



Examining Sexual Violence as a Predictor of Sexual Ambivalence

Alexandra Nicoletti¹ · D. J. Angelone¹ · Meredith Jones¹

Accepted: 17 February 2024
© The Author(s) 2024

Abstract

Sexual ambivalence can be defined as an experience of sexual behavior as both wanted and unwanted, to some degree, in a particular sexual situation. Despite ambivalence, individuals often decide to participate in these sexual experiences. There are several related and overlapping reasons as to why people ultimately decide to engage in sexual activity, including a history of engaging in a particular sexual behavior or being intimate with a prior partner. There is also evidence to suggest that experiences of sexual violence are related to sexual ambivalence. The present study explored whether prior experience with both a sexual activity and a partner, as well as sexual violence, predicted sexually ambivalent behaviors. Participants were 932 college students who completed a one-time survey about their sexual experiences. Results demonstrated that women were more likely than men to report experiencing sexual ambivalence, and women experienced more ambivalence before, during, and after a sexual encounter. Men were more likely than women to experience ambivalence during and after a sexual activity. A history of sexual violence victimization was associated with experiencing sexual ambivalence prior to engaging in a sexual behavior. Prior experience with a sexual partner or sexual activity was predictive of ambivalence during a sexual encounter, as well as engaging in a sexual activity despite ambivalence. These findings suggest that there are gender differences in sexual ambivalence, and that sexual violence impacts sexual-decision making. We hope these findings can inform sexual violence prevention and sexual education programs.

Keywords Sexual violence · Ambivalence · Sexual scripts · Sexual decision-making

✉ Alexandra Nicoletti
nicole23@rowan.edu

¹ Department of Psychology, Rowan University, 201 Mullica Hill Rd, Glassboro, NJ 08028, USA

Introduction

Sexual violence is defined as any attempted or completed penetrative, non-penetrative, or non-contact sexual behavior perpetrated against a person without their consent, or if the person is unable to consent or refuse (Basile et al., 2014). Nearly one in four women and one in nine men have experienced some form of non-consensual sexual contact in their lifetimes. Experiences of sexual violence are related to a variety of negative consequences, including anxiety and depressive disorders, eating disorders, and attempted suicide (Chen et al., 2010), and an increased likelihood of being revictimized in the future (Maniglio, 2009). Given the prevalence of sexual violence and its related negative outcomes, it is important to understand how experiences of sexual violence may influence other forms of sexual decision-making.

Engaging in sexual experiences may include a complex decision-making process depending on the specific situation, behaviors, and individuals involved. Despite historical perspectives defining sexual violence as any *unwanted* behavior, more contemporary perspectives have focused on *consent*. In fact, a recent model suggests that sexual behaviors can be dichotomized across two distinct poles: consent and wantedness (Peterson & Muehlenhard, 2007). These researchers suggest the wantedness of a sexual behavior can be distinctly different from consenting to a behavior. Wantedness can be defined as desiring, wishing, or feeling inclined toward a sexual behavior. Sexual wantedness is continuous and multidimensional, suggesting it can change throughout the course of a sexual encounter. On the other hand, consent can be defined as the act of agreeing to engage in a behavior. As such, an individual can *want* to engage in a sexual experience, but not *consent* to it. Without consent, this interaction would be considered sexual violence. Conversely, an individual may not want to engage in a particular sexual behavior, but willingly consent to it. Since the individual consented to the behavior, despite not wanting to, this experience would not be defined as sexual violence. There is, however, an association between sexual violence and consenting to unwanted sex. For example, individuals with a history of sexual violence by their current partners are more likely to consent to unwanted sex, despite a lack of immediate pressure to do so (Conroy et al., 2015; Katz & Tirone, 2010).

