

STRANGER AND ACQUAINTANCE RAPE

Are There Differences In the Victim's Experience?

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Most published research on the victim–offender relationship has been based on small samples that consisted mainly of women who were raped by nonintimate and nonromantic acquaintances, who viewed their experience as rape, and/or who were seeking treatment. In the present study, 489 rape victims were located among a national sample of 3,187 female college students by a self-report survey that avoided reliance on help-seekers. Two sets of comparisons were performed. First, the experiences reported by victims of stranger rape ($n = 52$) were compared with those of victims of acquaintance rape ($n = 416$). Then, the experiences of women assaulted by different types of acquaintances were compared including nonromantic acquaintances ($n = 122$), casual dates ($n = 103$), steady dates ($n = 147$), and spouses or other family members ($n = 44$). Rapes by acquaintances, compared with strangers, were more likely to involve a single offender and multiple episodes, were less likely to be seen as rape or to be revealed to anyone, and were similar in terms of the victim's resistance. In general, acquaintance rapes were rated as less violent than stranger rapes. The exception was rapes by husbands or other family members which were rated equally violent to stranger rapes but were much less likely to occur in a context of drinking or other drug use. In spite of these different crime characteristics, virtually no differences were found among any of the groups in their levels of psychological symp-

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toms. A significant feature of these data is that they have tapped the experiences of unreported and unacknowledged rape victims, a group that is potentially much larger than the group of identified victims.

It has long been recognized that a sizable number of rapes involve not only strangers but also persons who are acquainted with each other. For example, 52% of the completed rapes reported on the National Crime Survey (NCS) in 1982 involved nonstrangers (Bureau of Justice Statistics, [BJS], 1984). In most instances these were nonromantic and nonintimate victim-offender relationships. At the same time, it is suspected that there are many rapes that involve intimate acquaintances, which may be underrepresented in official studies such as the NCS, because these victims do not consider their experiences as crimes and thus do not report them as such (BJS, 1984). Studies in which sexual assault screening questions have been asked outside of a crime context have revealed high rates of rape involving intimate acquaintances. For example, Russell (1984) found that 88% of the rape victims identified among a probability sample of 930 San Francisco residents knew their offender.

Criminologists consider the victim-offender relationship to be of considerable importance. Thus, the authors of the NCS have concluded, "The nature of the relationship between victim and offender is a key element to understanding crime and judging the risks involved for the various groups in society" (BJS, 1984, p. 10). The relationship context has been postulated to affect both the victim's and offender's behavior before, during, and after the crime. It may take the woman who is acquainted with her offender longer to perceive that an interaction is progressing to rape, due to her greater investment in not labeling the situation as rape (Weis & Borges, 1973). In addition, the degree of violence the offender uses during a rape has been linked to the victim-offender relationship. Amir (1971) concluded, based on an examination of rapes reported in Philadelphia between 1958-1960, that the closer the victim-offender relationship, the more force that was used. Likewise, among a sample of women who called a rape crisis center, significantly more violence was reported when the victim knew the offender (Stuntz, 1975). However, contrary results also have been reported including a study by Ellis, Atkeson, and Calhoun (1981) in which it was stranger rapes that were rated by the victims as more violent, of longer duration, and involving more sex acts.

Along with these links to the victim-offender relationship, there have also been studies on the rape-avoidance strategies of victims who were assaulted by acquaintances compared with those assaulted by strangers. Several studies have supported the conclusion that victims were more passive if they were acquainted with the offender (e.g., Amir, 1971; Bart & O'Brien, 1981; Bart & O'Brien, 1985). Bart and O'Brien (1981) observed the trend that as the acquaintanceship increased, the likelihood of avoiding

rape decreased, and that victims acquainted with their offender were less likely to use physical resistance than victims of strangers.

Links between the victim-offender relationship and post-rape psychological symptoms have also been examined in several longitudinal studies. Post hoc analyses have failed to establish that the degree of post-rape depression, fear, or social maladjustment are predicted by the victim-offender relationship (e.g., Ellis et al., 1981; Frank, Turner, & Stewart, 1980; Kilpatrick, Veronen, & Best, 1985; Ruch & Chandler, 1983). The exception is a study by McCahill, Meyer, and Fischman (1979) in which interviewers rated the severity of post-rape trauma among a group of victims questioned in their homes on four occasions during the first year postrape. Victims whose offender was a casual acquaintance or relative stranger were rated more severely maladjusted than those whose offender was a friend, family member, or total stranger.

Finally, Sales, Baum, and Shore (1984) have suggested that the symptomatic responses to rape may be independent from the cognitive responses. Thus, the victim-offender relationship may predict some of the important choices that rape victims must make including: whom to tell, from whom to seek help, what changes in life circumstance to make, how to protect oneself in the future, what other actions to take in political and social terms, and how to reorganize oneself. Katz and Burt (1986) have suggested that nonstranger rape victims blame themselves more and rate themselves as less recovered than did victims of strangers for up to three years postrape.

