

RUNNING HEAD: Understanding Partner Sexual Violence

Silenced Suffering: The Need for a Better Understanding of Partner Sexual Violence

TK Logan, Robert Walker, & Jennifer Cole

Abstract

This paper has two overall goals. First, to examine the current state of sexual violence research to highlight several shortcomings in the knowledge on partner sexual violence. Second, to describe several factors to consider in future research to facilitate a more in-depth understanding of partner sexual violence. Shortcomings of the research on partner sexual violence include: (1) over-reliance on dichotomous yes/no representations of sexual violence experiences; (2) lack of, or inadequate documentation of the scope and nature of partner sexual violence; (3) inadequate ways to account for impairment of consent under different circumstances; (4) difficulties in discriminating unwanted from non-consensual sexual activities; and, (5) limited information about the role sexual violence plays in the larger context of coercive control. In order to facilitate a more in-depth understanding of partner sexual assault there is a need: (1) to better understand the scope and nature of partner sexual assault; and (2) to better understand the role partner sexual violence plays in coercive control. By improving the measurement of this phenomenon, victims, researchers, practitioners, and those involved in the justice system might be better equipped to respond to sexual violence among intimate partners.

Key Words: Sexual Violence; Rape; Domestic Violence; Sexual Assault; Wife Rape; Coercive Control; Measurement (n=190 words)

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“He had this thing - this way of taking things away from me, punishing me if he didn’t get sex. He would punish me by taking my keys to my car so that I couldn’t go anywhere or taking my car and you know leaving his without the keys or, taking the kids to his mother’s instead of me keeping them, yeah, punishment¹.”

“I knew if I didn’t I would have hell to pay. So I realized it was better off just to go ahead and let him do his thing and get up and go to the bathroom and cry and clean up and let it all be over. See I got with him when I was 15, he kind of raised me.”

“To go from that level of fighting where he had his hands around my throat to him kissing me and having sex with me; that was completely foreign to me. I had never been in that situation. And it ended up okay in the end but it still haunted me the next day...to me that’s not making love. I don’t know what that was. Or that he would feel hate for me one moment but try to show love [the next moment]. That’s a hard one. I don’t know how to relate to that even to this day.”

These scenarios depict three different situations where women had sex with their partners under conditions of limited autonomy or control. Yet, it is not clear that current ways of measuring or thinking about sexual violence would capture these three different situations as sexual violence. It is also unclear whether all three of the victims in these situations would classify their own experiences as sexual violence. The difficulties in understanding and measuring sexual violence experiences are greater when the acts occur within the context of intimate partner relationships. To some extent the ambiguity associated with how to classify, measure, and label the full range of compelled sex acts is a failure in our society to define the boundaries of bodily integrity within the context of intimate relationships. Not only is there doubt as to whether these three situations would be captured as sexual violence with current research measures, but there is also a lack of information about how they might affect victim consequences mentally or physically. Sexual violence has been recognized as a form of partner violence for years; however, much less research attention has been given to understanding the

¹ Logan, Cole, & Shannon (2007).

dimensions or severity of sexual violence within intimate relationships compared to understanding and measuring the dimensions of partner physical violence and psychological abuse. It is almost as if sexual violence is tangential to physical and psychological abuse even though sexual violence has been described as one of the most degrading and humiliating experiences a person might endure (Barstow, 2000; Bourke, 2007; War's overlooked victims, 2011; Koss, Heise, & Russo, 1994; MacKinnon, 2006).

In 1982 Russell published a book "Rape in Marriage" which described stories of sexual violence that married women had survived. Just a few years later Finkelhor and Yllo (1985) published a book on wife rape entitled "License to Rape: Sexual Abuse of Wives" that also told stories of sexual violence at the hands of partners. These two books played a key role in breaking the silence about this form of abuse and in opening the understanding about the nature and scope of partner sexual violence. These books were also published during a time in American society where it was still legal in many if not most states to rape your wife (Bennice & Resick, 2003). In 1999 Yllo suggested that "When marital rape is not explicitly challenged, then it is condoned, and husbands walk away secure in their sense of entitlement to their wives' bodies" (p. 237). Under changed laws marital rape is no longer condoned. However, the full range of coerced sex acts do not seem to be challenged when they occur between intimate partners. Thus, there is still a gap in knowledge about the full extent of the nature and scope of partner sexual violence, in part because research studies often do not take into account the variety of sexual violence experiences that women endure from their partners.

The purpose of this paper is twofold. First, this paper will examine the current state of sexual violence research to highlight several shortcomings in the knowledge about partner sexual violence. The three most common frameworks used to understand sexual violence will be

discussed along with an examination of 172 selected articles to describe the typical measures of sexual violence. Second, this paper will describe several factors to consider in future research to facilitate a more in-depth understanding of partner sexual violence.

Although many of the concepts discussed in this paper could be applicable to a better understanding of sexual violence regardless of victim-offender relationship, this paper focuses specifically on partner sexual violence for three main reasons: (1) cultural myths about “real rape” and cultural norms about family as a “private” matter continue to strongly influence societal responses to partner sexual violence; (2) sexual intimacy is vital to intimate relationships and thus presents even greater challenges to understanding and measuring the boundaries of sexual consent and violence; and, (3) coercive control is the critical component in understanding partner violence (Stark, 2007); however, the role that sexual violence plays in coercive control is unclear.

First, strong cultural myths and norms continue to inform and shape legal and social constructs of partner sexual violence. This includes the wide-spread notion that sexual relations between partners a “private” matter; “real” rape is between strangers (Hammond & Calhoun, 2007; Lazar, 2010; Yllo, 1999); “real” rape is physically violent and a “real” victim fights back (Raphael & Logan, 2009a; 2009b); and that sex is a “wifely” duty (Logan, Cole, & Shannon, 2007). These cultural myths and norms not only influence societal responses such as the police and court response but also influence victim perceptions. As some evidence for the influence of the cultural norm that family matters are “private matters,” Logan and Cole (2011) asked their sample of partner violence victims who reported their partner forced them to have sex and found that 82% did not tell anyone about the incident. Many of the women indicated they did not discuss any aspect of their sex life with others, let alone the sexual violence. Further, research

shows that only about half of those who report experiencing forced sex label that experience as a rape or an assault, and that percentage is even smaller for those forced to have sex by a partner (Hammond & Calhoun, 2007; Kahn, Jackson, Kully, Badger, & Halvorsen, 2003; Kahn, 2004; Layman, Gidycz, & Lynn, 1996; Littleton, Breitkopf, & Berenson, 2008; Littleton, Axsom, & Grills-Taquechel, 2009). It may very well be that sexual violence in abusive relationships becomes almost “normal” for women, in part, because it is the norm to NOT talk about sex and especially sexual violence. It may also be due to the cultural norms regarding the role sexual intimacy plays in intimate relationships (e.g., ‘wifely duty’, Logan et al., 2007).

Cultural myths may come into play as well. As mentioned above research suggests that “real” rapes are those that are physically forced and physically resisted (Raphael & Logan, 2009a; 2009b). However, research indicates the closer the offender is to the victim, the less likely it is the victim will use forceful resistance strategies (Clay-Warner, 2003; Macy, Nurius & Norris, 2006; Turchik, Probst, Chau, Nigoff, & Gidycz, 2007; Ullman, 2007; VanZile-Tamsen, Testa, & Livingston, 2005). Among women who were raped there is evidence that those who physically resisted had less self-blame and faster psychological recovery (Bart & O’Brien, 1984; Furby & Fischhoff, 1986; Rozee & Koss, 2001; Rozee, 2000). In fact, one study found that women who reported resisting an attacker were half as likely to experience distress as their counterparts who did not resist (Feehan, Nada-Raja, Martin, & Langley, 2001). But within intimate relationships forcefully resisting is less common (Clay-Warner, 2003; Macy, Nurius & Norris, 2006; Turchik et al., 2007; Ullman, 2007).

Second, the nature of sexual intimacy within close relationships poses unique challenges to understanding and measuring consent for sexual activity. In some ways, there is a presumption of continuous consent to sexual relations within an intimate relationship (Lazar, 2010; Monson,

Langhinrichsen-Rohling, & Binderup, 2000; Shotland & Goodstein, 1992; Yllo, 1999). More specifically, there is an assumption that prior consensual sex sets a *precedence of consent* that is particularly difficult to parse apart from sexual coercion or lack of autonomy in consent for sexual acts for victims as well as others. In other words, consent among sexual partners is typically viewed as static or as a single initiating event similar to a contract or to a criminal act. Thus, two people meet, perhaps begin dating and then engage in sex acts when both partners express a will to do so, or alternatively say “no.” Once the relationship becomes more permanent, the consent becomes more implicit and assumed. Although society and the law recognize that consent can be revoked, revocation is also often viewed as a singular, discrete event. Instead, consent or non-consent for sexual activity, in reality, is more fluid and thus should be conceptualized as continually open for negotiation. Lazar (2010) summarized the still prevailing attitude about partner sexual violence with “Constructing a woman’s consent as continual assumes it is contingent upon the external circumstances of marriage or upon the fact that the [one] act superficially resembles other consensual acts—and not upon her actual wishes and needs at the time. It removes her agency and denies her freedom of choice and action” and “The fact that she has consented before is [treated as] evidence suggesting that she consented this time, arguably relieving husbands of the legal obligation to ask” (Lazar, 2010, p. 361). Thus, Lazar (2010) argues that the dominant view of consent for sexual activity within relationships is static and based on prior consensual precedence. Defining clear boundaries of consent is context dependent especially within intimate partnerships and this complexity is difficult to capture with typical categorical measures of sexual violence.

Third, partner violence, in general, is best characterized not by specific violent acts but by coercive control where the acts of physical and psychological abuse or aggression are tools to

subordinate and dominate another person (Stark, 2007). Given that sex is an especially important component of intimacy in partner relationships (Baumeister & Tice, 2001), the use of sex to control, degrade, and humiliate a person can be a violation of trust, bodily integrity, and autonomy. It may be especially cruel. However, very little attention has been given to the specific role of sexual violence in relationships that are characterized by coercive control.