Another concept, sexual ambivalence, appears highly related to the concept of unwanted, consensual sex. Sexual ambivalence can be defined as an experience of sexual behavior as both wanted and unwanted, to some degree, in a particular sexual situation (Muehlenhard & Rodgers, 1998). Most sexually active people will experience feelings of ambivalence at some point in their lives when presented with an opportunity to engage in a sexual behavior (Muehlenhard & Peterson, 2005). These behaviors may include kissing, fondling, oral sex, penetrative sex, and other sexual behaviors (O'Sullivan and Gaines 1998). Prevalence rates of sexually ambivalent experiences range from 30 to 46 percent among young adults (O'Sullivan and Gaines 1998; Vannier & O'Sullivan, 2011).

People may feel ambivalent about engaging in a sexual behavior for a variety of reasons. For example, some young people report experiencing feelings of

pleasure during sex while also feeling vulnerable to physical or psychological danger (Muehlenhard & Peterson, 2005). Additionally, many adults may desire a sexual activity but fear potential consequences such as, pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases and infections (Muehlenhard & Peterson, 2005). Conversely, some individuals may desire the outcomes of sexual activity but not the act itself, leading to feeling unsure about whether to engage in sexual activity. These outcomes include promoting intimacy within their relationship and avoiding tension between partners (Muehlenhard & Peterson, 2005; O'Sullivan & Allgeier, 1998). Therefore, wanting only some aspects of sex but not others can lead individuals to feel ambivalent about engaging in a sexual activity. Despite their ambivalence, individuals often decide to ultimately participate in these sexual experiences (Peterson & Muehlenhard, 2007). In fact, when individuals find themselves in a situation in which they experience sexual ambivalence, only 13 percent do not consent to sex (O'Sullivan & Allgeier, 1998).

There are several related and overlapping reasons as to why people ultimately decide to engage in sexual activity. First, some adults engage in sex while feeling ambivalent if they have previously participated in that particular sexual act. In fact, according to the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), an individual's past behavior directly contributes to future engagement in the same behavior, and a key predictor for participating in sex is prior sexual behavior (Fielder & Carey, 2010; Ouellette & Wood, 1998). For example, people with prior sexual experience are far more likely to repeat the same behavior a year later (Owen et al., 2011). As for sexual ambivalence, between 30 and 50 percent of people who have engaged in sex despite feeling ambivalent report that they had previously engaged in that specific sexual activity (O'Sullivan and Gaines 1998; O'Sullivan & Allgeier, 1998). In addition, individuals are far more likely to engage in a sexual activity while feeling ambivalent if they have engaged in that activity despite past ambivalence (O'Sullivan & Allgeier, 1998).

In addition, individuals may be more likely to engage in sexual activity despite their ambivalence if they have previously had sex with the same partner (O'Sullivan & Allgeier, 1998). There is a positive relationship between feelings of commitment to a partner and an individual's likelihood to engage in sex despite sexual ambivalence (Impett & Peplau, 2003). As noted, people may consent to sex because they believe it will promote intimacy within the relationship with their partner (Conroy et al., 2015; Muehlenhard & Peterson, 2005). Many individuals also describe the concept of an implicit social contract within heterosexual romantic relationships that involves maintaining sexual activities even when sex is not desired by one partner (Vannier & O'Sullivan, 2011). Romantic partners often engage in sex despite feelings of ambivalence to fulfill their partners' desire for sex. These individuals may feel pressured to engage in sex due to an awareness that in the future, the roles of wanting versus not wanting may be reversed within their relationship. They may also believe that by refusing to engage in sex, their partner might think they are trying to dissolve or diminish the relationship (O'Sullivan & Allgeier, 1998). Others report consenting to sex to avoid upsetting their partners and to prevent partners from losing interest (Conroy et al., 2015).

Although limited, the existing literature demonstrates that having sex while ambivalent is linked to various negative outcomes (O'Sullivan & Allgeier, 1998). For example, among individuals who decide to engage in sex despite their ambivalence, 30% report experiencing emotional discomfort, including disappointment in oneself, physical discomfort, or relationship tension following the sexual act. They may also experience feelings of shame/guilt, and believe they lost part of their identity (Conroy et al., 2015). These individuals also report experiencing less enjoyment and pleasure during sexual encounters where they were feeling ambivalent (Vannier & O'Sullivan, 2011). Willingly consenting to sex despite ambivalent feelings may also have implications for individuals' vulnerability to sexual violence. For example, 19% of college women who report unwanted, non-consensual sex also report experiencing sexual ambivalence during these encounters (Peterson & Muehlenhard, 2007). Students who consent to sex while feeling ambivalent are also less likely to use condoms, increasing their risk for contracting and spreading sexually transmitted infections and diseases (Fair & Vanyur, 2011).

