and drug use) may account for clustering of individuals with similar attitudes.

In a large-scale mixed methods study titled the Listening to Boys' Voices Study conducted in conjunction with Harvard Medical School and the McLean Hospital Centers for Men and Young Men, Pollack (2006) explored the socialization of masculinity in boys between the ages of 12 and 18 and argued that boys are in crisis. The study consisted of 150 boys (primarily White and from middle-class backgrounds) who completed a two-hour battery of measures including items that assessed self-esteem; traditional views of masculinity; attitudes toward boys, girls, men, and women; inner attitudes about gender roles; unconscious attitudes and feelings about other people, self, and relationships (via a modified TAT); and items from the Beck Depression Inventory.

Additionally, boys participated in a two-hour semi-structured interview designed to explore areas such as boys' emotional connections to close others, as well as emotional expressivity in relation to self-esteem, relationships, interpersonal conflict, emotional pain, shame, and sexuality.

Pollack found that boys felt deeply conflicted about what was expected of them by society, a conflict that deepened with age and pressure to hide confusion with a mask of self-confidence, a perspective that manhood promised isolation and disconnection, as well as current feelings of sadness and alienation despite an outward appearance of content. Pollack argued that society places pressure on boys to follow "a strict code of masculinity" and to "hide their emotions at all costs" (p. 190). Further, "these rigid gender guidelines… push many boys to repress their yearnings for love and connection and to build an invisible, impenetrable wall of toughness around themselves… leaving them to experience a gamut of lonely painful problems…" (p. 191). Despite a span of more than a decade, a recent call to action was outlined by a set of guidelines for psychological practice with boys and men published by the American Psychological Association (APA) in August 2018 with the justification that although boys and men often occupy positions of power and privilege in society, they are also faced with distinct sets of challenges and barriers to treatment (American Psychological Association, 2018).

Fear of Emotions and Experiential Avoidance

Empirical research suggests that, in addition to boys, men also experience fear of emotions, and furthermore, that there is an association between men's fear of emotions and levels of anger and hostility. In a 2003 study, Jakupcak conducted secondary analysis of data collected from 155 college men from the University of Massachusetts,

Boston in order to test the hypothesis that the association between men's gender role stress and acts of aggression and violence is mediated by men's fear of particular emotions (e.g., sadness and anxiety but not positive emotions or anger). Participants completed an anonymous questionnaire at a distribution table located on campus, and they were approximately college-aged (M age = 25.79, range = 18-70, SD = 8.47) and racially diverse (57.2% Caucasian/White, 10.2% African American, 7.8% Asian or Pacific Islander, 7.8% Hispanic, 3% "Mixed Race,"1.8% Cape Verdean, 1.2% Native American, and 5.4% indicating "Other"). Men's fear of emotions was assessed using the Affect Control Scale, which includes four subscales: fear of anger, depressed mood, anxiety, and positive emotions. Masculine gender role stress was measured using the Masculine Gender Stress Scale, which asks men to rate the degree of stress they would expect to experience in five domains: physical inadequacy, emotional inexpressiveness, subordination to women, intellectual inferiority, and failing to perform professionally and sexually. Lastly, aggressive and violent behavior was assessed using the Conflict Tactics Scale, which includes subscales that measure verbal and nonverbal behavior used to symbolically hurt a relationship partner as well as physical violence ranging from minor acts to severe violence.

With respect to his hypothesized model, Jakupcak's results suggested that masculine gender role stress accounted for 10% of the variance in men's fear of emotions and that men's fear of emotions (including sadness, anxiety, and positive emotion) also predicted 7% of variance in men's use of aggression and violence. Based upon his study findings, Jakupcak suggested that men use aggressive and violent behavior both in response to threat to their masculine identity and as a strategy to avoid feelings of

vulnerability, including positive emotions associated with intimacy. Results from Jakupcak's analysis also indicated that married men reported the use of significantly more aggression and violence than did men who were dating and living separately from partners, and that men who were dating and living with their partners reported the use of significantly more aggression and violence than men who were dating and not living with their partners.

With interest to further evaluate the role of shame in perpetration of aggression and violence, Jakupcak, Tull, and Roemer's (2005) study suggested that masculinity, fear of emotions, and proneness to shame each predicted external expression of anger as well as levels of hostility and aggression. In a survey of 204 undergraduate and graduate students as well as employees at an Eastern urban university, participants completed measures of fear of emotions (Affect Control Scale), masculine gender-role stress (Masculine Gender-Role Stress Scale), masculine ideology (Male Role Norms Scale), proneness to shame (the Test of Self-Conscious Affect-2), experience and expression of anger (the State-Trait Anger Expression Inventory), and levels of hostility and aggression (the Buss-Durkee Hostility Inventory). Participants recruited through undergraduate psychology courses received course credit and those recruited through distribution tables on campus were nominally compensated. Sample age ranged from 18 to 65 (Mean = 25.51, SD = 8.14) with some racial diversity (57.4% Caucasian-White, 14.2% Asian or Pacific Islander, 11.8% African American, 5.9% Hispanic).

The Affect Control Scale asks individuals to rate their agreement with statements related to sadness, anxiety, anger, and positive emotions on a Likert scale of 1 (very strongly disagree) to 7 (very strongly agree). For example, items include statements such

as “Depression could really take me over, so it is important to fight off sad feelings” (p. 277) in order to assess an individual’s fear of emotion in relation to sadness. Proneness to shame, as measured by the Test of Self-Consciousness Affect-2, presents participants with 15 scenarios likely to elicit shame or guilt. For example, participants would be asked to imagine “While out with a group of friends, you make fun of a friend who’s not there,” and to rate on a scale of 1 (not likely) to 5 (very likely) “you would feel small… like a rat” (p. 277). Given significant high correlations between masculine gender-role stress and masculine ideology, researchers summed these two variables into a single factor representing masculinity. Utilizing a hierarchical regression, Jakupcak et al. found that fear of emotions significantly and uniquely predicted overt hostility. Additionally, men’s fear of emotions was positively and significantly associated with overt hostility and anger expression and was negatively related to anger control. Jakupcak et al. concluded that their findings lend support for the theory that gender socialization results in the use of anger and aggression to avoid vulnerability and other emotions. Rather than engaging in emotional closeness, men tended to exhibit patterns of overt hostility.

Langer and Lawrence (2009) reviewed relevant literature primarily through a cognitive behavioral clinical lens and introduced a framework to integrate research linking emotion regulation, experiential avoidance, and intimate partner violence (IPV). Emotion regulation refers to an individual’s capacity to manage which, when, and how emotions are experienced physiologically and cognitively, as well as an individual’s ability to control behavioral responses to those emotions. Langer and Lawrence attributed IPV to dysfunction in adaptive emotional regulation, or what is termed emotion dysregulation. That is, individuals less equipped to identify, express, and regulate

emotions are at higher risk to utilize violence in relationships in efforts to meet their needs. Experiential avoidance is defined as "a phenomenon that occurs when a person is unwilling to remain in contact with particular private experiences (e.g., bodily sensations, emotions, thoughts, memories, images, behavioral predispositions) and takes steps to alter the form or frequency of these experiences or the contexts that occasion them, even when these forms of avoidance cause behavioral harm" (Hayes et al., 2004, p. 554). Langer and Lawrence described IPV behaviors as attempts to control or avoid unwanted internal experiences in the context of intimate relationships, such as negative affect during relational conflict. They go on to suggest that deficits in emotion regulation may in fact drive maladaptive experiential avoidance, a strategy that ultimately proves ineffective at helping individuals to meet relational needs.

Extending research of experiential avoidance more focally to a college population, Shorey et al. (2014) empirically investigated the role of experiential avoidance in male dating violence in a sample of 109 college men at a Southeastern university in dating relationships. Consistent with their theoretical conceptualization, Shorey et al. found that men who perpetrated at least one act of sexual aggression reported higher levels of experiential avoidance, even after controlling for the effects of alcohol use, relationship satisfaction, and age. Participants (Mean age = 18.44, SD = .75; 79.2% Caucasian, 9.4% African American; 75.7% freshman, 18% sophomores, 4.5% juniors) completed web-based surveys in exchange for course credit. The survey consisted of measures of dating violence (The Revised Conflict Tactics Scales), experiential avoidance (The Acceptance and Action Questionnaire, second version; AAQ-II), alcohol use in the previous year (The Alcohol Use Disorders Identification

Test), and relationship satisfaction (The Relationship Assessment Scale). The AAQ-II asked participants to rate items on a scale of 1 (never true) to 7 (always true) such as "I am afraid of my feelings," an experiential avoidance item that seems particularly difficult to distinguish from the construct of fear of emotions, and "my painful memories prevent me from having a fulfilling life" (p. 6). Though not described in their results, Shorey et al.'s data also revealed the strongest correlation among constructs to be between psychological aggression and sexual coercion. While Shorey et al.'s study contributes to an understanding of how experiential avoidance manifests in relation to violence in dating relationships on college campuses, there still remains a question about the role of experiential avoidance in sexual violence within hookup sexual encounters outside of committed relationships.

Attachment

Though much of the research examining experiential avoidance and emotion regulation in relation to IPV is rooted in a behavioral clinical perspective, attachment theory provides an explanatory theoretical model to account for the mechanism by which fear of emotions and experiential avoidance confer higher risk for perpetration of intimate partner violence. As originally developed by Bowlby (1958), attachment theory contends that through a relationship with a primary caretaker in early life, an individual internalizes expectations about the availability of close others to provide safety and comfort when an individual is faced with threat and distress. While most individuals develop a secure sense that close others will be available and may be trusted, two additional common classifications include avoidant attachment (characterized by fears of intimacy resulting from the failure of an attachment figure to meet needs) and anxious

attachment (a fearful clinging to others lest they abandon or reject the individual), also described as preoccupied attachment (Ainsworth, 1989).

In a qualitative study exploring attachment dynamics in heterosexual couples with a male partner that used violence, Allison, Bartholomew, Mayseless, and Dutton (2008) utilized the semi-structured History of Attachments Interview and thematic analysis of data with 23 couples (15 of whom were self-referred, 8 court referred; Men's mean age = 34.13, SD = 8.18, range = 25-61; Women's mean age = 33.70, SD = 9.39, range = 23-59). Utilizing the couple as the level of analysis, Allison et al. found that the same violent behaviors corresponded to different strategies and functions depending on attachment patterns of partners within the relationship. More specifically, relationship violence served both as a pursuit strategy and a distancing one, depending on how violent partners sought to regulate closeness in their relationship. Among individuals identified as having anxious (preoccupied) attachment, violence was used when other attempts to maintain close proximity were unsuccessful. Alternatively, among individuals identified as having avoidant (fearful and dismissing) attachment, violence was used when too much proximity was experienced and attempts to create greater distance were denied. Allison et al.'s study yielded key insights into the processes through which attachment relates to the use of IPV. However, in order to understand these processes in relation to sexual violence on college campuses, additional research is needed utilizing a college sample within the context of hookup culture and beyond the frame of intimate relationships. While there is an evident association between IPV and both avoidant and anxious attachment patterns, many college students are engaged in hookup culture in which sexual encounters are predominantly outside of relationships. The question

therefore becomes: are individuals with anxious or avoidant attachment style who are not in a relationship more likely to engage in non-consensual or violent sexual behavior than those with secure attachment?

With a different methodological approach, Sutton and Simons (2015) directly examined attachment styles and hookup culture on college campuses as context that fosters the perpetration of sexual assault by undergraduate men utilizing structural equation modeling and path analysis. In their survey of 711 undergraduates (men = 326), administered as a voluntary extra credit assignment during scheduled class times, Sutton and Simons examined the relationship between interparental hostility, harsh parenting, attachment style, hook-up culture (a latent variable using measures of enjoyment of sexual encounters without commitment, alcohol use, and lifetime number of hookup experiences), as well as men's sexual assault perpetration and women's sexual assault victimization. The researchers found that 43% of men reported having perpetrated some form of sexual assault. Sutton and Simons found that men's sexual assault perpetration was significantly and positively associated with exposure to harsh parenting, an avoidant attachment style, and participation in hookup culture.

Several methodological considerations are worthy of note with respect to future research. The researchers equate interparental hostility with witnessing violence and experiencing physically aggressive punishment in childhood; however, four out of the eight items on their measure of hostility were interparental warmth items reverse coded, even though the absence of warmth (e.g., "acted loving and affectionate toward one another;" p. 2831) is not equivalent to aggression and hostility. While it is possible to conceive of the predominantly Caucasian (94.2%) and high SES sample as a weakness in

generalizability, the researchers indicate the composition of gender, racial, and age demographics in their sample were comparable to those within the larger institution. Therefore, while their findings may not be generalizable across all college campuses, their results indicate that within the context of hookup culture on their college campus, early life experience and avoidant attachment style are associated with undergraduate men's perpetration of sexual assault.

In another empirical study, McDermott and Lopez (2012) utilized structural equation modeling and a bootstrapping procedure to examine the relationships between attachment anxiety, attachment avoidance, gender role stress, and IPV acceptance attitudes. McDermott and Lopez surveyed 419 undergraduate heterosexual men on measures of avoidant and anxious attachment dimensions, attitudes toward male dating and intimate partner violence, as well as a measure of gender role stress. Participants had a mean age of 22.29 years (SD = 4.01) with diversity in terms of racial background and academic class level (28.5% White, 28.4% Asian-Pacific Islander, 14.5% Hispanic/Latino, 11.9% Black, 11% Indian, 4.5% multiracial, and 1% Native American; 44.9% junior, 23.9% senior, 17.9% sophomore. The Experiences in Close Relationships Scale-Revised was used to assess attachment avoidance (such as fears of and discomfort with intimacy, dependency, and vulnerability) and anxiety (such as concerns about rejection and abandonment by romantic partners). Attitudes toward intimate partner violence were measured with subscales assessing attitudes toward psychological, physical, and sexual violence (Attitudes Toward Male Dating Violence) and another scale that assessed attitudes toward psychological abuse, physical violence, and controlling behaviors (Intimate Partner Violence Attitude Scale-Revised). Men's levels of stress

experienced in situations that challenge traditional masculine roles was measured with the Masculine Gender Role Stress Scale (MGRS), a well-regarded five-factor measure that includes scales of physical inadequacy, emotional inexpressiveness, subordination to women, intellectual inferiority, and performance failures.

McDermott and Lopez found that both attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance had statistically significant indirect effects on IPV acceptance attitudes through gender role stress. Furthermore, they found that combining the contributions of attachment anxiety and avoidance accounted for 21% of the variance in IPV acceptance attitudes. McDermott and Lopez posited that anxiously attached men may rely on rigid gender norms in order to protect against fears of rejection and abandonment. Further, they suggested that avoidantly attached men may similarly rely on gender norms that allow them to control the degrees of intimacy and vulnerability. As a result, some men may view violence as a gender-appropriate means of managing attachment needs and threats to their masculine identities. Though further research is needed to investigate whether the study findings pertain to sexual aggression perpetration on college campuses (that is, whether attitudes toward IPV are predictive of the use of violence), McDermott and Lopez's results provide support for the mediating role of gender role stress between attachment and sexual violence attitudes.

Gender Role Stress and Precarious Manhood

In a study that explicitly investigated sexual aggression perpetration, Smith, Parrott, Swartout, and Tharp (2015) sought to examine the relationship between specific domains of masculine gender role stress and hegemonic masculinity in relation to men's sexual aggression toward an intimate partner. Hegemonic masculinity may be defined as

"the pattern of practice (i.e., things done)…[that] ideologically legitimate the global subordination of women to men" as well as "ascendency achieved through culture, institutions, and persuasion" (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005, p. 832). Said otherwise, hegemonic masculinity reflects a gender hierarchy with oppressive dominance attained by a select few in a patriarchal society through their enactment of masculine gender norms. In their study, Smith et al. operationalize hegemonic masculinity as comprised of adherence to the antifemininity norm (measured via The Revised Male Role Norms Inventory; items such as "A man should prefer watching action movies to reading romantic novels;" p. 163) and the degree to which dominance over a partner motivates sexuality (measured via The Sexual Dominance Scale; items such as "I enjoy the conquest;" p. 164). Results from Smith et al.'s data analysis suggested that men who endorsed higher levels of antifemininity and gender role stress in response to subordination to women (e.g., "being outperformed by a woman at work," p. 164) were more likely to report sexual dominance, which was positively correlated with sexual aggression frequency. These findings lent support to Smith et al.'s theoretical conceptualization and suggest a need for further study in a college sample.

Experimental research has also shown that in the aftermath of men's experience of threat to traditional masculine identity, men will both engage in sexual harassment in a laboratory-setting paradigm and endorse higher proclivity toward rape. In a set of experiments at the University of Padova in Italy, Maass, Cadinu, Guarnieri, and Grasselli (2003) experimentally threatened masculine identity in different ways and examined whether undergraduate men (N = 90) would sexually harass a fictitious woman interaction partner by sending pornographic photographs as part of a computer task.

Participants completed a measure of gender self-concept and were then provided different types of fictitious feedback. Maass et al. found that both men who were told that in recent years "male students are becoming increasingly feminine" and especially those who were told that their scores "fell clearly into the female curve and outside of the male curve" (p. 864) were more likely to send pornographic material (rated as offensive in a prior study).

In another set of two studies by Mescher and Rudman (2014), participant men (N = 214) higher in body shame (as measured by the Objectified Body Consciousness Scale) following rejection by a phantom woman confederate (ostensibly based on the participant's appearance in a photo taken at the start of the study), more highly endorsed a measure of likelihood to commit rape (measured by six items from Malamuth's Attraction to Sexual Aggression Scale). Though participant ages were not reported, Mescher and Rudman indicate that participants received credit toward an Introductory Psychology course, so it may be assumed they were undergraduate men enrolled at a college or university. These studies share in common hostility toward women as an outcome of threat to masculine identity.