Coercive control may inherently “impair” autonomy or decision-making capabilities for one partner while giving license to the other (Schulhofer, 1998). Sexual violence among intimate partners can and does occur through more subtle coercive means than the use of physical force or threats, and this subtlety is not well accommodated in the typical measures of sexual violence. Yllo (1999) argued that although sexual violence received equal billing on the power and control wheel, it is ignored in the broader efforts to address partner violence. Russell (1982) argued that partner sexual violence should not be collapsed under the larger construct of partner violence but rather it should be treated as its own form of violence. Failure to fully understand, conceptualize, and measure, and communicate the ways in which women in violent relationships have been forced to live may lead to misunderstandings about partner violence and limit efforts to effectively intervene. Thus, how sexual violence among intimate partners is understood may have serious implications for the entire construct of partner violence.

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) defines sexual violence as: “Nonconsensual completed or attempted contact between the penis and the vulva or the penis and the anus involving penetration, however slight; nonconsensual contact between the mouth and the penis, vulva, or anus; nonconsensual penetration of the anal or genital opening of another person by a hand, finger, or other object; nonconsensual intentional touching, either directly or through the clothing of the genitalia, anus, groin, breast, inner thigh, or buttocks; or nonconsensual non-

contact acts of a sexual nature such as voyeurism and verbal or behavioral sexual harassment. All of the above acts also qualify as sexual violence if they are committed against someone who is unable to consent or refuse” (Basile & Saltzman, 2002, p. 9). This paper will also use this definition for sexual violence with the caveat that consent is complex within intimate relationships.

In practice, and in the research literature, there are many terms that are used interchangeably to refer to forms of sexual violence such as rape, sexual assault, sexual abuse, sexual coercion, and unwanted sexual contact. In this paper the term *sexual violence* is used to encompass all of these various types and aspects of sexual violence. It is also important to note that even if studies use the exact same terms, they often define and measure them differently. Conversely, different terms may be used to mean the same thing. For example, studies may refer to sexual assault narrowly as rape or forced sexual penetration, while other studies will use the term sexual assault to refer to attempted rape, rape, sexual coercion, and unwanted sexual contact (Cook, Gidycz, Koss, & Murphy, 2011). This lack of consistent terms and definitions contributes to significantly varied prevalence rates and can also influence results on a variety of outcome variables. For example, if one study examined the association of forced sexual penetration, what is traditionally termed rape, with rates of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) while another study examined a very broad definition of sexual violence including unwanted sexual contact, attempted rape, as well as rape with PTSD, the number of respondents with PTSD will vary widely between these two studies. The results will vary widely because unwanted sexual contact may or may not be as traumatic as forced sexual penetration. Essentially, this means that it would be problematic to synthesize the results of these two studies to represent the association of sexual violence and PTSD. It would also be problematic for interventionists to try to use this

information in a practical way. Thus, the implications of how sexual violence is defined and measured are critically important for the knowledge base that informs prevention and intervention efforts. This will become more evident in the second section of this paper that discusses critical research components that are needed to facilitate a more in-depth understanding of partner sexual violence.

Current Frameworks of Sexual Violence Measurement. There are three main research frameworks that generate information on sexual violence. First is the general literature on sexual violence which examines rates and characteristics of sexual violence independent of victim-offender relationship. Second is the literature on partner violence which describes violence and abuse between intimate partners. Third, is the literature on sexual coercion which examines a wider range of coercion tactics and coerced sex acts. Each of these frameworks has strengths but each also have limitations with regard to understanding the nature and scope of partner sexual violence.

General Sexual Violence Literature. The general sexual violence literature examines sexual violence regardless of victim-offender relationship. So, for example, five national household surveys spanning a period of over 20 years indicated that between 1 in 6 (16%) and 1 in 8 (12.3%) women have been forcibly raped in their lifetime (Basile, Chen, Black, & Saltzman, 2007; Black et al., 2011; Kilpatrick, Edmunds, & Seymour, 1992; Kilpatrick, Resnick, Ruggiero, Conoscenti, & McCaluley, 2007; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2006). The measures of forced sex are typically some form of the question “Has anyone ever made you engage in sex acts that included penetration by force or by threats to harm you (or someone close to you)?” This is a narrow definition of sexual violence, focusing on forced and completed sexual penetration which is consistent with most basic elements for the legal definition of rape. Some studies are broader in

their definition of sexual violence, but as the definition broadens it starts to vary more widely across studies making comparability of prevalence rates more difficult.

In all but one of those studies partner offenders account for the largest category of rapists with between 29% and 53% (Basile et al., 2007; Black et al., 2011; Kilpatrick et al., 1992; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2006). These findings suggest that between 1 in 11 (9.4%) and 1 in 12 (8%) women will be raped by a partner in their lifetime (Black et al., 2011; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2006). As a side note, not all studies define ‘partner’ in the same way which can make comparisons of victim-offender relationships across studies difficult as well. For example, it is not clear how victims (or researchers) categorize dates or ex-dates unless it is explicitly stated, and this is rare. Another relationship that poses difficulty for classification is what the college age populations refer to as “hook-ups” (Stinson, 2010). The sexual violence literature has a significant and pervasive problem of a lack of specificity in definitions and terminology and this applies to even how perpetrators are classified in relation to victims. Thus, using clear definitions of sexual violence, using clear categories of victim-offender relationships, and using behavior-specific questions to classify victimization experiences are crucial.

Behavior-specific questions that probe for experiences of forced sexual activities be more accurate and precise than questions using the label “rape” yield higher and more reliable information (Abbey, Parkhill, & Koss, 2005; Cook et al., 2011; Fisher, 2009; Gavey, 1999; Koss, Gidycz, & Wisniewski, 1987). This is, in part, because not all women who have been forced into sexual activities or even who have experienced forced penetration label those experiences as “rape.” In fact, as mentioned above, research shows that about half of victims who report forced sexual experiences by endorsing statements that are similar to the legal definition of rape, do not

label their experiences as rape (Bondurant, 2001; Fisher, Cullen, & Turner, 2000; Fisher, Daigle, Cullen & Turner, 2003; Koss, 1985; McMullin & White, 2006; Pitts & Schwartz, 1993).

A number of factors contribute to whether a person who has experienced forced sex will label the experience as rape or assault. In particular, several studies indicate when forced sex is perpetrated by a partner the victim is less likely to label that experience of forced sex as rape (Hammond & Calhoun, 2007; Kahn, Jackson, Kully, Badger, & Halvorsen, 2003; Kahn, 2004; Layman, Gidycz, & Lynn, 1996; Littleton, Breitkopf, & Berenson, 2008; Littleton, Axsom, & Grills-Taquechel, 2009). For example, only between 30% and 45% of those who reported being forced by a partner to have sex labeled those experiences as rape, compared to between 55% and 72% of those who reported forced sex by non-partner assailants (Kahn et al., 2003; Layman et al., 1996; Littleton et al., 2008). These findings bring up an important question: if women who are threatened or forced to have sex with partners do not consider the experience rape, then what is it exactly? Perhaps the partner violence literature has some answers.

Partner Violence Literature. The second relevant research framework is the general partner violence literature. Using a narrow definition of sexual violence, similar to the one described above, studies suggest that between 20% and 68% of women experience forced sex within an abusive relationship (Campbell, 1989; Campbell & Soeken, 1999; Cole, Logan, & Shannon, 2005; Eby, Campbell, Sullivan, & Davidson, 1995; Logan, Cole, & Shannon, 2007; McFarlane, Malecha, Watson et al., 2005; McFarlane & Malecha, 2005; Randall & Haskell, 1995; Shields & Hanneke, 1983). This prevalence range is very wide and provides very little specificity about the scope and nature of partner sexual violence. Even so, within studies, having measures of forced sex is important especially for understanding the prevalence and incidence of different types of partner violence (e.g., psychological, physical, and sexual). For example, one

study found in a sample of 210 women with protective orders that 85.9% experienced severe physical violence, 58.5% reported their violent partner had stalked them, and 31% reported their violent partner had raped them (Logan & Walker, 2010).

Physical assault is often used as the defining element of whether or not a partner is abusive and yet physical assault is just one tool of many that are typically used to control another person (Stark, 2007). For example, Strauchler et al. (2004) examined 21 different partner violence measurement scales and concluded that measurement of partner violence focuses far more on physical violence than any other factor. Specifically, those authors criticize the research for not focusing more attention on control, threats, and manipulation/mind games (i.e., coercive control). They contend that partner violence is more complex than physical violence alone, and that humiliation, control, and blame are significant dimensions of partner violence that should be incorporated into the measurement of partner violence. These issues have also been noted by others as a weakness in measurement and understanding of partner violence (e.g., Stark, 2007). In essence, Strauchler et al. (2004) concluded that in order for partner violence to be accurately assessed and addressed, measures must move beyond the physical dimensions of partner violence. Unfortunately, even this critique of conceptual and operational definitions of partner violence did not give much consideration to sexual violence. When these authors developed their own measure of partner violence, it included only one very narrow question of sexual violence which was then dropped out of their factor analysis. Thus, it appears that even among those who understand that partner violence is larger than incidents of physical assault; sexual violence is still often overlooked as a distinct and significant form of abuse.

In fact, many studies on partner violence measure multiple dimensions of both physical (e.g, moderate and severe) and psychological abuse (e.g., jealousy, economic control, threats of

harm, control over freedom, degradation, and isolation) (Follingstad, Bradley, Laughlin, & Burke, 1999; Follingstad, Rutledge, Berg, Hause, & Polek, 1990; Follingstad & DeHart, 2000; O’Leary, 1999; Tolman, 1989). Including a measure of sexual violence within partner violence literature is less frequent. Sometimes sexual violence is even collapsed with the physical violence measure rather than measuring it as a distinct form of abuse (e.g., Feehan, Nada-Raja, Martin, & Langly, 2001).

