

RAPE CULTURE IN AMERICAN SOCIETY – WHAT FACTORS INFLUENCE CITIZENS OPINIONS TOWARD RAPE
VICTIMS?

by

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Introduction

In the United States, sexual assault is an often discussed aspect of life on college campuses, particularly with the presentation of the Safe Campus Act of 2015, which prohibits university investigation of reported sexual assaults unless the victim also files a report with police. The Act was introduced when the National Panhellenic Council (NPC), the governing body of all Panhellenic sororities, expressed concern for the safety of their members on college campuses. NPC aided in the drafting and proposal of the Act and spent over \$200,000 lobbying its support for the legislation. Many sororities have individually withdrawn their support in conflict with NPC, including Alpha Phi, Phi Mu, Alpha Gamma Delta, Alpha Chi Omega, Delta Phi Epsilon, Gamma Phi Beta, Sigma Delta Tau and Delta Gamma (Kingade 2015).

While this legislation is meant to further protect students, some question whether it will actually hinder the process of justice for victims of sexual assault. This new law could lead to rape victims seeing their assailant in living spaces and classes, as the university would not be able to take action without involvement from law enforcement (Kingade 2015). Often victims of sex crimes are reluctant to report their incidents to authorities for fear of facing persecution by juries. About one in eight women are raped and the percentage of case dismissals due to victim withdrawal is 51 percent for rape, compared to 47 percent for robbery and 64 percent for nonsexual assault (Flowers 2006).

Victim withdrawal from prosecution has been linked to the notion of victim-blaming in American society (Hocket et al. 2015). Research has shown that the victim is often questioned about what he/she was wearing; how much he/she has had to drink; whether or not he/she was alone, and several other incriminating, victim-blaming pieces of evidence (Vonderhaar and Carmody 2015). Scholars have done extensive research in this field, but a majority of studies are

done in the context of university culture. This study is intended as an analysis of public opinion. The purpose of this study is to examine victim blaming inside and outside of the university culture and draw comparisons between victim blaming among young college students and the rest of America.

Literature Review

Forced sex (rape) is defined as “any type of vaginal, oral, or anal penetration or intercourse in situations against your will. It also includes situations where you were unable to give consent for any reason, such as age, drugs, alcohol, sleep or mental disability. (Basile et al. 2007).” With this understanding of the definition of rape, one must consider the definition of rape culture. In a rape culture, citizens believe that rape is an inevitable part of life and that it is solely their own responsibility to protect themselves from it (Yost and Zurbriggen 2006). Studies on rape culture contend that victims are subjected to implications of blame for their own assaults, rather than responsibility being placed on their attackers (Hayes et al. 2013, Suarez and Gadalla 2010, Vonderhaar and Carmody 2015). It is socially implied that the personal characteristics of a victim, such as their clothing, profession, social standing or alcohol consumption, implicates them in their own violation (Suarez and Gadalla 2010).

These ideas of victim responsibility are proliferated by media, and sources such as television and newspapers enforce ideas of victim responsibility and reduce citizens’ empathy toward those who have been victims of sexual violence. (Kahlor and Eastin 2011). News media tends to use two different scenarios to report on rape, both of which enforce harmful rape myths among the general public. The first is the use of monster imagery to describe rapists and the “pure white virgin” stigma of victims. That is to say that rapists are men with the inability to control their urges, so they attack unsuspecting, wholesome women to fulfill their desires. These

cases are seen as the only true instances of rape. This is inaccurate because the majority of cases show the victim knows their attacker and that it is a situation of coercion, not violence (Bureau of Justice Statistics 2015). The second, more common, imagery used depicts victims as promiscuous women who invite rape. These portrayals can be harmful when rape cases involve individuals who subscribe to a rape culture mentality, such as jurors, attorneys and judges (O'Hara 2012). The most common rape myth proliferated by journalistic outlets is the idea that the alleged victim lied (Franiuk et al. 2008). Some reasons that victims are thought to lie about their assaults are for attention, revenge, personal gain or out of shame for sexual decisions they made and regret (Vonderhaar and Carmody 2015). This is particularly the case when the accused perpetrator has some notability, such as a politician or celebrity (Franiuk et al. 2008).