Prior experience with a specific sexual (O'Sullivan & Allgeier, 1998) or with a specific partner (Conroy et al., 2015; O'Sullivan & Allgeier, 1998) is associated with a greater likelihood that individuals will engage in sex while feeling ambivalent. For example, if someone had oral sex with a particular partner, they would be more likely to engage in oral sex with that partner even though they were feeling ambivalent. This would suggest that prior experience with *both* a specific sexual activity and a specific partner would predict engagement in sex while feeling ambivalent. Additionally, since sexual violence has been broadly linked to sexual ambivalence, we predicted that past experiences of sexual violence would be associated with ambivalent outcomes. However, due to the limited research in this area, our predictions were exploratory in nature. Therefore, the purpose of the current study was to explore whether 1) prior experience with both a sexual activity and a partner predicts sexually ambivalent behaviors, and 2) whether sexual violence predicts sexually ambivalent behaviors.

Method

Participants

Participants were recruited from a medium-sized public university in the northeastern U.S. using an electronic participant pool. Those who were eligible were directed to a one-time electronic survey administered via Qualtrics. The informed consent included information about the nature of the study, how the data would be used, and resources available should participants experience emotional distress. Upon completion of the survey, participants were given course credit. A total of 932 undergraduate students completed the survey. All study procedures were approved by the university's Institutional Review Board.

Measures

Demographics

Participants answered a series of demographic questions. These questions asked participants to self-identify their race and ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, and class year.

Sexual Ambivalence

We used an adapted version of the Questions About Ambivalent Experiences (O'Sullivan & Allgeier, 1998) to assess participants' experiences of sexual ambivalence. This is a 15-item scale with each item scored separately. For example, when asked "have you ever been in a situation in which a man/woman indicated to you that they wanted to engage in a particular sexual activity with you" and "have you ever been in a such a situation where a man/woman indicated that they wanted to engage in a particular sexual activity, but you were not sure at that time if you wanted to engage in it or not," participants answered either "yes," "no," or "I don't know." Participants were also given these answer options when presented with the question "had you ever engaged in this sexual activity with this person before this interaction." When asked "did you end up engaging in the sexual activity despite being unsure," participants answered either "yes" or "no." Participants were also asked to indicate if they experienced ambivalence before, during, and/or after a particular sexual activity.

Sexual Violence Victimization

In order to assess participants' prior experiences with sexual violence victimization, we utilized the Sexual Experiences Survey (Koss et al., 2007). This scale asks participants to indicate the frequency of particular sexual experiences in both the past 12 months and since the age of 14. For the purposes of our study, we only assessed participants' experiences over the past 12 months. Each item describes a sexual experience (e.g. "someone had oral sex with me or made me have oral sex with them without my consent by") and asks participants to indicate tactic used (e.g. "threatening to physically harm me or someone close to me," "taking advantage of me when I was too drunk or out of it to stop what was happening"). We created a dichotomous score for sexual violence victimization, with '1' indicating prior victimization and '0' indicating no prior victimization over the past 12 months.

Results

Descriptive Statistics

Our sample consisted of 925 participants ($M_{age}=19.1$). There were 515 women (55%) and 410 men (44%). Due to the limited number of participants that identified

within other gender categories, our analytic sample consisted only of cisgender men and women. 604 participants (65%) identified as White, 117 participants identified as Black or African American (13%), 103 participants identified as Latino or Hispanic (11%), 60 participants identified as Asian or Asian American (6%), 14 participants identified as Middle Eastern (2%), 6 participants identified as Native American (0.6%), and 22 participants identified as bi- or multi-racial (2%). Additionally, 814 participants identified as heterosexual or straight (87%), 26 identified as gay or lesbian (3%), 65 participants identified as bisexual (7%) and 10 identified as queer or another orientation (1%).