Further, measures of sexual violence in the partner violence research literature typically ask only a few questions about forced penetrations that are similarly worded to the physical and psychological abuse questions. Little attention has been paid to whether parallel measures for physical and sexual abuse are equally valid for both forms of violence. The implicit assumption is that the two forms of violence share the key characteristic in being “physical” but this may miss distinguishing features of partner sexual violence victimization. In other words, this approach assumes that measures are capturing an objective behavior that clearly indicates harm across all contexts. However, context is critical in fully understanding partner sexual violence victimization and only looking at an overt ‘objective’ act may have little to do with the degree of harm from the act. This approach neglects the special nature of bodily and psychological integrity that is uniquely affected by sexual violence. In other words, using narrow measures of sexual violence implies that the harm of sexual violence impacts only the sexual parts of the body rather than the deeper impact sexual violence has on victims such as attacking core aspects of bodily integrity, autonomy, and trust (Barstow, 2000; Bourke, 2007; Wars Overlooked Victims, 2011; Koss, Heise, & Russo, 1994; MacKinnon, 2006). Sexual violence has been characterized as, “A violent invasion into the interior of one’s body represents the most severe attack imaginable upon the intimate self and the dignity of a human being: by any measure it is a

mark of severe torture. When a women's inner space is violently invaded, it affects her in the same way torture does. It results in physical pain, loss of dignity, an attack on her identity, and a loss of self-determination over her own body" (Seifert, 1994, p. 55).

Physical violence and even psychological abuse can perhaps be better understood in categorical ways than sexual violence. A slap regardless of harm, is unwanted and non-consensual and being called dumb and fat, regardless of harm is unwanted and non-consensual. Sexual acts, however, may be more difficult to distinguish because sex acts in one context may wanted and/or consensual while in another are neither wanted nor consensual. This means the measurement may need to incorporate offender's intent and victim's interpretation of the acts and the harm they caused. Thus, narrow measures of sexual violence ignores the contextual features of partner sexual violence. These may be some of the reasons research on sexual coercion is important.

Sexual Coercion Literature. Broadening the definition of sexual violence to include coercion may capture more subtle forms of sexual violence. For example, Black et al. (2011) asked survey respondents about sexual coercion, which was defined as telling lies, making promises, threatening to end the relationship, threatening to spread rumors, wearing resistance down by repeatedly asking for sex or by showing unhappiness, and using authority (e.g., a boss or a teacher) to compel sex acts. Overall, results of this survey indicated 13% of women and 6% of men had experienced sexual coercion in their lifetime. This rate is very low compared to other studies possibly due to the methods used such as how the questions were framed or different definitions of sexual coercion.

Spitzberg (1998) summarized findings from over 95 studies and found about one-quarter of both men (23.2%) and women (25%) reported non-forced sexual coercion. Basile (2002a)

reported that 34% of women in a nationally representative sample of women indicated they had ‘unwanted’ sex with a partner. Unwanted sex is often used as a proxy for coerced sex. Other studies have found even higher rates of unwanted or coerced sex although the coercion tactics that are used are not always explicitly described, and when they are described they vary widely. Jackson, Cram, and Seymour (2000) found in their study of high school students that 76.9% of females and 67.4% of males had engaged in at least one incident of unwanted sexual activity. Another study found that 65% of women and 40% of men in dating relationships indicated they had sexual intercourse when their partner initiated even though they did not want to (Impett & Peplau, 2003). Yet another study found that 50% of women and 26% of men reported to consenting to unwanted sexual activity with their dating partner at least once during a 2-week period (O’Sullivan & Allgeier, 1998). And more recently, Vannier and O’Sullivan (2010) found 59% of female and 41% of males in their sample of participants in committed relationships indicated they engaged in unwanted sexual activity during the 3-week study period and that both men and women who engaged in unwanted sexual activities rated those activities as less enjoyable than when they initially desired sexual activity, and they believed their partners were aware that the activity was unwanted.

Some research indicates that sexual coercion, or complying with unwanted sex, is a relatively common occurrence in intimate relationships for both men and women (Basile, 2002a; O’Sullivan & Allgeier, 1998; Shotland & Hunter, 1995; Sprecher, Hatfield, Cortese, Potapova, & Levitskaya, 1994; Zweig, Crockett, Sayer, & Vicary, 1999). The Black et al. (2011) study found that women who reported any sexual coercion were most likely to have been coerced by a partner (75.4%) compared to lower rates for acquaintances (21.8%), other family members (6.1%), and persons of authority (5.7%). There were similar trends for men who reported being

sexually coerced by a partner most frequently (69.7%), compared to lower rates for acquaintances (31.3%), authority figures (3.4%), and family members (0.0%). Several studies report the main reason cited by participants for engaging in unwanted sexual activity with a partner was relationship maintenance (Hamby & Koss, 2003; Impett & Peplau, 2003; Jackson et al., 2000; Vannier & O'Sullivan, 2010). For example, a woman may consent to sex with her partner when she does not desire sex because she is tired, not feeling in the mood, or has other things on her mind, believing that the benefits of having sex with her partner at that point (e.g., enhanced intimacy, release of tension, harmony, reciprocity) will outweigh the negatives (e.g., having sex when desire is initially absent or ambivalent).

Some researchers suggest that wantedness and consent should be conceptualized as independent constructs rather than one-in-the-same as they are often represented in research (Hamby & Koss, 2003; Peterson & Muehlenhard, 2007). In some cases of sexual coercion the sexual acts may be unwanted but are consensual. In other cases of sexual coercion the sex acts are compelled because the partner may not feel she has the ability to refuse (non-consensual). Sexual activity, especially within the context of a relationship characterized by prior consensual sexual activities, is more complicated than viewing sex as wanted (implying consensual) versus unwanted (implying nonconsensual). More specifically, when sexual contact is both wanted and consensual, it is clearly not sexual violence and when sexual contact is both unwanted and nonconsensual it is clearly forced sexual contact or rape, although not all victims in this situation will label it as rape as noted above. But there are situations where sexual contact may be wanted, or at least not unwanted, but not clearly consensual (e.g., sex while sleeping, sex while intoxicated) and situations where sex is unwanted but consensual (e.g., verbally pressured or manipulated sex, sex after an argument). The other problem with equating "wanted" with

“consent” is that it implies these constructs are categorical whereas in reality the concept of wanted and consent are more accurately conceptualized as on a continuum. All of these complexities illustrate why the notion of non-forced sexual coercion may be considered sexual violence in some contexts and normative behaviors in others. The overall context of the relationship affects how consent can be inferred as being without coercion or undue influence.

Thus, the framework and measurement of sexual coercion is complicated by the overall nature and tenor of the relationship within which the sex acts occur. On one hand the measurement of sexual coercion is thought to capture more subtle forms of sexual violence that are often experienced within intimate relationships. On the other hand, sexual coercion cannot automatically be equated to non-consent because although unwanted sex may be obtained through “coercion,” sexual coercion (without implicit fear) and engaging in unwanted sex may be normative relationship behavior when sexual needs, wants, and desires do not equally match among partners (Baumeister & Tice, 2001). And when incidents of sexual coercion tactics that do and do not contain implicit threats and fear are intermixed, which may be common in intimate partner violence relationships, the results are even more muddled. Further, relationships change over time and sex acts that at one point may have been completely consensual and/or wanted may gradually shift into non-consensual and/or unwanted then back to being consensual and/or wanted again. The ‘temperature’ of the relationship must be constantly examined along with the sexual acts.

Typical Measures of Sexual Violence. Selected research articles on sexual violence published between 1982 and 2011 were examined in order to describe common measures used to assess sexual violence (n=172). The articles used for this analysis have an asterisk in the reference list. The articles were examined by one coder and 20% were examined by the first

author and where discrepancies occurred, they were discussed to 100% agreement by both coders. The first author also checked the codes and consistency in coding for all of the articles. The articles included for this analysis focused on adult females in their sample and on rates, types, or characteristics of sexual violence. The studies were all conducted in the U.S. The article also had to describe the measure used to identify sexual violence. Articles that used the same study data were represented only once, using the most recently published article or report. The articles selected did not necessarily have to include victim-offender relationship as a variable of interest or focus on partner-offenders. Articles with the primary focus on reviewing the literature, validating a measure, analyzing victim beliefs or assessments towards the law, exclusively assessing victim recovery (e.g., focus was on PTSD/depression or why they believed the rape occurred but no measures of sexual assault were included), articles that examined participant attitudes towards rape or rape myths, and articles that focused exclusively on male offenders were excluded. Further, articles that used a sample of pre-identified rape victims were excluded because those articles often did not include measures of sexual violence (e.g., victims who presented to the ER or a Sexual Assault Response Team sample). Although this is a comprehensive review of articles it is very likely that not every article that exists and met the inclusion criterion was included.

First, the selected articles were categorized into three main measure types which accounted for 97.7% of the articles. A small proportion of articles were included in an additional category if they used open-ended measures and those articles may or may not have used other measures classified into first three categories. The categories are: (1) Sexual Experiences Survey category (44.2%). Articles that mentioned using the Sexual Experiences Survey (SES) or a modified SES even if used in conjunction with other measures were classified as using the SES.

(2) Narrow measures of sexual violence (29.1%). Articles that defined rape/sexual assault as physically forced or threatened sex with penetration were categorized as having a narrow definition. Also, articles that used open-ended questions or an interview were included if they first use a narrowly defined screening question and reported those rates. Articles that used a definition of rape that included substance facilitated/ incapacitation were not included in this category. (3) Broad measures of sexual violence (24.4%). There were two criteria for this category. First, studies that measured and reported rape/sexual assault as forced along with non-forced means of compelling sex (e.g., verbal pressure, substance facilitated) were coded into this category. Second, if the study included a wide array of forced sexual activities (e.g., attempted penetration, unwanted sexual activities) were classified into this category. Also, articles were coded into this category if the study used open-ended questions or an interview with a broad screening question and reported the rate for the broadly defined sexual violence as noted above. (4) Qualitative measures of sexual violence (11.6%). Articles that used open-ended questions or an interview to gather data about sexual violence whether or not a screener question was used were coded into this category.

