

Evaluating Sexual Assault Awareness and Attitudes

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Running head: EVALUATING SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS

Evaluating Sexual Assault Awareness and Attitudes

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to evaluate students' current level of sexual assault awareness at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. The relationship between college students' attitudes toward women, their levels of rape myth acceptance, and their attitudes toward the issue of sexual assault at the University of Tennessee were examined.

Participants were 72 male and 128 female undergraduates with a mean age of 19.7 years.

In this sample, 83% of the students surveyed were Caucasian, 12% were African-American, 2% Asian, 1% Hispanic, and the remaining 2% were of mixed ancestry. Following an informed consent process, participants completed a questionnaire packet containing the Attitudes Toward Women Scale-Short Form (AWS-SF), the Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale-Short Form (IRMA-SF), and statements regarding sexual assault rates, services, and attitudes at UT. It was hypothesized that participants holding a more conservative view of women would be more accepting of rape myths. The $-.41$ correlation between the scores of the AWS-SF and those of the IRMA-SF provide support for this research hypothesis.

Statistically significant gender differences were observed on both the AWS-SF and the IRMA-SF scores, with females scoring higher on the AWS-SF and males scoring higher on the IRMA-SF. Thus, these data suggest that females hold a more positive attitude toward women and that males display a greater acceptance of rape myths. In addition, a Chi-square analysis was performed to assess the degree of association between participants' judgments about male and female UT students' concerns about sexual assault on campus.

Results indicate a statistically significant association between these two variables; more specifically, 52% of participants believe that UT females are concerned about sexual assault but that UT males are not; 28% of participants believe that both males and females are concerned, whereas 19% believe that neither males nor females are concerned about sexual assault on campus. Methodological strengths and limitations as well as suggestions for future research are discussed.

Evaluating Sexual Assault Awareness and Attitudes

In recent years, more attention has been focused upon the issue of sexual assault, especially on the campuses on American universities and colleges. This increased attention has come as a result of the astonishing findings of two groundbreaking studies of the late 1980s. In 1987, Mary Koss' landmark study of 32 American colleges and universities found that 1 in every 4 female undergraduate students had been victims of sexual assault or attempted sexual assault, a majority of which had known their perpetrators (Koss, Gidycz, & Wisniewski, 1987). Similarly, in 1988, Robin Warshaw conducted a national study of 3,187 college women and found that one in four of those women reported having been the victim of rape or attempted rape. Of these crimes, 84% of the perpetrators were acquaintances of the victims (Warshaw, 1988). Warshaw also observed that women ages 16 to 24 have a four times greater risk of being raped than any other age group. The findings of these studies illuminated not only the dangers facing college women but also the misguided actions of college men as 1 in 12 of the male students surveyed had committed acts that met the legal definitions of rape or attempted rape though the majority (84%) of the male participants did not believe these actions were illegal (Koss, Gidycz, & Wisniewski, 1987; Warshaw, 1988).

These alarming statistics led the federal government to require that colleges and universities provide educational programming about sexual assault for their students. Even with The Crime Awareness and Campus Security Act of 1990, amended in 1992, colleges and universities have faced obstacles in establishing sexual assault awareness programs and achieving success with these educational programs. Part of the problem lies in the fact that these programs focus primarily on self-defense and communication skills, neglecting to address and to challenge the cultural norms that support rape (Boulter, 1998; Davis, 1997; Drieschner & Lange, 1999; Klaw, Lonsway, Berg, Waldo, Kothari, Mazurek, & Hegeman,

2005). Negative attitudes toward women and acceptance of rape myths are both examples of how cultural norms can perpetuate the incidence of sexual assault.

Previous research has shown a relationship between views toward women and rape myth acceptance. In 1978, Feild found that conservative views of women as defined by the Attitudes Toward Women Scale-Short Form (AWS-SF; Spence, Helmreich, & Stapp, 1973) were highly correlated with beliefs that rape prevention is the responsibility of the woman involved. Similarly, in 1985, Muehlenhard, Friedman, and Thomas (cited in Szymanski, Devlin, Chrisler, & Vyse, 1993) found that men holding more traditional views toward women as classified by their score on the long version of the AWS were more likely to view date rape as justifiable than those who held more egalitarian views toward women. Likewise, Martha Burt's (1980) investigation of rape and its cultural myths and supports revealed that acceptance of rape myths is related to gender role stereotyping. In 1993, Szymanski et al. further explored this relationship by examining the correlation between college students' gender roles and attitudes toward rape. Participants completed the Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI; Bem, 1974), read an acquaintance or stranger rape scenario, and then filled out a questionnaire designed to assess attitudes toward the scenario, the short version of the AWS, the Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (RMAS; Burt, 1980), and the Attitudes Toward Rape questionnaire (ATR; Feild, 1978). By classifying participants as masculine, feminine, androgynous, or undifferentiated according to the BSRI, Szymanski et al. hoped to find significant differences between those classified as having a masculine gender role and the other groups. Although the data failed to support this hypothesized difference, Szymanski et al. did find significant differences between males and females on their AWS and RMAS scores. Males scored lower on the AWS, and yet they scored higher on the RMAS than females, suggesting that a more conservative view toward women predicts a greater acceptance of rape myths.

This relationship between more conservative views of women and a higher acceptance of rape myths provides an indication of the direction in which future sexual

assault educational programs should be focused. The purpose of this study is to evaluate students' current level of sexual assault awareness at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. In support of this goal, I examined the relationship between college students' attitudes toward women, their levels of rape myth acceptance, and their attitudes toward the public health issue of sexual assault as it pertains specifically to this university. It was hypothesized that individuals with more negative views toward women will report greater acceptance of rape myths.