One of the most prominent places dealing with rape culture is university campuses. One in four women on a college campus in the United States have claimed to have experienced rape, but did not report it due to avoidance of court (Aronowitz et al. 2012). There are several theories as to why the university setting breeds rape culture – alcohol, drugs, experimentation and age group. All of these elements of the typical university setting contribute to the societal idea of victim blaming (Hockett et al. 2015).

The opposing argument is that rapists cause rape and nothing else. This is the argument that feminism and many scholars agree should be prevailing in society to end rape culture (Edwards et al. 2011). Scholars adhering to this argument differentiate between the ethical and legal responsibility of victims. It is acknowledged that victims are morally responsible for protecting themselves and that prevention methods are essential for self-preservation. However, in a legal sense, the only individual responsible for the sex crime being tried is the perpetrator – if proven guilty (Hayes et al. 2013).

One of the main issues in rape culture is the dichotomy in societal gender roles which begin to be reinforced during development social conditioning. In parental conversations with children, female children are told to protect themselves from males, to dress modestly, to maintain their alcohol intake and to not walk alone at night (Osman 2011). Male children are not given this conversation in the same context. Instead of discussing consent and respect, young men are given social cues such as the idea that “boys will be boys” and that revealing clothing and intoxication allow men to inflict sexual assault without blame (Weiss 2009). While this is the social norm, feminist scholars conclude that it is insulting to assume that men cannot control their primal urges (Klaw et al. 2005).

Two groups of women in society are seen as unable to be raped – prostitutes and wives – for two different reasons. There are religious groups that enforce the idea that wives are required to be subservient to their husbands, and therefore are required to be sexual available to the men they married, according to scripture (Edwards et al. 2011). These religious roots have penetrated general social stigma about married couples and particularly married women. Research among college students found “31 (percent) of men and 19 (percent) of women indicated that a husband having sex without his wife’s consent does not constitute rape and only 15 (percent) of the population believed that boyfriends and husbands *could* rape their partners” (Edwards et al. 2011, p. 763). In recent United States history, husbands who raped their wives were exempt from legal repercussions. This is due to the interpretation of the legal language of marriage licenses that states a wife has legally consented to sexual activity with her husband. Also, prostitutes are seen as individuals who invite sexual assault into their lives because of their “choice” in profession. Prostitution myths have progressively normalized violence against women (Franklin and Menaker 2015). Citizens in Franklin and Menaker’s study (2015) reported the lines between

rape and standard risks of a profession of this nature being blurred. Two opinions were reported by participants: a prostitute that reports a sex crime against her may be doing so to protect herself from arrest and frame a client; or a client may have been entitled to further sexual acts with the prostitute as it is her job to provide them.

While victim blaming has been explored and discussed in the literature, there has not been a comprehensive study that compares victim blaming on college campuses versus the larger population. What factors contribute to victim blaming? Which people buy into rape culture and to what degree? Several studies rely on college students to make generalizations to the population (Vonderhaar and Carmody 2015 and Yost and Zurbriggen 2006). While victim-blaming on college campuses merits more empirical examination, the data need to be compared data on victim blaming in general society. Conducting the study in this manner will allow the opportunity to draw conclusions about rape culture in the United States, versus the college campus.

Additionally, the link between political ideology, party identification, political participation, and frequency of victim-blaming has been understudied. While research has linked increased liberal ideology to support for women's rights in general (Holbert et al. 2003), and the rejection of the larger notion of "rape myths," (Kahlor and Morrison 2007), there has not been a direct examination of ideology and victim blaming.

Hypotheses

H₁: Males blame rape victims more than people of other genders.

Discussions about sexual activity for young men exclude consent and responsibility and this understanding carries into adulthood. Also, social norms that influence sexually active males say that they have a certain entitlement to sex. Therefore, men will be less sympathetic toward

victims, adhere to rape myths and blame victims for their choices (Aronowitz et. al. 2012 and Weiss 2009).

H₂: Older people blame rape victims more than younger people.

Research shows that as citizens get older, they become more individualistic. Therefore, older people have more conservative ideologies. As conservative members of society, older people would not adhere to the feminist argument of responsibility that places legal blame on rapists, as conservatives do not tend to agree with feminism. Concluding, older people are more likely to consider factors such as intoxication and clothing choice when discussing victimization (Erikson and Tedin 2016).

H₃: Straight people blame rape victims more than people of other sexualities.

People of other sexualities are often subjects of persecution for things they cannot control, both legally and socially. They also may feel they have not been treated fairly in the justice system due to their sexualities. Because of this, they are more sympathetic toward rape victims due to a perceived shared experience (Hutchinson 2013).