Sexual Experiences Survey. The Sexual Experiences Survey (SES) was the most frequently used measure, 44.2% of the studies, in the 172 articles examined (Koss & Gidycz, 1985; Koss et al., 2007). In general the SES is one of the most comprehensive and widely used measures of sexual violence (Koss et al., 2007; Testa, VanZile-Tamsen, Livingston, & Koss, 2004) and the SES has a number of important strengths. First, the SES uses behaviorally specific descriptions, which helps circumvent the problems with asking victims to label their experiences as “rape.” Second, the SES inquires about a variety of unwanted sexual experiences as well as a variety of tactics used to compel sex acts. For example, the Revised SES asks about tactics such

as the use of lies, threats to end the relationship, threats to spread rumors, and verbal pressure. It also asks about whether the perpetrator expresses displeasure or criticizes the victim's sexuality or attractiveness and whether the perpetrator takes advantage while the victim was intoxicated or too out of it to stop what was happening. It includes threats of physical harm or harm to someone close and the use of actual force. The Revised SES also asks about several different unwanted sex acts including petting/kissing; oral sex; attempted rape; and completed rape.

There are also some limitations with the typical use of the SES to measure sexual violence. One limitation is that the way the measure is designed it is not clear whether multiple assaults occurred (e.g., the number of tactics and compelled sex acts were due to different incidents) or whether the respondent experienced one incident that involved multiple compelled sex acts as well as multiple tactics (Koss et al., 2007). In other words, it may be difficult to determine frequency of distinct sexual violence incidents with the SES measure unless the researcher asked about only one incident of sexual violence. For example, if the SES is not framed about a specific incident a respondent might indicate she experienced six different tactics but they could have all been within one incident of sexual violence or there could have been six different incidents. The frequency count is therefore can be confusing when trying to measure actual incidents of sexual violence.

A second limitation of the typical use of the SES is that although the revised version of the scale asks about frequency or number of times each tactic occurred, studies typically ignore that information and summarize the results with a dichotomous measure (Yes/No) to describe forced sex and sexual coercion experiences rather than providing more in-depth information.

The third problem with the SES is there is limited guidance or standardization across studies with regard to defining sexual violence which means different research articles use

different questions to define sexual violence. For example, of the 76 articles that used the SES as the primary measure of sexual violence, 30.3% reported sexual violence using a narrow definition of forced or threatened sexual intercourse, while 61.8% used a broader definition that varied by study, and 7.9% did not provide enough information to determine what was used to define sexual violence.

Narrow Measures of Sexual Violence. The second most frequently used type of measure consists of questions that narrowly focus on threatened and forced penetration (29.1% of the articles). Examples of these kinds of measures include the Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS) (including the original CTS and the CTS-R) (e.g., Bennice, Resick, Mechanic, & Astin, 2003; Cattaneo, DeLoveh, & Zweig, 2008; Cole et al., 2005), National College Women's Study (e.g., Fisher et al., 2000; Fisher et al., 2003), National College Health Risk Behavior Survey (e.g., Brener, McMahon, Warren, & Douglas, 1999), and the National Violence Against Women Study (e.g., Basile, Arias, Desai, & Thompson, 2004; Chen & Ullman, 2010; Tjaden & Thonnes, 2006). Other studies used some form of these questions that were narrowly focused on threatened or forced penetration worded to be consistent with the legal definition of rape in their particular state (e.g., Johnson & Sigler, 2000; Mohler-Kuo, Dowdall, Koss, & Wechsler, 2003; Peterson & Muehlenhard, 2004). As discussed earlier, narrow measures of sexual violence miss the full range of sexual violence.

Broad Measures of Sexual Violence. The third most frequently used type of measure (24.4% of the articles) was characterized as broad when rape/sexual assault were defined and reported as forced and non-forced means of compelled sex acts (e.g., verbal pressure, substance-facilitated) in addition to threats of harm or force and/or measures that incorporated a wide array of forced sexual activities (e.g., attempted penetration, unwanted sexual activities) and

incorporated all of these tactics into their definition of sexual violence (usually termed sexual assault, or sexual coercion, or unwanted sex). Examples of these measures include the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (e.g., Bonomi, Anderson, Rivara, & Thompson, 2007), Abuse Assessment Screen (e.g., Coker, Derrick, Lumpkin, Aldrich, & Olendick, 2000; Coker, Smith, McKeown, & King, 2000), and the Severity of Violence Against Women Scale (e.g., Temple, Weston, Rodriguez, & Marshall, 2007). As discussed earlier, a definition of sexual violence that includes forced and non-forced means of compelling sex suggests they are equal, but that is not always the case and without understanding the context of non-forced sexual activity it is not clear what is being measured.

Qualitative Measures of Sexual Violence. Only a very small percentage of studies analyzed for this article used qualitative methods to fully examine sexual violence. Of the 172 articles that were examined only 11.6% included open-ended questions either as a primary or a secondary measure. However, one problem with many of the studies using open-ended questions, is that in the end, many used the narrative information to classify responses into a yes/no format for whether or not rape or sexual coercion occurred (55% of those that used qualitative questions in this sample) (e.g., Fry & Barker, 2001; Randall & Haskall, 1995; Weingourt, 1990). This seems to subvert the purpose of qualitative information and limits understanding the critical contexts of sexual violence. One of the reasons for this treatment of the open-ended narratives may be that the vast majority of current frameworks of sexual violence center on a very narrow definition of sexual violence (73.6% of the qualitative articles).

Measures of Sexual Coercion. To better examine types of sexual coercion research on sexual violence typically includes, the 172 articles were examined for three specific forms of sexual coercion: (1) non-forced sexual coercion (28.4%); (2) substance involved sexual violence

that was measured but not necessarily reported separately (40.7%); and, (3) substance-involved sexual violence that was reported separately from other types of sexual violence (16.3%). Table 1 summarizes these results.

Almost 1 in 3 (28.4%) of the articles included a measure and reported rates of non-forced sexual coercion. Most of these studies incorporated sexual coercion as measured by the SES (71.4%) or used a relatively narrow definition (16.3%) of sexual coercion (e.g., including only a few tactics primarily verbal pressure, misuse of authority, emotional pressure). As discussed earlier, the measurement of sexual coercion is problematic due to widely varying definitions and due to framing sexual coercion as sexual violence when in actuality it is not clear how respondents interpreted and answered the sexual coercion questions (i.e., the social context was not communicated). None of these studies measured wanted and unwanted along with consensual versus non-consensual sexual activity as noted in the previous section.

Further, of the 172 research articles, 40.7% measured substance-facilitated penetration, which is defined as sexual acts that occur when the victim is under the influence of intoxicants or when the perpetrator purposefully administered substances to render the victim unconscious. Of those, 72.9% used substance-facilitated forced sexual activity questions from the SES. However, of those articles that indicated measurement of substance-facilitated penetration 40% reported it separately from other tactics of sexual violence (16.3% of the articles overall reported separate rates of substance-facilitated penetration) while 51.4% reported rates of rape that incorporated substance-facilitated penetration.

Summary of Current Frameworks for Understanding Partner Sexual Violence. Three areas of research guide current conceptual frameworks and assumptions about sexual violence: the general sexual violence literature, partner violence literature, and literature on sexual

coercion. The examination of the typical measures of sexual violence from the selected 172 research articles highlights some significant shortcomings in the current state of sexual violence measurement including: (1) over-reliance on dichotomous yes/no representations of sexual violence experiences; (2) lack of, or inadequate documentation of the scope and nature of partner sexual violence; (3) inadequate ways to account for impairment of full consent under different circumstances; (4) difficulties in discriminating unwanted from non-consensual sexual activities; and, (5) limited information about the role sexual violence plays in the larger context of coercive control. In light of the limitations of current knowledge on partner sexual violence this paper proposes several factors to consider in future research to facilitate a more in-depth understanding of partner sexual violence.

A better understanding of the scope and nature of partner sexual violence depends on greater accuracy and precision in measures of the frequency, severity, and duration of sexual violence incidents and tactics. Second, future research should do better job of describing the role of sexual violence in coercive control. This includes better understanding of: (1) the sexual degradation and humiliation that underlie sexual violence within intimate relationships; (2) the boundaries of sexual autonomy and consent within an intimate relationship; and, (3) the trajectory of how sexual violence develops within intimate relationships along with other types of violence. Considering these factors in future research is essential to facilitate a deeper understanding of the unique impact sexual violence has on victims and in influencing legal and social responses to partner sexual violence.

Scope and Nature of Partner Sexual Violence. It is important to note that several of the articles reviewed for this paper did analyze qualitative data to expand understanding of narratives of sexual violence like what Russell (1982) and Finkelhor and Yllo (1985) provided (e.g., Logan

et al., 2007; Logan & Cole, 2011). However, none of the articles systematically assessed the frequency, severity, and duration of sexual violence incidents, all of which have been associated with the risk for trauma outcomes (Thoresen & Overlien, 2009).

Frequency. Research on trauma strongly indicates that exposure to greater frequency and greater duration of traumatic events is associated with increased physical and mental health problems (Logan, Walker, Jordan, & Leukefeld, 2006; Sullivan, Cavanaugh, Buckner, & Edmondson, 2009). Some research suggests there may be a dose-response relationship between exposure episodes and psychological outcomes (Culbertson & Dehle, 2001; Dutton, Kaltman, Goodman, Weinfurt, & Vankos, 2005; Riggs, Kilpatrick, & Resnick, 1992; Ullman & Siegel, 1993). Thoresen and Overlien (2009) took a unique perspective in trying to understand the measurement of trauma and investigated why women might have trouble answering questions about the traumatic impact of a sexual assault (and other traumatic events). These researchers found that of women who had trouble deciding on how to answer a question about whether or not they were “exposed” to sexual or physical violence the difficulty was, in part, due to how frequently it happened. Those who reported it happened only once or that it had happened occasionally struggled with whether or not to respond affirmatively to the exposure question. On the other hand, anecdotally partner sexual violence can occur so frequently that victims sometimes come to believe that it is “normal” rather than abnormal and the consequences of viewing it in this way have not been investigated (Logan, 2011).