In these studies of the victim-offender relationship, several methodological problems and constraints on generalizability are evident. Samples were often recruited from rape crisis centers or by media advertisements. Yet, as few as 5% of victims report that they sought rape crisis center services soon after the rape (Koss, 1985). Both crisis center case rosters and media recruitment identify women who conceptualize themselves as rape victims. But it has been widely recognized that there are many women who have sustained harm but who fail to conceive of themselves as victims (BJS, 1984; Burt & Estep, 1981; Koss, 1985). In fact, the desire to avoid using the term "rape" is frequently very high. Curtis (1976) completed a reverse-records study in San Jose and found that only 54% of *known* acquaintance rape victims (i.e., victims whose rapes had been reported to police) would admit to an interviewer that they had been raped. The possibility must be considered that women who actively identify themselves as rape victims and who seek services have had different assault experiences than unidentified, nonhelpseeking women in the general population who have been raped. Therefore, generalization from clinical to nonclinical groups cannot simply be assumed.

In published studies of the victim-offender relationship, the most common design has been to dichotomize the variable into stranger-versus-acquaintance categories. Few of the rapes placed in the acquaintance cate-

gory of these studies, with the exception the sample developed by Russell (e.g., 1984), have involved victims who were dating or were married to their offender. Rather, the acquaintance category often consisted of offenders who had nonintimate and nonromantic relationships with the victim including co-workers, neighbors, and casual friends. Yet, recent epidemiological studies among large probability samples of women have revealed that rape by intimates is far more prevalent than rape by strangers or by nonromantic acquaintances (Koss, *in press*; Russell, 1984).

The research design used in the present study was developed to tap the responses of unreported and unacknowledged rape victims and produce data with potentially greater generalizability. The salient features of the present study included:

1. recruitment methods that avoided exclusive use of self-identified or helpseeking participants;
2. inclusion of a range of victim-offender relationships including those characterized by high degrees of intimacy;
3. use of a national sample of respondents to enhance generalizability and to provide sufficient power to detect potential relationships.

In the present study two sets of comparisons were made. First, stranger and acquaintance rape victims' retrospective reports were compared including ratings of their perceptions during the assault, the offender's aggression, their resistance, the impact of the experience, and current psychological symptoms. Then, comparisons on these variables were made among four subgroups of acquaintance rape including those in which the offenders were nonromantic acquaintances, casual dates, steady dates, and spouses or other close family members. The participants in the present study were all higher education students. College students were studied because they are a high-risk group for rape by virtue of their age. Women in the 16–24 year old age group have the highest rates of rape victimization (BJS, 1984), and 26 % of the U.S. civilian population aged 18–24 is attending college (U.S. Bureau of Census, 1980).

METHOD

A self-report questionnaire was administered to a sample of 6,159 students, including 3,187 women, at 32 U.S. institutions of higher education.

Sampling Procedures

On the basis of data on enrollment characteristics maintained by the U.S. Department of Education (Office of Civil Rights, 1980), the nation's 3,269 higher education institutions were sorted by location into one of the eight

regions of the continental United States (i.e., New England, Mideast, Great Lakes, Plains States, Southeast, Southwest, Rocky Mountain, and West). Within each region, institutions were placed into homogeneous clusters according to five criteria:

1. location in or outside of a Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area [SMSA] of certain sizes (i.e., SMSA > 1,000,000; SMSA < 1,000,000; or location outside an SMSA);
2. enrollment of minority students above or below the national mean percentage;
3. control of the institution by private secular, private religious, or public authority;
4. type of institution, including university, other 4 year college, and two-year institutions;
5. total enrollment within three levels of approximately equal numbers of students (i.e., 1,000–2,499; 2,500–9,999; > 10,000).

Using these criteria, the institutions of the entire nation were divided into homogeneous clusters. Clusters were sampled in proportion to enrollment. In the case of refusals by the original target, replacements were obtained from the same cluster. In all, 92 schools were contacted and 32 institutional participants were obtained including 19 first choices. The institutions were guaranteed anonymity. A random-selection process based on each institution's catalogue of course offerings was used to choose target classes and alternates. The only limitations on class selection were that classes under 30 students and large lecture sections were eliminated. The questionnaire was administered in classroom settings by one of eight post-master's level psychologists. The two men and six women used a prepared script and were trained to handle potential untoward effects of participation. The anonymous questionnaire was accompanied by a cover sheet that contained all the elements of informed consent. The rate of refusal to complete the survey was negligible; only 91 persons (1.5%) did not wish to participate.

Participants

The 3,187 female participants were characterized as follows: Mean age = 21.4 years; 85% single, 11% married, and 4% divorced; 86% White, 7% Black, 3% Hispanic, 3% Asian, and 1% Native American; and 39% Catholic, 38% Protestant, 4% Jewish, and 20% other or no religion. Because of the assumptions on which the sampling plan was based and the hesitancy of many institutions to participate, the sample is not completely representative. Four variables were considered to determine the extent to which this sample was representative of U.S. higher education

enrollment: (a) Institution location, (b) institution region, (c) participant ethnicity, and (d) participant family income.

The region in which the institutions were located was the only variable on which significant discrepancy was noted. The present sample somewhat overrepresented the proportion of students enrolled in the Northeast and Southwest and underrepresented students attending institutions in the West. The regional disproportion is relatively unimportant since the individual participants in the sample were still reflective of national enrollment in terms of ethnicity and family income. Nevertheless, weighting factors were used. Examination of both weighted and unweighted data indicated that the effect of weighting was very small (see Koss, Gidycz, & Wisniewski, 1987).

Variable Scoring and Data Reduction

All data were obtained via a self-report questionnaire that consisted of 330 items divided into seven sections with a branching format.