Additional research suggests a more pronounced direct link between threats to masculine gender identity and perpetration of violence and aggression. In a report of five studies building on prior research pertaining to masculine gender role stress and restoration of gender identity following threat to masculinity, Vandello, Bosson, Cohen, Burnaford, and Weaver (2008) forwarded their notion of *precarious masculinity* to refer to the elusive and tenuous nature of masculine gender identity in Western cultures. In three additional experiments, Bosson, Vandello, Burnaford, Weaver, and Wasti (2009)

investigated men's use of physical aggression in order to restore threatened gender status and its function to reduce anxious cognitions following gender threat. Vandello et al. (2009) posit that the most effective strategies that men may use to restore threatened masculine identity are those that involve risk, are challenging, and visible to others, rendering acts of physical aggression a strong contender for the task.

In the first of three studies, 31 undergraduate men (Median age = 20; 41.9% White, 25.8% Latino, 16.1% Black, 9.7% Arabic) participating in research for course credit were randomly selected to be video recorded for 5-minutes (which the participant believed would then be viewed by 10-20 students) either braiding a wigged, female mannequin's hair (hairstyling task) or braiding rubber bands on a wooden frame (rope task). Prior studies confirmed that heterosexual men perceived the hair braiding task as a gender threat compared to the neutral rope task. A White female experimenter then asked participants to choose to be video recorded engaged in either a boxing task (punching a punching bag) or a basketball task, with impact pressure for each punch recorded by the experimenter. Though there were no significant differences in the number of participants who chose to engage in boxing after braiding hair versus rubber-bands, results from a one-way ANOVA indicated that men who braided hair (threat condition) punched harder than did men who braided rubber bands with a large effect size.

In a similar second study (part of Vandello et al.'s 2009 larger study) with 45 undergraduate men (Median age = 19; 55.6% White, 20% Latino, 15.6% Black, and 8.9% Asian American), participants completed either the hairstyling or rope task as in the first study. Participants were then asked by a White female experimenter to choose between

either a boxing task or a brainteaser puzzle (rated as less masculine than boxing via pilot ratings), though participants did not in fact engage in any second task. Vandello et al. found that among men in the threat condition (hairstyling task), more than twice as many participants chose the boxing task (50%; n = 11) compared to those in the neutral condition (rope task) (22%; n = 5). Though the researchers note that between the first two studies combined, most men did not choose the aggressive task, Vandello et al. contend that more displays of physical aggression followed the threat condition than a neutral condition.

In the third study, Vandello et al. sought to investigate whether the post-threat boxing task functioned to downregulate anxiety produced by threat to manhood. A total of 60 undergraduate men (Median age = 19; 45% White, 20% Latino, 16.7% Asian American, 8.3% Black, 5% Arabic, 5% biracial) were assigned to three conditions. In the first condition, men completed the same hairstyling task as in studies one and two as well as the boxing task, followed by completion of a word-completion task to assess anxiety-related cognitions. Participants received word stems (such as STRE__ __) that could be completed either in anxious or non-anxious ways (such as stress or street), with seven words total (stress, threat, shame, loser, bother, weak, and upset). In the second condition, following the hairstyling task, participants were led to believe that the impact pressure gauge for the boxing task was malfunctioning, so they skipped the boxing task and completed the sentence completion task. Those in the third condition completed the sentence completion task only. Through a contrast analysis and a simultaneous multiple regression analysis, Vandello et al. found that men who engaged in a task that threatened their manhood without restoring their masculine identity through an aggressive act were

more anxious than those who restored their manhood through an aggressive act (boxing task).

Findings from a study by Bosson and Michniewicz (2013) suggest that men are more sensitive to threats to their gender identity than women. In a series of three studies with 756 undergraduate students from a large Southeastern university, Bosson and Michniewicz found that men displayed greater gender dichotomization than women via a task in which participants rated a series of 20 traits on a scale from 1 (not at all central) to 9 (extremely central) to their gender group. Furthermore, following a reminder of the precariousness of their gender status (writing task about a time when the participant felt badly about their status as a "real man") men tended to further disavow feminine traits in order to reinforce their ingroup identity. In a more recent review article, Bosson and Vandello (2011) maintain that men are sensitive to a cultural script in which aggression is able to restore threatened manhood. A review of sexual scripts from pornography above suggests that these scripts may entail violence toward women as well; however, it remains unclear whether the findings from Vandello et al.'s studies translate to college men's perpetration of sexual violence.

Athletic and Fraternity Involvement

In a survey-based study of 365 mostly White and heterosexual undergraduate men (mean age = 19.71), Seabrook, Ward, and Giaccardi (2018) further narrowed a sample of interest by examining sexual assault among undergraduate fraternity members compared to undergraduate men who were not in fraternities. The authors sought to investigate whether the pressure that fraternity members feel to uphold traditional masculine gender norms as well as endorsement of the norms themselves, including objectification of

women, mediated the relationship between fraternity membership and acceptance of sexual violence [which the authors utilized as a proxy for perpetration of sexual violence with the argument that attitudes toward and perpetration of sexual violence are "important indicators of acceptance of sexual violence" (p. 5)]. Sexual violence acceptance was comprised of items from a rape myth acceptance scale and a sexual deception scale, which included items such as, "Told someone 'I love you' but really didn't just to have sex with them" (p. 6).

A series of independent *t* tests provided support for the researchers' hypothesis that compared to non-members, fraternity members more strongly endorsed conformity to masculine norms, pressure to uphold masculinity, acceptance of objectification of women, rape myth acceptance, and sexual deception. Through structural equation modeling and item-to-parcel balance technique, the researchers found an acceptable fit between their data and the measurement model as well as their proposed model. These findings lent support for the conclusion that masculine gender norms, the pressure to uphold masculinity, and acceptance of objectification of women mediate the relationship between fraternity membership and rape myth acceptance as well as the relationship between fraternity membership and sexual deception. Seabrook et al.'s findings also indicated that more frequent sexual deception behaviors were associated with pressure from male friends to uphold masculinity and that greater rape myth acceptance was associated with greater conformity to masculine norms. Further research into the relationship between fraternity membership and violence perpetration is warranted.

Results from various studies suggested that masculinity norms and fraternity status are related to sexual aggression, as is alcohol use. Results from Locke and

Mahalik's (2005) study of 254 undergraduate men at four colleges and universities in the Northeastern and Mid-Atlantic regions (Mean age 19.70, SD = 1.60; 91.3% White) indicated that masculinity norms (Conformity to Masculinity Norms Inventory) and problematic alcohol use (but not athletic involvement) predicted sexually aggressive behavior (SES) toward women and rape myth acceptance. Results from another study suggested that fraternity involvement, higher perceived peer drinking norms, as well as three out of eleven measured masculine norms (playboy, risk taking, and winning) were positively associated with frequency of drinking alcohol to the point of intoxication (Iwamoto, Cheng, Lee, Takamatsu, & Gordon, 2011). Iwamoto et al.'s study included 776 undergraduate men at a large Southern California public university (Mean age = 20.24, SD = 2.16; 63% Asian American, 19% Caucasian, 9% Latino) with representation across academic class levels (30% seniors, 27% juniors, 21% sophomores, 30% freshman).

Alcohol

To more directly understand the relationship between alcohol consumption and sexual violence on college campuses, we can look to results from a study by Nicholson and colleagues (1998). Nicholson et al. administered a 49-item yes or no response questionnaire to 1,084 students at a large Northeastern university (Male = 518, Female = 566; 91.8% White, Age range: 18-21). The researchers found that significantly more male (8.1%) than female (1.8%) participants reported having perpetrated unwanted sexual activity, and that 77.5% of participants reported that alcohol had been involved in those incidents. Nicholson and colleagues also found that 87.9% of females and 73.7% of males reported that alcohol had been involved in unwanted sexual activity, and that

among those participants who reported having perpetrated rape (2.7% of males), they indicated that alcohol was involved 100% of the time.

As has been touched upon (Iwamoto et al., 2011), empirical studies have suggested that undergraduate men consume alcohol heavily in order to reinforce their ingroup status, in addition to engaging in gender dichotomization and enacting aggressive scripts. Dumas, Graham, Maxwell-Smith, and Wells (2015) conducted the first empirical study to examine the relationships among heavy episodic drinking, within-peer-group status, and aggressive responding to provocation in bars. In Dumas et al.'s study, 116 undergraduate men enrolled in an Introductory Psychology course at a large Southwestern Ontario university completed an online survey that included measures of within-peer-group status, physical bar aggression, heavy episodic drinking, personal approval of bar aggression, and physical trait aggression. Within-peer-group status was assessed by asking participants to list the names of male members in their peer group and to provide rankings to group members, including themselves, on dimensions of: "1) makes group decisions; 2) has opinions that are listened to by other group members; 3) possesses popularity; and 4) with whom it is important to comply" (p. 216). Only participants' ranking of themselves was utilized in Dumas et al.'s analysis. Physical bar aggression was measured by asking participants to rate the likelihood on a 10-point Likert scale that they would use physical aggression in response to a series of four vignettes describing slights against the participant when at a bar with their peer group.

Dumas et al. utilized bootstrapping techniques and regression coefficients to evaluate the fit of their data to a mediation model. Results of their analysis indicated that within-peer-group status was significantly correlated with likelihood of engaging in bar

aggression and heavy episodic drinking (the number of times a participant consumed 5 or more standard alcoholic drinks in one sitting). Additionally, Dumas et al. found that heavy episodic drinking in the past month also significantly mediated the relationship between within-peer-group status and physical bar aggression. That is, the more a man perceived himself to be influential within his peer group, the more likely he was to engage in frequent episodes of heavy drinking and to endorse his likelihood of partaking in physical aggression if slighted at a bar in front of his peers.

Fugitt and Ham (2018) experimentally investigated the impact of a threat to masculinity and ingroup status on alcohol consumption in a simulated bar laboratory. Participants were 65 undergraduate men recruited through the psychology subject pool and the broader student population at a Mid-Southern university (Age range = 21-29; 76% Caucasian). After completing online demographic and background measures, participants were randomly assigned fabricated feedback indicating that their scores were consistent with prototypical masculinity or with lower masculinity and higher femininity compared to their undergraduate men peers. In a simulated lab, participants received their feedback from a female experimenter, who then left the participant with a bartender who was a male experimenter. In a threat condition, the bartender engaged the participant in a conversation about academic goals. In what Fugitt and Ham label the undermine condition, the bartender engaged the participant in a scripted conversation that challenged norms about the masculine nature of alcohol consumption by citing research that men and women drink at the same rates, and there was a poster behind the bartender with women drinking beer. As a dependent variable, Fugitt and Ham measured the amount of alcohol that participants consumed in a simulated beer taste-test. Results from

ANOVAs and post hoc tests indicated that undergraduate men in the threat condition consumed significantly more beer than those in the control and undermine conditions. Fugitt and Ham concluded that men consumed more alcohol in order to restore their senses of manhood following a threat.

In a 1998 empirical study by Abbey, McAuslan, and Ross, the researchers demonstrated support for a previously proposed theoretical model to explain the mechanism by which alcohol use increases the likelihood of sexual violence. Abbey et al. surveyed 798 undergraduate men at a large commuter university (Age range = 18-59, median = 22; 70% Caucasian, 13% African American, 8% Asian, 6% Arabic). Participants included students from 27 different majors at the university, an aim that was facilitated by 80 faculty members allowing the researchers to administer the 20-minute survey during class time. Surveys included measures of rape supportive beliefs (including items from the Rape Myth Acceptance Scale and the Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence Scale), items to assess participant beliefs about the effects of alcohol on men's and women's behavior (e.g., they become mean, or more sexually responsive, etc.), misperception of sexual intent, frequency with which a participant had consumed alcohol when he misperceived his sexual partner's intent as well as frequency of the sexual partner's alcohol consumption during those incidents, likelihood of committing sexual assault if unpunished, and sexual assault perpetration (SES).

Results of a structural equation modeling analysis indicated that belief in traditional rape myths, frequent misperception of women's sexual intent, and likelihood of committing sexual assault if unpunished all contributed directly to sexual assault perpetration, with frequent and heavy consumption of alcohol contributing indirectly

(mediated through misperception of sexual intent and likelihood to commit sexual assault if unpunished). Abbey et al. relay that heavy alcohol consumption is likely to contribute to miscues about desires and intention in sexual partners, which may then make sexual assault perpetration more likely. The researchers noted that men perpetrate sexual assault in the absence of misperception as well; however, they argue that misperception is a significant contribution. Abbey et al. also acknowledged that their methodology and data analytic procedures were cross-sectional, and they suggested that prospective research and experimentation are needed in order to prove causal relationships between the constructs identified.

One methodological consideration in Abbey et al.'s study is that misperception of sexual intent may be difficult to accurately assess via a self-report measure. In their study, misperception was assessed with a question such as "Sometimes people misinterpret or misperceive what we do or say. How often have you thought a woman wanted a greater degree of sexual intimacy than she actually did?" (p.178). Another consideration is that while Abbey et al. provide a breakdown of prevalence rates of different forms of sexual violence, their analysis utilized a summed score of the total number of sexual assaults (ranging from fondling/kissing to completed rape) as a measure of sexual assault frequency when there may be value in exploring these categories nominally rather than as interval data.

Reporting and Identifying Own Behavior as Sexual Violence

Though Abbey et al. (1998) relied upon men's self-report of their misperceptions of previous partners' sexual intent, there are various reasons that self-report may be an unreliable source to describe undergraduate men's sexually violent behavior. Social

desirability, positive impression management, and concerns about repercussions for criminal action are all evident, and many studies that rely on men's self-reports of sexual violence perpetration attempt to control for these factors such as though the use of the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960). In an experimental study of men aged 18-30, Strang and Peterson (2016) found that the odds of men reporting that they had committed illegal sexual assault was 6.5 times greater (37.9% of the sample) in men who believed their honesty was being tracked through a polygraph than men who were not told about a polygraph. At the same time, the researchers still found that only 5% of men answered affirmatively to the question, "Do you think you may have ever raped or sexually assaulted a woman?" (p. 18), which led Strang and Peterson to conclude that "even under pressure to answer honestly, men may fail to accurately identify or label their use of sexual assault" (p. 18). Intoxication from substance use, sexual scripts, and traditional gender norms may also influence undergraduate men's interpretation and classification of their own behavior. Since research into prevalence of sexual violence perpetration and victimization began in the 1980s, these considerations have presented challenges to researchers.

Loh, Orchowski, Gidycz, and Elizaga (2007) sought to empirically examine men's perceptions of sexual aggression through the lens of social norms theory. Social norms theory posits that men who use sexual aggression may be more inclined to view their own behavior as normative, socially acceptable, and objective. Therefore, Loh et al. were interested to investigate the extent to which men who had perpetrated sexual aggression were able to identify inappropriate dating behaviors and signs of nonconsent, and to recognize similarity between their own behavior and date rape behavior in a video

scenario. Participants included 231 undergraduate men at two large Midwestern universities enrolled in psychology courses (98.3% heterosexual; 92.2% Caucasian; 66.7% between ages of 18-19 years old), and they initially completed a survey with 10 items to assess sexual assault perpetration (SES). All participants watched two videos with the same actors on a first date that included: negotiating the date, finishing dinner, and the party. One video included no sexual aggression and another video depicted a date rape scenario (e.g., man making sexist comments, pressuring woman to drink more alcohol and to go to isolated location, and eventually using physical force to engage in sexual intercourse). Following each video, participants completed measures pertaining to what they had seen of identification with the perpetrator, identification of inappropriate or aggressive behaviors, cues indicating nonconsent, and each partner's interest in sex.

Results of repeated measures ANOVA indicated that men who had perpetrated sexual aggression rated their own behavior as more similar to the behavior of the man in both video scenarios. Rejecting three out of four of their hypotheses, Loh et al. concluded that men with a history of sexual aggression perpetration did not differ in their recognition of signal of nonconsent, inappropriate behavior, identification with the perpetrator, or sexualization of the couple compared to men without a history of sexual aggression perpetration. Loh et al. argue that one explanation for why men with sexual aggression perpetration histories identify more with the man in a nonaggressive dating scenario than men without sexual aggression perpetration is their tendency to perceive similarity between themselves and their peers, regardless of the behaviors. As a result, Loh et al. suggest that interventions may be required that address capacities to identify inappropriate behaviors and nonconsent cues. While there are additional possible means

to interpret their findings, Loh et al. neglected a vital source of explanatory data by failing to ask participants directly how they were able to account for their own identification with the man in the video scenarios. Valuable as is their contribution to experimental literature, undergraduate men's decision and meaning making processes cannot be accounted for quantitatively.

In a pivotal empirical study that shed light on linguistic factors that may skew reporting on violence perpetration prevalence rates, Edwards, Bradshaw, and Hinsz (2014) found that the 86 undergraduate heterosexual men participants in their study could be categorized into three groups: men who did not report intent to be sexually coercive, men who endorsed behavioral descriptions of intent but denied intent with respect to the word "rape," and men who explicitly endorsed the intent to rape. Participants (Mean age = 21, SD = 3.6; More than 90% Caucasian) completed surveys with measures of hostility toward women (e.g., items such as "I feel that many women flirt with men just to tease them and hurt them;" p. 190), callous sexual attitudes, attraction to sexual aggression scale, and Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale. Items used from the attraction to sexual aggression scale included questions that asked participants "If nobody would ever know and there wouldn't be any consequences" whether they would engage in: heterosexual intercourse, forcing a female to do something sexual she does not want to do, and rape (p. 190).