Method

Participants

Participants were 200 undergraduate students (72 males and 128 females) ranging from age 18 to 44, with a mean age of 19.7 years. In this sample, 83% of the surveyed students were Caucasian, 12% were African-American, 2% Asian, 1% Hispanic, and the remaining 2% were of mixed ancestry (see Table 1). In exchange for their participation in this study, students were awarded five extra credit points in their undergraduate psychology courses.

Questionnaires

The Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale-Short Form (IRMA-SF; Payne, Lonsway, & Fitzgerald, 1999) is a measure of rape myth acceptance. Participants rate their level of agreement with 20 statements, such as "Women tend to exaggerate how much rape affects them" and "A women who dresses in skimpy clothes should not be surprised if a man tried to force her to have sex" by answering on a 7-point scale from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." It has a strong internal reliability with an alpha coefficient of .87. Also, it has been shown to be a more reliable choice for use with university students than the original Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (RMAS; Burt, 1980) because its language is more up-to-date and thus, better suited to the average student's vernacular (Payne et al., 1999).

The Attitudes Toward Women Scale-Short Form (AWS-SF; Spence, Helreich, & Stapp, 1973) is a measure of attitudes toward women. It contains 25 items and asks

participants to rate their level of agreement with statements, such as "Women should assume their rightful place in business and all professions along with men." Level of agreement is defined on a 4-point scale from "agree strongly" to "disagree strongly." It has a strong internal reliability with alpha coefficients of .86 and .90, respectively, for male and female participants.

The questionnaire targeting attitudes toward sexual assault specifically at the University includes eight items on which participants either agreed or disagreed and then provided their level of confidence, such as "I do believe female students at UT are concerned about the problem of sexual assault." Participants also answered free-response questions concerning improvements for addressing the issue of sexual assault and reasons why rates of sexual assault among college women are higher than those among the general population. A copy of the complete set of questionnaires is provided in Appendix A.

Procedure

Upon reporting to the assigned room for the study, participants received an informed consent sheet, (see Appendix B), which outlined the purpose of the study, risks and benefits, and what the participant would be asked to do. If after reviewing the information sheet the participant felt comfortable and wanted to continue, the participant was given a questionnaire packet to complete. In order to protect the anonymity of the participants, the University of Tennessee Knoxville Institutional Review Board (IRB) authorized a waiver of documentation of informed consent for this study, meaning that participants would not be required to sign the informed consent forms. Similarly, participants were specifically instructed to refrain from putting their names on any of the research materials, (e.g. questionnaires). Completion of the research survey constituted informed consent from the participants. The packet itself contained the Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale-Short Form (IRMA-SF; Payne et al., 1999), the Attitudes Toward Women Scale-Short Form (AWS-SF; Spence et al., 1973), and a short survey of questions regarding sexual assault at the University of Tennessee. Half of the participants received a packet in which the AWS-SF was

placed first, and the other half received packets in which the IRMA-SF was first. This counterbalancing was done in order to assess for possible effects due to the order to presentation of questionnaires. For all participants, the final survey in the packet was the questionnaire regarding sexual assault attitudes and awareness at the University of Tennessee.

The participants sat at a table while they completed the packet. A research administrator was present at all times to answer any questions, but there was no discussion among the participants, maintaining a quiet atmosphere in the room. Participants completed the packet in approximately 15-20 minutes. After having completed the packet and turned it in to the research administrator, participants received a feedback sheet, (see Appendix B), that provided further information about the questions answered and the contact information for the UT Student Counseling Services in case participants wished to speak to a professional about any of the issues (e.g. sexual assault) presented in the study. Participants were also given the contact information for the researcher and her supervisor so they could reach them should any other questions arise.

Results

Before performing statistical tests of the hypothesis in this study, the reliability of the AWS-SF and the IRMA-SF was assessed for this sample. The obtained Cronbach's alpha of .867 for the AWS-SF and .824 for the IRMA-SF suggest a high degree of internal consistency (i.e. reliability) in the measures used in this study.

The relationship between the scores on the AWS-SF ($M = 78.93$, $SD = 10.853$) and those of the IRMA-SF ($M = 48.78$, $SD = 14.631$) was examined using a Pearson r correlation coefficient [$r(200) = -.405$, $p < .001$]. Results indicated a strong negative correlation between attitudes toward women and acceptance of rape myths.

On the AWS-SF males had a mean score of 75.36 while the mean score for females was 80.93. A one-way between-subjects analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to examine gender differences in participants' scores on the AWS-SF. Results indicated that

females endorsed significantly more positive attitudes toward women than did the males in this sample, $F(1, 199) = 7.92, p < .005$. Table 2 includes the summary table for this ANOVA.

In order to test the hypothesized gender difference in rape myth acceptance, a one-way between subjects analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed, $F(1, 199) = 12.85, p < .001$. As hypothesized, male participants ($M = 52.60$) scored significantly higher on the IRMA-SF than did female participants ($M = 46.63$). These findings point toward the idea that males in this sample were more accepting of rape myths and agreed with more pro-rape attitudes than did the females. The summary table for the ANOVAs is presented in Table 3; means and standard deviations appear in Table 4.

When participants were asked if male and female students at UT were concerned about the issue of sexual assault, 28% of those surveyed believed that both males and females were concerned, 52% believed that females were concerned but males were not, and 19% believed that neither males nor females were concerned about the issue. A 2×2 Chi-Square analysis indicated a statistically significant association between participant gender and beliefs about UT students' concerns, $\chi^2(1, N = 200) = 16.444, p = .001$. In short, both males and females believe females are more concerned about the issue than are males. The Chi-square cell frequencies and percentages are presented in Table 5.