Because partner-offenders, compared to stranger and acquaintance offenders, have greater access to their victims, it is very likely that partner sexual violence is repeated (Bergen, 1996; Finkelhor & Yllo, 1985; Koss, Dinero, Seibel, & Cox, 1988; McFarlane, Malecha, Watson et al., 2005; McFarlane & Malecha, 2005; Riggs et al., 1992; Russell, 1982; Stermac, Del Bove, &

Addison, 2001; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2006). For example, Finkelhor and Yllo (1985) reported that half of the 50 women they interviewed endured twenty or more rapes by their partner.

Another study found that 65% of women assaulted by an intimate partner reported multiple sexual assaults (including completed rape, attempted rape, and sexual attacks with serious and minor injury) compared to 14% of women assaulted by acquaintances and 9% assaulted by strangers (Mahoney, 1999). Mahoney (1999) found that almost 20% of women reporting sexual assaults by intimate partners reported more than 10 sexual assaults in a 6-month period.

McFarlane and Malecha (2005) reported that of the 148 partner violence victims in their study, 68% reported at least one forced sexual experience, and of those over half (55%) reported a second sexual assault within one month of the first assault. Logan, Cole, and Shannon (2007) examined sexual violence through a qualitative lens and several partner violence victims talked about the frequency of sexual violence as exemplified in the following accounts:

- “He just constantly just wanted to have sex with me and it was rough. And then you know I was extremely sore and swollen and he knew that I was like this, you know, he was just touching me. It was just unbelievable. I begged him [to stop] and it was like it didn’t matter”
- “Then he started getting rougher and rougher and then doing things I didn’t want him to do against my will there towards the end. And I didn’t want him to touch me. He touched me anyway, when I said no, he did it anyway. So he just more or less raped me, repeatedly over and over. He generally never asked, toward the end. It was either have sex or get beat to death and then have sex, that’s just how it was. And put his hands on my throat and squeeze and choke me and say, “Open your mouth bitch or die.” And he choked me so bad one time that I lost my voice for two weeks. I couldn’t even talk.”

Even though it is acknowledged and accepted by researchers and practitioners that partner sexual violence is typically repeated (and repeated frequently) there is still very limited documentation of the frequency. There are several reasons it is important to capture frequency of sexual violence in measurement. First, it is important to better understand whether the frequency of sexual violence is associated with physical and mental health outcomes within violent

relationships. Second, while there are studies that indicate that rape by an intimate partner produces as much, if not more, emotional distress than a rape by a non-intimate partner, these studies often do not take into account the frequency of sexual violence, thus losing a critical factor in assessing impact on victims (Culbertson & Dehle, 2001; Koss, Dinero, Seibel, & Cox, 1988; Stermac, Del Bove, & Addison, 2001; Temple et al., 2007). Third, although some research suggests forced sex is associated with risk of assault and lethality (Campbell et al., 2003; Koziol-McLain et al., 2006), it is not clear whether the frequency of sexual violence is associated with risk of re-assault or even lethality.

Severity. Severity of a traumatic event has been associated with posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (Brewin et al., 2000). In the domain of physical abuse, frequency and severity have been shown to be overlapping but distinct phenomenon (Follingstad, Bradley, Laughlin, & Burke, 1999). Thoresen and Overlien (2009) found that severity of an event was also associated with self-reported ratings of whether or not that event was perceived as traumatic. In other words, some of the respondents in their study of traumatic events struggled with categorizing the sexual assault as traumatic if it was not a completed penetration because they believed the experience was not severe enough to be counted as traumatic. Other research on sexual violence more generally also indicates that the more severe the event the more likely a victim is to label the event as rape (Bondurant, 2001; Hammond & Calhoun, 2007; Littleton et al., 2008).

Severity of sexual violence can be conceptualized in multiple ways including the brutality of the experience, whether the act was completed or not, and/or the number of different forced sexual acts or tactics used within the context of an “incident.” The following are some examples of sexual violence severity women suffered from their partner (Logan et al., 2007; Logan, 2011).

- He got off on hurting me and the more that he - if he could see physical pain it was great – wonderful, that was like the best thing for him. He had to at least think that I was hurting,

like he was a big man or something. If he could see blood or if he could see physical evidence of pain he got off. He really liked to hurt me and I had to learn to be really, really loud in bed and fake pain at the right moments and how to make it seem sincere. It had to seem like I really hated what was going on.

- He wanted sex. I told him to kiss my ass, he grabbed me by the hair, pulled me down to the floor, and he flipped his knife open from out of his pocket. “You will do what I tell you to, and he stuck it right at my throat and cut me a bit, I could feel just a little bit of heat and I did whatever he wanted. And I got up and there was blood from where he cut me.”
- When I was pregnant he told me if I didn’t do what he wanted he said “I could hurt that baby up in you. I could stick something up in there and kill it.”

As can be noted by these examples, severity incorporates a wide range including violent sex, threats or use of a weapon, threats to others including children, sexual violence during recovery from medical procedures or other injuries, forced sex with others, forced prostitution, and/or torture like activities that accompany the rape (Bergen, 1996; Campbell & Alford, 1989; Russell, 1982; Logan et al., 2007). Even at the extreme end of what is traditionally defined as severe—rape, all rape is not the same. Some rapes are more brutal than others, and the question is does that matter for victim outcomes? Intuitively the answer is most likely yes, but there is little research documenting severity of sexual assault incidents in general and specifically for partner sexual violence. It is not clear for example, whether or how the impact of being threatened with harm and physically compelled into sex acts differs from being tied up for hours and being forced to have sex or being violated with various objects.

Also, it is important to question whether or not “severity” of sexual violence can be conceptualized in similar ways for women experiencing sexual violence from partners versus those experiencing sexual violence from strangers and acquaintances. Severity is, in particular, one area that needs to be better understood in order to translate the event to traumatic response. It is likely that severity is individualized. Thus, it may be important to conceptualize severity as a continuum rather than a simple dichotomy of severe or not severe.

Duration. For the purpose of this paper, duration is defined as a characteristic of a sexual violence “incident” which can last from a half hour to days according to victims. Frequency and duration of sexual violence has been associated with long-term impacts on both physical and mental health (Culbertson & Dehle, 2001; Riggs et al., 1992; Ullman & Siegel, 1993). Kaysen, Rosen, Bowman, and Resick (2010) commented on the difficulty they had in locating any research on duration of exposure for a single traumatic event. Their study on the association of duration of sexual assault found that duration had a small but significant impact on immediate PTSD symptoms but not at the 3 month follow up, although their sample was small and the measure of duration had limited variance.

There is anecdotal evidence that in fact rapes do vary in duration. Several studies indicate that sexual violence incidents can last for hours and involve repeated rapes and physical assaults (Browne, 1987; Russell, 1982). Logan et al. (2007) recount one woman’s story:

- He took me in the bedroom and he locked me in there for, well, until his football game went off. And after the football game went off and I heard him turn the TV off and I knew I’d just had it. And he come in unlocked the bedroom door and I laid there. And I tried to pretend like I was asleep but it didn’t do any good and he ripped my clothes off me and he tried to have anal sex with me against my will and I fought him off over that and he ended up just raping me. I felt really nasty, helpless, hopeless, scared.

A woman in Russell’s (1982) study talked about her husband tying her up while she was sleeping and raping and brutalizing her repeatedly over a period of four hours. One woman was brutalized and raped for 12 hours and the episode sent her to the hospital for three weeks (Russell, 1982). Another woman in Russell’s book talked about the time her husband locked her up for 5 weeks and repeatedly raped and tortured her. Other women whose partners use drugs and alcohol recounted times when the rape episodes lasted hours and they attributed the duration to the substances their partner was using (Browne, 1987; Logan et al., 2007; Russell, 1982). It is likely that whether sexual violence is repeated throughout a relationship or whether it is a one-

time event, duration has an impact on trauma.

The Role of Sexual Violence in Coercive Control. Partner violence is defined by power and control over another person—coercive control. Specific tactics are not important but rather are tools to facilitate the overriding goal of controlling another person through fear. In essence, coercive control erodes an individual's capacity for independent decision making or personal agency in the areas by which we distinguish free citizens from slaves (Nussbaum, 2000; Sen, 1999). Stark (2006) argues that the net effect of coercive control on a victim is global: victims suffer from cumulative harms rather than just suffering from injuries resulting from specific and definable incidents. Logan et al. (2007) reported women specifically talking about their partner using sex as a way to control them:

- I think that's how he got off. You know I think he got hard from beating me and physical fighting, you know what I mean? And it was a way for him to overpower me and I would just hush sometimes and - the control. It was the control thing - especially at the end because I was really rebellious I guess. And it seemed like the harder I rebelled the harder he controlled and it always led into sex and I think sex became the ultimate way of controlling me.
- He thought I was messing around on him and so he wanted to have sex with me because I was his wife, and I needed to do that, so he was going to have sex with me even though I didn't want to have sex with him. I don't know if it was so much that he wanted to have sex or just the fact to show me he was going to have sex with me.

Understanding the role that sexual violence plays in coercive control is key to a more full understanding of coercive control. There are three areas to examine to better define the role sexual violence plays in coercive control: (1) sexual degradation and humiliation; (2) the boundaries of sexual autonomy and consent; and, (3) the trajectory of sexual violence with other forms of abuse.

Sexual Degradation and Humiliation. Sexual degradation and humiliation often serve as a potentially significant undercurrent in the context of partner sexual violence. For example,

women in violent relationships report being directly demeaned and put down in sexual terms and that they often perceived those experiences to have been deliberately designed for the purpose of deliberately humiliating and degrading them rather than gaining sex (Logan et al., 2007). Starratt et al. (2008) found that the frequency of insults derogating a partner's value as a person and accusing a partner of sexual infidelity were most predictive of sexual coercion.

What makes something degrading and humiliating, of course, is personal and differs for each person, although there are some tactics that seem to be degrading to a significant portion of women. These tactics include being forced to watch pornography, insulting sexual performance, their partner becoming violent during consensual sex, and continuing sex when it is causing the victim pain. Other women talk about how forced sex was used to punish them (e.g., for an alleged affair or for being overweight) (Logan et al., 2007).