Edwards et al. utilized a descriptive discriminant function analysis in order to distinguish three groups of participants. Men who denied intent to rape but endorsed intent to force a female to do something she does not want to do reflected an unusual pattern of an inverse construct of hostility toward women but high levels of callous

sexual attitudes. Edwards et al. interpreted this combination of scores as "representing personality characteristics that might lend themselves to allowing men to not perceive his actions as rape and may even view the forced intercourse as an achievement. The primary motivation in this case could be sexual gratification, accomplishment, and/or perceived compliance with stereotypical masculine gender norms. The use of force in these cases might be seen as an acceptable mean to reach one's goal, or the woman's "no" is perceived as a token resistance consistent with stereotypical gender norms" (p. 192). They go on to suggest that understanding undergraduate men's meaning making processing will allow for targeted interventions to be developed. If undergraduate men using force against a woman's will fail to conceptualize their behavior as sexual assault, psychoeducation, revisions of sexual scripts, and changes to cultural norms are warranted. Alternatively, if high levels of hostility toward women are responsible, interventions that address anger and cognitions are more appropriate. Edwards et al. found that higher levels of hostility toward women distinguished men who endorsed intent to rape from those who endorsed behavioral descriptions of intent alone.

With many of the previously described quantitative studies utilizing structural equation modeling, the research design and data collected provide information on the aggregate level that may be generalizable to broader populations. At the same time, these studies fall short of providing insight into how the men who use violence relate to their own behavior. While the linkages may be made through path analyses, we are not able to understand the processes by which men make these connections and what the variables and behaviors mean to them. As a result, we next turn our attention to qualitative work within the realm of how men understand and talk about their use of aggression, sexual

violence, and undergraduate college men's experience in general and within hookup culture.

How Men Construct Violence

In order to develop an understanding of violent behavior from the perspective of men who use violence, Dagirmanjian et al. (2017) conducted interviews with 12 "blue-collar" adult men and sought to explore how they constructed violence and explained their own violent behavior. Participants ranged in age from 23 to 59 with some racial diversity (Caucasian = 7; African American = 3; Asian American =1; Biracial =1) and diversity in relationship status (married = 3) and education (some college = 4, college graduate = 1). The researchers utilized a semi-structured interview conducted in the office of one of the male authors at Boston College with questions about a range of health behaviors including physical violence, such as "Research shows that men tend to get into more physical fights than women. Why do you think that is?" (p. 2279). Interviews were transcribed verbatim and analyzed using consensual qualitative research method. Different configurations of researcher teams categorized data, then identified and coded domains, before abstracting core ideas from each domain and developing categories from the core ideas that best represented themes.

The two domains that Dagirmanjian et al. reported were: 1) reasons men engage in violence and 2) reasons men avoid engaging in violence. Within the first domain, reasons that men engage in violence, the researchers identified seven categories that included: stand up for yourself/self-defense, avoid disrespect, alcohol or drug use, gain or maintain dominance/status/respect, protect others, men are naturally/innately violent, and last resort. In the second domain, reasons men avoid engaging in violence, the

researchers identified two categories: age and legal consequences. In their discussion, the authors suggested that their overall findings best support the precarious manhood thesis that a man must prove his manhood and that it may be easily lost (Vandello & Bosson, 2013). As an example, one participant shared, "A lot of men feel the need to prove their masculinity by different means… by the women that they date, marry, sleep with, by, you know, the amount of people they can beat up" (p. 2286). Dagirmanjian et al.'s study contributes a depth of meaning to how some men relate to their own masculine identities and their motivation to engage in violent behavior. However, in order to understand the implications of these data for sexually violent behavior on college campuses, research with undergraduate students embedded within the hookup culture is needed.

How Undergraduate Men Relate to their Gender Identities

With the aim of understanding college men's experiences through a social justice and gendered lens, Harris and Edwards (2010) each conducted independent qualitative studies of college men's experiences as college men, the findings of which the researchers then combined in a published article after they became aware of each other's studies at a national conference. Though both researchers utilized a grounded theory approach, Edwards utilized a constructivist method toward gender as well as a social justice theoretical framework, whereas Harris utilized a more traditional grounded theory approach informed by a social constructivist framework. Edwards' study included 10 college men at a large public university who represented a range of social identity groups across domains such as race, sexual orientation, class, athletics and fraternity involvement, as well as other organizations. Edwards conducted three open-ended interviews about what it meant to them to be a man and how that had changed for them

over time. Transcripts were coded with a constant comparative method of grounded theory until saturation was reached. Harris' study consisted of 68 undergraduate men at a large private institution in the Western region of the US who represented a range of backgrounds and identities such as race and ethnicity, athletic and fraternity involvement, religion, and sexual orientation. Harris conducted in-person semistructured interviews with 12 men in phase 1 in order to develop a protocol that guided inquiry in phase 2, which consisted of nine focus groups that included the remaining 56 participants. Data were analyzed in a similar process to that of Edwards's study.

Harris and Edwards identified three themes common to their respective studies: external pressures and expectations to perform hegemonic masculinity; consequences of hegemonic masculinity; and efforts to transcend hegemonic masculinity. With respect to the first theme, men described socialization and pressure from parents, coaches, teachers, media, and sports, to embrace traditional masculinity such as by being dominant, competitive, tough, aggressive, and in control. As a consequence, men tended to feel the need to cover up their authentic selves and to engage in activities such as competitive heterosexual sex, drinking to excess, doing drugs, having misogynistic relationships and attitudes toward, limited relationships with men, and a loss of their sense of selves. Harris and Edwards write,

> Interestingly, participants in both studies acknowledged that these attitudes and behaviors did not always reflect their authentic beliefs and feelings about women. But they were not compelled to challenge their peers because they did not want to disrupt the dynamics of the group; nor did they want to have their statuses and acceptance within the group taken away. As a consequence of these interactions,

> participants in both studies found it difficult to be open with other men about their interests in genuine, rather than exclusively sexual, relationships with women. In fact, some participants shared the fact that their romantic relationships with women were authentic, fulfilling, and offered some respite from the pressure they experienced in their interactions with men (p. 52).

The final theme included expressions of men finding ways to access their true natures and vulnerabilities, to challenge traditional gender norms, and to connect with others who embraced shared perspectives. In order to build upon the depth of understanding offered by Harris and Edwards's studies, additional research is needed to more focally explore college men's attitudes toward sexually violent behavior.

How Undergraduate Men Relate to Hookup Culture

In a grounded theory study utilizing in-depth interviews conducted in 2006 and 2007 with 78 heterosexual, predominantly White, undergraduate women (n = 50) and men (n = 28), Currier (2013) sought to explore the function and meaning of the term "hookup," as well as how the term itself is used strategically by undergraduate men and women to further different ends. In her office, the researcher conducted one-on-one interviews that were recorded and transcribed and then engaged in a recursive back-and-forth interaction with data gathered in interviews over a 21-month period. Among the themes that emerged, the researcher described one of the most prominent patterns as the relationship between hooking up, hegemonic masculinity, and strategic ambiguity. More specifically, the researcher found that masculinity was first and foremost defined as heterosexuality, or the avoidance of being "gay," which resulted in an overemphasis on heterosexual activity. Secondly, the researcher described an apparent pressure that men

perceived to bond with other men by impressing them with their sexual prowess, thereby raising their social status and establishing them as "real men." Furthermore, Currier found that men felt "accountable" to other men, such that even those who experienced unwanted pressure to engage in sexual encounters with women described putting the same pressure on their peers. Men used strategic ambiguity when describing hookups in order to reinforce their masculinity and to strengthen their social status with respect to other men. Impressing women was not the goal; rather, men felt accountable to other men and sought to develop a reputation by hooking up with many women. Despite evident differences between sample characteristics, both Currier and Dagirmanjian et al.'s studies lend support for the precarious manhood thesis.

The strengths of Currier's study rest in her capacity to provide in-depth accounts about the nature of hookup culture within the context of a college campus from the perspective of both undergraduate men and women. Through these narratives, key themes emerged that elucidate the meaning of engaging in sexual activity for undergraduate men. There is an evident pressure to meet the expectations of peers in order to belong, to be respected, and to enact masculine identity. Given the nature of contemporary culture, it is feasible--and perhaps likely--that hookup culture, as it manifests on Currier's college campus and others across the country, presented a different landscape in 2019 than it did in 2006 and 2007. Therefore, further exploration of how undergraduate students conceptualize their sexual behavior and proximal culture would be a valuable contribution. Additionally, while Currier's research develops an understanding of pressures to conform to gender norms and the role of sexual behavior in this endeavor, the study does not delve into the nature of sexually violent behavior.

Young Men's Sexual Scripts

In a set of two studies, Morrison, Masters, Wells, Casey, Beadnell, and Hoppe (2015) explore how heterosexual men relate to sexual experiences through a sexual scripts framework and found that undergraduate men described a combination of a traditionally masculine "player" script as well one that emphasized mutual pleasure in sexual encounters with women. In the qualitative study, Morrison et al. collected narrative data from 26 men (Age range = 18-25; 16 currently enrolled or graduated from a 4-year college; 9 European American/White, 5 Latino, 5 Asian/Pacific Islander, 4 African American, 3 multiracial) using a semi-structured protocol that asked men to share stories, trajectories, and their perspectives on their experience in committed romantic partnerships, ongoing casual sexual relationships, and one-term only sexual encounters. Interviewers followed up with questions about contraception, STIs, pregnancy as well as fatherhood if these topics did not organically emerge. Interview transcriptions were sequentially topic coded and themes were summarized using across-case analysis. Three team members then used analyses to produce a 28-item questionnaire and 12 brief sexual scenarios based on themes that included: traditional masculine sexuality (men having strong sex drives, being players, and valuing sex over relationships), contrast between traditional feminine sexuality and women who desire and initiate sex, relationships and emotional context of sex, as well as courtship.

In the second study, a total of 648 men were recruited through advertisements on Facebook and Craigslist in order to complete a survey online (Mean age = 20.6, SD = 2; 22.2% Latino, 20.8% African American, 20.5% European American/White, 18.4% multiracial or other, 18.1% Asian American). The survey included 12 sexual script

scenarios after which men were asked to rate "How desirable is this situation for you?" (scale of 1-4), "How common is this situation for you?" as well as questions about the extent to which the scenario was desirable and common for "guys your age." Items on the questionnaire included statements such as "Sex is better if it's in a relationship that includes love," and participants were asked to provide a rating on a scale of 0 (strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). Morrison et al. utilized exploratory factor analysis to determine which types of scripts men identified as most desirable for them, and identified both a traditional masculinity script as well as a sexual script involving women who are interested in sex, initiate it, and enjoy it. These findings broaden an understanding of men's scripts for sexual encounters; however, they do not provide insight into the interrelationship between undergraduate men's scripts and cultures on college campuses, nor do they shed light on how men come to develop these expectations for sexual encounters.

How Anonymous Perpetrators Explain Sexual Assault Online

In a novel thematic analysis of anonymously posted online content, Hipp, Bellis, Goodnight, Brennan, Swartout, and Cook (2017) selected responses posted to Reddit.com, an online community, in response to the question: "Reddit's had a few threads about sexual assault victims, but are there any redditors from the other side of the story? What were your motivations? Do you regret it?" The researchers found that five interrelated themes emerged with respect to how perpetrators of sexual violence justified their behavior: sexual scripts, victim blame, hostile sexism, biological essentialism, objectification, and sociosexuality. The theme of sexual scripts refers to the cultural belief that women are not supposed to openly express sexual desire, which results in an

expectation of mock resistance in sexual encounters even when women do desire sexual activity. Victim blame reflects responders' descriptions of holding a victim accountable as a result of the victim engaging in flirtatious or suggestive behavior, drinking too much, failing to verbally or physically resist sufficiently, or having previously consented to sexual activity. The theme of hostile sexism reflected violent and aggressive anger toward women, and biological essentialism described the belief that men are not able to control their sexual behavior. Objectification included accounts that separated a woman's body parts from the individual as a whole and devalued women by describing their function in the service of men rather than as autonomous human beings deserving of dignity. Relatedly, the theme of sociosexuality refers to accounts that described depersonalization, dehumanization, and objectification in order to achieve sexual gratification with disregard for intimacy or acknowledgement of the partner as a person.

Hipp et al.'s methodology opened the door for a scholarly analysis of existing data within the field, and they were able to uncover key themes relevant to how perpetrators describe the motivation behind and meaning of sexually violent behavior. As a next step, further insight is needed into how undergraduate men within the context of hookup culture make sense of similar phenomena. Additionally, further study is needed to evaluate to what extent undergraduate men are able to account for the role of early life experiences, individual level factors, as well as proximal and distal culture in their perpetration of sexual violence. Lastly, future research may provide more insight into how undergraduate men define sexually violent behaviors and identify their own behavior as problematic.

Summary and the Current Study

There are robust bodies of literature investigating factors at different levels of analysis in relation to sexual violence, as well as discrete descriptive accounts of how men relate to violence (broadly), sexual violence, and hookup culture. Various authors have called for a multiple systems approach to understand the complexity of sexual violence use on college campuses that account for factors related to the individual as well as proximal and distal culture. Quantitative research supports the relationship between sexual violence perpetration and the individual (fear of emotions, experiential avoidance, hostile masculinity) and early life experiences (exposure to harsh parenting, sexual abuse, and insecure attachment relationships), proximal culture (such as hookup culture that includes heavy alcohol consumption, fraternal organizations, and peer norms), and distal culture (including a patriarchy that prescribes rigid masculine gender roles that must be earned and are consistently under threat). To date, however, there remains a need for further exploration of how undergraduate men understand and describe their own sexually violent behavior developmentally, and within the context of hookup culture and contemporary culture more broadly. To what extent do undergraduate men who use sexual violence understand that their behavior is categorized as such, and how do they describe their behavior differently? How do undergraduate men who use sexual violence understand the relationship between the aforementioned constructs (factors at the level of the individual, immediate circumstance, as well as proximal and distal cultures) and the perpetration of sexually violent behavior? Are their relational needs being met through enactment of these behaviors? How is their narration of their experiences different from what is captured by extant models in the research literature? Through integration of existing literature and findings of the current study, steps may continue to be taken to

develop interventions that directly target those at high risk of sexual violence perpetration on college campuses and fundamentally shift the cultures that sustain and reinforce these behaviors.

Methods

The current study is a multi-phased mixed methods study, an approach that allows for the strengths of quantitative research to be augmented by the strengths of qualitative research and vice versa (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Quantitative and qualitative approaches to research are each respectively based upon different epistemological stances; quantitative research is based on the belief that there is a pre-existing truth to be learned, whereas qualitative research rests on the belief that we make meaning through ongoing, dynamic, interactive, and constructive processes between individuals and their environments (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Quantitative research yields data that is amenable to statistical analyses, tells us about prevalence rates, allows for grouping subsets of a broader population, and facilitates data collection with considerably larger samples. While quantitative research offers these added benefits, within the confines of nominal choices that quantitative data requires, there may be subtlety, nuance, and new information that is not captured through quantitative methodology. Qualitative research, on the other hand, provides more comprehensive insight into the perspectives, worldviews, and narratives of study participants, and the current research literature pertaining to sexual violence use on college campuses is worthy of further qualitative study. In the current study, a mixed methods approach allows the use of quantitative responses as a grouping variable to be able to make comparisons between qualitative

responses of participants with different patterns of violence use as well as comparisons between responses to quantitative and qualitative items that ask about related content.

Participants

In order to recruit participants for the focus group, a bulk email was sent to 18,880 undergraduate students at a large Southeastern, public university (approximately 40% male) with eligibility including that participants be 18-26 years of age, undergraduate, cisgender men who have sex with women. A total of five participants replied with interest and two were available to meet during the time of the focus group. We believe the timing of recruitment, the penultimate week of the semester (right before final exams), was one factor that considerably limited the number of responses.

After the measures were refined, a second bulk email was sent out to 18,502 undergraduate students on June 27, 2019. The student body was approximately 40% males; however, the bulk email service was unable to target male students only. A total of 121 participants began the study, and the last recorded response took place on August 18, 2019. A total of 40 participants who began the demographic section were ineligible: 18 identified as a woman; one identified as nonbinary; three men were younger than 18; eight men indicated that they did not engage in sexual activity with women; and 10 dropped out without completing the demographic portion. There were 15 eligible participants who began but did not complete the quantitative portion. Among eligible participants, 66 completed all quantitative items, and 30 eligible participants also completed all qualitative questions. Of the 30 participants who submitted responses for all 11 qualitative questions, four were not included in the primary qualitative analysis due

to a poverty of meaningful data. For example, one participant wrote only the word "No" in each response.

For the 66 participants who completed all quantitative items, ages ranged from 18-22 (mean = 19.6) with a fairly even distribution (38 participants were 20-years-old or older; 28 were 19-years-old or younger). Year in school was similarly distributed: 18 identified as a freshman; 11 as a sophomore; 19 as a junior; and 18 as a senior. A total of 24 participants indicated that they were a part of or currently pledging a fraternity. Only four participants indicated that they were members of an intercollegiate athletics team. Among the 26 participants who also submitted meaningful qualitative data (a subset of the 66 participants described above), ages ranged from 18-21 (mean = 20); there were 16 participants 20-years-old or older (juniors and seniors) and seven who were 19-years-old or younger (primarily freshman and sophomores, with one junior). There were 10 participants who indicated that they were a part of or currently pledging a fraternity. None of these participants indicated membership in an intercollegiate athletics team.

Procedures and Measures

Prior to the online survey, a focus group was conducted in order to garner feedback about a delimited series of questions pertaining to whether or not survey items were both clear and resonant to participants with similar characteristics to those who will complete the online survey. Two male colleagues (one a doctoral student in the Clinical and School Psychology program and the second a dissertation committee member on faculty in the Sociology department) co-facilitated the focus group. The focus group utilized a semi-structured interview, along with handouts, and data collected included

handwritten notes by the study participants as well as the two co-facilitators. During the focus group, participants were presented with the online survey on a TV screen as well as a handout with survey item text and space to respond briefly to questions about item clarity. Items were reviewed one by one with participants first indicating in writing whether the item was clear as well as recommendations to make the item more clear, followed by a brief discussion about the item. See Appendices A and B for the focus group script and handout.