H₄: As conservative ideology increases, so does the tendency to engage in victim-blaming.

Studies tend to link political liberalism with greater empathy toward women's rights in general. Therefore, liberals are more likely to support the feminist argument of responsibility that places legal blame solely on the rapist (Rokeach 2016 and Flanigan and Zingale 2015).

H₅: Republicans will blame rape victims more than Democrats

Republicans tend to adhere generally to conservative ideology. Therefore, they are not likely to empathize with political liberalism which actively discusses and provides support for women's rights. Additionally, this lack of adherence to liberal ideology will lead Republicans to reject the feminist argument of responsibility (Rokeach 2016 and Flanigan and Zingale 2015).

H₆: College students will be less likely to engage in victim-blaming than those not in college.

College students have been more exposed and sensitized to the notion of victim-blaming than those who are not in college. Plus, the student population tends to be more liberal than those who do not attend college (Pike 2005).

Research Design

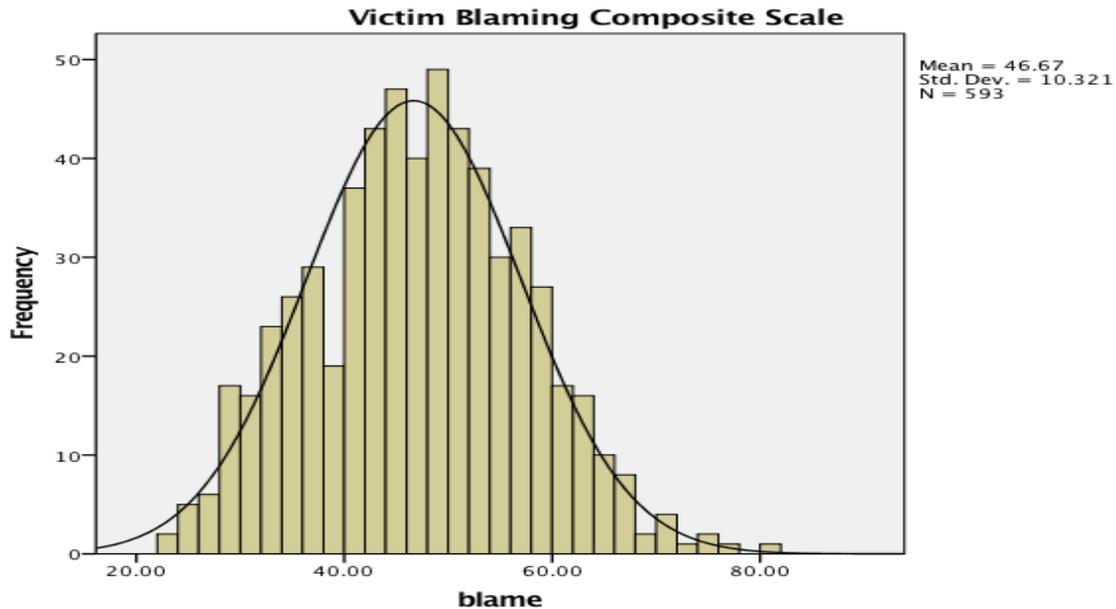
The following study was conducted by distributing a cross-section survey* through online mediums approved by East Carolina University's IRB. Two samples were collected: East Carolina University students and the United States adult population. East Carolina University students included sample populations from Political Science 1010 classes (with some receiving extra credit), ECU's Honors College and Kappa Delta Sorority (both on a volunteer basis). These methods of distribution are the university survey system called ECUQualtrics, and Amazon's Mechanical Turk, a paid survey distributor. This medium has been shown to provide the most valid general sample (Berinsky et al. 2012). These data were analyzed through multivariate regression analysis. The independent variables are gender, sexuality, age, political ideology and whether the participant is a college student. The dependent variable is degree of victim blaming.

* See Appendix A for survey.

Methodology

The dependent variable is the tendency to victim blame. This variable is measured on a composite scale calculated by the responses to questions 10 through 30 of the survey in Appendix A, with the exclusion of question 27. The scale reflects a low score represents a lesser tendency to victim blame and a high score represents a great tendency to victim blame. The lowest score of this data set is 23 and the highest is 81.