Identification of rape victims. Data on sexual victimization since the age of 14 were obtained through the use of the Sexual Experiences Survey (Koss & Gidycz, 1985; Koss & Oros, 1982). This survey is a self-report instrument designed to reflect various degrees of sexual victimization with a reported internal consistency reliability of .74. The test-retest agreement rate between administrations one week apart was 93% (Koss & Gidycz, 1985). The accuracy and truthfulness of self-reports on the Sexual Experiences Survey have been investigated and significant correlations were found between a woman's level of victimization based on self-report and her level of victimization based on responses related to an interviewer several months later, $r = .73$, $p < .001$ (Koss & Gidycz, 1985). Most importantly, only 3% of the women (2/68) who reported experiences that met legal definitions of rape were judged to have misinterpreted questions or to have given answers that appeared to be false.

The group of 489 women who are labeled rape victims in the present study represented 15.4% of the 3,187 respondents. These women responded yes to one or more of the following three questions that described, in behaviorally specific terms, experiences that met legal definitions of rape: (a) Have you had sexual intercourse when you didn't want to because a man gave you alcohol or drugs? (b) Have you had sexual intercourse when you didn't want to because a man threatened or used some degree of physical force (twisting your arm, holding you down, etc.) to make you? (c) Have you had sex acts (anal or oral intercourse or penetration by objects other than the penis) when you didn't want to because a man threatened or used some degree of physical force (twisting your arm, holding you down) to make you?

The legal definition of rape in Ohio (similar to many states) is the

following: "Vaginal intercourse between male and female, and anal intercourse, fellatio, and cunnilingus . . . Penetration, however slight, is sufficient to complete vaginal or anal intercourse . . . No person shall engage in sexual conduct with another person . . . when any of the following apply: (a) the offender purposely compels the other person to submit by force or threat of force, (b) for the purpose of preventing resistance the offender substantially impairs the other person's judgment or control by administering any drug or intoxicant to the other person" (Ohio Revised Code, 1980).

Classification of victim-offender relationships. The 489 rape victims were classified into groups according to the following categorical scoring procedure. Stranger rape victims ($n = 52$) included women who reported that their offender was a total stranger. Acquaintance rape victims ($n = 416$) were placed into one of the following four groups according to whether their offender was a nonromantic acquaintance including a friend, co-worker, or neighbor ($n = 122$), a casual date ($n = 103$), a steady date including boyfriend or lover ($n = 147$), or family member including husbands ($n = 44$). Because 21 rape victims did not complete information on their offender, they could not be included in the analyses.

Demographic comparisons were conducted between stranger and acquaintance rape victims. The groups did not differ in current age, $F(1, 464) = .04, p < .839$, or in age at the time of the incident, $F(1, 444) = 1.69, p < .194$. For both groups the mean current age was 23.2 years old and the mean age at the time of the incident was 18.3 years. The stranger and acquaintance rape groups did not differ in ethnicity, $\chi^2(4, n = 469) = 2.36, p < .670$; income, $\chi^2(4, n = 460) = 3.39, p < .640$; religion, $\chi^2(4, n = 467) = 4.94, p < .293$; or marital status, $\chi^2(4, n = 469) = 3.66, p < .454$. The groups did differ in how long ago the incident occurred, $\chi^2(5, n = 463) = 17.79, p < .003$. Whereas 55% of the acquaintance rapes had occurred within the last 1–2 years, only 24% of the stranger rapes had occurred during this period.

Demographic comparisons were also conducted among the four groups of acquaintance rape victims. The women did not differ in age at the incident, $F(3, 390) = .77, p < .510$. For all groups the mean age at the time of the incident was 18.4 years. The groups did not differ in religion, $\chi^2(12, n = 416) = 15.07, p < .237$. A trend toward significance existed among the groups on ethnicity, $\chi^2(12, n = 417) = 20.66, p < .055$. Women raped by nonromantic acquaintances and by casual dates were more likely to be white than were victims assaulted by steady dates and family members. Definite group differences appeared in all the remaining comparisons. Specifically, the groups differed in current age, $F(3, 410) = 19.06, p < .001$; victims raped by family member ($M = 30.1$ years) were significantly older than victims of casual date rape, steady date rape, and nonromantic acquaintance rape who had mean ages of 22.2, 21.8, and 23.3

years old respectively. The groups also differed in time since the incident, χ^2 (15, $n = 411$) = 44.27, $p < .001$. Of the rapes involving family members, only 23% had occurred within 1–2 years, compared to 51–63% of the rapes involving nonromantic acquaintances, casual, and steady dates. The groups differed in income category, χ^2 (15, $n = 409$) = 33.68, $p < .004$. Women raped by family members were more likely than women in the other three groups to report incomes in their family of origin below \$15,000 per year. The groups differed in marital status, χ^2 (12, $n = 417$) = 89.12, $p < .001$. Women who were raped by family members were less likely to be single (22%) and more likely to be married (35.1%) or separated/divorced (36.9%), compared with women in the other three groups among whom 75–84% were single, 6–9% were married, and 7–10% were separated/divorced. The implications of these demographic differences will be discussed below.

Dependent variables. In the self-report questionnaire, respondents who had been sexually assaulted answered additional questions regarding their most severe experience. The dependent variables used in the present study were obtained from these responses. They have been rationally grouped into the following five categories.