Several studies with partner violence victims have asked questions about sexually demeaning and humiliating tactics perpetrated by violent partners (Logan et al., 2007; Logan, 2011). Both of these studies divided the samples into two groups: those who reported being forced by the violent partner to have sex and those who did not. Table 2 summarizes the findings across the seven different tactics that were measured. What becomes clear when examining the table is that most women who are raped by the violent partner experience a variety of sexual degradation and humiliation tactics. What is less expected is that a large proportion of the group of women who did not report threatened or forced sex reported experiencing a variety of degradation and humiliation tactics. Some examples of sexual degradation and humiliation are listed below (Logan et al., 2007; Logan, 2011).

- He was just really - well other than him being overbearing about it and you just feel like you were completely belittled by everything anyways, he has overpowered me so completely period. Then he would get up and say, "OK, go take a shower now, you're nasty," or you know, "You nasty slut," or, you know, he found ways to make me feel as small as he could.

And make me feel just like I was an awful person for doing it [sex] even though if I hadn't done it then I'd have got hell. I would have had to pay.

- One time I was naked, just after I had the baby, and he was making fun of me. He made me stand in front of the mirror and just look at myself. He knew how much I hated my body at that time. The whole time he told me how ugly I was.
- Well...he made me watch stuff with a man tying a woman up and he knows the kind of stuff that I've been through with being raped and abused [previously]. For him to put that on there and saying, "Wouldn't you like me to do you like that?" "You'd like it, wouldn't you?" and I'd say "no" and he'd say "Don't lie, you know you would."
- Do you know what it's like to be tied down, and can't move. I mean can't get up, a handkerchief crammed in your mouth and you can't scream, just for him to get his rocks off. And when he's done he might cut you loose an hour later, it's degrading, and it makes you feel like you're shit. Why me--what did I do that was so bad for me to get this--I thought I found Mr. Right but I found Satan. The more he hurts me the better he gets off.

As with sexual coercion tactics, sexual humiliation and degradation is difficult to measure. Examining this phenomenon with qualitative research is important given that all of the tactics that are used to sexually degrade and humiliate partners are not known, and also women do not interpret certain tactics or behaviors as humiliating or degrading in the same way.

The Boundaries of Sexual Autonomy and Consent. In general, sexual consent involves the agreement (which can be verbal or non-verbal and direct or indirect) to engage in a sex act (Hickman & Muehlenhard, 1999) regardless of whether it is wanted or unwanted. There are two main components of sexual consent (Lim & Roloff, 1999; Muehlenhard, 1996). First, an individual must have a clear understanding of what she (he) is consenting to before consent can be considered legitimate. This requires knowledge of the other person's sexual intentions and expectations and the capacity on the part of the consenter to make a judgment (e.g., sober, of the age of consent, cognitively capable). Second, sexual consent must be given freely without implicit or explicit fear and threats or other undue influence.

There are a variety of tactics that are used to compel sex besides physical force,

especially by a partner. Several research articles have focused specifically on non-forced sexual coercion tactics (Basile, 1999; Shackelford & Goetz, 2004; Starratt, Goetz, Shackelford, McKibbin, & Stewart-Williams, 2008; Struckman-Johnson, Struckman-Johnson, & Anderson, 2003); however, the list of specific tactics is unlimited, bound only by the imagination and creativity of the party trying to coerce sex from his or her partner.

This paper will focus on three main clusters of tactics that are often not systematically and explicitly documented for partner violence victims: (1) sexual coercion in the context of implicit threat; (2) substance-facilitated; and (3) incapacitated.

Sexual Coercion in the Context of Implicit Threat. Within the context of a violent relationship, the concept of sexual coercion may seem more useful in terms of capturing more subtle sexual violence or forced sex acts characterized as both unwanted and nonconsensual. This assumption is made because the core of a violent relationship is coercive control, thus sexual consent may be rendered meaningless within the context of a controlling and abusive relationship. And in fact, some research indicates that more severe physical violence in the relationship was associated with more sexual coercion (Marshall & Holtzworth-Munroe, 2002). Specifically, in one study 54% of wives in a severely physically violent relationship reported sexual coercion compared to 27% of wives in moderately physically violent relationships, and 20% in non-violent relationships (Meyer, Vivian, O'Leary, 1998). Another study found that 66% of the partner violence victims who reported they were not raped (defined using the narrow criteria of threatened or forced penetration) by their violent partner also reported having sex with their partner when they did not want to because their partner insisted (i.e., sexual insistence) (Logan, 2011). Another study reported sexual insistence rates experienced by partner violence victims who were not stalked or raped (defined using the narrow criteria of threatened or forced penetration) by

the violent partner (29.6%), victims who were stalked but not raped (61%), and victims who were raped by the violent partner (97.7%) (Logan & Cole, 2011).

When listening to women's stories of sexual violence many of them recognize at least some aspects of their sexual relations as unwanted and threatening, but they, like many others do not label their experience as rape. It is the combination of unwantedness with some form of coercion or implicit threat of harm that rises to the level of sexual violence. There are at least two main tactics or circumstances that have been identified in the research literature as implicitly threatening for women in violent relationships (Bergen, 1996; Finkelhor & Yllo, 1985; Logan et al., 2007; Logan, 2011; Russell, 1982). First, women had unwanted sex because they were afraid of physical harm or a more forceful rape if they said no. Second, women may have unwanted sex after a physical assault (which is also an implied threat).

Many women report having sex with their violent partner because they are too afraid to say no. For example, several studies found that between 40.4% and 45.2% of partner violence victims who reported they were not raped by the violent partner and 81.8% and 93.5% of partner violence victims raped by the violent partner said they had sex with their partner because they were too afraid to say no (Logan, 2011; Logan et al., 2007). Examples of women who had sex with their partner because they were afraid to say no are presented below (Logan et al., 2007; Logan, 2011):

- “We had sex daily, period. There was no question to it. No options, no questions, that’s the way it was, period. End of discussion. *Did he ever force you to have sex?* Physically force me, no, because I never told him no. [I was] afraid to tell him no. As long as I didn’t tell him no, we didn’t fight. But I know for a fact the first time I would have told him no, that’s a fight. But if I told him no with anything [trailed off].
- I had to do it or there would be repercussions...I just had no say in the matter. I was almost like a robot.
- It’s just easier to go ahead with it then have to go through all of that. I mean I was going to end up having sex with him anyway. So I’m going to have sex with or without the ass whipping...

Violent partners wanting sex after an assault is also common. Logan (2011) found that 51.1% of partner violence victims who did not report rape by the violent partner said their partner wanted to have sex after assaulting her or arguing with her and she did not want to, and 90.9% of partner violence victims who were raped reported having unwanted sex after being assaulted.

Examples of women who had sex with their partner after a fight are presented below (Logan et al., 2007; Logan, 2011):

- We [had] been arguing, I mean he hit me or something and I didn't feel [like having sex.] I just felt like I was being raped. You know what I'm saying? I just felt like, "You just beat me up and now you want to make love to me?"
- Having sex after an argument doesn't make sense to me. Didn't seem healthy to wanna have sex at that particular time, during an argument, or after somebody's hurt your feelings so bad, you know, belittled you in such a way and then they want you to lay down with them like it had never happened.

The context of threat – implicit or explicit – that is potentially inherent in certain relationships forms a key element of the measurement of partner sexual violence. Without considering this overall threatening context within which the sexual coercion takes place it is difficult to know how to interpret it – is it sexual violence or unwanted sex (but consensual or non-consensual because it occurs within the context of an implicit or explicit threat)? The context provides the framework for how to interpret the behaviors. If sexual coercion occurs within a relationship context that is characterized by implicit threat of physical harm, then it makes more sense to classify it under the sexual violence rubric. This means measurement of partner sexual violence may have to go beyond measuring acts alone to incorporate the perceived intentions and consequences of the act(s). This could be done with sexual assault as it is now done with many measures of stalking where the target's interpretation of the act is included in the measurement and definition. For example, for many stalking measures, victim fear is a central component.

Substance-Facilitated Sexual Violence. Measurement of substance facilitated-penetration or penetration when the victim is incapacitated has recently gained more research attention when these questions were included in several large representative studies of college students (Kilpatrick et al., 2007; Krebs, Lindquist, Warner, Fisher, & Martin, 2007) and community members (Kilpatrick et al., 2007). However, the partner violence literature has yet to systematically examine these tactics. In some ways that may be understandable. Typically, sexual assault involving alcohol or drugs is thought of as more common among acquaintances rather than partners. Because this is more “stereotypical” it may inhibit the measurement of this tactic among partners, especially long term partners like those in violent relationships. However, this particular tactic is especially relevant for violent relationships where control and manipulation can and does include substance use and abuse (Logan et al., 2006).

Recently, the research literature on sexual assault has identified two main categories of substance-involved sexual violence: (1) incapacitated due to drugs or alcohol; and (2) drug and alcohol facilitated. Generally, incapacitated is defined as rape that occurs after the victim voluntarily ingests drugs or alcohol and is unable to give consent because of intoxication or loss of consciousness while substance-facilitation is defined as sexual violence that occurs after the drug is given without the victims permission or the offender deliberately tries to get her drunk (McCauley, Ruggiero, Resnick, & Kilpatrick, 2010; Zinzow et al., 2010). These questions are typically some form of “Taking advantage when the victim was too drunk or was too out of it to stop what was happening.”

Overall, between 5% and 8% of women indicate they have been high, drunk, drugged or passed out and unable to consent when someone had sex with them, which includes substance-facilitated and incapacitated rape (Black et al., 2011; Kilpatrick et al., 2007; Krebs et al., 2007).

The Black et al. (2011) study indicates that of those women who experienced a drug or alcohol facilitated penetration, 43% of offenders were partners, 50.4% were acquaintances, and 9.6% were strangers. Other studies, especially those from college students show lower proportions of substance-facilitated penetrations by partners but at the same time suggest it is not rare (with rates at about 9%) (Kilpatrick et al., 2007).