Histogram 1



Histogram 1 shows the distribution of responses on a normal curve, the mean score being 46.67 with a standard deviation of 10.321. It is important to note that none of the participants were completely without some degree of victim blaming (obtained a score of zero). The variable $n=593$ indicates the sample size, meaning there were 593 total participants obtained through Amazon MTurk and ECUQualtrics.

The independent variables are gender, age, political ideology, sexuality and whether or not a respondent is an East Carolina University student. It is predicted that the tendency to victim blame will vary within each variable*.

*See Appendix B for variable measurements and coding

Results

Descriptive Statistics

The populations in this sample are best described through percentages. The sample reflects 55.5 percent not-male and 44.5 percent male; 7.9 percent homosexual and 92.1 percent heterosexual; 39.6 percent ECU students and 60.4 percent Amazon MTurk participants. Tables 1,

2, 3 and 4 show the descriptive statistics for the variables age, ideology, college education and party identification, as they are not binomial variables.

Table 1

Age	Percent
17-24 years old	47
25-29 years old	14.5
30-35 years old	13
36-40 years old	7.6
41-50 years old	6.9
51-60 years old	7.8
61 years old or older	3.2

Table 2

Ideology	Percent
Very liberal	13.5
Liberal	24.6
Moderate	44.2
Conservative	12.1
Very conservative	5.6

Table 3

Education	Percent
High school or less	10.3
Some college	15.1
Associate's degree	6.3
Bachelor's degree	39
Master's degree	7
Professional /vocational	.6
Doctorate	1.3
Currently enrolled in an undergraduate program	18.4
Currently enrolled in a graduate program	2

Table 4

Party Identification	Percent
Republican	25.1
Independent leaning Republican	9.3
Independent/don't know/other	12.5
Independent leaning Democrat	13.7
Democrat	39.5

The univariate results demonstrate several interesting findings. First and foremost, the data indicate that 18.9 percent of the sample, or about one in five people, were victims of sexual

assault in their lives. This is in standing with the national statistic that about one in five percent of Americans are victims of sexual assault (Bureau of Justice Statistics 2015).

Table 5

Demographic	Percent Assaulted
Female	29.1
Male	6.4
Heterosexual	17.4
Not Heterosexual	35.6
ECU Students	16.5
General Americans	20.5
All participants	18.9

National statistics show that one in four women is a victim of sexual assault (Bureau of Justice Statistics 2015). Table 5 shows that approximately one in three (29.1 percent) of the participants who do not identify as male in this sample indicated they were victims. This may have to do with the fact that this sample is relatively young and sexual assault is more prevalent among younger populations. When observing age, 61.5 percent of participants were between the ages of 17 and 29, meaning the majority of the sample was under 30 years old. Though Table 4 displays 6.4 percent of men in this sample indicated they were victims of an assault (3.4 percent higher than the national average, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 2013), 23.1 percent of those male victims were homosexual.

Table 6

Demographic	Percent Knows a Victim
Female	63.2
Male	47
Heterosexual	72.3
Not Heterosexual	54.6
ECU Students	51.7
General Americans	62.6
All participants	56

Of the whole sample, 56 percent know a victim of sexual assault. In relation to this variable, Table 6 shows 51.7 percent of ECU student participants know a victim of sexual

assault. Table 6 also shows that the percent of Amazon Mechanical Turk participants who know a victim is 62.6 percent, which is higher than ECU. This may be due to the fact that many of those MTurk participants are also university students and/or have completed a Bachelor’s degree fairly recently, based on the ages and college education displayed in Tables 1 and 3.

To summarize, high percentages of university students know victims of sexual assault, on ECU’s campus and others. Also, 72.3 percent of non-heterosexual participants know a victim of sexual assault. These numbers indicate that all of the non-heterosexual participants have some kind of relationship with sexual assault, whether they are victims or they know a victim. It is also important to note that 63.2 percent of those who do not identify as a man know a victim of sexual assault. These data are in concordance with the claim that sexual assault and rape are, in large part, issues that disproportionately affect non-male, non-heterosexual populations.