VICTIM PERCEPTIONS.

Women rated the clarity of their nonconsent, the man's aggressiveness, their resistance, the amount of responsibility they felt, the amount of responsibility they attributed to the perpetrator, and how scared, angry, and depressed they felt at the time of the incident. Each item was rated on a (1) *not at all* to (5) *very much* scale. The alpha internal consistency reliability of these items was .71.

OFFENDER AGGRESSION.

Respondents indicated the forms of coercion the offender used including: holding the victim down or twisting her arm; hitting or slapping; choking or beating; and displaying a weapon. They also indicated whether the offender was drinking, using drugs, or both. Finally, the victims indicated how many offenders were involved (response range was one man to three or more men) and how many times the offender repeated his sexual aggression (response range was 1–>5 times).

VICTIM RESISTANCE.

Victims indicated whether or not they used each of the following strategies: screaming for help; running away; physically struggled, pushed him away, hit, or scratched; turned cold; reasoned, pleaded, quarreled, or told him to stop; and sobbed or cried.

IMPACT.

Women indicated whether or not they discussed the experience with anyone, reported it to the police, used a rape crisis center, considered suicide after the experience, and felt they needed counseling. Finally, victims indicated their label for the experience from among four choices: Did not feel victimized, felt I was a victim of serious miscommunication, felt I was a victim of a crime but not rape, and felt I was a rape victim.

SYMPTOMS.

Based on literature reviews of rape-induced aftereffects, it was decided to assess four symptoms: depression, anxiety, relationship satisfaction, and sexual satisfaction (i.e., Ellis, 1983; Holmes & St. Lawrence, 1983). To measure anxiety, the Trait Anxiety Scale was chosen (Spielberger, Gorsuch, & Lushene, 1970). It consists of 20 items to which respondents indicate on a 4-point scale the extent to which each question reflects how they generally feel. Internal consistency estimates range from .86 to .92, and test-retest coefficients range from .73-.86 (Spielberger et al., 1970). The State-Trait Anxiety Inventory has been shown to distinguish rape victims from nonvictims for at least one year postrape (Kilpatrick et al., 1985). To measure depression, the Beck Depression Inventory was used (Beck, Ward, Mendelson, Mock, & Erbaugh, 1961). It consists of 21 items that reflect symptoms and attitudes of depression such as sadness, pessimism, and suicidal ideation. The Spearman-Brown split-half reliability was .93, internal consistency reliability was .82, and test-retest reliability has ranged from .60-.83 (e.g., Beck et al., 1961). To measure sexual satisfaction, women were asked to indicate on a (1) *don't do it* to (5) *very satisfying* scale the extent to which they find the following activities physically satisfying: Kissing and hugging; petting and stroking; and sexual intercourse. Responses to these items were then summed, with an internal consistency of .79. To measure relationship satisfaction, women were asked to indicate on a (1) *not at all* to (5) *very much* scale the extent to which they feel able to trust others, to make friends, get close to others, and to maintain relationships. The responses to these items were summed, with an internal consistency of .66.

Missing data were replaced according to the following rationale: If the number of respondents missing an individual item did not exceed 20% of the total sample, the overall mean was substituted. If no more than 20% of the items on a standard scale were missing, the scale mean was substituted. With replacement of missing data, loss on most of the variables was minimal.

RESULTS

Due to the substantial number of comparisons conducted, and because several items were not truly independent measures, items with similar

format were analyzed by multivariate analyses of variance where possible. Post-hoc univariate analyses were conducted only when the multivariate results were significant. Thus, the chances of alpha error were reduced. Dichotomous data were analyzed by chi-square.

Stranger and Acquaintance Rape Compared

Victim perceptions. The groups differed significantly on the group of items that covered their perceptions during the assault, $F(8, 433) = 3.67$, $p < .001$ (transformed from Pillai's criterion). Post-hoc univariate comparisons indicated that stranger rape victims, compared with acquaintance rape victims, rated the offender as more aggressive; victims were more scared, and felt the man was more responsible for what happened. The groups of women did not differ in their ratings of the clarity with which they communicated nonconsent to the offender, ratings of the degree of resistance they offered, in their feelings of anger and depression during the assault, nor in the extent to which they felt responsible for what happened. The group means on the victim perception items, multivariate, and univariate statistics are presented in Table 1.

Offender aggression. Acquaintance rapes, compared with stranger rapes, were more likely to involve one offender acting alone, $\chi^2(2, n = 468) = 19.89$, $p = .000$, and to have been perpetrated multiple times by the same man, $\chi^2(4, n = 466) = 36.58$, $p = .000$. Just 55.8% of acquaintance rapes, compared with 99.2% of stranger rapes, involved a single assault by the perpetrator.

Close to half of the victims in both groups were drinking before their assault. Victims of stranger rapes, compared with victims of acquaintance rapes, were more likely to state that they were using drugs or drugs and alcohol combined at the time of their assault, $\chi^2(3, n = 465) = 15.85$, $p < .001$. Specifically, 25.4% of stranger rape victims were using drugs or drugs and alcohol combined at the time of their assault compared to 9.9% of acquaintance rape victims. However, there were no significant differences between the groups in reports of offenders' use of intoxicants.