Following the focus group, the two co-facilitators provided verbal feedback to the primary investigator indicating that the primary aims of the focus group—to confirm resonance and clarity with participants from the target sample—were met. Data analysis began with an initial reading of all of the co-facilitator notes as well as participant responses. The second step involved reading responses (across facilitators and participants) item by item and incorporating feedback into questions. Feedback that was incorporated included clarifying additions to wording [such as adding "already" to the question "Have you engaged (or attempted to engage) in sexual activity with a woman by doing so when she was *already* too drunk or high not to?"], word changes (such as changing "knew" to "thought" in the stem "continuing after she said "I don't want to do this" because you *thought* she did?), and the addition of clarifying statements and examples (such as adding "Patterns in relationships refer to previous relationships with parents, peers, romantic partners, etc. For example, if someone felt rejected by a parent, they may continue to feel rejected by friends"). There was consensus between both participants on all items except for the introduction leading up to the first qualitative item. One participant believed that the introduction was clear and the second requested

more information. In order to err on the side of caution (and to be more clear than vague), an example was added to this item ("For example, having a close relationship with a family member may allow you to feel more comfortable in a close relationship with a friend"). A revised version of measures was shared with the focus group facilitators in order to confirm that their notes were correctly interpreted.

Surveys were completed online wherever participants were able to access links and participants were made aware that their responses were anonymous. The survey platform utilized, Qualtrics, allowed for participant responses to be collected without linking responses to IP addresses. The first part of the online survey consisted of a quantitative measure. The measure consisted of six items adapted from Malamuth's (1989) Attraction to Sexual Aggression Scale. Malamuth's scale was revised to both address the purpose of the measure in the current study (to assess past behavior, not attraction toward behaviors) and to update language to contemporary jargon for sexual behavior. For example, Malamuth's scale begins with the following stem, "People frequently think about different activities even if they never do them. For each kind of activity listed, please indicate whether or not you have ever thought of trying that activity," with items such as "Necking," "Petting," "Oral sex," etc. following the initial stem (Malamuth, 1989, p. 36). For the current study, the initial stem was changed to, "During dating and hooking up, people use many different methods in order to initiate sexual activities with a person they are with… Have you engaged (or attempted to engage) in sexual activity with a woman by…" with items such as, "doing so when she was already too drunk or high not to." Demographic information was also collected that

included: age, academic class, and bivariate (yes/no) responses to membership of a fraternity and membership of an athletic team.

Participants were also asked to complete qualitative items. The qualitative portion consisted of focal yet open-ended questions that asked participants to describe their experiences as well as their accounts of what influences the use of sexually violent behaviors. At the end of the survey, participants were debriefed through written text and provided with resources for psychoeducation, counseling, as well as information for how to contact the office of Title IX at their university. See Appendix C for the survey.

The total number of responses determined the direction of data analysis. In our initial data analytic plan, we intended to use responses to the quantitative measure as a grouping variable in order to identify 10 participants who endorsed violence use (with maximum variability in terms of types of violence and frequency) and 10 participants who did not endorse use of violence. Though the data analytic plan was to make comparisons between individuals who reported having used violence and those who denied use, we recognized that there is a false dichotomization by creating these groups (Pascoe & Hollander, 2016) and planned to select participants that varied in the number of strategies and types of strategies endorsed along the spectrum of behaviors.

Though the number of participants who responded to quantitative items met the threshold for our initial data analytic plan, a smaller number of participants responded meaningfully to all qualitative items. We therefore made the decision to forego random selection of 10 participants from each end of the spectrum of behaviors for the primary qualitative analyses. We instead decided to utilize all qualitative data that was available and to explore comparisons between responses of those who endorsed quantitative items

and those who did not, despite differences in sizes of those respective groups. It was our belief that the integrity of these comparisons would not be compromised by utilizing all available data, as we were not intending to draw generalizable conclusions based on these results. Rather, our goal was to understand how participants were thinking about the research questions and how these beliefs intersected with endorsed behaviors.

Primary qualitative analyses were conducted utilizing a consensus coding approach from basic qualitative research design (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The coding team included the primary investigator along with two doctoral-level, male colleagues (one in the Strategic Leadership program and the other in the Assessment and Measurement program). Once all of the data was collected, the primary investigator organized the data so that it could be readily analyzed by the coding team. This included removing ineligible participants, assigning letter identifiers to participants, copying and pasting responses into Word documents in order to facilitate analysis, and creating a table to be used in an ongoing fashion as a codebook.

The research coding team met for an initial meeting in order to discuss and refine the initial data analytic process. The coders were provided with the research project's purpose statement and research questions in order to contextualize the data analysis that would follow. Each coder was given a coding form that contained 11 qualitative questions and the responses to each of those questions submitted by four participants. The research coding team determined that after the initial meeting, they would each read through responses of the four participants provided in order to begin to identify categories. Coders were also instructed to write down in the margins any questions about the process as they came up.

The purpose of the second meeting was to discuss the initial process in order to ensure that the coders were using a similar approach and to clarify any questions that arose during the initial coding process. Codes and themes themselves were not discussed during this meeting; rather, the purpose of the meeting was to discuss process over content. The primary questions that arose in this meeting were questions about whether or not a particular segment of text was considered a unit of data. In other words, the coders sought to clarify whether text was meaningful within the context of the research questions. Through discussion, the research coding team determined that they would err on the side of considering text meaningful and would further assess the data during the consensus coding meeting. After the second meeting, coders were provided with the remaining data (responses from 22 participants) and instructed to continue to categorize data. The research coding team also decided that they would each begin to write preliminary notes in their respective codebooks.

The final consensus coding meeting took place over the course of five concentrated hours. During this meeting, the consensus coding team went through responses from 26 participants for each of the 11 questions. The team discussed categories and preliminary codes that were entered into a shared codebook that continued to be revised throughout the meeting. After the team reviewed responses to the 11 questions, they turned their attention more focally on the codebook. Units of data were used as examples and moved around into different categories as determined by the team until codes began to emerge. Differences of opinion about how to code units of data were discussed until there was consensus among the three members of the team. Finally,

the team went through each code in the codebook and determined code names, descriptions, inclusion and exclusion criteria, and provided text samples.

The primary investigator independently completed additional discrete analyses. The first analysis looked at participant responses to questions one and nine. These questions both provided a behavioral description of sexual assault and asked the participant whether this described any of their previous behavior. The only difference between the two questions was that question nine indicated that the behavior described was one definition for sexual assault. In question one, the words "sexual assault" were not used. The goal of this analysis was to explore to what extent labeling behavior as sexual assault might change whether or not a participant acknowledged that they had previously engaged in that form of behavior. The primary investigator also analyzed similarities and differences among responses to quantitative items asking about history of sexual violence use and qualitative items asking about the same. Additionally, comparisons were made between qualitative responses of participants who endorsed violence use on the quantitative measure and participants who denied violence use.

Study Design

The first phase of the study was an exploratory sequential design aimed to refine measures for the second phase of the study, which was a combined participant selection and convergent design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). However, the revised ecological systems model, described above, that contained, shaped, and drove the primary research questions of this study was aligned with qualitative research. As such, the qualitative data was most heavily weighted in the analyses in order to address the research questions outlined. See Figure 2 for a model of the study classification and design.

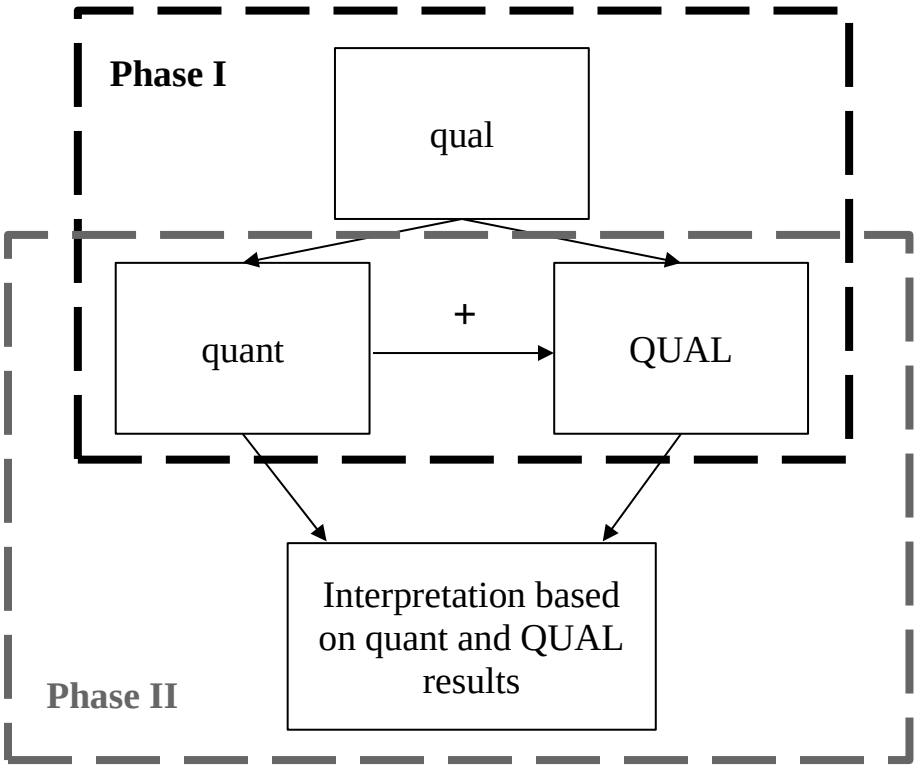


Figure 2. Multi-phased mixed methods design.

Results

The following quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods results are the findings of an anonymous, online survey completed by cisgender men who were students between the ages of 18-22 at a large Southeastern, public university. A total of 66 participants responded to all quantitative items, and a total of 26 participants responded meaningfully to at least some of the 11 qualitative questions. The purpose of the current study was to explore how college men, including those who have used sexually violent behavior in the past, understand and describe sexually violent behavior, and to what extent their accounts correspond to how these behaviors, within the context of hookup and broader culture, are described in the research literature.

Quantitative results

Out of 66 eligible participants who completed all quantitative items, there were 11 (17%) who responded "yes" to items from an adapted version of Malamuth's (1989) Attraction to Sexual Aggression Scale asking about whether they had previously utilized violent means in order to engage in sexual behavior with a woman. Two participants endorsed two items (indicated that they had utilized two different "strategies") and the remaining nine endorsed one item. The most frequently endorsed item, with seven participants endorsing the behavior, was engaging (or attempting to engage) in "sexual activity with a woman by doing so when she was already too drunk or high not to." There were two participants who indicated that they had engaged or attempted to engage in sexual activity by "getting her too drunk or high;" as well as two participants who endorsed doing so by "continuing after she said 'I don't want to do this' because you thought she did want to." One participant each responded to the items "making it clear that you could hurt her if she said 'no'" and "using physical force (such as your body weight or holding her down)."

Qualitative results

The results of the primary qualitative analysis that follow are reflective of the experiences and beliefs of the college men who participated in this study. The ecological systems theoretical model that undergirded the research questions was echoed on various levels. There were also several unexpected, emergent themes that equally help to address the research questions. We will first describe the a priori themes evident from the data before describing those themes that emerged. We will then present comparisons between

participant responses to the same question both when the phrase “sexual assault” is and is not used.

Consistent with previous literature, there was considerable evidence that study participants believed that individual factors and social influences at various levels shape behavior. Our review of literature described systems models of sexual violence perpetration, the influences of patterns of attachment, socialization and peers, distal and proximal culture (including alcohol use and pornography), and threat to masculine identity on sexually violent behavior, as well as the “myth of the bad apple.” The following themes were reflective of how one’s social environment and individual factors inform behavior: (1) influence of upbringing, (2) peers influence attitudes and behavior, (3) socialization of masculinity, (4) pornography influences expectations, (5) alcohol use, (6) no consequences, and (7) othering.

Influence of upbringing. Participants agreed with the research literature on the principle that an individual’s childhood, rearing, and family influence how one behaves in relationships and sexual encounters. Most broadly, one participant responded, “I think if someone was to see abusive behavior or grow up around abuse, he could potentially do these things to their own partners or women they might come across if they want to hook up with a woman.” There were more vague comments about the broad influence of how one’s family background influences behavior, such as a particularly succinct, “badly raised = bad sex habits,” as well as responses that shed more light on the nature of family influence both in terms of protective as well as risk factors. One participant noted that because he was raised with three siblings, he was also raised to have compassion and to know the difference between right and wrong. Another participant offered, “I don't really

follow ‘be a man,’ raised by my sisters and my mom.” There were also references to risk factors, such as: “Maybe being in an abusive family” and “I think if young men had an abusive childhood they’re more likely to be abusive to the people around them when they are becoming men.” In various ways, participants seemed to believe that a man’s family influences his behavior.

Peers influence attitudes and behavior. Consistent with previous literature, participants also wrote about how one’s friends, as well as peers in social groups, affect how men behave in sexual encounters. Several participants described the positive influence of peers, such as “At least of my friend group, we all don’t pressure one another to forcefully hook up with a girl. That’s just not right.” Other descriptive accounts of how peers influence attitudes and behavior included, “Groupthink like this among groups of young men in fraternities and another male-only communities is toxic and pervasive, and I’d argue has a very large positive correlation with sexual assault in general,” as well as, “The friends a man may have will surely influence [their] behavior.” One participant relayed a particularly poignant personal example of how this had played out for him within a male-only college-based organization. He wrote, “I think this is a huge factor. I was pledging one fraternity and we were asked to tell hook up stories every time we had ‘line ups.’ The pledges that didn’t have stories were made fun of in front of everyone. I feel this gave an incentive to get sex any way one could. I dropped from this fraternity.”

Socialization of masculinity. Relatedly, participants also described how pressure and the desire to fit in among peers, and other men, also influences sexual behavior. Several participants described how masculine socialization influences sexual behavior specifically. “If all of their friends have had sex and they are a virgin, they

could feel as though in order to be like 'the guys' they need to have sex with a girl no matter the cost," wrote one participant. Similarly, another responded, "Trying to fit in as a guy can be tough, because there are so many pressures put on guys these days that no one wants to acknowledge. So that causes a typical guy to force a woman into a situation that no woman wants to be put into." Another wrote, "Being a man typically involves getting either the hottest chick to sleep with you or as many chicks to sleep with you," drawing an association between manliness and heterosexual sexual behavior. Other participants spoke about other aspects of socialization of masculinity for men, such as, "The archetype of a man is one that uses physical force or persuasion, so this encourages males to do so." They also wrote about how pressures of socialization limit full expression. "It gives pressure that I can't have emotions and I have to just accept whatever pain I'm going through or else I'm less of a man," stated one participant. "Often I find myself thinking that I need to 'be a man' and do 'manly' things," responded another.

Pornography influences expectations. Among the more specific social influences in their environment, participant responses were aligned with the research literature that pornographic content influences college men's expectations of what happens during sexual encounters. One participant wrote, "Pornography is probably a big part of why men become abusive because some of the scenes showed in pornography can be a bit graphic." Our coding team interpreted the response, "Porn makes sexual experiences lame. Most guys think porn is an actual representation of sex," to mean that in comparison to how sexual encounters are portrayed in pornography, real life experiences of sexual encounters are disappointing. Another participant pointed focally

to a concept described in the research literature as “mock resistance” portrayed by pornography: the notion that part of the sexual scripts in western culture is that women are supposed to say “no” but really mean “yes” (Krahé, Bieneck, & Scheinberger-Olwig, 2007). He wrote, “I think porn is much, much rougher than real life and can make is seem as though women who say they do not want to have sex really do.” Participants related awareness that pornography influenced expectations as well as how it influenced expectations in particular.

Alcohol use. Resoundingly, participants agreed with the research literature that alcohol plays a role in sexual assault in several ways. Participants described disinhibition and impulsivity in general when college men consume alcohol, as well as the emergence of aggression in particular. For example, participants replied, “When people aren’t thinking straight they are more likely to have sex” and “He could black out and not know what he’s doing.” Others wrote, “Alcohol can make people less aware at the level of harm they are having on someone,” and “Diminished inhibitions may result in a guy using physical force or persuasion even if they wouldn’t otherwise.” With respect to the term aggression specifically, participants wrote, “Some guys get really angry and aggressive when they’re drunk and might act on whatever impulse they have,” and “Alcohol is a scary thing when it comes to this stuff. The guy could be an aggressive drunk and force sex, the guy could also be scheming the whole time and feeding girl drinks.” The latter concept, of alcohol consumption being weaponized, was echoed by other participant responses, such as “It’s easy to see that when girls get drunk it’s much easier for guys to get with them so guys will feed them alcohol to get them drunk.”

No consequences. The data also suggested that participants believed that one reason some men use sexual violence is because there have been no consequences of sexual violence in the past. One participant wrote, "If they've done it in the past or they've been around others that did it, they'll be more likely to do things like this in the future." Also demonstrating the theme of entitlement, another participant responded, "If the guy feels like he can get away with anything," he might use sexually violent behavior. There was also reference to the influence of observing others engaging in sexually violent behavior. For example, responses such as, "If they've been around others that did it, they'll be more likely to do things like this in the future" and "Some people see others sexually abusing women and getting away with it so they figure they can as well" were reflective of how observation influences behavior. This theme suggests the belief that a lack of repercussions for sexual violence increases the likelihood that one will continue to use this behavior in the future.