Analysis

Table 7
Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) Regression on Victim Blaming*

Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	p-value
Male	6.609	.825	.000
Political Ideology	2.350	.533	.000
Party Identification	-.481	.356	.177
Heterosexual	4.097	1.473	.006
Age	-.579	.263	.027
Education	-.412	.184	.025
ECU student	-2.659	1.107	.017
Constant	39.164	2.973	.000
Adjusted R ²	.244	-	-
N	593	-	-

**Note: The dependent variable of the victim blaming scale is a composite of responses to answers 10-30 with the exclusion of question 27 in the survey found in Appendix A. The scale reflects that a low score indicates less victim blaming and a high score reflects more victim blaming.*

The results displayed in Table 7 indicate some significant findings on the topic of rape culture. For instance, compared to participants who don’t identify as male, males have a higher

tendency to blame rape victims ($X = 6.609$, $p < .000$), confirming predictions in hypothesis one. These findings give merit to the theoretical justification of this hypothesis, which says that men do not receive the same conversation as others when discussing consent and sexual entitlement.

Compared to those who do not identify as straight (gay, bi, etc.), heterosexuals have a higher tendency to blame rape victims ($X = 4.097$, $p < .006$). This confirms hypothesis three. While it also gives merit to the theoretical justification provided, stating that non-straight individuals feels a shared experience, but it may also shed light on another issue, which is that homosexuals are disproportionately targeted as victims, so they therefore are more likely to sympathize (Burt and Lesley 2008).

As age increases, the tendency to victim blame decreases. That is, younger people blame rape victims more than older people ($X = -.579$, $p < .027$). These findings contradict the second hypothesis, which predicts that victim blaming will increase with age. This also contradicts literature findings that support hypothesis two. Further study is necessary to determine the cause for this opposition, but it may be due to limitations in this study which will be discussed further in a following section.

Compared to the American public, ECU students have a lower tendency to blame rape victims ($X = -2.659$, $p < .017$). Also, more educated people tended to blame rape victims less than others ($X = -.412$, $p < .025$). This confirms the final hypothesis that college students blame rape victims less than those who are not attending or have not attended college. This may be due to liberal ideology, or due to the prevalence of sexual assault on college campuses. However, this contradicts the variable analysis of age, because younger people typically attend universities. It may be speculated that these opposing findings occurred due to the limitations in this study involving age.

These data also show that as one gets more conservative, so does the tendency to victim blame ($X = 2.350$, $p < .000$). This confirms the fourth hypothesis and supports the claim justifying the hypothesis, that conservatives are less likely to adhere to feminist ideology that solely blames the victim. Given the significance of this variable, it is fair to say that ideology greatly affects one's tendency to victim blame and merits further exploration. In conjunction with this variable, as participants lean more towards the Democratic party, the less likely they are to blame rape victims ($X = -.481$, $p < .177$). However, hypothesis five is rejected due to the significance level. Since the p value is not less than .05, this variable does not have a substantial influence on the tendency to victim blame. This is most likely due to the fact that political party and political ideology are not mutually exclusive (Flanigan and Zingale 2015). Liberalism and conservatism have fluctuated over time between the parties and members of each party have varying adherence to several ideologies, including but not limited to liberalism and conservatism. Therefore, there are Republicans who may be somewhat liberal and Democrats who may be somewhat conservative (Erikson and Tedin 2016), meaning that individuals may or may not support feminist ideology and women's rights regardless of their political party. To summarize, ideology has a much greater influence than political party affiliation.

One fourth of the variation in the tendency to victim blame can be explained by these factors (24.4 percent), which is a large relative percentage. Though these numbers do not indicate causation, they support the theoretical justifications and observations made in other literature, provided in previous sections. It can then be inferred that the concerns researchers and advocates share in regards to the prevalence of sexual assault are, in fact, factually present and are in need of further discussion in contexts of objective research and statistics.

Limitations

As with any research design, there are some limitations to this sample. On the whole, these participants are relatively homogenous within certain demographics. Race is unable to be discussed because 80 percent of the sample indicated that they are white. The majority of the sample is also relatively young. Therefore, the coefficient for the variation in tendency to victim blame for people of different ages may be conflated. Younger people may blame victims more in this sample simply because the respondents were mostly young people. Also, most of the sample is university educated or currently enrolled. The results for age and education may also conflict with each other in this sample due to the high number of young participants, meaning that there is a larger distribution of education levels among young participants. That is to say that just because one is young, does not mean they are educated. This population's similarity in age and education may also explain the slightly higher variation in sexuality of this sample compared to national averages, as well as the lower variation in political ideology. A larger, more varied sample would reflect even more accurate analysis.