Most offenders were thought to be using intoxicants at the time of the sexual assault including alcohol (47.8%), other drugs (3.2%), or both (16.6%). Stranger rapes were more likely to involve threats of bodily harm, $\chi^2(1, n = 450) = 8.39$, $p < .004$; hitting and slapping, $\chi^2(1, n = 457) = 6.96$, $p < .041$; and a weapon, $\chi^2(1, n = 424) = 10.89$, $p < .001$. The two groups did not differ significantly in reported offender use of arm twisting, holding down, choking, and beating. The percentage of women in each group who responded yes to each item, and the results of chi-square analyses are found in Table 2.

Table 1
Post-hoc univariate comparisons of perceptions between
victims of stranger and acquaintance rape

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Means</i>		<i>Univariate</i>			<i>Multivariate</i>		
	<i>Stranger</i>	<i>Acquaintance</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
<i>Victim perceptions</i>								
Offender aggression	4.12	3.80	5.77	1,453	.017	3.67	8,433	.000
Clearness	4.03	4.01	1.21	1,452	.888			
Resistiveness	3.67	3.80	.67	1,455	.411			
Scared	4.06	3.52	7.06	1,458	.008			
Angry	3.97	3.92	.07	1,453	.790			
Depressed	4.02	3.91	.28	1,456	.599			
Feel responsible	2.91	2.82	.26	1,453	.606			
Man responsible	4.53	4.23	4.19	1,454	.041			

Note. Victim-offender relationship: stranger, *n* = 52; acquaintance, *n* = 416.

Table 2

Chi-square analyses of differences in rape experience between stranger and acquaintance rape victims

Variable	Percent Yes in Each Group		χ^2	df	p
	Stranger	Acquaintance			
Number of offenders					
One	83.5	90.3			
Two	9.7	11.1			
Three or more	6.8	1.2	19.89	2	.000
Number of incidents					
One	99.2	55.8			
Two	0.0	16.1			
Three	.8	6.5			
Four	0.0	3.4			
Five or more	0.0	18.3	36.58	4	.000
Man using intoxicants					
None or don't know	23.8	33.4			
Alcohol	47.8	47.8			
Other drugs	.8	3.5			
Both	27.7	15.2	6.77	3	.080
Woman using intoxicants					
None	32.5	44.6			
Alcohol	42.1	45.5			
Other drugs	12.2	2.5			
Both	13.2	7.4	15.85	3	.001
Offender force					
Threats of bodily harm	54.4	32.8	8.39	1	.004
Twisting, holding	73.7	62.0	2.17	1	.141
Hitting, slapping	27.6	12.8	6.96	1	.041
Choking, beating	16.1	6.8	3.23	1	.072
Weapon	15.8	3.4	10.89	1	.001
Resistance strategies					
Turn cold	70.7	76.6	.55	1	.459
Reason, plead	76.7	83.3	.91	1	.339
Cry, sob	53.3	45.7	.67	1	.414
Scream for help	31.5	11.2	12.23	1	.001
Run away	22.6	11.2	3.74	1	.053
Physically struggle	69.0	69.6	.16	1	.922
Impact					
Discussed with anyone	73.2	54.0	6.11	1	.013
Sought crisis services ^a	24.0	3.1	22.25	1	.000
Reported to police ^a	28.6	3.2	29.26	1	.000
Considered suicide	38.5	26.5	2.59	1	.107
Should have therapy	61.6	37.7	9.69	1	.002
Label for the experience					
Don't feel victimized	7.9	11.1			
Miscommunication	21.5	50.9			
Crime, but not rape	15.6	15.0			
Rape	55.0	23.1	26.34	3	.000

Note. Percentages are calculated within type of victim-offender relationship: stranger, $n = 52$; acquaintance, $n = 416$.

^aThese percentages were calculated within the group of women who told anyone at all.

Victim resistance. Few significant differences in avoidance strategies were found between the acquaintance and stranger rape victims. Specifically, the two groups did not differ in their use of the following strategies: turning cold, reasoning or pleading, crying or sobbing, running away, and physically struggling. Approximately one-half or more of both types of victims reported that they used each of these strategies. However, women assaulted by strangers, compared with women assaulted by acquaintances, were more likely to report that they screamed for help, $\chi^2 (1, n = 364) = 12.23, p < .001$. These data are summarized in Table 2.

Impact. Victims of stranger rape, compared with victims of acquaintance rape, were more likely to discuss their experience with someone, $\chi^2 (1, n = 462) = 6.11, p < .013$; to have sought crisis services, $\chi^2 (1, n = 275) = 22.25, p < .001$; to have reported to the police, $\chi^2 (1, n = 268) = 29.26, p < .001$; and, looking back, to believe that they should have had counseling after the assault, $\chi^2 (1, n = 435) = 9.69, p < .002$. Due to the branching format of the questionnaire, women who stated they had told no one at all about their assault were not asked further questions about reporting and helpseeking. Thus, for data analysis the percentages of reporters and helpseekers were calculated only among the women who told someone. When calculated for the entire sample, 19.2% of stranger rape victims ($n = 10$) and 1.7% of acquaintance rape victims ($n = 7$) sought crisis services. The police were informed by 21.2% of stranger rape victims ($n = 11$) and 1.7% of acquaintance rape victims ($n = 7$). The groups did not differ in the percentage of victims who had considered suicide after the assault. Among all victims, 27.8% had considered suicide to the point of thinking about methods. Women assaulted by strangers were much more likely than women assaulted by someone they knew to view their experience as rape, $\chi^2 (3, n = 451) = 26.34, p < .001$. While 55.0% of women assaulted by strangers considered their experience rape, only 23.1% of women assaulted by someone they knew did so. Many women did not view their assaults as *any* kind of crime including 29.4% of women raped by strangers and 62% of women raped by someone they knew. The percentages of women who responded yes to each of the impact items and the corresponding chi-square analyses are found in Table 2.