Participants also answered a question about whether or not the University does an adequate job of addressing the issue of sexual assault and also what, if any, improvements they would suggest. Of the students surveyed, more than half (61%) stated that UT does not adequately address this public health issue. Responses to this question varied, but most improvements suggested increasing publicity for self-defense classes, holding seminar or forums for students to discuss the issue, distributing pamphlets with statistics, services, and contact numbers, and including this topic among those addressed at freshmen orientation and in dormitory meetings. Also, many students expressed that before participating in this study they believed they had been sufficiently educated on this issue but that after

completing the surveys they felt inadequately informed. Other responses discussed personal experiences regarding this issue and the problems encountered when trying to report an incident of sexual assault. Appendix C contains a complete listing of the participants' anonymous responses to this question.

A similar question asked students what they considered the reasons why rates of sexual assault among college-aged women were higher than those of the general population. With this question, students were also prompted to offer possible ways to eliminate these contributing factors. Nearly every response noted the higher rate of alcohol consumption among college students and spoke to how alcohol use leads to impaired judgment and decreased inhibition. Also, many participants mentioned the new sense of independence that college students seek and, in doing so, the fact that they often place themselves in more dangerous situations. Others cited the high concentration of people in such a confined area of a college campus while some saw heightened sexual drives and social pressures as reasons behind the problem. Solutions focused on students being more responsible for their actions and realizing the consequences of their behaviors. Others saw increased police presence, harsher penalties for perpetrators, and stricter punishments for under-aged drinking as possible solutions. Also, many students felt as though there are no ways to reduce the problem. Appendix D lists all the responses to this question.

Discussion

It was hypothesized that participants holding a more conservative view of women would be more accepting of rape myths. In support of the research hypothesis, individuals with a low score on the AWS-SF, indicating a more traditional view of women, scored higher on the IRMA-SF, suggesting a greater rate of rape myth acceptance. This relationship between attitudes toward women and rape myth acceptance shows how one's beliefs concerning women and their role in society can affect how he or she views rape. If he or she views women more negatively, then he or she is inclined to view rape as more justifiable and to place the blame upon the victim who is, in most cases, a woman. Consequently, it is

possible that through encouraging more egalitarian attitudes toward women the acceptance of rape myths could be decreased.

Along with this, male participants scored lower on the AWS-SF, revealing a more negative view of women, than did females in this study. This is similar to what previous studies (Muehlenhard et al., 1985; Spence & Helreich, 1972; Szymanski et al., 1993) have reported. The fact that this gender difference still appears in 2006 is important to note. Despite the increased attention to sexual assault awareness over the past three decades, there is still a significant difference in how males and females view women. This suggests greater focus of the sexual assault awareness and prevention programs should be placed upon improving males' attitudes toward women, more specifically, by tailoring the sexual assault education programs to tackle this issue and to challenge these negative views toward women, especially in men.

Additionally, results of this study indicated that male participants scored higher on the IRMA-SF than did the female participants. This suggests that males in this sample hold significantly stronger rape myth beliefs than females in this sample. Rape myths are theorized to perpetuate the crime of rape and attempted rape; therefore, by reducing the beliefs in these myths the incidence of these crimes should also decrease. Since males are the overwhelming majority of rape perpetrators, it is especially important to focus on reducing males' beliefs in rape myths. This would also be beneficial to the victims of sexual assault. A reduction of rape myth acceptance could make it easier for them to seek legal advocacy, medical treatment, and psychological counseling by eliminating or at least reducing some of the stigma surrounding sexual assault. This stigma revolves around the idea that the blame should fall upon the victim; that is, the assault is the consequence of her provocative dress, her flirtatious mood, or perhaps her inviting attitude.

It was interesting to find that, in this study, more than 1/2 of males and females believed only female students are concerned about the problem of sexual assault at UT. This mirrors the other findings in this study that males endorse less positive views toward

women. Also, since nearly 20 percent of the participants believe that neither males nor females are concerned about sexual assault, there is clearly a need for increased efforts to educate students and make them more aware of this important campus issue. More concretely, participants' suggestions for improving sexual assault awareness and for reducing the prevalence of this crime point to ways in which the University can specifically address the problem. By publicly promoting the programs it has already created, UT can reach out to more students. Also, it appears that students want the University to directly address the issue and not simply make it apart of a larger campaign on campus safety. Students also feel it would be beneficial to talk openly about the overall social pressures that lead students to engage in risky behaviors such as drinking and drug abuse. Offering students the opportunity to come together and informally discuss these issues can lay the groundwork for further educational programs aimed at reducing the incidence of sexual assault.

This study demonstrated that gender continues to play an important role in college students' attitudes toward rape. In doing so, this study also evaluated the students' current level of sexual assault awareness at the University of Tennessee, suggesting a clear division in how male and female students view the issue. The findings of this study suggest that further education needs to focus on establishing more positive views toward women while also increasing knowledge of facts, services, and programs concerning sexual assault available at UT. By making students more aware of the existence of rape myths and eliminating their prevalence in the school community, the University can aid its students in creating a safer, more welcoming environment for both current and prospective students.

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Appendix A

Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale – Short Form^a

Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the statements below by circling the corresponding number.