Othering. Another theme reflected in the literature that was echoed by participants is the concept of distancing oneself from violent behavior and othering those who use violence. One participant offered, "In order to intentionally hurt someone like that you have to be wrong in the head," suggesting that those who use violence are mentally ill or inherently bad. "They need to seek other forms of help. Harming other people to make yourself feel better is a no," wrote another participant. The theme of distancing was also captured by the response, "I'm not sure. I don't understand how anyone could justify it to themselves." Another wrote, "If you force a woman to hook up with you, you're not a man, you're a low life asshole. Being a man means you wouldn't force something like that on a woman." The transposition of violent behavior was seen

most specifically by another participant. He wrote, “For me personally no it doesn’t because that’s not really what my fraternity and my friends are about. For other guys and other fraternities on campus I can definitely see that though.” Though the participant acknowledges the phenomenon of violent behavior by college men, he makes it clear that neither he nor anyone close to him are like this.

In addition to the themes described above that correspond to previous literature, there were a number of emergent themes. While some of these themes, such as one pertaining to the influence of the media on behavior, addressed the research questions, other emergent themes, such as entitlement, were not asked about specifically and yet were seen across participants. The emergent themes described below include: (1) entitlement, (2) response to rejection, (3) need for power, (4) male drives of sex and aggression, and (5) imperviousness to the influence of the media.

Entitlement. One of the more surprising--and quite prominent--themes in the data was the concept of college men using violence in order to engage in sexual activity because they believe themselves to be entitled to sexual gratification. One participant wrote, “Some guys may be used to getting whatever they want and when this doesn’t occur with a girl they lash out.” Similarly, another stated “Honestly people who always get what they want are the ones who can’t understand when a woman says ‘No.’” There were references to men accustomed to being the “popular dude” in high school and those influenced by “athletes being able to get any girl they want” in the media. Other participants used phrases like men thinking they “earned” sexual gratification or having been “spoiled,” resulting in feelings of entitlement. Despite one participant’s indication that men believe they have earned sexual gratification, it was our belief that the

entitlement described in the data is actually reflective of unearned privilege bestowed by virtue of desire and expectation rather than past merits.

Response to rejection. Related to the notion of entitlement, another emergent theme was the belief that some men use violence as a reaction to rejection or as a means of ego repair for rejection received in the past. We believed this theme was related to the concept of entitlement in so far as rejection presumably most often results in violent behavior when there is an implicit (if not explicit) expectation that one deserves what one has been denied. One participant wrote, "if he never/always is facing rejection then he can grow more accustomed to feeling like he has to make it happen or feel like it just should happen, respectively." In the research team's words: if a man has always been rejected, he will be more inclined to feel like he has to force something in order for it to happen. If he has never been rejected, he will feel entitled." The concept of restoration of ego or masculine identity was reflected by responses such as, "A man may try to force himself upon a girl because of the fact he feels rejected by others and therefore feels able to pick on a weaker person due to a difference in strength" and "I know several guys that get very irritated when they get rejected by a girl when they are under the influence." Also echoing the theme of othering, one participant wrote, "At least in my circle of friends you just suck it up and take rejection, there is no need to force something." Participants seemed to believe that experience with rejection in the past, and how they respond to rejection, influences whether men will use sexually violent behavior.

Need for power. Though dominance over women is described in the research literature as a trait, our data indicated that participants believed that some men satisfy a need for power through enactments of sexually violent behavior. Participants wrote

"power over another," "superiority complexes," and "their need to feel powerful and overcontrolling" as needs being met when some men use sexual violence. One responded, "I'd say probably the need to feel power. They might feel as though they 'conquered' someone." There were also participants who described the power dynamic of men having dominance over women. For example, participants wrote, "Growing up, you see a lot of movies of the man always 'overpowering' the woman and showing her who's the 'man' in the house/bedroom" and similarly (also reflecting the theme of distancing), "men also want to feel like they are the ones in charge. Not specifically me, but men I know always want to feel like they can do whatever they want to a woman, to show them who's the 'boss' in the bedroom.' Despite the framing of power as a need in these responses, we believed this need was more reflective of a social construction than biological imperative, which distinguished it from the theme that follows.

Male drives of sex and aggression. Participant responses pointed to a broader theme that sexual violence is brought about by deeply rooted drives of sex and aggression in general, particularly when alcohol reduces inhibition. There were vague and succinct responses alluding to sadism such as, "Human nature typically involves brute force" and "Anger and hate. Rape hurts and some people want to hurt others." Other pointed responses described sexual drives, such as "testosterone," "horniness," alcohol "makes them horny," and "how attractive the girl is and how desperate the guy is at the time." With respect to the role of alcohol disinhibiting underlying drives, participants also wrote, "Some guys get really angry and aggressive when they're drunk and might act on whatever impulse they have," and similarly (also reflecting the theme of response to rejection), "All I have to say about that is that some guys become angry drunks and when

things don't end up going their way they get super pissed." Collectively, these responses reflect the idea that some men cannot control their impulses toward sexual and aggressive behavior.

Imperviousness to the influence of the media. Despite consensus among participants that one's social environment and pornography influence both expectations and behavior in sexual encounters, many participants adamantly disagreed that men's behavior was influenced by the media, such as entertainment seen in movies, on TV, and magazines. "None," wrote one participant, "No forms of media promote sexual abuse from what I've seen." Another responded, "I think it is rare it actually does. Although many people see 'rough sex' in movies, porn, etc., I think most people can disconnect that from reality when with a partner." Relatedly, other participants wrote, "I don't think media has much of an influence, most people are smart enough to see the separation from TV to reality" and "I believe that TV and entertainment of that nature have little to no effect on how a person acts. Yes representation in media matters for certain, but this often can have a positive effect on an individual and rarely a negative effect." This last response was particularly noteworthy for the acknowledgement of a beneficial influence of media on behavior but denial of its influence on malevolent behaviors.

We also noted that a number of participants referenced their understanding of how different levels of influence interact with each other to inform sexual behavior, as has been suggested by prior research (Krahé, 2018; Schwartz, 2015; Thompson, Swartout, & Koss, 2013; Mikorski & Szymanski, 2017; Armstrong et al., 2006). For example, one participant described the interactions between an individual's developmental history and the media: "The brain is more vulnerable in these younger years and viewing media that

depicts this way of treating woman can have detrimental effects down the road, especially if the child does not come from a good home." Another spoke of interactions between self-concept as well as family relationships and values: " "It all depends on the person. Are they insecure? What was their father or male guardian like? Did they have a father? What is their friend group like? Did they come from a home with values and morals? I think that these questions, and countless others that I could list for days, all factor into what it means to "be a man" for somebody. Depending on the answers to these questions, pressure to "be a man" may carry more weight in some individuals than others on determining whether they use physical force or persuasion to hook up with women." Even without open-ended opportunity to describe their experience or how systems of influence interact, two participants addressed this point.

Within participant qualitative results

As described above (and available for reference in Appendix C), participants were asked to respond to an open text question asking whether they had previously sexually assaulted a woman. The first time they were asked this question (question one of the qualitative portion), they were only provided with a description of sexual assault. They were again asked the same question at the end of the study (question 10) with the information that the description provided was a definition of sexual assault. Though he did not elaborate, we did find that one participant responded "Yes" to the first question and "No" to question 10. Another participant responded to the first question with "touching her in order to engage," but did not respond to the latter question. Though yet another participant also did not respond to the latter question, he offered his thoughts after reading the description of the first definition as follows: "I think about guys who

constantly hit on a girl in a very sexual manner over and over again even after they have been told to stop or have been given clear no thank you signs. Eventually, these women get trapped by it and can never really make it stop." There were no participants in our study who provided meaningful and different qualitative responses to a question about sexual violence when the question described sexual violence only versus when the question described sexual violence and also included the phrase "sexual assault."

Mixed methods results

The mixed methods results included responses to quantitative and qualitative items asking about related content as well as results of a comparison between qualitative responses of those who endorsed having used sexual violence on a quantitative measure and those who did not.

Among the 11 participants who endorsed a quantitative item asking about the use of sexually violent tactics in the past, only two participants responded in kind to the qualitative question. As described above, one of those participants only responded "Yes" to the qualitative question. The second wrote, "touching her in order to engage." The remaining nine participants who indicated that they had used sexual violence in the past denied use when asked about their behavior in an open-ended way using the description of sexual assault.

One participant who endorsed having engaged or attempted to engage in sexual activity with a woman when she was "already too high or drunk not to" on a quantitative item described himself as a protector given his personal history in his qualitative response. He wrote, "It's something I'm aware of and know that happens on campus due to it happening to close friends and I try to stop it whenever I see someone with a girl

who's a little too drunk. Nothing me or my friends have engaged in since I would not put myself around those types of people." Another participant who endorsed the same quantitative item wrote the following in his qualitative response, "I have never coerced or forced a woman into performing any sexual activities with me." A third participant who endorsed the quantitative item described above wrote in his qualitative answer, "No I make sure girls give consent before engaging in sexual activity" and a fourth participant wrote, "Nothing comes to mind. No means no."

There was one participant who endorsed two quantitative items: having engaged or attempted to engage in sexual activity with a woman by (1) "continuing after she said 'I don't want to do this' because you thought she did want to," and (2) "using physical force (such as your body weight or holding her down)." Despite his responses to these items, when asked an open text question he wrote, "No" (i.e., that the description of sexual assault provided did not describe his behavior in the past). The second of two participants who endorsed two quantitative items indicated that he had engaged or attempted to engage in sexual activity with a woman both by "doing so when she was already too drunk or high not to" and "getting her too drunk or high." He did not respond to the open text question about sexual assault. The participant who endorsed a quantitative item asking about sexual activity after "making it clear that you could hurt her if she said 'no'" also did not respond to the qualitative item.

The final mixed methods results address the question of whether qualitative response from those who endorsed sexual violence use on a quantitative measure were different from responses from those who did not endorse these behaviors. The results

that follow correspond to each qualitative question in the survey. Thematic comparisons were made utilizing the codes described in the qualitative results section.

Question 1. The first question prompted participants as follow: “One type of behavior we’re interested to know more about is when guys force a woman, through emotional coercion, physical force, or manipulation, to engage in non-consensual sexual acts. These acts might include sexual touching or penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina, anus, or mouth with any body part or object, without the woman's consent. Thinking back on your sexual activity since starting college, does this describe any of your past behavior? Describe what comes to mind.” Surprisingly, responses to the first question were virtually indistinguishable in terms of the range and nature of content. Three participants who endorsed quantitative items adamantly denied having done so. For example, their responses included, “No I make sure girls give consent before engaging in sexual activity” and “Nothing comes to mind. No means no,” as well as the response described above and as follows: “It's something I'm aware of and know that happens on campus due to it happening to close friends and try to stop it whenever I see someone with a girl who's a little too drunk. Nothing me or my friends have engaged in since I would not put myself around those types of people.” These responses were thematically similar to those of participants who did not endorse quantitative items. For example, those responses included, “no, definitely not. consent is super important” and “I have never forced any sexual activities on a girl,” as well as “No. I am a male who cares about whether the female is very comfortable if we do decide to have consensual sexual interactions. If the female does not feel comfortable going about those interactions, then that's fine. I do not feel the need to pressure any female to have sexual interactions if she

does not want to." Overall, there were no meaningful differences between the two subsets of participants.

Question 2. The second question asked participants, "How does a guy's childhood and adolescence influence whether he will use physical force or persuasion in order to hook up with a woman?" Several themes were found in responses from both participants who endorsed quantitative items and those who did not, including influence of upbringing, socialization of masculinity, pornography influences expectations, entitlement, and response to rejection. For example, one participant who endorsed violence use replied, "Some guys may be used to getting whatever they want and when this doesn't occur with a girl they lash out," a response that was thematically similar to that of a participant who did not endorse a quantitative item, who wrote "in high school some guys are used to being the popular dude who gets what they want when they want it. That changes in college but sometimes takes a little longer for some guys to realize that they can't just do whatever they want." There were two exceptions identified. Firstly, one participant who endorsed quantitative items described the theme of othering with the response, "...in order to intentionally hurt someone like that you have to be wrong in the head." Secondly, one participant who did not endorse a quantitative item referenced the theme of male drives of sex and aggression. He wrote, "Men who cannot find a consenting partner sometimes become sexually frustrated and are more likely to coerce women into involuntary acts, and display more predatory behavior such as attempting to take advantage of drunk women."

Question 3. The third question asked participants, "How does a guy's personality and patterns in relationships influence whether he uses physical force or persuasion in

order to hook up with a woman? Patterns in relationships refer to previous relationships with parents, peers, romantic partners, etc. For example, if someone felt rejected by a parent, they may continue to feel rejected by friends." Notably, by the third question, there were only five participants who had endorsed a quantitative item who continued to provide meaningful responses relative to 20 participants who did not endorse a quantitative item. The themes of no consequences and male drives of sex and aggression were found across participant responses. For example, one participant who endorsed a quantitative item wrote, "Seeing mistreatment of women go unpunished or not corrected" whereas a participant who did not endorse a quantitative item responded, "some people see others sexually abusing women and getting away with it so they figure they can as well." Those who did not endorse quantitative items also referenced themes of response to rejection, such as "They might feel rejected and the need to forcefully get a relationship," and entitlement with the response, "something they might think that they deserve by being in a relationship." Given the difference in sample size and the nature of qualitative research, the presence of themes of response to rejection and entitlement among participants who did not endorse quantitative items but not among participants who did endorse items is not necessarily reflective of differences between these two populations.

Questions 4. For this question, participants responded to the prompt: "How do different forms of media (e.g., TV, movies, pornography) influence whether a guy uses physical force or persuasion in order to hook up with a woman? When answering this question you may describe yourself or other guys you know." Given the question, all participants wrote about the topic of the influence of pornography; however, one key

difference seen among participants is that while those men who endorsed quantitative items clearly believed that pornography influences expectations, the preponderous of the 20 respondents to this question who did not endorse a quantitative item asserted that media does not influence sexual behavior, with one participant paradoxically writing, "TV and entertainment...have little to no effect or influence on how a person acts. Yes representation in media matters for certain but this often can have a positive effect and rarely a negative effect." We interpreted this response to mean that the media does not influence behavior, but even if it does, it only has a benevolent influence on behavior. Those who endorsed quantitative items affirmed the influence of media with responses such as, "pornography is probably a big part of why men become abusive because some of the scenes showed in pornography can be a bit graphic," and "porn makes sexual experiences lame. Most guys think porn is an actual representation of sex." Alternatively, participants who did not endorse a quantitative item wrote, "I think it is rare it actually does. Although many people see 'rough sex' in movies, porn, etc., I think most people can disconnect that from reality when with a partner," and "I don't think media has much of an influence, most people are smart enough to see the separation from tv to reality." Participants who endorsed quantitative items believed that men's expectations are shaped by the media they consume while participants who did not endorse quantitative items believed that men are capable of distinguishing fantasy from reality and eschewing the influence of the media they consume. While there were also participants among the latter sample who described the belief that media influences behavior (e.g., "such things desensitize people and can make things once considered to be

terrible acts of violence and manipulation seem not as bad,") this was not the most frequent response among the set.

Question 5. The fifth question asked participants, "How does pressure to 'be a man' influence whether a guy uses physical force or persuasion in order to hook up with a woman? Use your definition of what it means to 'be a man.' When answering this question you may describe yourself or other guys you know." Both participants who did and did not endorse quantitative items wrote about (1) how the pressure to "be a man" influences sexual behavior and (2) that being a "man" can also be defined as someone who treats others with respect. With respect to the influence of pressure to "be a man," participants who endorsed quantitative items provided responses of, "the archetype of a man is one that uses physical force or persuasion, so this encourages males to do so" and "to be a man means to not take no for an answer and get the job done. Because of this way of thinking, it can very easily carry over into other areas of a person's life." Responses of participants who did not endorse quantitative items included, "the pressure makes them think they need to hook up with a girl no matter the cost" and "the definition of being a man is hooking up with girls who want to hook up with you. If girls don't want to hook up with you, you aren't a man regardless of whether you force them to or not." Reflecting the belief that to "be a man" means to be respectful toward others, participants who endorsed quantitative items wrote, "being a man isn't taking advantage of girls when they're intoxicated, high, etc. It's taking the girl that can't move home instead of to your room," which was similar to responses among those who did not endorse quantitative items, such as, "to be a man is the same as being a woman, meaning we all should respect one anothers personal boundaries." Participants who did not

endorse quantitative items also provided insight into their own definitions of what it means to "be a man" and their implications, such as, "it gives pressure that I can't have emotions and I have to just accept whatever pain I'm going through or else I'm 'less of a man,'" and "being a man means not speaking much, not displaying emotions, while being capable and charismatic. In pursuit of those goals (with whatever merit they may or may not have), we forgo teaching boys becoming men how to properly handle emotions and temper aggressive urges." These responses also reflected the theme of the socialization of masculinity, even though this question did not ask about socialization explicitly.

Question 6. This question asked participants, "How do expectations of manhood, pressure to 'fit in,' and to be 'one of the guys' influence whether a guy uses physical force or persuasion in order to hook up with a woman? When answering this question you may describe yourself or other guys you know." Though participants across the board indicated that their responses to question five applied to this question as well, there were a number of different responses as well. One participant who endorsed a quantitative item wrote about sexual intercourse with women as a rite of passage to becoming, and fitting in among, men: "fitting in is desired by all, and some men haven't lost their virginity yet and feel pressured to do so for reasons such as embarrassment," which was similar to the response of a participant who did not endorse a quantitative item, who wrote, "if all of their friends have had sex and they are a virgin, they could feel as though in order to be like 'the guys' they need to have sex with a girl no matter the cost." One participant who did not endorse a quantitative item summed up the process as follows: "I think the way guys sometimes can talk about sex with other guys has it considered being more of an achievement or something that you were able to obtain and

in masculine circles the inability to do this can be perceived as a personal flaw. So because of this guy's might act more aggressively to obtain sex in order to maintain social status." The theme of othering was echoed with both participants who did and did not endorse quantitative items creating distance with responses such as, "again, in my friends, I nor my friends judge each other on how many girls they've had sex with" and "for me personally no it doesn't because that's not really what my fraternity and my friends are about. For other guys and other fraternities on campus, I can definitely see that though" respectively. Yet another participant who did not endorse a quantitative item wrote about his personal experience pledging a fraternity in which, "pledges that didn't have [hook-up] stories were made fun of in front of everyone. This gave an incentive to get sex any way one could." Participants among both samples described the influence of fraternities in particular as a "toxic" environment that rewarded sexual behavior.