Symptoms. The groups did not differ in the psychological symptoms they were currently experiencing, $F (4, 433) = .24, p < .915$, transformed from Pillai's criterion. The group means for stranger and acquaintance rape victims on the Beck Depression Inventory were 11.80 and 11.01. For the State Anxiety Index, the means for stranger and acquaintance rape victims were 43.93 and 43.01. On Relationship Quality, the means for stranger and acquaintance rape victims were 14.50 and 14.54, and for Sexual Satisfaction the means were 13.01 and 13.22. Univariate comparisons were not conducted in the absence of multivariate significance.

Four Forms of Acquaintance Rape Compared

Victim perceptions. The four groups of women who were assaulted by acquaintances differed significantly in their perceptions of the rape, $F(18, 1164) = 4.39, p < .001$, based on the Pillai's criterion. Post-hoc univariate analyses of variance indicated that the groups of victims differed in their ratings of offender aggression, feelings of anger and depression at the time of the assault, and in the degree they felt responsible for what happened. The groups did not differ in their ratings of resistiveness, or in the extent to which they felt scared at the time of the assault. Women raped by husbands or family members, particularly when compared with women raped by nonromantic acquaintances or casual dates, gave more severe ratings of their anger and depression and of the offender's aggression. Also, they viewed themselves as less responsible for what had happened than the other groups of acquaintance rape victims. The means on these variables and post-hoc group comparisons are found in Table 3.

Offender aggression. The groups differed in their reports of the forms of force used by the offender including his use of threatened bodily harm, $\chi^2(3, n = 399) = 13.65, p < .003$; hitting or slapping, $\chi^2(3, n = 387) = 18.87, p < .004$; choking or beating, $\chi^2(3, n = 379) = 13.11, p < .004$; and display of a weapon, $\chi^2(3, n = 381) = 8.50, p < .037$. These forms of force were reported more often by women raped by husbands or family members than by any other group of acquaintance rape victims. The percentage of women in each acquaintance group who responded yes to the force items and the results of chi-square analyses are found in Table 4.

Victim resistance. Virtually no differences among the four groups of acquaintance rape victims were found on the various resistance strategies. Although the groups differed in the likelihood that they cried or sobbed, $\chi^2(3, n = 344) = 8.46, p < .037$; and ran away, $\chi^2(3, n = 385) = 14.64, p < .002$, all groups were equally likely to have turned cold, reasoned, screamed for help, and struggled. With the exception of screaming for help and running away, which were not used frequently, the other forms of resistance were all used by 38–92% of the victims. The percentage of women in each group who used each of the resistance strategies and the results of the chi-square analyses are found in Table 4.

Impact. The groups of acquaintance rape victims differed significantly in whether they told anyone at all about their assault, $\chi^2(3, n = 410) = 14.43, p < .002$. The percentage of respondents who discussed their experience was 65.0% among women raped by nonromantic acquaintances, 59.4% among women raped by casual dates, 44.2% among women raped by steady dates, and 43.8% among women raped by husbands or other family members. The groups did not differ significantly on the remaining impact items including whether they sought crisis services, told police, considered suicide after their assault, or felt that they needed counseling.

Table 3
Post-hoc univariate comparisons of perceptions among victims
of four forms of acquaintance rape

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Means</i>				<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
	<i>Non-romantic (n = 122)</i>	<i>Casual Date (n = 103)</i>	<i>Steady Date (n = 147)</i>	<i>Spouse or Family (n = 44)</i>			
Offender aggression	3.88 _a	3.65 _b	3.72 _c	4.24 _{abc}	4.03	3,399	.007
Resistiveness	3.85	3.60 _a	3.84	4.06 _a	2.10	3,400	.099
Scared	3.63	3.23 _a	3.54	3.84 _a	2.51	3,402	.058
Angry	3.67 _a	3.82 _b	4.10	4.32 _{ab}	4.04	3,397	.008
Depressed	3.95 _a	3.95	3.72 _b	4.39 _{ab}	2.93	3,402	.033
Felt responsible	2.72 _a	3.09 _b	2.94 _c	1.98 _{abc}	9.90	3,399	.000

Note. Means with subscripts in common are significantly different from each other at $p < .05$.