- 1=Strongly Disagree
 2=Moderately Disagree
 3=Slightly Disagree
 4=Uncertain
 5=Slightly Agree
 6=Moderately Agree
 7=Strongly Agree

1. If a woman is raped while she is drunk, she is at least somewhat responsible for letting things get out of control.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

2. Although most women wouldn't admit it, they generally find being physically forced into sex a real "turn on".

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

3. If a woman is willing to "make out" with a guy, then it's no big deal if he goes a little further and has sex.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

4. Many women secretly desire to be raped.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

5. Most rapists are not caught by the police.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

6. If a woman doesn't physically fight back, you can't really say that it was rape.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

7. Men from nice middle-class homes almost never rape.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

8. Rape accusations are often used as a way of getting back at men.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

9. All women should have access to self-defense classes.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

10. It is usually only women who dress suggestively that are raped.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

11. If the rapist doesn't have a weapon, you really can't call it rape.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

12. Rape is unlikely to happen in the woman's own familiar neighborhood.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

13. Women tend to exaggerate how much rape affects them.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

14. A lot of women lead a man on and then they cry rape.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

15. It is preferable that a female police officer conduct the questioning when a woman reports a rape.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

16. A woman who "teases" men deserves anything that might happen.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

17. When women are raped, it's often because the way they said "no" was ambiguous.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

18. Men don't usually intend to force sex on a woman, but sometimes they get too sexually carried away.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

19. A woman who dresses in skimpy clothes should not be surprised if a man tried to force her to have sex.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

20. Rape happens when a man's sex drive gets out of control.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Attitudes Toward Women Scale – Short Form^a

The statements listed below describe attitudes toward the role of women in society that different people have. There are no right or wrong answers, only opinions. Please indicate your level of agreement with each statement by circling the corresponding number.

1= Agree Strongly

2= Agree Mildly

3= Disagree Mildly

4= Disagree Strongly

1. Swearing and obscenity are more repulsive in the speech of a woman than of a man.

1 2 3 4

2. Women should take increasing responsibility for leadership in solving the intellectual and social problems of the day.

1 2 3 4

3. Both husband and wife should be allowed the same grounds for divorce.

1 2 3 4

4. Telling dirty jokes should be a mostly masculine prerogative.

1 2 3 4

5. Intoxication among women is worse than intoxication among men.

1 2 3 4

6. Under modern economic conditions with women being active outside the home, men should share in household tasks such as washing dishes and doing the laundry.

1 2 3 4

7. It is insulting to women to have the "obey" clause remain in the marriage service.

1 2 3 4

8. There should be a strict merit system in job appointment and promotion without regard to sex.

1 2 3 4

9. A woman should be as free as a man to propose marriage.

1 2 3 4

10. Women should worry less about their rights and more about becoming good wives and mothers.

1 2 3 4

11. Women earning as much as their dates should bear equally the expense when they go out together.

1 2 3 4

12. Women should assume their rightful place in business and all professions along with men.

1 2 3 4

13. A woman should not expect to go to exactly the same places or have quite the same freedom of action as a man.

1 2 3 4

14. Sons in a family should be given more encouragement to go to college than daughters.

1 2 3 4

15. It is ridiculous for a woman to run a locomotive and for a man to darn socks.

1 2 3 4

16. In general, the father should have greater authority than the mother in the bringing up of children.

1 2 3 4

17. Women should be encouraged not to become sexually intimate with anyone before marriage, even their fiancés.

1 2 3 4

18. The husband should not be favored by law over the wife in the disposal of family property or income.

1 2 3 4

19. Women should be concerned with their duties of childbearing and house tending, rather than with desires for professional and business careers.

1 2 3 4

20. The intellectual leadership of a community should be largely in the hands of men.

1 2 3 4

21. Economic and social freedom is worth far more to women than acceptance of the idea of femininity which has been set up by men.

1 2 3 4

22. On the average, women should be regarded as less capable of contributing to economic production than are men.

1 2 3 4

23. There are many jobs in which men should be given preference over women in being hired or promoted.

1 2 3 4

24. Women should be given equal opportunity with men for apprenticeship in the various trades.

1 2 3 4

25. The modern girl is entitled to the same freedom from regulation and control that is given to the modern boy.

1 2 3 4

Please choose the statement from each item that you believe more accurately describes you (by circling either A or B). Then indicate the degree to which **you believe the statement describes you** by circling the corresponding number.

1=Not at all

2=A little

3=Neutral

4=Somewhat

5=Very much so

A. I **do** know where to find the published annual crime statistics for UT.

B. I do **not** know where to find the published annual crime statistics for UT.

1 2 3 4 5

A. I **do** know how to report a crime such as an incident of sexual assault to the UTPD.

B. I do **not** know how to report a crime such as an incident of sexual assault to the UTPD.

1 2 3 4 5

A. I **do** know what services the University offers to victims of sexual assault.

B. I do **not** know what services the University offers to victims of sexual assault.

1 2 3 4 5

A. I **do** know how to access the available services for sexual assault victims at UT.

B. I do **not** know how to access the available services for sexual assault victims at UT.

1 2 3 4 5

A. I **do** believe female students at UT are concerned about the problem of sexual assault.

B. I do **not** believe female students at UT are concerned about the problem of sexual assault.

1 2 3 4 5

A. I **do** believe male students at UT are concerned about the problem of sexual assault.

B. I do **not** believe male students at UT are concerned about the problem of sexual assault.

1 2 3 4 5

1. Have you ever participated in a sexual assault awareness program at UT, including but not limited to the Rape Aggression Defense classes offered by the UTPD? No ___ Yes ___
If yes, please list which one(s) and who offered the class(es).

Prior to your participation in this survey, were you aware that the police department offered such classes?

2. Do you believe the University does an adequate job of addressing the public health issue of sexual assault? If not, what are some improvements you would suggest?

3. What do you see to be the reasons why the rates of sexual assault among college women are higher than those among the general population? What do you think can be done to eliminate or reduce some of these contributing factors?

^aThese scales are property of their publishers and appear here only for educational purposes. They should not be copied without proper permission.

Appendix B

Information Sheet

Thank you for your willingness to consider participating in this research. The goal of this study is to describe the current level of students' sexual assault awareness at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

On the following pages, you will be asked to answer questions about your attitudes toward gender roles as well as toward sexual assault, in general, and as it pertains specifically to you as a student of the University of Tennessee. Before each set of questions, there are instructions for that particular section. Please write on the questionnaire in the spaces provided. If you wish not to answer any questions, simply leave that item blank. The surveys take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete.