Question 7. In the seventh question, participants responded to the following prompt: "How does a guy's use of alcohol influence whether he uses physical force or persuasion in order to hook up with a woman? When answering this question you may describe yourself or other guys you know." Though one participant who endorsed a quantitative item believed that alcohol could be causal to violence (i.e., "Diminished inhibitions may result in a guy using physical force or persuasion even if they wouldn't otherwise.), both participants who did and did not endorse quantitative items generally believed that alcohol impairs judgment, disinhibits, and renders those with latent tendencies to be more likely to use violence. One participant in the former sample wrote, "obviously it increases the likelihood making you more aggressive, but if you're

genuinely a good guy it wouldn't drastically change you when you're drunk to do something like that. Those who did not endorse quantitative items similarly responded, "it could be more likely that violent tendencies are brought out through intoxication" and "alcohol makes the guy more impulsive, so he thinks less about his decisions and would be much more likely to use physical force or persuasion to hook up with a woman." Both participants who did and did not endorse quantitative items also described how alcohol can be used to take advantage of women, writing, "it's easy to see that when girls get drunk it's much easier for guys to get with them so guys will feed them alcohol to get them drunk" and "the guy could also be scheming the whole time and feeding a girl drinks" respectively. There was also reference to the theme of male drives of sex and aggression with a response from one participant who did not endorse a quantitative item who wrote, "makes them horny." Participants who did not endorse quantitative items also wrote about the theme of violence as a response to rejection particularly when men have consumed alcohol.

Question 8. The eighth question asked participants, "Humans have both physical and psychological needs. Examples of psychological needs include a human need to feel emotionally connected to others or a need to feel more powerful than another person. Using this description of a psychological need, what (if any) psychological needs are being met when a guy uses physical force or persuasion to engage in sexual activity with a woman? When answering this question you may describe yourself or other guys you know." Both participants who did and did not endorse quantitative items believed that the need for power could be met through the use of sexual violence. Those who endorsed quantitative items wrote, "their need to feel powerful and over-controlling" and

"dominance and power." Responses from those who did not endorse quantitative items included "I'd say probably the need to feel power. They might feel as though they "conquered" someone" and "the feeling of being in control or more powerful than someone." Responses from participants who did not endorse quantitative items also included the theme of othering (e.g., "They need to seek other forms of help. Harming other people to make yourself feel better is a no.") as well as the concept that men need to feel love and connection, with the response, "Guys want to feel loved, like there is someone there for them." Though this participant did not elaborate on how or whether connection through force allows a man to meet that need, another participant wrote, "it's all artificial. The guy might think his needs are being met but they are not." Only one participant suggested that sexual activity through force may reflect "A psychological need to be successful or feel a closeness with another person of the opposite sex," noting his belief that although possible, it is also "twisted" to perceive an assault as an opportunity for connection.

Question 9. This question was the most open-ended, asking participants, "Besides what you have already shared, what else influences whether a guy uses physical force or persuasion in order to hook up with a woman? When answering this question you may describe yourself or other guys you know." Though many of the responses provided to this question reiterated topics that participants were asked about explicitly in previous questions (e.g., "socialization," "their need to assert their dominance," "past relationships, childhood," and "friends"), one theme that emerged in this question through several terse responses was male drives of sex and aggression. For example, participants who did not endorse quantitative items wrote, "testosterone," "men want

sexual gratification," and "how attractive the girl is and how desperate the guy is at the time," as well as, "anger mostly. Some dudes can't control themselves." The themes of othering and no consequences were also reflected in responses to this question, such as, "if he has had a prior experience doing it and has been successful or "gotten lucky" and "I don't understand how anyone could justify it to themselves."

Question 10. The tenth question was the same as the first question with the exception that the tenth question used the explicit phrase "sexual assault." The prompt provided was, "One way to describe sexual assault is 'forcing a woman, through emotional coercion, physical force, or manipulation, to engage in non-consensual sexual acts. These acts might include sexual touching or penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina, anus, or mouth with any body part or object, without the woman's consent.' With this definition of sexual assault (the same used in question 1), do you think differently about any of your sexual experiences since starting college? Describe your thought process to answer this question." As with the first question, there were no differences between responses of participants who endorsed quantitative items and those who did not. Furthermore, none of the participants had different responses to question 10 than to the first question because none of the participants indicated that they had previously used sexually violent behavior in response to the first qualitative question, even those participants who endorsed these behaviors through a quantitative measure. One surprising finding in response to this question was a response from one participant (who did not endorse a quantitative item) who realized he had experienced sexual assault. He wrote, "It's made me reflect on some of the hookups I've had. I can definitely see that I was being taken advantage of for some of them. That scares me."

Question 11. The final question asked participants, “Can a ‘good guy’ sexually assault a girl or woman? Describe your thought process to answer this question.” There was a mix of responses across participants who did and did not endorse quantitative items. There were the straightforward responses that “the good guy takes the girl home” and “No, you can’t be a ‘good guy’ unless you’re a good guy most of the time and raping someone is too far over the line to recover” from a participant who did and did not endorse quantitative items respectively. There was also the notion that an individual may be a “good guy” only superficially, such as, “A guy might come off as a good guy until that moment he shows his true colors and shows he's not” from a participant who endorsed a quantitative item and “A guy can act like a good guy on the outside but act differently when having sex,” and “Yes. Good guys are fake plenty of the time. Anyone can do anything at any time regardless of how they were before” from participants who did not endorse quantitative items. There were also responses that reflected an apparent fear of sexual assault by accident. For example one participant who endorsed a quantitative item wrote, “Yes. Good doesn’t mean perfect. People can be influenced by a variety of different things whether or not they are good guys,” and a participant who did not endorse a quantitative item wrote, “Yes. All it takes is one bad day, or even an accident. It is all up to interpretation but what matters in the eyes of the law is the victim's perspective.” Finally, there were responses that more directly captured how all members of hookup culture are subject to its influence, such as, “Yes, anyone can fall under pressure or have a mental lapse where they don't act like the person that they would want to be,” and “all people have the potential to perform heinous acts regardless of whether they are considered ‘good’ or ‘bad’ by the masses.”

Discussion

The purposes of the current study were to explore how college men understand and describe sexually violent behavior, including their own, and to evaluate to what extent their beliefs are aligned with the existing research literature pertaining to the influence of proximal and distal culture, as well as individual factors, on sexually violent behavior. It was in part a response to calls for qualitative research that explores various interacting systems that influence socialized masculinity as well as sexual violence (McDermott et al., 2015; Schwartz, 2015). We also wondered what other factors college men might believe to be associated with sexual violence that have not been prominent in prior research. We sought to investigate whether college men describe certain behaviors (i.e., those identified as sexual violence in the research literature) as sexual violence. Finally, there was interest to explore what differences emerge when similar content is addressed via qualitative and quantitative means.

Familiar themes

Results from the primary qualitative analysis addressed a number of the research questions. Participant beliefs were found to be aligned with the current literature in several ways. As has been well represented in prior research, participants believed that college men's sexual behavior is influenced by their childhood and upbringing (Malamuth et al., 1991; Casey et al., 2017; Sutton & Simons, 2015; McDermott & Lopez, 2012), their peers (Swartout, 2013; Harris & Edwards, 2010; Currier, 2013), socialization and cultural expectations of masculinity (Salazar et al., 2018; Pollack, 2006; Jakupcak, 2013; Morrison et al., 2015), pornographic content (Sun et al., 2016; Krahé et al., 2007; Cooper, 1998; Malamuth & Impett, 2001), alcohol (Salazar et al., 2018; Nicholson et al.,

1998; Dumas et al., 2015; Armstrong et al., 2006), and no consequences (Abbey et al., 1998; Edwards et al., 2014). Results also reflected the "myth of a few bad apples" and the "campus serial rape assumption" (Oppenheimer, 2015; Swartout et al., 2015), the process of scapegoating or projecting potential for harm onto others rather than acknowledging one's own role or complicity in a system (e.g., hookup culture) that supports sexual violence (Pascoe & Hollander, 2016). This was most distinctly observed through the theme of othering or distancing.

Unexpected themes

Participants also described beliefs not discussed in the literature review. In particular, results revealed themes of entitlement, response to rejection, need for power, and male drives of sex and aggression. Contrary to prior research (Mikorski & Szymanski, 2017; Sun et al., 2016; Cooper, 1998; Salazar et al., 2018; Harris & Edwards, 2010), participants also described their beliefs about their imperviousness to the influence of the media on their sexual behavior. Particularly with the preponderance of media consumption as a result of platforms such as Instagram and Tik Tok, participants' beliefs that they were not influenced by media are notable. As described in the results, participants' beliefs were also at times confusing and paradoxical, such as one participant who asserted that the media had no influence on him, but if it did, it would be a positive influence. One factor worthy of consideration may be related to the verbiage of this particular question, as the term "the media" may not have resonated in a generationally appropriate way. Participants may have responded differently if the question had more specifically asked about how the stories and images they see on Instagram, Facebook,

and Tik Tok, and in TV shows and movies influence their expectations for sexual encounters.

Though much has been written about the entitled nature of Millennials and Generation Z (Ayuhdya, & Smithson, 2015; Alsop, 2008; Twenge, 2006), participants described a subset of men in college who have been accustomed to getting whatever they want irrespective of earned merit and believe that they are deserving of sexual gratification. Entitlement in this sense is more similar to concepts of privilege, particularly male privilege, as has been studied extensively (Mann, 2020; Flood & Pease, 2005). Participants described men they knew who the participants perceived to have been able to get anything they wanted in high school and how this in turn would result in these men feeling entitled to sexual activity when they want it. The theme of entitlement was also closely related to that of response to rejection, as "lashing out" behavior was understood to be a response to rejection in conjunction with the belief that one deserves, or is entitled to, sexual gratification.

Though the concept of response to rejection seen in the results is distinct in its association with the theme of entitlement, response to rejection is also reminiscent of concepts such as male fragility and precarious masculinity (Maass et al., 2003; Mescher & Rudman, 2014; Jakupcak, 2013; Vandello et al., 2009), which have been studied robustly in prior research. "Lashing out" behavior may also be understood in relation to prior research about the relationship between emotional avoidance, threat to masculine gender identity, shame, and resulting aggression (Jakupcak et al., 2005). Perhaps the aggression and violence that participants in the current study described in response to rejection of sexual advances resulted in experiences of shame and threat to masculine

identity (Vandello et al., 2008; Vandello et al., 2009). In the absence of adaptive means to process or share difficult emotions (e.g., shame) with others, college men may use aggression and sexual violence in order to restore their masculine identities.

The concept of dominance, particularly men's dominance over women, is oft-discussed in the research literature as it relates to men's notions of masculine identity as well as a factor related to sexual aggression and violence perpetration (Smith et al., 2015; Dagirmanjian et al., 2017; Malamuth et al., 1991). While dominance was represented in the current study's data as well, it is notable that participants described power in response to a question about psychological needs. While this response was prevalent, unfortunately it is difficult to parse out how much of these responses was influenced by the question itself. Participants were provided with the prompt: "Humans have both physical and psychological needs. Examples of psychological needs include a human need to feel emotionally connected to others or a need to feel more powerful than another person. Using this description of a psychological need, what (if any) psychological needs are being met when a guy uses physical force or persuasion to engage in sexual activity with a woman?" Whether participants would have organically produced the concept of power as a need per se without priming from the prompt is an interesting question to explore in future research.

Though there is minimal research pertaining to the theme identified in the current study of male drives of sex and aggression, several studies have identified similar constructs. One prior qualitative study identified the theme of men having strong sex drives as part of notions of traditional masculine sexuality (Morrison et al., 2015) and another thematic analysis of responses to a post on Reddit.com identified "biological

essentialism" as one of the justifications used by men who have perpetrated sexual violence (Hipp et al., 2017). As with the argument that rape is about sex and not power, responses that comprise the theme reflect a primitive and limited understanding of social behavior in that they fundamentally ignore the irrefutable facts of when, where, and with whom these acts of violence take place. For example, if college men are unable to control impulses to engage in sexual and aggressive behavior, why then are incidences of assault not frequently seen during the day, in a classroom, on the quad, or in other public settings? A study with over 4,000 college women found that more than half of the incidences of rape reported took place after midnight and most happened in living quarters and off campus (Fisher, Cullen & Turner, 2000). Sexual violence is not simply a result of men not being able to control themselves, it is associated with specific environments, contexts, and communities of people who look the other way, condone, or even encourage when these behaviors take place. Though impulses and drives may play a role (men and women alike have impulses toward sexual and aggressive behavior), there are other key mitigating factors. The results from the current study, as well as prior research (Dumas et al., 2015; Fugitt & Ham, 2018) help to ground these behaviors in their context. For example, drives toward sex and aggression may take over when men believe that they deserve sexual gratification (entitlement), have used sexual violence in the past without negative consequences (or even with positive ones), and have dampened inhibitions due to alcohol and perceived peer attitudes. The data helps us to explain that these behaviors are multidetermined and complex, important considerations with respect to making changes to address the cultures that support sexual violence.

Experiential avoidance of emotions

It is also worth noting that participants described these phenomena with a sense of disapproval, fear, anger, and isolation among other emotions implicit in their responses. These emotions were relayed by phrases such as, “That’s just not right,” “Alcohol is a scary thing when it comes to this stuff,” “If you force a woman to hook up with you, you’re not a man, you’re a low life asshole,” and “I just have to accept whatever pain I’m going through or else I’m less of a man.” Consistent with Pollack’s (2006) large scale mixed methods study (and other research, such as Harris and Edwards’s 2010 study), participants in the current study felt that they needed to hide their emotions at all costs, thereby suppressing emotional needs and putting up walls of toughness and images of virility. Though emotional tenor was considerable among participant responses, there was little reflection or explicit self-awareness among participants of the relationship between emotional suppression and anger or violence (with the exception of relating sexual violence to “rejection” as described above). As described in the literature review, prior research suggests that masculinity, fear of emotions (particularly sadness and anxiety), and proneness to shame predict college men’s hostility and aggression (Jakupcak, 2003; Jakupcak et al., 2005; Langer & Lawrence, 2009). Furthermore, none of the participants described themselves as feeling motivated or empowered to address problems identified in hookup culture or the broader culture; however, the study questions neither asked nor pulled for participant emotions or beliefs about how to effect change or their capacity to do so, and as such their beliefs, positioning, and experiences in this regard warrant additional study.

Differences in responses to a quantitative and qualitative item

With respect to our research question about college men's awareness of the violent nature of their own behavior, and differences in responses to quantitative and qualitative items, only two out of 11 study participants who endorsed quantitative items responded in kind to a qualitative question asking about this behavior. As noted in the results section, the remaining nine participants who indicated having used sexual violence on the quantitative item either stated "no" or elaborated affirmatively that they had not used sexual violence in the past, with one even positioning himself as a champion for women. It is worth noting that the question asked in the quantitative question was not identical to the question asked in the qualitative portion, which may account for some of the discrepancy observed. More specifically, the quantitative questions all began with the stem "Have you engaged (or attempted to engage) in sexual activity with a woman by…" with the remainder of the question ending in stems such as, "doing so when she was already too drunk or high not to?" or "getting her too drunk or high?" Whereas the qualitative question prompted the participants as follows: "One type of behavior we're interested to know more about is when guys force a woman, through emotional coercion, physical force, or manipulation, to engage in non-consensual sexual acts. These acts might include sexual touching or penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina, anus, or mouth with any body part or object, without the woman's consent. Thinking back on your sexual activity since starting college, does this describe any of your past behavior? Describe what comes to mind." Was the latter paragraph perhaps too lengthy or convoluted for participants to be able to find their own behavior in its description? While there are surely differences between these two questions, it is also important to note that the quantitative items, albeit implicitly, did directly ask about non-consensual

behavior. For example, we did not simply ask participants whether they had engaged in sexual activity when they or their partner was incapacitated; rather, we asked whether the partner was "already *too* drunk or high *not to*" or if the participant had gotten her "*too* drunk or high."

Another possibility suggested by these results is that participants were able to recognize sexual violence when a paragraph description is provided; in this case, sufficient defenses were activated in order to lead participants to deny or disavow these behaviors. However, when a more discrete description of individual instances are provided, these behaviors are not recognized as sexual violence, and participants were comfortable acknowledging that they had engaged in these behaviors. If the latter possibility (which is worthy of further study) has merit, these findings have meaningful implications for the development of interventions. Namely, perhaps it is the case that college men are in need of additional psychoeducation about the nuances of sexual assault; there may well be misunderstanding around how engaging in sexual activity with someone who is too inebriated to consent is in fact non-consensual sexual activity. Results from prior research are consistent with the finding that misperceptions play a considerable role in perpetration of sexual assault (Abbey et al., 1998; Loh et al., 2007; Edwards et al., 2014).