Measuring substance-involved sexual violence within partner violence research is relatively rare but the few studies that do exist suggest it is an important consideration in sexual violence. One study partner sexual violence found that 52% of the partner violence victims who said they were raped and 29% of those not raped by the violent partner reported their partner had encouraged her to use alcohol/drugs with the motivation to have sex with him. Also, that same study found 16% of those raped and 10% of those not raped by the violent partner reported that partner had at some point in the relationship had sex with her when she was passed out or unaware due to substance use (Logan et al., 2007). The following are some examples of substance-involved sexual violence perpetrated by violent partners (Logan, 2011):

- I think he got aroused when I didn't have any control, I believe he liked getting me drunk because he liked the way I acted in bed more when I was drinking. It was like he liked to degrade me, showing he does have power because when I'd be so drunk I couldn't hardly move and stuff he could do whatever he wanted to my body. I mean some of the things he did to me when we'd be drinking was crazy. I think at times he was ashamed to say what his sexual desires were and he thinks that by getting me drunk he could act the way he wanted to.
- He basically took advantage of me while I was passed out. I wish that I had handled it differently. I was pretty upset actually.
- He knew a little bit about my past. I explained to him that I do have an addiction to alcohol and drugs and that I black out easily and I pretty much do anything and everything in those blackouts. And I guess that's why he began to encourage me to go there. So that he could get me to do just what I didn't want to do. I guess maybe he thought I'd be more kinky or freaky.

The literature suggests that substance-facilitated sexual violence may be as traumatic for victims as force-only sexual violence (Brown, Testa, & Messman-Moore, 2009; Littleton, Grills-

Taquechel, & Axsom, 2009), associated with similar negative emotions, such as guilt and anger (Clum, Nishith, & Calhoun, 2008), and may be associated with more self-blaming cognitions, more stigma, and more negative social reactions than sexual violence that is not substance-facilitated (Koss, Figueredo, & Prince, 2002; Littleton et al., 2009). However, the bulk of this literature has overlooked the prevalence and impact of substance-facilitated sexual violence among partner victims, especially among victims who experience coercive control or physical control by the partner. This particular form of coercion may be especially important to recognize and address in treatment for substance abuse and mental health issues (Logan, Cole, & Leukefeld, 2002; Logan et al., 2006).

Incapacitated. Besides substance-facilitated incapacitation there is at least one other common tactic that qualifies as incapacitated sexual violence—initiating sex while sleeping. Women have described this tactic in their narratives in qualitative studies (Bergen, 1996; Russell, 1982). However, very few studies have measured this tactic systematically. One study of partner stalking victims indicated that 41.7% of those who were not raped (self-reported forced or threatened sex) by that partner and 72.7% of those who were raped by that partner indicated that they had woken up after being asleep and found their partner having or trying to have sex with them (Logan et al., 2007). Findings from a small pilot study of partner violence victims were that 51.1% of those not raped and 90.9% of those raped by the violent partner reported the violent partner initiated sex while she was sleeping and he knew she did not like that, and 31.9% of those not raped and 81.8% of those raped reported they had woken up with him actually penetrating her (Logan, 2011). Below are some excerpts from women about incapacitated sex (Logan et al., 2007; Logan, 2011).

- I wouldn't have sex with him that night because I didn't feel well and then when I fell asleep, I woke up in the morning about 4 or 5 and I had woke up and it scared me, it startled me. *He was*

in? Yeah and I said, “Stop, what are you doing” and he said, “This is the only way I thought I could get it.” Yeah, it really does freak me out. But it’s your husband, and he laughs about it later on. I don’t know how to act about that, even when it did happen. I was - he was really turned on by it. He was sweating and into it. I mean, it’s hard to say that your husband raped you, but, but since I’m technically his wife at that time it’s not rape to him. Or most people!

- I was lying on my side and I woke up and he was doing his thing and acted like I didn’t feel it but I did. I just laid there, I was like, “God,” you know, I don’t understand why, I told him that I thought it was like - I thought he was having sex with dead people. I mean that’s how it made me feel. You know, I mean, my ex-husband was the same way. My grandma told me that was abuse.
- [I wake up feeling] angry. My feelings were hurt because it’s like I’m a piece of meat. Yesterday morning that was the situation. I woke up and he was - he was going at it, and every time I’d tell him to stop he wouldn’t and he went ahead and I just laid there like a dead person. I just gave in, you know. There was absolutely no emotions, no language. I just laid there [saying] “No, no.”

In addition to compelled sex due to incapacitation while she slept the excerpts above also underscore humiliation and degradation.

Trajectory of partner sexual violence. Understanding the evolution of partner sexual violence is also critically important. Relationships evolve over time and patterns that might be rare at one stage can become more frequent later. To date, there is very little information available about when partner sexual violence starts within a relationship, how it starts, how it evolves in relation to the other dimensions of partner violence, and how it evolves over time within the relationship. One study provided some limited information about the trajectory of sexual violence and found that over half of the partner violence victims who experienced sexual violence reported they were sexually assaulted the first time within two years after the first consensual act (McFarlane & Malecha, 2005). The examination of the trajectory of sexual violence over time also needs to account for changes in victim responses over time. The examination of perpetration and response interaction assessed only at one point in time does not provide the “whole story.”

In general, there is agreement that partner violence consists of at least four main dimensions: physical, psychological, stalking, and sexual violence (Basile et al., 2004; Logan et al., 2006; Mechanic, Weaver, & Resick, 2000; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). Research suggests that between 25% and 55% of women experiencing physical assault by an intimate partner also experience sexual violence by that partner (Campbell & Soeken, 1999; Eby et al., 1995; McFarlane & Malecha, 2005; Wingood, DiClemente, & Raj, 2000a). One study found that for 30% of the sexual violence victims, the sexual assault occurred before the first physical abuse began (McFarlane & Malecha, 2005). The same study also found that 40% of the partner violence victims who were sexually assaulted were physically assaulted immediately before the first sexual assault and 50% were physically assaulted immediately before subsequent sexual assaults. Thirty percent of the victims were physically assaulted immediately after the first sexual assault and 35% were physically assaulted immediately following subsequent sexual assaults. Several studies have found that partner sexual violence is associated with more severe partner physical violence (Bergen & Bukovec, 2006; Cole et al., 2005; Crowell & Burgess, 1996; Dutton, Goodman, & Bennett, 1999; Ramisetty-Mikler, Caetano, & McGrath, 2007). In fact, one study found that partner violence victims with forced sex experiences had almost double the physical severity score index compared to those with no sexual insistence or force and even those in the sexual insistence group (their partner insisted they have sex but there were no explicit threats or force) (Cole et al., 2005).

Several studies indicate that when victims are thinking of separation and thus perhaps have begun an emotional separation or when they are actually separated they are at risk of sexual assault (DeKeseredy, 2007; Finkelhor & Yllo, 1985; Russell, 1982). Russell (1982) found that 15% of the wives in their study experienced sexual violence after the relationship had been

terminated and several of them were raped for the first time during the separation.

Other research suggests there is a significant association between stalking and sexual violence (Logan & Cole, 2011; McFarlane & Malecha, 2005; McFarlane, Malecha, Watson et al., 2005). Not all women are stalked by their violent partner and not all women are raped by their violent partner. Research suggests that of women with protective orders, between 50% and 60% have experienced stalking at any point in the relationship with that partner (Logan et al., 2007; Logan & Walker, 2009). At the same time 25% to 30% of women with protective orders against a violent partner report forced sex by that partner (Logan et al., 2007; Logan & Walker, 2009). Several studies have found between 25% and 33% of their sample were stalked and had experienced rape by that partner (Logan et al., 2007; Logan & Cole, 2011). Stalking and rape are particularly important dimensions of abuse to examine because of their significant link with the risk of revictimization as well as physical and mental health consequences associated with each of these dimensions of abuse. One study compared three groups of partner violence victims with protective orders: (1) women who never experienced stalking or rape by the violent partner; (2) women who were stalked but not raped (defined using the narrow criteria of threatened or forced penetration) by the violent partner; and, (3) women who were both stalked and raped by the violent partner (Logan & Cole, 2011). Results showed that more women in the rape and stalking group reported experiencing every single sexual coercion and abuse tactic measured compared to the other two groups.

Although many researchers agree that there is a significant overlap of physical assault and sexual assault in violent relationships, several studies suggest that there are some relationships that are characterized solely by sexual assault/violence which are referred to as force-only rape (Bergen, 1996; Campbell, 1989; Finkelhor & Yllo, 1985; Russell, 1982). For

example, Finkelhor and Yllo (1985) identified 40% of their sample of 50 victims as experiencing forced-only rape (no physical abuse outside of the rape). A few other studies have found much smaller proportions of force-only relationships (2%-4%) (Russell, 1982; Campbell, 1989).

Unfortunately, recent studies have not attended to these characteristics of partner sexual violence so there is still much to be learned. For example, little is known about the rate of sexual violence within relationships characterized more by controlling behavior than by physical assault. Thus, it is not clear whether some of the “force-only” rapes are actually part of coercive control or whether they really are the only abusive aspect of the partner’s behavior.

Conclusion. In 1999 Kersti Yllo noted that despite the fact that sexual violence received equal billing on the power and control wheel, “sexual violence is ignored within the Duluth model and in broader efforts to deal with woman abuse” (p. 224). The examination of both the current literature and the frequently used measures of sexual violence suggests that there is still a significant gap in knowledge regarding a full understanding of the scope and nature of partner sexual violence. One of the implicit questions behind this paper is whether social norms have influenced research or whether research has contributed to shaping social norms. That is, have the shortcomings of the research so paralleled the ambivalence society feels about examining private sexual life that there has been a failure in research to advance the understanding of partner sexual violence?

Regardless of the answer to the question above, the fact that the selected 172 articles examined had very little information regarding the scope and nature of partner sexual violence suggests that continuing with existing research methods and measures will not facilitate a deeper understanding of this phenomenon. Specifically, it is no longer acceptable to just ask women a yes or no question or classify women into a dichotomous category of whether she was threatened or

forced into sex acts. A dichotomy cannot and does not begin to capture the level of terror and bodily incapacity women experience during the sexual violence incidents. It also means that researchers must delve more deeply into the targeted behaviors and contributing factors rather than simply applying existing measures to different sample populations. One of the first steps in future research should be to systematically examine the frequency, severity, and duration of sexual violence incidents. And, one of the second steps in future research should be to better elucidate the role of sexual violence plays in coercive control.