As a participant, you will be provided the number for the UT Student Counseling Services if you wish to speak to a professional about any of the issues (e.g. sexual assault) included in this study.

Understanding what students already know about this subject will allow for further suggestions on particular areas that need to be addressed, whether these be related to rape attitudes, assault prevention, crime reporting, or counseling and health services. The findings of this study can be used to educate not only students but moreover the faculty, staff, and administration as to what the University could be doing to reduce the problem of sexual assault in our community and to raise awareness of the resources available.

Also, since the surveys will be anonymous, there will be no way to identify the individual participants. Only the researcher and the faculty advisor for the project will have access to the completed, anonymous surveys.

As compensation for your participation in this study, you will be awarded two extra credit points for your psychology course.

If you have questions at any time about the study or the procedures, please contact Rachel Raines by phone (901.485.0644) or by email (rraines1@utk.edu), or her supervisor, Dr. Susan Lonborg (slonborg@utk.edu). If you have questions about your rights as a participant, please contact Research Compliance Services at 865.974.3466.

Your participation in this study is voluntary; you may decline to participate without penalty. If you decide to participate, you may withdraw from the study at anytime without penalty and without loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you withdraw from the study before data collection is completed your data will be returned to you or destroyed. Return of the completed survey (questionnaire) constitutes your consent to participate.

Yours,

Rachel Raines

Feedback Sheet for Sexual Assault Awareness Study

Thank you for participating in this research study. The surveys which you completed assess your attitudes toward women, your acceptance of rape myths, and your level of sexual assault awareness. The first two surveys were used to establish the relationship between how conservatively you view the role of women in our society and how accepting you are of rape myths. Previous research has shown conservative gender role attitudes to predict rape-related attitudes. By examining this relationship, it is the goal of the researcher to offer suggestions to reduce the incidence of sexual assault, especially in our community here at the University of Tennessee. Furthermore, the final survey was used to assess your knowledge of the resources and services available to students who have been victims of sexual assault or who wish to learn more about the issue. The answers of this final survey will allow the researcher to focus on the areas that need the most attention in order to better educate our student body.

If you wish to speak to a professional about any of the issues presented in this study, please contact the UT Student Counseling Services at 974.2196. Also, if you have further questions, please contact Rachel Raines at (rraines1@utk.edu), or her supervisor Dr. Susan Lonborg at 974.2204.

Appendix C

Participants' Responses to Open-Ended Question

Do you believe the University does an adequate job of addressing the public health issue of sexual assault? If not, what are some improvements you would suggest?

- No, maybe more public flyers/pamphlets on bulletin boards describing the services offered.
- No, I've never heard of it before this. Maybe they should post up informational flyers.
- Yes and No. I think the students should be more aware of the classes and where to report and find things.
- Somewhat – they do try, I just look past a lot o' it (take little notice) I am sure they introduce it a lot more to freshman [sic] and dorm, but I did not start here... letting classes be known a little better and if there is someone out there – they are sketched or something, display it throughout campus – if it looks as though they would be more likely 2 get caught, I think it would prevent a lot
- Not really. Maybe holding awareness classes in the dorms or especially with the fraternities and sororities [sic].
- No. More campaigns against sexual assault.
- I'm sure that there is always more that can be done. By creating more programs and getting out and educating people more.
- No, b/c I didn't even know about the resources – posters, signs w/#'s up you can call
- I have only seen the outdated "crime" posters that are placed in the UC lobby; I think more could be said to enforce a negative social connotation [sic] against sexual assault
- No, post a visible webpage.
- I don't know what all they do for addressing the situation so I couldn't suggest improvements.
- No, making the classes [and] info. on sexual assault more public
- Advertise the public health more
- The only information I ever remember receiving was a small card w/sexual assault information. Someone handed it to me outside the U.C. – I kept it, but most people throw stuff like that out.
- No; put more banners up & give warnings.
- I thought they did but after taking this survey I realized I don't know.

- Yes, bc I have not heard of any sexual assault cases, so that means there must be a very low rate.
- No, if I'm not aware, I don't know it[']s a soft subject
- No, they should have posters/seminars.
- No, it needs to be more advertised.
- No, there is no direct address of it – they discourage walking alone but they never directly address protecting against sexual assault.
- Not really, I thought we were supposed to be notified if a rape occurred on campus! Have there been no rapes since August? If not that's great, but I doubt it!
- Sexual assault is a problem everywhere, so everyone should be concerned about it to begin with, and if they want more info, it's there for them if they look.
- Pretty good, maybe more community awareness about it. My suitemates had made a girl do stuff she didn't want to do and we got the RA to help us and our floor has made a real effort against sexual assault.
- I don't know either way.
- No, more emphasis should be but on informing women about the risk of sexual assault, especially when they are off campus and alcohol is involved.
- I do not believe up to this point being at UT the university has done an adequate job of addressing sexual assault.
- Hand out flyers, have seminars with free food to attract students, Bruce Pearl/Pat Summit pictures, autographs
- No – stop tearing down parking lots by dorms and making girls walk in garages at night
- No, more widely known programs should be put in place
- Yes & No. We are told not to walk alone, but the T isn't always free.
- No, more student awareness of how & what to do to report sexual assault.
- Maybe announcements about these services over dormitory intercoms. Just put them out there more and make them more well known.
- No; opening the lines of communication to let everyone (females & males) know about the services offered to victims.
- They could always do more. Hold more publicized events, the signs they have in front of women's dorms are good.
- No – even in the Beacon, rapes are always alleged and it's made out to be the woman's fault.