Defense against threat to identity

There were additional observations that suggest that participants experienced defensiveness when completing the current study[3]. Defenses may be understood as

[3] As I comment on what I and my research coding team interpreted as participant defensiveness, it feels incumbent upon me to also attend to defensiveness on my part as the primary investigator. Ultimately my willingness and capacity to fully engage with the inevitable emotional pain manifest in research related to sexual violence has a direct influence on the nature of the framing of problems identified, the research

psychological processes outside of one's awareness that function to allow an individual to "avoid emotional pain by in one way or another pushing thoughts, wishes, feelings, or fantasies out of awareness" (Safran & Hunter, 2020, p. 174). Acknowledgment of one's personal flaws, failings, or threats to one's self concept may be defended against (i.e., put outside of one's awareness) in order to protect how people feel about themselves. Perhaps not surprisingly given the developmental age, there is evidence that college students may be more likely to engage in impression management and self-deception strategies when participating in other surveys (Paulhus, 1986; Larson & Miyoshi, 2007). In fact, prior research suggests that men may be more likely to report past sexual violence when they believe the veracity of their reports are being verified

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questions, study design, and interpretation of results. Simply put, my defensiveness cannot be discounted either. Numerous conversations with my dissertation chair touched upon the inclusion in my manuscript of a position statement or acknowledgement of reflexivity in some form, a suggestion that I agreed with and also avoided for months due to my implicit desire to avoid consideration of how this research has impacted me. I was initially drawn to the current research topic in the context of the re-emergence of the #MeToo movement in 2017, as well as events on my university campus that highlighted inherent misogyny and sexual violence in the university culture. Having matriculated though an all-women's college in a major urban setting in the northeast as an undergraduate student, the culture of the university was one that both alarmed and mystified me, and also felt directly related to the propagation of cultures of sexual violence beyond college. As a graduate student of psychology aware of the importance of moving toward discomfort in the service of growth, I chose to seek to understand something that I found both off putting but was also able to keep myself at a sufficiently safe distance from because of the etic, outsider position that I adopted. In doing so, I participated in a similar dynamic that has been both described in the research literature and was reflected in the data of the current study. Namely, I implicitly positioned myself as someone outside of the cultures that support sexual violence rather than acknowledging my own roles (past and present) in maintaining systems that support violence. I have in the past and continue to experience pressures to conform to cultures that prescribe my roles. I have felt and continue to feel pressure to perform as a woman in a man's world, pressure to minimize my emotions and relational needs, and pressure to expect traditional masculine performance from men. All of these pressures have shaped my behavior at times with more or less awareness. Furthermore, the content of the current research study has throughout various phases of the dissertation process (literature review, data collection, analysis and interpretation) been tremendously difficult to engage with. It has been a frequent reminder of the personal pain and trauma that women and men have endured, along with abounding aggression and violence. As I have embarked on different parts of my own life cycle, I have needed to distance myself from my research in order to focus more wholly on the beauty, joy, connection, and profundity that life has to offer in addition to the suffering. Though awareness alone does not make the change, it is also a key step in understanding the problems at hand and how to effect change beginning with our own participatory behavior.

(Strang and Peterson, 2016). Though we attempted to minimize biases in responses based on impression management, self-deception, or defenses via the study design (anonymous and untraceable web-based survey), we cannot disregard how these processes influenced participant responses.

For example, one indication of possible defensiveness that emerged were responses that relayed the meta message that participants rejected a perceived intent of the researcher to teach them information about themselves. This was particularly interesting in light of participant knowledge that the primary investigator was a woman based on the presence of her name in the bulk email used for recruitment and the consent page at the start of the survey. Examples of responses that reflect this hypothesis include, "No. I knew all of this before and I would never have sex with someone if they didn't want to," and "This one is true. When people aren't thinking straight they are more likely to have sex." It is worth noting that the framing of survey questions in order to address the research questions may have contributed to participants experiencing a didactic dynamic as they completed the survey. Given that one of the study's aims was to evaluate to what extent participants' beliefs were congruent with the research literature, and that the qualitative prompts included statements about findings from the literature, it may be reasonable that participants were left feeling as though the completion of the study also functioned as a lesson.

Good guys and bad guys

Another interesting pattern observed across qualitative responses was an apparent avoidance of the use of specific, descriptive, or direct language pertaining to acts of sexual violence. In other words, even as participants were prompted with phrases such as

"forces," "physical force," "non-consensual sexual acts," and "sexual assault," participants frequently avoided the use of these phrases in lieu of more obscure and vague language. For example, participants used words or phrases such as "it," "such activities," "involuntary acts," "some of the scenes [shown] in pornography can be a bit graphic," and "hookup with a girl no matter the cost." One of the themes that emerged in the qualitative analysis was the process of distancing and othering violent behavior: disavowing that aggressive or violent behaviors are ones that men or their friends have used.

There is the possibility of an evident reality to these participant responses. Despite the anonymity of the survey, surely there is self-selection bias such that perhaps those participants who responded (and their friends) do engage in aggressive or violent behaviors less frequently than other populations. However, our quantitative data provide some evidence that this is not the case. It may be more likely that even though participants have used aggressive or violent strategies to engage in sexual activity with women, explicit reflection on these types of behaviors is experienced as so threatening to their senses of themselves (and the "good guys" they believe they should be) that they defend against acknowledgement of their proximity, and possible use, of violent strategies by maintaining a safe distance between themselves and the "other" men who behave this way. The weight of this latter possibility, and any awareness of this process on the part of participants, cannot be determined from the data and would be interesting to explore in future research.

Messner (2016) thoroughly contextualizes the allure of being the "good guy" in his brief review of perspectives on rape and antirape activism. A feminist paradigm

emerged in the 1970s and 1980s that shifted perspectives toward sexual violence from the result of a few bad apples to a reflection "a culturally honored definition of masculinity that rewarded the successful use of violence to achieve domination over others" (p. 59). Though the professionalization of antirape work of the 1980s and 1990s was an accomplishment of the feminist movement, there were mixed results, as this shift both broadened awareness and resources but also "recast violence against women as a public health issue, rather than a manifestation of men's collective power over women" (p. 60). The 2000s was predominated with the "good man/bystander approach" (p. 62) that focused on healthy behaviors and bystander intervention. Within bystander intervention trainings, "a foundational but often unspoken assumption is that everyone in the room is a 'good man,' while the violent men, the rapists, are imagined to be someone else, somewhere *out there*" (p. 63). While this approach has its appeals, it again "carries the risk of further eclipsing feminist visions of social transformation" (p. 62) and interferes with an acknowledgment of the deeper, underlying structures that give rise to sexual violence. As with participants in the current study, there is a clear distinction between rapists and the "good guys" rather than acknowledgment of how the culture engenders violence against women.

Hostile and aggressive responses

There were also responses that suggest that some participants resented the framing of the study. For example, in response to a question about past sexual assault toward women, one participant wrote, "This may describe my sexual behavior in a CONSENSUAL manor. Drunk women emotionally manipulate far more times than men do," a perplexing response to a question asking specifically about "non-consensual sexual

acts." It is worth noting that this participant answered the second question with "unless you are too dumb to know how to act sexually" before discontinuing the study.

Participant hostility and aggression toward the female primary investigator was seen most evidently by several participants who elected to complete the entire survey, including providing responses to some or all of the 11 qualitative questions, with hostile content. For example, one participant responded to each qualitative question with "69," a number that means a sexual act (Urban Dictionary, 2021). Another participant simply wrote, "No" to all 11 questions. While we might consider that these responses are simply meaningless and not relevant data, it is important to note that participants had the choice to drop out. Instead, these participants chose to respond to each question by actively providing ostensibly meaningless data. However, their curt responses seem to reflect implicit, tacit emotional responses elicited by participation in the study. Finally, there was one participant whose responses were particularly hostile, and while their content was not deemed by the research coding team to be relevant to themes found in the primary qualitative analysis, their content is notable. For example, he responded to the first question about past history of sexual violence with, "lol," and in response to the second question (about the influence of childhood and adolescence on sexual behavior), the participant wrote, "if dad rapes u u rape." When asked about personality and patterns in relationships, he responded, "fuckin gutys always fuckin," and in response to a question about how pressure to "be a man" influences behavior, he wrote, "makes me grab her skull :)". We cannot rule out myriad factors that may have related to this participant's responses, including the role of a history of childhood abuse or trauma (Casey et al., 2017). Given the patterns observed above and consistent with prior

research (Salazar et al., 2018; Pollack, 2006; Jakupcak, 2013; Morrison et al., 2015), it is also possible that socialization into a masculine identity that rejects the emotional pain and shame that come with it are related to this participant's hostility, aggression, and efforts to convey that he did not take the study seriously; in fact, these statements may be interpreted as defensive attempts to prove his imperviousness to the impact the study's content despite the very real vulnerability that he shares with the rest of humanity.

Implications for early interventions

In light of the responses elicited by participants, what are the implications of the current study for the development of future interventions? One approach that has been suggested previously was echoed by a study participant as follows: "Some guys understand what's right and what's wrong and some don't and by the time of doing all this sexual assault classes [during freshman orientation] is too late. Someone with that capability isn't going to all of a sudden change at that age, it needs to be applied earlier." The current study confirms prior research suggesting that one means to address systemic problems is to trace back to earlier roots of where these problems are embedded (Kim, 2016). Children are not too young to understand and to learn about consent. Various suggestions have been made about how to begin to teach even babies and toddlers about their rights to decide what happens to their bodies and how to be respectful toward others' bodies. For example, even though infants are unable to grant permission, initiating the practice of asking an infant before changing their diaper sets the stage for a schema of asking for consent before someone touches them (Carson, 2018). Avoidance of tickling (Marder, 2020) and not telling children to "go hug" a given family member similarly sends the message that the child decides when and with whom

they want to engage in a hug or other physical contact (Girl Scouts, 2018). As children age, there are developmentally appropriate ways to continue to teach consent and respect for people's bodies, including one's own (Tatter, 2018).

Given the role of early life attachment and its implications for development and interpersonal patterns across the lifespan (McConnell & Moss, 2011), interventions that promote strong attachment between children and primary caretakers may also be key. The foundation of healthy attachment includes the establishment of trustworthy, reliable, and stable relationships that withstand the inevitable vicissitudes of life: relationships that build self-esteem through the encouragement of independence while ensuring a secure base to which a child has the option to return when needed. For a review of interventions that help to foster parent-child attachment, see Steele & Steele (2018).

Implications for college personnel

Where else may interventions be targeted? As alluded to above, there is some evidence that misperceptions or misunderstandings about the nature of sexual violence are related to why college men engage in these behaviors. Though we may assume that a college student can readily interpret a definition of sexual assault and see how this directly applies to real life scenarios, perhaps these connections need to be more specifically delineated. College personnel responsible for the development, identification, and dissemination of trainings for college students pertaining to sexual violence on campus may benefit from consideration of the fallacy of the assumption that acts of sexual violence are unilaterally understood as such. Materials from prior studies (e.g., Abbey et al., 1998; Loh et al., 2007; Edwards et al., 2014) that have identified misperceptions by college men about whether or not certain scenarios are examples of

sexual assault may be utilized as a starting point for identifying gaps with continued research and explicating misperceptions. However, the precariousness of masculine identity, as well as the defensiveness observed even in the anonymous format of the current study, may well present challenges to interventions that aim to address misunderstandings.

Additional implications relate to participants' beliefs that a lack of consequences influences college men's use of sexual violence. Though the theme of no consequences was touched upon in our literature review, we had not expected for the theme to be as prominent as it was in our data. The considerable number of reasons for the lack of consequences for sexual violence on college campuses (such as fear of not being believed due to insufficient evidence, fear of social repercussions, victim blaming and shame, as well as the retraumatizing nature of some procedures) has been well documented. Future research may help to further understand what role this plays in violence perpetration, which may in turn inform interventions that address the perceived lack of consequences on college campuses.

Implications for clinicians

In addition to continued research and interventions that address these issues on college campuses, there are clinical implications of the findings from the current study. The APA published clinical recommendations for clinicians that highlights considerations that may be important when working with boys and men. The current study sheds light on several considerations for clinicians to take into account when working with young men. Clinicians may benefit from conceptualizing their clients through a lens that accounts for various systemic influences on how young men construct

identity and behave in relationships (Carter & McGoldrick, 1999). Additionally, intrapersonal themes and patterns identified by the current study, such as young men subverting their feelings and authentic selves in order to fit in and belong with peers, may be an important landscape for clinicians to explore with clients. Through the therapeutic relationship, clinicians may be able to create a sufficiently safe place for young men to begin the processes of experiencing, identifying, responding (both in relation to themselves and through contact with close others) and making meaning of their emotions and inner worlds. There is evident need for psychologists to continue to study and work with their clients in order to address these issues. At the same time, given all that has been discussed above, there are many obstacles that may preclude young men from seeking and engaging with clinical professionals.

Implications for intervention at the systems level

How then might we address problems related to precarious manhood and defensiveness? As described by various prior researchers and scholars, there is a fundamental crisis in the way that boys and men are raised in current western cultures to believe that their authentic, emotional, and vulnerable selves need to be hidden with heteronormative, dominant, invulnerable, tough, and virile masks. At the individual level, parents can raise their children with awareness of the traps and pitfalls inherent in patriarchy and provide alternative perspectives and ways to view the world. We can encourage boys or men in our lives who are struggling to seek out help, such as psychotherapy. And we can work on and model what it looks like to be reflective, emotionally attuned to ourselves, capable of seeking connection and help from others through shared vulnerability, and accountable for our actions when we falter. We must

also recognize that the deeply rooted, sociohistorical context of our broader culture is not one that will readily change.

Clearly there are many levels of systems involved, ranging from the family and interpersonal patterns, climates on college campuses, and broader culture; no singular intervention can suffice. Further, this problem can be understood as one that impacts not just college students or men, but all of us. The influence of patriarchy and hegemonic masculinity are as cultural as they are personal. Furthermore, they are influences that significantly impact girls, women, and nonbinary individuals, populations that have minimally been addressed by the current study. There was intentionality in our exclusion of women participants from the study. We sought to avoid the common pitfall of "victim blaming" by placing the responsibility of preventing sexual violence on the women who suffer from it. Hookup culture tends to place the onus of "gatekeeping" (Armstrong et al., 2006; p. 491) on women (e.g., "mock resistance" in pornography and feminine sexual scripts). By identifying sexual violence as a men's problem, we sought to shift the frame away from the assumption and narrative that sexual violence is inevitable, so women should learn to protect themselves.

Limitations

However, this was also a limitation of the current study. Women and nonbinary individuals are part of the cultures described--their voices, perspectives, needs, and desires must be accounted for, included, and represented in the cultures where they exist. Patriarchy fundamentally influences how girls, women, and nonbinary individuals think about themselves as well. As such, women and nonbinary individuals too may benefit from an embrace of traditionally "feminine" qualities of emotional expression,

vulnerability, and longing for connection that broader culture, and hookup culture in particular, have encouraged them to cast off in order to succeed in a man's world (Wade, 2017).

There are a number of additional limitations to the current study that also present both challenges as well as opportunities for future research. While there were good reasons for why we chose to use an anonymous survey (namely that anonymity would render more honest and open responses), this format had a number of disadvantages as well. Unstructured and semi-structured interviews and focus groups allow researchers to ask emergent, clarifying, as well as exploratory questions. As new ideas or topics are discussed, the researcher may learn more about them in vivo with study participants, which was not possible in the current study. Additionally, while there were good reasons that we asked participants the specific questions that we did in relation to the research questions, participants were not given the opportunity to describe their experience as members of various systems of culture, which may well have rendered quite different themes and answers to some of our research questions. Additional research may be able to shed light on more of college men's perspectives about their phenomenology and all that has influenced it.

Another limitation (and opportunity for further study) was that the current study did not address how college men understand their emotional processes. We did not ask questions about experiential avoidance or how college men understand the role of avoidance of emotions in relation to the use of sexual violence. Though this may be tied to socialization and masculinity, it would be worthwhile to understand how college men conceive of their emotional processes: to what extent are they aware of them? Lastly, it

is important to acknowledge several aspects about the sample characteristics. participants of the current study were students at a university with 77% of students reporting their race as White (James Madison University, 2021) with a median family income of $147,000 (NYTimes, 2021). Additionally, the current study did not include many members of fraternities and athletic teams in the qualitative portion. It would be helpful to understand whether and how these subpopulations have different perspectives than participants in the current study.

Conclusion

Though much continues to remain worthy of understanding and exploration, our study revealed new perspectives and findings. We believed that by using an anonymous, untraceable platform, we would be able to bypass impression management that can obscure a researcher's endeavor to obtain authentic and honest responses from study participants. However, we had not quite accounted for the role of defenses, the internal processes that preclude us from being able to acknowledge parts of reality to ourselves. That a number of study participants endorsed having used violence in the past when asked about specific behaviors through the quantitative measure but denied these behaviors when asked about them in an open-ended question highlights the human capacity to shield ourselves from information perceived as harmful or threatening to our sense of ourselves as good and just (although there are additional possible explanations as described in the discussion above). Similarly, as my research progressed and I became in closer contact with the pain and anger revealed by the study participants, I was also forced to encounter my own defenses and reluctance to engage.

Even as we sought in the current study to contextualize and understand the complexity of what factors are related to why college men use violence, there was much that we fundamentally were unable to dive into. One participant wrote about pledging for a fraternity and needing to tell hook up stories while in his line up; he felt pressure to engage in sexual activity in order to evade embarrassment and to fit in among men in the fraternity. While this participant was turned off by this experience, we must presume that many others were and are not. And yet, our current study did not tap into these voices. We did not hear from the men who stayed in the line up, who felt obliged to participate in the performance. Though I can understand this participant's choice to leave, I am left wondering: for those men who stayed in line (literally and figuratively), what does it feel like, what is the phenomenology, what are the internal processes that lead them to stay? What is going on in the inner worlds of those who fall prey to the traps of the pain and harm endured by striving to live up to the inevitably unattainable reaches of ideal masculinity? Furthermore, what made it so that my study did not take us to the answers to these questions? What makes it difficult to go there? Equally important to understanding the experience of those who use violence is an understanding of what gets in the way of our search to deeply understand the experience of those who do.