Table 4

Chi-square analyses of differences in rape experience among four groups of acquaintance rape victims

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Percent Responding Yes</i>				χ^2	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
	<i>Nonromantic (n = 122)</i>	<i>Casual Date (n = 103)</i>	<i>Steady Date (n = 147)</i>	<i>Spouse or Family (n = 44)</i>			
Number of offenders							
One	94.5	95.4	99.7	99.1			
Two	4.3	1.4	0.3	0.9			
Three or more	1.3	3.2	0.0	0.0	12.55	6	.051
Number of incidents							
One	78.6	72.3	41.4	2.1			
Two	11.4	18.7	14.2	29.1			
Three	4.2	1.1	10.2	12.8			
Four	1.2	1.1	6.4	5.0			
Five or more	4.6	1.7	9.8	51.1	123.44	12	.000
Man using intoxicants							
None/don't know	25.4	16.1	44.6	57.7			
Alcohol	54.1	60.1	40.5	27.5			
Other drugs	3.1	2.6	3.9	5.8			
Both	17.4	21.3	11.0	9.1	41.07	9	.000
Woman using intoxicants							
None	34.7	22.5	55.2	87.3			
Alcohol	54.8	63.2	37.0	8.0			
Other drugs	3.5	1.4	2.8	0.9			
Both	7.1	12.9	5.0	3.8	68.41	9	.000

Due to the branching format of the questionnaire, women who stated they had told no one at all about their assault were not asked further questions about reporting and helpseeking. Thus, for data analysis the percentages of reporters and helpseekers were calculated only among the women who told someone. When calculated for the entire sample, crisis services were sought by 2.5% of nonromantic acquaintance rape victims ($n = 3$), 2.9% of casual date rape victims ($n = 3$), and 1.4% of steady date rape victims ($n = 2$). None of the victims of spouse-family rape sought crisis intervention at the time of the assault. The police were informed by 4.1% of nonromantic acquaintance rape victims ($n = 5$), by 1.9% of casual date rape victims ($n = 2$), and by 2.2% of spouse-family rape victims ($n = 1$). None of the victims of rape by a steady date informed the police.

The groups differed in their label for the experience, $\chi^2 (9, n = 399) = 32.27, p < .001$. Women assaulted by spouses and family members (37.8%) and by nonromantic acquaintances (27.7%) were more likely than victims of casual date rape (18.2%) or steady date rape (18.3%) to view their experience as rape. Many women did not view their assaults as any kind of crime including 52.1% of women raped by nonromantic acquaintances, 73.0% of women raped by casual dates, 71.2% of women raped by steady dates, and 32.0% of women raped by spouses and family members. These data are presented in Table 4.

Symptoms. The groups of acquaintance rape victims differed significantly on the symptom measures, $F (12, 1176) = 2.19, p < .010$, based on Pillai's criterion. Post-hoc univariate analyses suggested that the groups differed only on the measure of Relationship Quality, $F (3, 411) = 4.09, p < .007$. Women who were raped by spouses or family members had lower ratings of relationship quality than the other groups of acquaintance rape victims. However, the groups did not differ on any of the remaining symptom measures including the Beck Depression Inventory, the State Anxiety Index, or on the Sexual Satisfaction Scale. The means on these variables and post-hoc group comparisons are found in Table 5.

DISCUSSION

The self-report methodology used in the present study successfully identified a large number of women who had experienced sexual violence that met legal definitions of rape. The small fraction of them who had sought crisis services or reported to the police highlights the limited generalizability of research restricted to identified helpseekers. The rape experiences of women assaulted by acquaintances were compared with those of women assaulted by strangers and then comparisons within subtypes of acquaintance rape were made. Interpretation of the results of comparisons between stranger and acquaintance rape victims was simplified by the ab-

Table 5
Post-hoc univariate comparisons of posttrape symptoms among victims
of four forms of acquaintance rape

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Means</i>				<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
	<i>Non-romantic (n = 122)</i>	<i>Casual Date (n = 103)</i>	<i>Steady Date (n = 147)</i>	<i>Spouse or Family (n = 44)</i>			
Beck Depression	11.59	10.26	11.03	11.02	.653	3,403	.582
State Anxiety Index	44.05	43.08	42.63	40.99	.86	3,402	.464
Relationships	14.89 _a	14.46 _b	14.73 _c	13.09 _{abc}	4.09	3,411	.007
Sex Satisfaction	13.21	13.64	13.04	12.87	2.29	3,410	.077

Note. Means with subscripts in common are significantly different from each other at $p < .05$.

sence of group differences on demographic characteristics or on variables that could have affected recall of the sexual assault.

A number of differences were found in the victim's perceptions of the assault and its impact. Specifically, assaults by strangers were perceived as more violent than assaults by acquaintances. Stranger rapes were more likely than acquaintance rapes to involve threats of bodily harm, hitting, slapping, and display or use of weapons. This finding directly contradicts the prevailing view that the closer the relationship, the greater the force (e.g., Amir, 1971; Stuntz, 1975). However, the analysis within forms of acquaintance rape clarified the apparent contradiction. Assaults involving husbands or close family members were significantly more violent than any other form of acquaintance rape. In fact, an informal comparison of the mean aggression rating between stranger rape and spouse/family rape revealed equivalent levels of violence. Thus, the relationship between intimacy and assault violence was nonlinear in the present study; both stranger and marital/familial rapes were rated more highly violent than the other forms of rape.

There were also several important differences in the crime characteristics of stranger versus acquaintance rapes. Stranger rapes were more likely to involve multiple offenders than acquaintance rapes but they usually occurred only once. In contrast, acquaintance rapes were virtually all perpetrated by individuals but they frequently involved a series of assaults by the same offender. Over half of the women assaulted by spouses or other family members reported five or more rapes by the same perpetrator. Many, but by no means all, of the men who perpetrated rapes were drinking at the time the violence occurred. Stranger rapes were as likely as all acquaintance rapes combined to involve an offender who was drinking. However, analysis among types of acquaintance rapes revealed that alcohol use by the offender or victim prior to the assault generally became less likely as the relationship became closer. In the rapes that involved spouses and family members, for example, 58% of offenders and 87% of victims were *not* drinking or using any drugs when the assault occurred.