Conclusion

These data show that social conditioning, demographical information and political efficacy have some influence on citizens' opinions toward victims of rape. What is important to gain from analysis like this is the gravity of these influences on politics. Political ideology is the number one influence on citizens when determining who to vote for (Mani 2007). Policy decisions being made for rape prevention, protection and prosecution by legislators are ultimately being made by the voters that elect them. Based on this study, though it simply indicates an association, more conservative voters have a tendency to victim blame, and therefore may be likely to vote on other issues of importance rather than sexual assault. This may lead to lack of protection and prevention for victims. Further exploration of voter behavior and

political ideology linked to victim blaming will be beneficial for determining the atmosphere surrounding this delicate issue.

What these numbers mean for victims and perpetrators of sexual assault is that there is a lack of education regarding this topic. While universities make it their priority to address sexual assault on their campuses through many different mediums, such as freshman orientation and defense/prevention classes and lectures, they fail to address the prevalence of rape culture in their communities. Conversations surrounding rape center on the responsibility of the victim to protect themselves, just like the conversation in general society. An objective of prevention universities should be taking is providing comprehensive education about what rape is and can be. As mentioned in several sections of this paper, citizens are undereducated about what rape typically looks like. It is not the “monster ideology” where the attacker is an unknown assailant in an alley. It is typically someone the victim knows and it is often a situation involving alcohol, guilt and coercion, leading to legal responsibility being partially placed on victims (Yost 2006). Those who have a tendency to blame may not fully understand that the arguments claiming sole responsibility to the perpetrator are not ideological, but based on statistical research (Bureau of Justice Statistics 2015, Burt and Lesley 2008, Edwards et al. 2011, Hayes 2013, Klaw et al. 2005, Suarez and Gadalla 2010, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 2013, Vonderhaar and Carmody 2015).

Further exploration of victim-blaming and its links to political ideology and party identification such as this are imperative to the strength of advocacy centers and educational organizations geared toward victim rehabilitation and future rape prevention. Though it is a difficult topic to analyze and discuss, for fear of subjectivity and accusations of conflicted interest, these studies provide the strength and empirical backing of the programs these entities

wish to install. Some recommendations for the furtherance of this study are to expand sample size to create a more well-rounded population to test and to narrow the focus to party identification, political ideology and level of political involvement. By focusing on these variables, voter behavior may be predicted and education programs geared toward voters can be instituted with merit. Then, public opinion will encourage legislators to make responsible policy decisions regarding rape and other forms of sexual assault.

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Appendix A – Survey

1. The legal definition of rape is:
 - a. Any type of vaginal, oral, or anal penetration or intercourse in situations against your will. It also includes situations where you were unable to give consent for any reason, such as age, drugs, alcohol, sleep or mental disability. =1
 - b. Any type of vaginal, oral, or anal penetration or intercourse in situations where victims are physically forced against their will. = 2
 - c. Any type of vaginal intercourse in situations against your will. =3
 - d. Any type of vaginal, oral, or anal penetration or intercourse in situations against your will by someone of the opposite sex. = 4
 - e. Any sex act of any variation in situations against your will. =5
2. Have you ever known anyone who has been a victim of rape?
 - a. Yes = 1
 - b. No = 2
 - c. Not Sure = 9

If yes, please answer the following:

3. Did they drink alcohol prior to their assault?
 - a. Yes = 1
 - b. No = 2
 - c. Not Sure = 9
4. Did they know the person who assaulted them?
 - a. Yes = 1
 - b. No = 2
 - c. Not Sure = 9
5. Do you feel that the victim had some responsibility in their assault?
 - a. Yes = 1
 - b. No = 2
 - c. Not Sure = 9
6. Have you ever been a victim of a sex crime?
 - a. Yes = 1
 - b. No = 2
 - c. Not Sure = 9

If yes, please answer the following:

7. Did you know the person?
 - a. Yes = 1
 - b. No = 2
 - c. Not Sure = 9

8. Have you told anyone about your assault?
 - a. Yes = 1
 - b. No = 2
 - c. Not Sure = 9
9. Did any of the people you told hold you accountable, at least partially, for your assault?
 - a. Yes = 1
 - b. No = 2
 - c. Not Sure = 9

For the following section, please indicate whether you agree or disagree:

10. It is my responsibility to protect myself from rapists.
 - a. Strongly Agree = 5
 - b. Somewhat Agree = 4
 - c. Neither Agree nor Disagree = 3
 - d. Somewhat Disagree = 2
 - e. Strongly Disagree = 1
11. Rape is an inevitable thing that occurs in society.
 - a. Strongly Agree = 5
 - b. Somewhat Agree = 4
 - c. Neither Agree nor Disagree = 3
 - d. Somewhat Disagree = 2
 - e. Strongly Disagree = 1
12. Rape is not preventable due to human nature.
 - a. Strongly Agree = 5
 - b. Somewhat Agree = 4
 - c. Neither Agree nor Disagree = 3
 - d. Somewhat Disagree = 2
 - e. Strongly Disagree = 1
13. Education about rape is lacking.
 - a. Strongly Agree = 5
 - b. Somewhat Agree = 4
 - c. Neither Agree nor Disagree = 3
 - d. Somewhat Disagree = 2
 - e. Strongly Disagree = 1
14. If voluntary alcohol or drug consumption is involved, an incident cannot be classified as rape.
 - a. Strongly Agree = 5
 - b. Somewhat Agree = 4
 - c. Neither Agree nor Disagree = 3
 - d. Somewhat Disagree = 2
 - e. Strongly Disagree = 1
15. Someone cannot be raped by their spouse/partner.
 - a. Strongly Agree = 5

- b. Somewhat Agree = 4
 - c. Neither Agree nor Disagree = 3
 - d. Somewhat Disagree = 2
 - e. Strongly Disagree = 1
16. If someone convinces another person to have sex who is unsure of what they want, it cannot be classified as rape.
- a. Strongly Agree = 5
 - b. Somewhat Agree = 4
 - c. Neither Agree nor Disagree = 3
 - d. Somewhat Disagree = 2
 - e. Strongly Disagree = 1
17. Self-defense classes for rape victims are sufficient in preventing it from happening.
- a. Strongly Agree = 5
 - b. Somewhat Agree = 4
 - c. Neither Agree nor Disagree = 3
 - d. Somewhat Disagree = 2
 - e. Strongly Disagree = 1
18. Rape is discussed more with female children than with male children.
- a. Strongly Agree = 5
 - b. Somewhat Agree = 4
 - c. Neither Agree nor Disagree = 3
 - d. Somewhat Disagree = 2
 - e. Strongly Disagree = 1
19. Rape is not discussed enough by parents in the household.
- a. Strongly Agree = 5
 - b. Somewhat Agree = 4
 - c. Neither Agree nor Disagree = 3
 - d. Somewhat Disagree = 2
 - e. Strongly Disagree = 1
20. Universities do a good job of protecting students from rape.
- a. Strongly Agree = 5
 - b. Somewhat Agree = 4
 - c. Neither Agree nor Disagree = 3
 - d. Somewhat Disagree = 2
 - e. Strongly Disagree = 1
21. Sometimes women lie about being raped.
- a. Strongly Agree = 5
 - b. Somewhat Agree = 4
 - c. Neither Agree nor Disagree = 3
 - d. Somewhat Disagree = 2
 - e. Strongly Disagree = 1
22. Women who dress promiscuously expect attention from men.
- a. Strongly Agree = 5

- b. Somewhat Agree = 4
 - c. Neither Agree nor Disagree = 3
 - d. Somewhat Disagree = 2
 - e. Strongly Disagree = 1
23. Women should be aware that there are some men who cannot control their urges.
- a. Strongly Agree = 5
 - b. Somewhat Agree = 4
 - c. Neither Agree nor Disagree = 3
 - d. Somewhat Disagree = 2
 - e. Strongly Disagree = 1
24. If a woman goes home alone with a man after a night out, sex is to be expected.
- a. Strongly Agree = 5
 - b. Somewhat Agree = 4
 - c. Neither Agree nor Disagree = 3
 - d. Somewhat Disagree = 2
 - e. Strongly Disagree = 1
25. Questions about the victim's lifestyle are appropriate to ask in court.
- a. Strongly Agree = 5
 - b. Somewhat Agree = 4
 - c. Neither Agree nor Disagree = 3
 - d. Somewhat Disagree = 2
 - e. Strongly Disagree = 1
26. Women who experience a sex crime sometimes don't know that what they experienced was rape.
- a. Strongly Agree = 5
 - b. Somewhat Agree = 4
 - c. Neither Agree nor Disagree = 3
 - d. Somewhat Disagree = 2
 - e. Strongly Disagree = 1
27. Women who are victims of rape sometimes blame themselves.
- a. Strongly Agree = 5
 - b. Somewhat Agree = 4
 - c. Neither Agree nor Disagree = 3
 - d. Somewhat Disagree = 2
 - e. Strongly Disagree = 1
28. Prostitutes cannot be raped while working.
- a. Strongly Agree = 5
 - b. Somewhat Agree = 4
 - c. Neither Agree nor Disagree = 3
 - d. Somewhat Disagree = 2
 - e. Strongly Disagree = 1
29. An incident can only be classified as rape if the victim said "No."
- a. Strongly Agree = 5