- Yes, they addressed it when I came to school here very thoroughly, though I didn't know there were classes and how to report such things.
- No – have more meetings about them (at dorms)
- There should be more communication around campus & within organizations so that people can hear about these issues/classes/help. Personally I have not heard of any sexual assault class/discussion except a self-defense class offered in Humes dormitory.
- No. It would be better if RA's talked about it in their meetings and if maybe there were more publicized events.
- I do – but they seem to only be known after an incident – I feel that if in some spot in the beacon there was always a number or an awareness tip that would be a constant reminder
- I'm not really sure, I have never come into a case of it, but I believe the UTPD could be a lot more strict or harsh on the issue.
- Hotline numbers be made more visible ... or "what to do if this happens" scenarios [sic] posted around campus.
- This is my 1st semester here and live off-campus. So I'm really not sure about the answer to the question.
- I don't know, I am only on campus for class.
- I do believe that they do an adequate job of making girls aware of such things in sororities, outside of sororities I am not sure.
- No. I think they need to make all new students aware of what to do if they are sexually assaulted.
- I think the university could provide information on when & where classes are occurring [sic] a little more publically [sic] so that it would be general information rather than just when something happens to someone.
- Yes it has numbers and posters to contact
- I guess not because I have never heard of or participated in any kind of program addressing sexual assault until now where I had to for a class.
- No. I believe that at freshmen orientation seminars on sexual assault should be offered.
- No. A friend of mine was sexually assaulted on campus, but the police would not allow her to file a report. And dismissed the incident as though it didn't happen. The police could pay more attention to cases of rape and sexual assault that have already taken place.

Appendix D

Participants' Responses to Open-Ended Question

What do you see to be the reasons why the rates of sexual assault among college women are higher than those among the general population? What do you think can be done to eliminate or reduce some of these contributing factors?

- College women put themselves in more dangerous situations than the general population does. There really isn't anything that can be done to stop this, however, the few who do not set themselves up, are usually somewhere dark and untrafficked [sic]. There should be more lighting and better means of keeping such places monitored. This will not eliminate these crimes, but it will make them less likely to happen.
- Men don't usually prey on older women, and it is harder to get to high school girls because they still live at home. So college girls are more sought [sic] after and more accessible. I don't know what can be done. Perhaps make women study self defense.
- High use of alcohol and/or drugs at social gatherings contributes. Encouraging students for self-empowerment, such as free self-defense classes and making sure everyone knows they are available.
- They are out more then [sic] the general population, late hours of the night, maybe leaving friends to walk home. Always have someone with you when out late.
- I guess college women party more. I'm not sure.
- Rates are higher because of the partying and girls not knowing how and where to report things.
- The college women are assaulted more mainly because they are young and very unaware of certain dangers they put themselves in.
- Centralized location of a lot of younger women who often place or find themselves in compromising situations...many are easily influenced...being in groups could help and everything else one learns when leaving for college, but I really am unsure of any extra approaches one might be able to take...unfortunately there won't always be someone there.
- Personally I have not seen or heard of an[y] sexual assault around me, my friends, and random acquaintences [sic] around this campus, although I'm sure it happens. Possibly some people are afraid to come forward with that type of information so many an anon. hotline; not necessarily to catch the rapist but just to counsil [sic] the person who was raped. I think it occurs more in college in part because of the reckless age most students are in, the carelessness (both of men and women) and we are more put into compromising situations because of parties and various events, esp. those containing alcohol. The most you can do is just make people aware that all this is going on.
- Because more rapes occur when the college women are drunk, and are not very aware of what is going on at the time.

- College students in general like to drink which makes college women much easier to target. Education on how to drink responsibly [*sic*] and safely might prevent some of this.
- More people together and partying. Women should stay in groups and with familiar males at all times. They don't need to participate in risky behavior. Males just need to grow up and if a woman says no, leave it at that.
- A college campus is like a separate world[.] Alcohol consumption is higher in college students than in the general population.
- B/c a campus is full of ppl, a lot of drugs & alcohol consumption being done recklessly, fear of reporting rape & assault stigmatization and increase awareness
- College women drink at higher rates than the general population
- They are often still young & naïve etc.
- More education
- Buddy systems etc.
- A reason I see is that college students tend to be "under the influence" of alcohol and illegal substances more often than the general population. This means that the students['] inhibitions are affected and they either perform acts or are influenced to take part in acts they usually would not. Getting information to the people about how the abuse of alcohol, unawareness of one's self, and illegal substances contributes [*sic*] to many college students' sexual assault could reduce the sexual assault rates.
- Sadly, college women put themselves in more risky positions, I believe a wom[a]n should be safe against sexual assault anytime or place regardless of her dress or impairment but this is not reality. A man will take advantage if given the opportunity; the contributing factor of sexual assault against women is alcohol; more should be done to enforce UT's dry policy and the KPD should do a better job of enforcing laws of underage drinking. Many bars on the strip would not have business if they enforced 21 yrs of age, the problem should be addressed!
- I haven't known that
- Less alcohol drinking
- The hormones, alcohol, & close proximity of people your own age at college probably contributes to a lot of the higher risks for sexual assault. There also doesn't seem to be strict penalties for those accused of sexual assault so people don't fear the consequences of the actions they take.
- College women are placed in an environment that is constantly filled with classes, parties, and social gatherings. College is designed to make them want to fit in, so they are more prone to "be in the wrong place at the wrong time." More mentoring programs that show that social life can be achieved without drug and alcohol filled parties would be helpful.
- College women are young and a lot of the times walk home late drunk and by themselves making them easy targets.
- It is due to the partying & the "college atmosphere" Be more aware that it is going on, even in the freshman dorms.