The use of drugs and alcohol combined, which could seriously impair a woman's ability to resist assault successfully, was most often reported by women who were raped by strangers and casual dates (13%). Among women raped by friends, steady boyfriends, and spouses, combined alcohol and drug use was reported by 7%, 5%, and 4% respectively. This finding does not mean that drinking or drug use was a risk factor for rape, since such a conclusion would have to be based on a direct comparison of rape victims and nonvictimized women. However, the finding does suggest that sexual violence is more likely to occur in the context of drug and alcohol use when the parties are strangers or casually acquainted whereas it is less likely to occur in conjunction with drug or alcohol use among couples who are intimately acquainted. In the absence of an established victim-offender relationship, it is possible that the disinhibition subse-

quent to alcohol use is needed to excuse or rationalize forceful sexual conduct. Where an intimate relationship exists, men may feel more entitled to sexual relations and may not feel as strong a need to excuse their behavior.

Previous studies (e.g., Amir, 1971; Bart & O'Brien, 1981) have suggested that victims become more passive and are less likely to use physical resistance as the intimacy with the offender increases. This conclusion was not supported in the present study where virtually no differences were found between stranger and acquaintance rape or among the forms of acquaintance rape in the extent to which the victims resisted or in the avoidance strategies that were used. The mean scores of all the groups of victims were the equivalent of "quite a bit" of resistance. In all groups, the most common forms of resistance were turning cold which was used by 71–92% of the victims, reasoning or pleading which was used by 75–88% of the women, and physically struggling which was used by 65–75% of the women.

The two behaviors that the groups of victims differed on were yelling and running away which have been identified as the most effective for avoiding rape regardless of whether the perpetrator is a stranger or an acquaintance (e.g., Bart & O'Brien, 1984; Levine-MacCombie & Koss, 1986). These findings suggest that women hesitated or were less well-prepared psychologically to use active avoidance when assaulted by someone they knew compared with women who were assaulted by strangers. But they also suggest that no group of victims used these strategies as often as their demonstrated effectiveness warrants. Preparation for the use of active avoidance, especially in potential acquaintance rapes, may need greater emphasis than in rape prevention programming.

The likelihood of service seeking and reporting differed according to the victim–offender relationship. Stranger rape victims, compared with acquaintance rape victims, were more likely to tell someone about their experience, to seek crisis services, to report to the police, to believe that they should have sought therapy, and to view their experience as rape. The likelihood that a woman would discuss her experience declined directly as intimacy with the perpetrator increased. While 73% of women raped by strangers told someone, the experience was discussed by just 44% of women who were raped by a steady boyfriend or spouse. These levels of confiding, helpseeking, and reporting were painfully low especially in light of the potential therapeutic effect of talking. Davis and Friedman (1985) have suggested that talking about a crime experience is the single most therapeutic behavior engaged in by crime victims. This source of comfort appeared to be seen as unavailable by many rape victims and future research must consider whether traumatic assaults can be resolved adaptively without discussing them with others.

In spite of differences in the reported impact of the sexual assault, victims of stranger and acquaintance rape did not differ in their current levels

of psychological symptoms which is consistent with the bulk of the literature (e.g., Ellis et al., 1981; Frank, Turner, & Stewart, 1980; Kilpatrick et al., 1985; Ruch & Chandler, 1983). However, all groups of victims had scores on the standardized psychological scales that were elevated according to population norms. For example, both stranger and acquaintance rape victims had mean scores on the Beck Depression Inventory that were approximately one standard deviation above the mean of nonvictimized women in the national sample of college students ($M = 5.47$, $SD = 6.05$). The depression score of the rape victims was consistent with a clinical label of mild depression according to Beck's classification. Scores on the State Anxiety Index also were almost one standard deviation above the mean of nonvictimized women in the national sample ($M = 37.80$, $SD = 9.47$). An anxiety score of the elevation found among rape victims is characteristic of college students with emotional problems (Spielberger et al., 1970). Thus the responses to psychological symptom scales among all groups of victims indicated a lingering, potentially clinically significant impact of rape which did not vary in severity according to the victim-offender relationship.

The following cautions and limitations must be raised in regard to the results of the present study. The data were obtained retrospectively. With this methodology, it is possible that the respondents' current life experiences may have affected their recall of the past. In addition, women raped by spouses or family members were found to differ from other acquaintance rape victims on several demographic variables. It is possible that their greater age and experience led them to take a harsher view of their assaults than was true among younger victims. The finding that the groups of victims did not differ on several variables, such as psychological symptoms, does not necessarily mean that the psychological impact of the rapes was similar. Although the general level of psychological symptoms was equivalent, the sources of the emotional pain could vary. Future research must address the possibility that the cherished beliefs or assumptions shattered by a rape (e.g., Burt & Katz, 1985; Janoff-Bulman, 1985; Taylor, 1983), which were not assessed in the present study, could differ depending on the relationship of the victim to the offender and that these differences could influence the shape and or the course of resolution. The results are limited in application to college students. However, within this group they give a better representation of the full scope of rape than has been available.

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