- b. Somewhat Agree = 4
 - c. Neither Agree nor Disagree = 3
 - d. Somewhat Disagree = 2
 - e. Strongly Disagree = 1
30. Media sources do a good job of covering rape cases.
- a. Strongly Agree = 5
 - b. Somewhat Agree = 4
 - c. Neither Agree nor Disagree = 3
 - d. Somewhat Disagree = 2
 - e. Strongly Disagree = 1
31. I get most of my information about rape from media.
- a. Strongly Agree = 5
 - b. Somewhat Agree = 4
 - c. Neither Agree nor Disagree = 3
 - d. Somewhat Disagree = 2
 - e. Strongly Disagree = 1

The following are demographic questions and will not be shared with anyone besides the research team. We will not use this information to identify you, the participant, in any way.

32. What is your age?
- a. 17-24 = 1
 - b. 25-29 = 2
 - c. 30-35 = 3
 - d. 36-40 = 4
 - e. 41-50 = 5
 - f. 51-60 = 6
 - g. 61 or older = 7
33. What is your gender?
- a. Male 1
 - b. Female 2
 - c. Non-binary 3
 - d. Agender 4
 - e. Transgender 5
 - f. Other = 9
34. What is your sexual orientation?
- a. Heterosexual = 1
 - b. Homosexual = 2
 - c. Bisexual = 3
 - d. Other = 9
35. What is your race?
- a. White = 1
 - b. Black = 2
 - c. Hispanic/Latino = 3

- d. Asian = 4
- e. Multiracial = 9

36. In politics TODAY, do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat or Independent?
- a. Republican = 1
 - b. Democrat = 2
 - c. Independent = 3
 - d. No Preference = 4
 - e. Other = 9
 - f. Don't know = 0

IF PARTY=c,d,e,f ASK:

PARTYLN

37. As of today do you lean more to the Republican Party or more to the Democratic Party?
- a. Republican = 1
 - b. Democrat = 2
 - c. Other/Don't know/Refused (VOL.) = 9
38. In general, would you describe your political views as:
- a. Very Conservative = 5
 - b. Conservative = 4
 - c. Moderate = 3
 - d. Liberal = 2
 - e. Very Liberal = 1
 - f. Don't Know = 9
39. What level of education have you completed?
- a. High school or less = 1
 - b. Some college but did not finish = 2
 - c. Associates Degree = 3
 - d. Bachelor's Degree = 4
 - e. Master's Degree = 5
 - f. Professional/Vocational Degree (i.e. Law) = 6
 - g. Doctorate = 7
 - h. Currently enrolled in undergraduate studies = 8
 - i. Currently enrolled in graduate studies = 9

Appendix B: Independent Variables

Variable	Measurement
Gender	Male = 1; Female = 2; Non-binary = 3; Agender = 4; Transgender = 5; Other = 9. (coded to male/not male)
Age	17-24 = 1; 25-29 = 2; 30-35 = 3; 36-40 = 4; 41-50 = 5; 51-60 = 6; 61 or older = 7
Sexuality	Heterosexual = 1; Homosexual = 2; Bisexual = 3; Other = 9 (coded to straight/not straight)
College attendance	High school or less = 1; Some college but did not finish = 2; Associates Degree = 3; Bachelor's Degree = 4; Master's Degree = 5; Professional/Vocational Degree (i.e. Law) = 6; Doctorate = 7; Currently enrolled in undergraduate studies = 8; Currently enrolled in graduate studies = 9
ECU or U.S. Adult	ECU = 0; Amazon MTurk = 1.
Political Ideology	Very Conservative = 5; Conservative = 4; Moderate = 3; Liberal = 2; Very Liberal = 1; Don't Know = 9