It is far from unusual in my experience as a therapist to hear, and even be the recipient, of rage born out of unspeakable, and often inaccessible, pain. In response to injustice, tragedy, trauma, shame, and many other unfortunately ubiquitous human experiences, we feel angry! We are moved to do something about our oppression, mistreatment, and loss. Anger can feel mobilizing when suffering, grief, and pain are overwhelming. Given how prior theory, research, and the current study have helped us to

understand that sexual violence can be born out of feelings of insurmountable pressure on men under patriarchy to be something that they are not, theoretically, the violence and rage are understandable. And yet, with few exceptions, we did not hear rage in the current study, which has left me, at the prompting of my dissertation committee, to ask myself why. When it comes down to it, I believe that the answer is as simple as this. I find myself anxious, terrified, and resistant to authentically elicit, engage, and embrace the anger that results from the tremendous pain of living as a man under hegemonic patriarchy. For many of us, it can be gravely uncomfortable to sit with emotions like rage, anger, shame, and pain. But equally so, I find myself anxious, terrified, and resistant to consider that by peering into the inner world of those who use sexual violence, I may recognize my own capacity to rage, to aggress, to hurt when I am hurt, or worse, my own sadism. None of us want to acknowledge our capacity to do harm to others, and yet this capacity, and reality, is a part of humanity. Many of us hurt others when we hurt. We hurt those who are vulnerable, those who are closest to us, those best positioned to help us, and often those we believe to be strong enough to take it.

Despite these propensities, I do not believe them to be destiny. Insight and complex understanding provide us with opportunities to make new choices about how we relate to others. With intention and authenticity, we can raise children to understand their worth irrespective of their alignment with the unattainable pressures placed upon them by their surrounding cultures. We can assure them that they are loved and worthy when they are different and when they falter. Furthermore, we can choose to acknowledge rage and recognize it as an expression of pain in need of understanding and compassion. We can choose to repair wounds, however imperfectly, instead of perpetuating them.

Appendices

Appendix A: Focus Group Script

Facilitator:

"The purpose of this focus group is to receive your feedback about questions to be used in an online anonymous survey in a later part of the study. The goal of that study is to gain more information about how men talk about and understand sex and sexuality, including consensual and non-consensual sexual behavior. We will be asking for your input and opinions about the survey questions; however, at **no point** will we be asking you to respond to the questions on the survey.

The first part of the online survey is a 6-item questionnaire about sexual behavior, and the second part consists of open-ended questions. Both parts will be completed anonymously online.

Again, we do not want you to answer the survey questions. Instead, what we are looking for is your feedback about the questions in order to understand if they are clear and make sense to you in the way intended by the researcher."

Part A [*facilitator hand out form A]*

Facilitator:

"I'm going to pull up the online survey on the TV screen here and ask you use this form to provide your feedback to each of the survey questions. After you write your feedback to each item, we'll then talk about it as a group. As a reminder, please ***do not*** respond to the online survey questions. We are asking for your feedback and not for your personal responses to the online survey questions. Do you have any questions before we get started?

Please read the first paragraph and we will then move on to question 1.

[Allow participants to read the opening paragraph of the survey. Confirm that they are all finished when it seems they are done, and then move on to question 1.]

Please read question 1 and then write responses to the questions below it on the form."

[Allow participants to read question 1 of the survey and to write their response on the form.]

"Let's start with question 1. Was this question clear? Is there anything you would
add or delete to make it more clear?"

[Listen to responses.]

"Now let's move on to question 2. Read the question and write down your responses on the form. Then we'll talk as a group."

[Allow participants to read question 2 and pick up again when it seems they're done writing.]

"Was question 2 clear? Is there anything you would add or delete to make it more clear?"

[Continue this process through question 7.

Part B:

Facilitator:

"We're going to continue to the next part of the online survey. As a reminder, we do not want
you to respond to the questions. Instead, what we are looking for is your feedback about what might be confusing and how we can make it more clear.

Take a look at this paragraph and complete the questions below it on the form. Then we'll talk about it as a group."

[Allow participants to read the opening paragraph of the survey and to write their response on the form. When it seems that they have finished writing responses, invite them to speak as a group]

"Was the paragraph clear? Is there anything you would add or delete to make it more clear?"

[Listen to responses.]

"Now let's move on to question 1. Read the question and write down your responses on the form. Then we'll talk as a group. Please remember that we do not want you to respond to the question in Italics."

[Allow participants to read question 1 and pick up again when it seems they're done writing.]

"Was question 1 clear? Is there anything you would add or delete to make it more clear?"

[Continue this process through question 10.

Collect form A from all participants.]

Part C: [*facilitator hand out Bulk Email Request form]*

Facilitator:

"As we wrap up today, we have a few more questions. Keeping in mind that this is an anonymous, online survey, do you think men on campus will fill this out? Thinking about your friends and peers, what is the likelihood that people will respond?"

[Listen to responses]

"[If there are concerns] what concerns do you expect people would have? What might make them more likely to complete the survey? E.g., are there specific questions that we could take out in order to make the survey less threatening? What changes would you make?"

[Listen to responses]

"This focus group was part 1 of a 2-part study. The reason we are administering the survey (that you have seen) in part 2 is because we want to know more information about how men talk about sex and sexuality, including consensual and non-consensual behaviors. If we ask the questions that you have read, is there anything we would be missing? Are there any other questions you would add?"

[Listen to responses]

"These can be some difficult topics to talk about, so we thank you for giving your time today."

Debrief:

Facilitator:

“As I mentioned at the start of the focus group, the purpose of the online survey is for us to learn more about how men talk about and understand sex and sexuality, including consensual and non-consensual sexual behaviors. From what we know, non-consensual sex is fairly common and often happens either inadvertently or without men understanding that their behavior is problematic. The longer-term goal for this study is to use results to develop interventions to address behavior in college men who have not responded to previous education and training.

Because these topics can be difficult to talk about, and are sometimes not things that we talk about openly, we would like to provide you with some resources where you can learn more about these topics, as well as resources where you might be able to connect with other people in order to talk about these things more if you wish.”

[*Provide Resource List to participants]*

“The information that you have provided us with today will be de-identified and will remain

completely confidential. If you do have additional questions about this study after you leave here today, you are welcome to contact the researcher via the email address indicated on the resource list.”

Appendix B: Focus Group Handout

As you read the text below, imagine that you are completing an anonymous survey online. Please do not respond to the questions in *Italics*.

During dating and hooking up, people use many different methods in order to initiate sexual activities with the person they are with. Sexual activities include kissing, touching breasts/genitals, sexual intercourse, and oral sex. In order to answer the following questions, please consider your sexual activities with women at college and provide yes or no answers.

Have you engaged (or attempted to engage in) sexual activity with a woman by…

1. *doing so when she was too drunk or high not to?*

QUESTION 1: Is the question above clear? Circle one: Yes / No

If no, what would make it more clear?

_____

_____

2. *getting her too drunk or high?*

QUESTION 2: Is the question above clear? Circle one: Yes / No

If no, what would make it more clear?

_____

_____

3. *making sure she couldn't get away?*

QUESTION 3: Is the question above clear? Circle one: Yes / No

If no, what would make it more clear?

_____

_____

4. *continuing after she said "I don't want to do this" because you knew she did?*

QUESTION 4: Is the question above clear? Circle one: Yes / No

If no, what would make it more clear?

_____

_____

5. *making it clear that you could hurt her?*

QUESTION 5: Is the question above clear? Circle one: Yes / No

If no, what would make it more clear?

_____

_____

6. *using physical force?*

QUESTION 6: Is the question above clear? Circle one: Yes / No

If no, what would make it more clear?

_____

_____

7. *When you were answering these questions, how many women (if any) were you referring to?*
8. *How many incidents were you thinking of?*
9. *What was the nature of your relationship with any women you were referring to (for example, strangers, met at a party, friend of a friend, girlfriend, etc.)?*

QUESTION 7: Are the questions above clear? Circle one: Yes / No

If no, what would make them more clear?

_____

_____

As you read the text below, imagine that you are completing an anonymous survey online. Please do not respond to the questions in *Italics*.

In order to understand people's behavior, it is often helpful to consider a number of different influences. These influences include an individual's background, childhood, family, personality, relationship patterns, community, culture, and the situation that a person is in. In the following questions, you will be asked to consider how all of these influences (and others) may lead people to behave the way they do.

QUESTION 1: Is the paragraph above clear? Circle one: Yes / No

If no, what is unclear? Please circle (or cross out) the text above and write any notes below.

_____

_____

_____

QUESTION 2: What do you suggest we add or delete in order to make it more clear?

_____

_____

1. *One type of behavior we're interested to know more about is when a guy forces a woman, through emotional coercion, physical force, or manipulation, to engage in non-consensual sexual acts. These acts might include sexual touching or penetration,*

no matter how slight, of the vagina, anus, or mouth with any body part or object, without the woman's consent. Thinking back on your sexual activity since starting college, does this describe any of your past behavior? What comes to mind?

QUESTION 3: Is the question above clear? Circle one: Yes / No

If no, what was unclear? Please circle (or cross out) the text above and write any notes below.

_____

_____

_____

QUESTION 4: What do you suggest we add or delete in order to make it more clear?

_____

_____

2. *How does a guy's childhood influence whether he will use physical force or persuasion in order to hook up with a woman?*

QUESTION 5: Is the question above clear? Circle one: Yes / No

If no, what is unclear? Please circle (or cross out) the text above and write any notes below.

_____

_____

_____

QUESTION 6: What do you suggest we add or delete in order to make it more clear?

_____

_____

3. *How does a guy's personality and patterns in relationships influence whether he uses physical force or persuasion in order to hook up with a woman?*

QUESTION 7: Is the question above clear? Circle one: Yes / No

If no, what is unclear? Please circle (or cross out) the text above and write any notes below.

_____

_____

_____

QUESTION 8: What do you suggest we add or delete in order to make it more clear?

_____

_____

4. *How do different forms of media (e.g., TV, movies, pornography) influence whether a guy uses physical force or persuasion in order to hook up with a woman?*

QUESTION 9: Is the question above clear? Circle one: Yes / No

If no, what is unclear? Please circle (or cross out) the text above and write any notes below.

_____

_____

_____

QUESTION 10: What do you suggest we add or delete in order to make it more clear?

_____

_____

5. *How does pressure to "be a man" influence whether a guy uses physical force or persuasion in order to hook up with a woman?*

QUESTION 11: Is the question above clear? Circle one: Yes / No

If no, what is unclear? Please circle (or cross out) the text above and write any notes below.

_____

_____

_____

QUESTION 12: What do you suggest we add or delete in order to make it more clear?

_____

_____

6. *How does pressure to fit in and to be one of the guys influence whether a guy uses physical force or persuasion in order to hook up with a woman?*

QUESTION 13: Is the question above clear? Circle one: Yes / No

If no, what is unclear? Please circle (or cross out) the text above and write any notes below.

_____

_____

_____

QUESTION 14: What do you suggest we add or delete in order to make it more clear?

_____

_____

7. *How does alcohol influence whether a guy uses physical force or persuasion in order to hook up with a woman?*

QUESTION 15: Is the question above clear? Circle one: Yes / No

If no, what is unclear? Please circle (or cross out) the text above and write any notes below.

_____

_____

_____

QUESTION 16: What do you suggest we add or delete in order to make it more clear?

_____

_____

8. *Some people believe that as humans, we have a need to feel emotionally connected to others. One way to define a "need" is to think of it as something that motivates or*

drives someone to fill a gap or to reach a goal. Using this definition of a need, what needs are being met when a man uses physical force or persuasion to engage in sexual activity with a woman?

QUESTION 17: Is the question above clear? Circle one: Yes / No

If no, what is unclear? Please circle (or cross out) the text above and write any notes below.

_____

_____

_____

QUESTION 18: What do you suggest we add or delete in order to make it more clear?

_____

_____

9. *Besides what you have already shared, what else influences whether a guy uses physical force or persuasion in order to hook up with a woman?*

QUESTION 19: Is the question above clear? Circle one: Yes / No

If no, what is unclear? Please circle (or cross out) the text above and write any notes below.

_____

_____

_____

QUESTION 20: What do you suggest we add or delete in order to make it more clear?

_____

_____

10. *One way to describe sexual assault is "forcing a woman, through emotional coercion, physical force, or manipulation, to engage in non-consensual sexual acts. These acts might include sexual touching or penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina, anus, or mouth with any body part or object, without the woman's consent." When thinking about your sexual experiences since starting college, does any of your behavior include sexual assault? Describe your thought process to answer this question.*

QUESTION 21: Is the question above clear? Circle one: Yes / No

If no, what is unclear? Please circle (or cross out) the text above and write any notes below.

_____

_____

_____

QUESTION 22: What do you suggest we add or delete in order to make it more clear?

_____

_____

11. *Can a good guy sexually assault a woman? Describe your thought process to answer this question.*

QUESTION 23: Is the question above clear? Circle one: Yes / No

If no, what is unclear? Please circle (or cross out) the text above and write any notes below.

_____

_____

_____

QUESTION 24: What do you suggest we add or delete in order to make it more clear?

_____

_____

QUESTION 25: Is there a way to format the survey in order for it to be more clear?

_____

_____

Appendix C: Survey

Quantitative Measure - Part A

During dating and hooking up, people use many different methods in order to initiate sexual activities with the person they are with. Sexual activities include kissing, touching breasts/genitals, sexual intercourse, and oral sex. In order to answer the following questions, please consider your sexual activities with women at college and provide yes or no answers.

Have you engaged (or attempted to engage) in sexual activity with a woman by…

1. doing so when she was already too drunk or high not to?
2. getting her too drunk or high?
3. making sure she couldn't get away?
4. continuing after she said "I don't want to do this" because you though she did want to?
5. making it clear that you *could* hurt her if she said "no"?
6. using physical force (such as your body weight or holding her down)?

7. When you were answering these questions, how many women (if any) were you referring to?
8. How many incidents?

9. What was the nature of your relationship with any women referred to (for example, strangers, met at a party, friend of a friend, girlfriend, etc.)?
10. Where were you (include all locations) when any incident(s) took place?

Qualitative Measure - Part B

In order to understand people's behavior, it is often helpful to consider a number of different influences. These influences include an individual's background, childhood, family, personality, relationship patterns, community, culture, and the situation that a person is in. For example, having a close relationship with a family member may allow you to feel more comfortable in a close relationship with a friend. In the following questions, you will be asked to consider how all of these influences (and others) may lead people to behave the way they do.

1. One type of behavior we're interested to know more about is when guys forces a woman, through emotional coercion, physical force, or manipulation, to engage in non-consensual sexual acts. These acts might include sexual touching or penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina, anus, or mouth with any body part or object, without the woman's consent. Thinking back on your sexual activity since starting college, does this describe any of your past behavior? What comes to mind?
2. How does a guy's childhood and adolescence influence whether he will use physical force or persuasion in order to hook up with a woman? When answering this question you may describe yourself or other guys you know.
3. How does a guy's personality and patterns in relationships influence whether he uses physical force or persuasion in order to hook up with a woman? Patterns in relationships refer to previous relationships with parents, peers, romantic partners, etc. For example, if someone felt rejected by a parent, they may continue to feel rejected by friends. When answering this question you may describe yourself or other guys you know.
4. How do different forms of media (e.g., TV, movies, pornography) influence whether a guy uses physical force or persuasion in order to hook up with a woman? When answering this question you may describe yourself or other guys you know.
5. How does pressure to "be a man" influence whether a guy uses physical force or persuasion in order to hook up with a woman? Use your own definition of what it means to "be a man." When answering this question you may describe yourself or other guys you know.
6. How do expectations of manhood, pressure to "fit in," and to be "one of the guys" influence whether a guy uses physical force or persuasion in order to hook up with a woman? When answering this question you may describe yourself or other guys you know.

7. How does a guy's use of alcohol influence whether he uses physical force or persuasion in order to hook up with a woman? When answering this question you may describe yourself or other guys you know.
8. Humans have both physical and psychological needs. Examples of psychological needs include a human need to feel emotionally connected to others or a need to feel more powerful than another person. Using this description of a psychological need, what (if any) needs are being met when a guy uses physical force or persuasion to engage in sexual activity with a woman? When answering this question you may describe yourself or other guys you know.
9. Besides what you have already shared, what else influences whether a guy uses physical force or persuasion in order to hook up with a woman? When answering this question you may describe yourself or other guys you know.
10. One way to describe sexual assault is "forcing a woman, through emotional coercion, physical force, or manipulation, to engage in non-consensual sexual acts. These acts might include sexual touching or penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina, anus, or mouth with any body part or object, without the woman's consent." With this definition of sexual assault (the same used in question 1), do you think differently about any of your sexual experiences since starting college? Describe your thought process to answer this question.
11. Can a "good guy" sexually assault a woman? Describe your thought process to answer this question.

Debrief:

The purpose of this study is to understand how cisgender undergraduate men who have sex with women relate to their own sexually violent behavior, and to evaluate how these narratives correspond to the current research literature. Results from the study may be able to contribute to the development of interventions that address behavior in college men who have not responded to previous education and training. All data has been collected in a strictly anonymous way. Executive summaries of anonymized data analyses will be made available to the offices of Student Affairs and Title IX at JMU along with recommendations.

Psychoeducational materials regarding masculinity and sexual violence are as follows:

1. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9VXOknUbzBM
2. https://www.keithedwards.com/men-ending-rape/men-ending-rape-videos/
3. https://goodmenproject.com/featured-content/megasahd-man-box-the-link-between-emotional-suppression-and-male-violence/
4. http://www.wearemanenough.com/

Resources for Counseling:

1. JMU Student Counseling Center https://www.jmu.edu/counselingctr/index.shtml
2. JMU Counseling and Psychological Services: http://www.iihhs.jmu.edu/caps/contact.html

3. Counselors in the community: https://www.jmu.edu/counselingctr/resources/community-referral.shtml

If you would like to consult someone regarding an incident that you are concerned about, you may contact the Title IX Office at JMU; https://www.jmu.edu/access-and-enrollment/titleIX/index.shtml

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