- Well, I have personally never put myself in a situation to be sexually assaulted, but my guess is that maybe some girls are so insecure that they desire any kind of love & attention... until it gets out of hand. Women & girls, especially in the South, need to learn that they actually matter in society. They don't need to be told, they to be show[n]. Boyfriends, fathers, & other male figures need to encourage independence, self-love, leadership, professionalism, & pursuit of big dreams in their girlfriends, daughters, etc.
- College women go to more parties, and men are more sexually active.
- It is up to the women to keep themselves safe and stay out of dangerous situations.
- Because women in college tend to drink a lot more and to be more careless about always keeping their drink with them.
- Watch your drink being made & if you leave it or set it down, buy/get another one.
- Girls shouldn't walk alone at night
- The amount of social activities people participate in and with alcohol being involved makes it more likely to occur
- I don't think anything can really change it b/c nobody thinks it can happen to them till it does.
- The rates are higher among college women bc college women are careless, unlike more professional women. Awareness could possibly help eliminate or reduce some of these contributing factors.
- Maybe the girls are leading the guys on and the drink is higher also. Not sure
- I think the reason college women are sexually assaulted more [is] because they drink & are around men more than the general population. I don't think anything can be done to help this, unless the college women start taking more step[s] toward safty [sic].
- I think many young girls that attend college put thereself [sic] out there in the thought that they would find a real nice guy, when in fact they find several over active sex drives of young men. They get assaulted when it goes to[o] far – quickly. I think that maybe a class should be offered for credit that would allow girls to meet guy[s] in a casual way while not feeling alone in the crowd.
- Drugs, alcohol, and idiots. When a person is raped, one or two out of two people are being stupid. If we can raise our children to have respect towards people of the other gender, we can ride the world of the dumb-asses by a large fraction.
- Maybe college women are oblivious to the fact that rape is a serious threat. They aren't cautious about the possibility of rape. Plus, alcohol is a big factor. Give extra credit for females who attend rape awareness seminars/self-defense classes.
- There are more men and women around. Everyone is drinking and women are dressed to impress. Men need to take more responsibility for their sexual actions & desires.
- I think that more college women are sexually assaulted more because they are an easy target when they live, work, and go to classes all in one area. A sexual predator

could easily target a young woman and find out where she goes each day, then follow her and attack. Especially dangerous are night classes – any girl should walk w/a friend at night and keep her sharp keys or cell phone handy. Another danger – putting all of her info (schedule, dorm room #, etc.) online.

- I think the main reason is drinking. A lot of people drink in college but I think women tend to try & out drink men & when they do, they lose all inhibitions. There is also a greater risk on large college campuses when women walk by themselves somewhere, especially at night. How much a woman drinks is controlled by herself so as far as what the college's can do to reduce the factors, I think all they can do is have bus services to & from places.
- I did not realize it was higher in college, but first dorms could be simply non-coed or be on completely different sides like Hess or North Carrick. Dorms like Morrill are ridiculous because boys can freely walk into the girls area especially when their doors are often left wide open and the girls are alone. Second, alcohol obviously has a lot of influence sometimes so girls should always travel in packs with other girls they can really trust, not just boys.
- B/c college women are more naïve, acceptable, seeking "fun" easily, etc. Generally, they are ignorant of the signs or atmosphere of such situation[s] due to acceptance. I think awareness is the key. Awareness promotes knowledge. Knowledge promotes proactive responses. Proactive responses promote possibly less assault issues.
- College females are often known to be sexually active and usually compromised by either intoxication or "wrong place, wrong time"
- Cause college girls go crazy and dress provocatively
- Young women are adapting to their new independence & aren't fully aware of the dangers of going out & coming home late at night.
- It seems to be due to the density of single women on campuses across the nation. Nothing can be done about that except tighten security.
- Alcohol, unsafe situations, vulnerability.
- I think alcohol abuse among college students is higher, they put themselves in more vulnerable positions. I'm not really sure we can do anything about it! College students think they are invincible!
- Possibly it's due to age & maturity, as well as irresponsibility w/drinking. Most college-aged guys would never think of committing rape, but alcohol can do some crazy things to people, and they might not even be fully aware of what they are doing. I think the best way to avoid sexual assault is to be smart – use your head & don't put yourself in danger by walking alone in the dark, getting drunk at parties, etc.
- Being dumb. Most of the times it is them placing themselves in bad situations like walking alone, being in certain situations with guys, or even alcohol. To reduce it: Buddy system, don't drink, be aware of the guys/gals around you.

- Lots of drunk guys looking for drunk girls. More police.
- Because there are a lot more opportunities for me and women to get involved and alcohol is very prevalent [*sic*]. There really isn't much that can be done it is up to the woman to not put herself in those situations and it is up to the guy to know when to stop and how far it too far. It is all about responsibility.
- Because of the sex drive of younger men and the amount of alcohol consumed in college
- More self-defense classes
- College girls are seen as a target.
- Media, college men view college women in the "girls gone wild" fashion especially when it comes to college parties. Have forums set up so that both men and women can come together on major misconceptions.
- College women think they know the campus, but everything is different at night. College women also may be too quick to trust the guys they meet.
- College women are [p]ut in bad situations more frequently [than] the general public – (walking alone at night, drinking in unfamiliar places). College women need to be informed about the resources to be safe & prevention education.
- I think most people generalize college as the sexual time. Lots of underage alcohol is flowing and people get carried [away]. It's possible some people exaggerate [*sic*] when reporting sexual assault
- Girls walking alone of large campus
- UTPD
- College women do not tend to think about the situations they could get themselves into. They want to be independent & sometimes this leads to not feeling like they could report assault. Opening the lines of communication is one way to reduce these factors.
- Campus close to bars, women are taken advantage of easier.
- College women get really drunk and sometimes they get forced into things that they don't want to do. Girls don't need to drink as much.
- College students walk most places a lot of the times by themselves. More officers along places that students commonly walk.
- Hormones, alcohol, attractive women, college is an entirely different atmosphere than the general population. Lot more drinking & partying. To reduce some of the factors would be let women have more knowledge about rape. Women need to be more observant @ parties, go w/girlfriends, watch their drinks & don't drink too much.
- College women are constantly around college men and parties. Alcohol plays a key role. More information needs to be out there – what constitutes as rape/sexual

assault. I work for a non-profit Take a Stand Against Violence (TKASTND.ORG) and we're trying to get more info out there.