Suggesting that sexual violence has its own role within coercive control is different from saying that sexual violence is just another form of partner violence (Yllo, 1999). Thirty years ago Russell (1982) concluded that “wife rape cannot and must not be subsumed under the battered woman rubric” (p. 101). Understanding sexual violence as a unique class of coercive control with a specific role might radically alter society’s view of how seemingly “consensual” sexual acts are actually conducted in a context that negates women’s sexual agency and causes serious harms. Some considerations for how future research could facilitate a better understanding of the unique role of sexual violence include examining: (1) the sexual degradation and humiliation that underlie sexual violence within intimate relationships; (2) the boundaries of sexual autonomy and consent within intimate relationships; and, (3) the trajectory of how sexual violence develops within intimate relationships along with other types of violence. None of this can be accomplished without an increased willingness to break the silence of sexual violence by systematically acknowledging, documenting, and addressing the full scope and nature of partner sexual violence.

One of the most challenging aspects of understanding the role of sexual violence in coercive control will be to clarify the boundaries of sexual consent within intimate relationships. The

complexity comes from at least three primary sources. First, the prevailing myths and norms about sexual violence within relationships contribute to the narrow understanding of partner sexual violence. It may be that research needs to provide more compelling information about the nature and scope of partner sexual violence to dispel the myths and norms about “real rape” that are influential in society’s response to partner sexual violence. Second, the potentially hidden nature of implicit threats that make the interpretation of sexual behaviors in one context seem “normal” and in another context seem “violent” and this context is difficult to discern with the typical research methods and measures. Third, there are unique challenges associated with partner sexual violence around consent, especially because consensual sexual relations likely precede and follow incidents of sexual violence. Although sexual consent is at the core of sexual violence, especially in legal cases, there has been very limited research on how consent is perceived, negotiated, and communicated in general and how it is different from wantedness (Humphreys & Herold, 2007). Schulhofer (1998, p. 103) suggests that “We have to consider the dynamics of sexual interaction in different settings and the possible impairment of decision-making capabilities under different circumstances.” And, this consideration of context must be translated to research and measurement. Future research must consider the concept of wantedness and consent in a way that distinguishes sexual coercion from attempts to negotiate mismatched sexual desires between partners where there is the capacity to give consent, without coercion or undue influence.

It is likely that women reporting forced sex are the “tip of the iceberg” in terms of the extent and depth of sexual violence perpetrated by partners. Given the wide range and proportions of women who experienced non-physically forced sexual coercion and sexually degrading tactics it may be especially important to examine the patterns, evolution, and dynamics of various types of sexual behavior, ranging from “healthy” sexuality, to demeaning, to

violent, within the context of other psychological and violent behaviors (i.e., coercive control). This may mean that a change in language is needed to better measure sexual violence in intimate relationships. For example, it may be important to consider language that indicates more of a continuum rather than a dichotomy of experiences. Further the measurement and language of sexual violence may need to be more qualitative and less rooted in structured approaches that are confined by current knowledge. In one sense, this may mean going back to the drawing board with regard to measurement of sexual violence. In part, this suggests that the field has leapt ahead of itself, presuming too much on what has been learned about physical violence and assuming that sexual violence is but another form of physical assault or that it is synonymous with unwanted sex. Also, it will be important to capture the impact of the sex act on the victim as an additional way of understanding boundaries, consent, and harm from the acts.

By more accurately capturing sexual violence experiences, the impact of partner sexual violence can be portrayed more accurately. A number of studies indicate there is an association of partner sexual violence and higher rates of physical and mental health problems, although the consequences reported in these articles vary widely (Bonomi et al., 2007; McFarlane, Malecha, Gist et al., 2005; McFarlane, Malecha, Watson2005b; Pico-Alfonso et al., 2006; Wingood, DiClemente, & Raj, 2000a; Zinzow et al., 2010). There are a number of reasons for the differences in the impact of sexual violence on health and mental health outcomes by study; however, this paper suggests that the full nature and scope of sexual violence is not being captured in current studies which mean that outcomes cannot be accurately portrayed.

It will also be important to capture a wider range of women's responses to partner sexual violence. This includes learning more about the effects but also about how women's resilience and self-protective measures might play a role in the trajectories of sexual violence (Logan et al.,

2007). Currently, little is known about the effects of resisting sexual violence in intimate relationships apart from knowing that resistance is less common in partner rapes than in stranger and acquaintance rapes (Clay-Warner, 2003; Macy, Nurius & Norris, 2006; Martin, Taft, & Resick, 2007; Turchik, Probst, Chau, Nigoff, & Gidycz, 2007; Ullman, 2007; VanZile-Tamsen, Testa, & Livingston, 2005). For example, little is known about specific tactics for resistance and whether any of these are safer or more protective than others or how some women are able to avoid sexual violence more often than others, which is a gap in the understanding that would be important to fill for the development and improvement of prevention interventions. Logan et al. (2007) found, from a qualitative study, that 19% of the participants volunteered information about how they resisted sexual relations with their partners at least some of the time (23% of the group that did not report ever being raped by that partner and 16% of those who reported a history of rape with that partner). That proportion would likely be higher if every participant would have been asked about their resistance ability and strategies.

Another argument for greater emphasis on contextual factors is that not all women perceive the same level of trauma from the same kinds of sexually violent acts. Further, it may be important to consider whether or not equating non-forced sexual coercion to forced sex diminishes the extent of harm that forced sexual contact has on victims (Gavey, 1999). Thus, while specific acts must be carefully accounted for, it becomes all the more critical to capture individual experiences of what the acts have meant to victims. Gavey (1999) summarizes this point with:

“If we see our role as giving women voice, then it may not be legitimate to “put words in their mouths,” to describe experiences as rape that women themselves do not describe in that way.” However, “When women’s voices don’t always tell ‘our story’ it can be

troubling to know how to proceed” (p. 68)... “However, the notion that it may be possible to experience rape and suffer no lasting devastating psychological effects is less often articulated than is the discourse of harm. But this “finding” about the effects of rape begs the question of whether such research, which once again must compress and order experiences into finite categories, is adequate to perceive more subtle, idiosyncratic, and unpredictable psychological effects of rape” (p. 70).

Lastly, partner sexual violence has received limited attention as a risk factor for ongoing assaults, persistent stalking, and lethality but this is an area that needs more attention in future research. As noted earlier, sexual violence is associated with more severe physical violence in the relationship (Bergen & Bukovec, 2006; Cole et al., 2005; Crowell & Burgess, 1996; Dutton et al., 1999; Ramisetty-Mikler et al., 2007). And there is some research that indicates sexual violence is associated with persistent stalking (Logan & Cole, 2011). Other literature suggests there is an association of sexual violence and risk for lethal violence (Morgan & Gilchrist, 2010). Expanding the notion of sexual violence to include features discussed in this paper, especially features like frequency, duration, trajectory, and level of humiliation and degradation with risk for severe violence, ongoing assaults, persistent stalking, and lethality may be important in developing even more accurate risk assessments (Bellingham-Whatcom County Commission Against Domestic Violence Safety Audit Team, 2011).

It is recommended that future research move step-wise from open-ended qualitative approaches into careful development of more accurate quantitative measures that account for context and effects of sexual violence. Understanding the full nature and scope of partner sexual violence will also pave the way for holding offenders accountable for their actions. Also, having better knowledge and documentation of the harms associated with partner sexual violence can

inform the legal processes as well. Allowing for a more open discussion of all the ways women have been forced to live will acknowledge the full extent of victim suffering, which is the first step before amelioration of suffering can occur, and will demand an improved response from society. One woman who was sexually and physically abused for years summed it up: “It is hard to speak loud and clear when you are choking on fear and are beaten and wounded inside and out. Over time, my voice became almost inaudible. I was disappearing in every way possible. I felt lost and unheard. I don’t feel either any more. There is much comfort for me in knowing that I have been heard...It has made my suffering endurable. What kept my screams silent for so long was the fear that no one would believe me...It is a horrible feeling to be calling out for help, hanging on to hope for dear life, and to continue to feel yourself disappearing” (Evertz, 2001, p. 282).

Table 1. Additional Classifications of Measures of Sexual Violence

Category n=172	Category Description	Category Inclusion Criteria	%
Sexual Coercion	Included sexual coercion prevalence rates separate from forced sexual activity	An article measured and reported rates of non-forced sexual coercion (e.g., verbal pressure).	28.4%
Substance-Involved Sexual Violence Measured	Included measures of incapacitated and substance-facilitated sex activities	An article measured the use of drugs or alcohol to impair, lower resistance, incapacitate the victim, or if a question asked if the victim was too impaired from alcohol or drug use to give consent. Articles that only asked about alcohol or drug use by either victim or perpetrator were not coded into this category.	40.7%
Rates of Substance-Involved Sexual Violence Reported Separately From Other Forms of Sexual Violence	Included measures of incapacitated and substance facilitated sex activities and reported rates of substance involved forced penetration separate from sexual coercion and/or rape	Rates of the use of drugs or alcohol to impair, lower resistance, incapacitate the victim, or the victim was too impaired to give consent were reported separately from other types of sexual violence.	16.3%

Table 2. Degrading and Humiliating Sexual Tactics Reported by Victims of Partner Violence in Two Studies

	Did Not Experience Threatened/Forced Sex	Experienced Threatened/Forced Sex
Did something sexually demeaning before, during, or after sex	21.3%-29%	80.6%-90.9%
Insisted on watching pornography when she didn't want to	16%-23.4%	61.3%-81.8%
Insulted her physical appearance in the context of a sexual encounter	27.7%-41.9%	58.1%-81.8%
Accused her of being a lousy lover	27.7%-29%	58.1%-72.7%
Compared her in a negative way to his past sex partners	25.5%-38.7%	45.2%-72.7%
Got violent during sex (that wasn't forced) without feeling badly about it	10.6%-16%	72.7%-78%
Used sex as another way to control her	46.8%	90.9%

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