- Because college women are always experimenting and testing their limits with foreign substances, and sometimes things happen that wouldn't normally occur under a sober mind. Could reduce it by not having so much social pressure and build up about college party life and how that's what it's all about.
- Atmosphere of partying, drinking, dating & everything going at a faster rate. ("living the college life")
- More vulnerable; naive [sic]
- Because college women are at their prime age; college girls look good and often get themselves in dangerous situations. College girls also go out a lot [sic], and men know that & know where they'll be & what will be going on. There should be clear communication and updated news on sexual assault incidents so that people know that it goes on & where it goes on.
- The college years tend to be very wild. I think that there is a lot [sic] of drinking, drug abuse, and sexual activity going on at a very fast growing rate. These young girls get influenced. While they're caught up in the mix, they get taken advantage of. I see it happen. Guys love those girls that don't seem too smart. The girls get drunk and who knows what happens next. It's like a game. I don't really know what could be done about it. We are never to be taught how to hang around the right crowd, and not to be influenced easily. Smarter decisions have to be made.
- Because we are all so new to the "being on our own label" that we definitely not as cautious [sic] b/c our parents have normally informed what to do & not to do. To make more girls more aware that it does happen & give realistic stats.
- I think they are more vulnerable in certain situations, also they are more under the influence of alcohol than other populations. They need to be more aware of their surroundings and their state of being.
- Because a lot of the guys are drunk more often, as well as the girls. I'm not really sure what can be done to change that, but making students more aware of the consequences, what qualifies as "assault" and the resources available to them would probably help.
- Drinking & flirtatious [sic] behavior. Also college age women are often small & somewhat defenseless. We sometimes put ourselves [sic] in dangerous situations such as walking alone or talking to strange men.
- Because college girls get drunk and dress skanky. I think the girls need to be more aware by dressing better.
- They tend to go out and drink more in a much less responsible way.
- Drinking is a major factor on college campuses.

- I think they are higher because girls go to frat houses and parties and get so drunk they cannot comprehend what is going on. They also walk by themselves, sometimes intoxicated at night when they shouldn't.
- I think that there is more drinking among college students than at any other time which increases the likelihood [*sic*] of rape. Police can crack down more on too much drinking.
- It is probably because there is a greater concentration of people in one area who are often necessarily outdoors (to get to class, etc.) Also, many cases of sexual assault occur because of intoxication, etc. and it is generally thought that such things occur very often on campus.
 - provocative dressing
 - drug consumption
 - alcohol consumption
 - changes in behaviors w/new generations
 - crack down harder on punishments
- The college atmosphere of partying & drinking is a big factor in the sexual assault rates being higher. Those contributing factors are hard to eliminate because of the nature of college life but more cops & people could patrol dangerous areas.
- College women are the ones that walk around campus late at night. Provide awareness in public about the dangers. Get statistics together to show how often it does happen and what the consequences consist of.
- Because college women are easier to force because in general men are stronger. Having them take self-defense classes would help eliminate some problems.
- I think since college women are for the first time on their own that they are put into more positions to be a victim of sexual assault. There are also many men looking for these kind of vulnerable women. I don't really think anything can really be done about it. Maybe self-defense classes and awareness programs/ But nothing is really going to cut it out. Because I think women know that it[']s a huge possibility and try to stay away from it as much as possible.
- The reason that rates of rape are higher among college women is because of alcohol & the party lifestyle. I think that educating college-age women more on the issue would help.

Table 1

Characteristics of the Research Sample and the University of Tennessee

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>UT Total^a</i>	<i>UT Males^a</i>	<i>UT Females^a</i>
N	200	72	128	27,769	13,343	14,426
Age	19.7	20.1	19.4	-----	-----	-----
Ethnicity						
% Caucasian	83.3	83.3	83.3	83.0	-----	-----
% African-American	11.6	12.5	11.1	7.7	-----	-----
% Asian	2.0	1.4	2.4	2.6	-----	-----
% Hispanic	1.0	0.0	1.6	1.3	-----	-----
% Mixed ancestry	2.0	2.8	1.6	-----	-----	-----

^aUT students by race and gender from Student Information System, UT Fact Book 2004-05

Table 2

Summary Table of One-way ANOVA for Attitudes Toward Women Scale – Short Form

Source	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Gender	1428.90	1	1428.90	12.86	.001
Sub (Gender)	22010.98	198	111.17	-----	-----
Total	23439.88	199	-----	-----	-----

Table 3

Summary Table of One-way ANOVA for Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale – Short Form

Source	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Gender	1639.26	1	1639.26	7.92	.005
Sub (Gender)	40961.06	198	206.87	-----	-----
Total	42600.32	199	-----	-----	-----

Table 4

Table of Means and Standard Deviations

Dependent Variable	Gender	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
AWS-SF	Males	72	75.36	10.64
	Females	128	80.93	10.49
IRMA-SF	Males	72	52.60	13.56
	Females	128	46.63	14.82

Table 5

Table of Frequencies and Percentages

Dependent Variable	Frequency	Percent
Males and females concerned	56	28
Females concerned, males not	102	52
Males and females not concerned	38	19