Regarding ambivalence, 539 participants (68%) reported that they had ever felt ambivalent about a sexual activity, with 264 (46%) reporting engaging in a sexual activity while ambivalent. 502 participants (54%) reported experiencing ambivalence before a sexual activity, 146 (16%) reported ambivalence during the activity, and 83 (9%) reporting ambivalence after the sexual activity. Further, 85 (9%) of participants reported completed sexual violence victimization by fondling, 64 (7%) reported oral sex, 41 (4%) reported vaginal sex, and 30 (3%) reported anal sex victimization. Additionally, 37 participants (4%) experienced attempted sexual violence by oral sex, 24 (3%) by attempted vaginal sex, and 23 (3%) by anal sex. Experiences of attempted and completed sexual violence were significantly correlated ($r=0.53$, $p<0.001$).

We ran independent samples t-tests to assess gender differences in prior experience with a partner and activity, sexual violence, and ambivalent experiences. There were no significant differences in sexual violence victimization among men and women, $t=0.17$, $p=0.74$. Men were, however, more likely to report having ever engaged with their sexual partner and the sexual activity as compared to women, $t=-6.75$, $p<0.001$. Women were significantly more likely to experience ambivalence as compared to men, $t=6.75$, $p<0.001$. Women were also significantly more likely to experience ambivalence before ($t=5.60$, $p<0.001$), during ($t=6.63$, $p<0.001$), and after sexual activity ($t=2.97$, $p<0.001$).

Primary Analyses

We ran a series of generalized linear models to evaluate how prior experience with a sexual partner and activity and a history of sexual violence, predicted a series of ambivalent outcomes. Due to the initial differences in gender among our outcomes, we added gender as a predictor within our model. The models predicting ambivalence before ($p=0.05$) engaging in a sexual behavior, ambivalence during ($p<0.001$), and after engaging in a sexual behavior ($p=0.03$), and engaging in sexual behavior despite ambivalence ($p<0.001$) were significant.

Ambivalence Before

Prior experience with a partner and sexual behavior was not significantly associated with experiencing ambivalence before a sexual activity (Wald $\chi^2=3.01$, $\beta=-0.50$, $OR=0.61$, 95% CI [0.35, 1.07], $p=0.08$). A history of sexual violence, however,

was significantly associated with experiencing ambivalence before a sexual activity (Wald $\chi^2=5.08$, $\beta=-1.06$, $OR=0.35$, 95% CI [0.14, 0.87], $p=0.02$). Gender was not significantly associated with feeling ambivalent before a sexual behavior (Wald $\chi^2=0.07$, $\beta=-0.08$, $OR=0.97$, 95% CI [0.52, 1.65], $p=0.79$).

Ambivalence During

Prior experience with a partner and sexual behavior (Wald $\chi^2=8.67$, $\beta=0.64$, $OR=1.89$, 95% CI [1.24, 2.88], $p=0.003$, CI) as well as identifying as a man (Wald $\chi^2=20.34$, $\beta=-1.14$, $OR=0.32$, 95% CI [0.20, 0.53], $p<0.001$) were significantly predictive of experiencing ambivalence during a sexual behavior. A history of sexual violence was not significantly associated with ambivalence during a sexual behavior (Wald $\chi^2=1.49$, $\beta=0.53$, $OR=1.69$, 95% CI [0.73, 3.93], $p=0.22$).

Ambivalence After

Identifying as a man (Wald $\chi^2=5.73$, $\beta=-0.74$, $OR=0.48$, 95% CI [0.26, 0.87], $p=0.02$) was significantly predictive of experiencing ambivalence after a sexual behavior. However, prior experience with a partner and sexual behavior (Wald $\chi^2=2.30$, $\beta=0.40$, $OR=1.50$, 95% CI [0.89, 2.52], $p=0.13$) and a history of sexual violence were not predictive of ambivalence after a sexual behavior (Wald $\chi^2=0.45$, $\beta=0.35$, $OR=1.42$, 95% CI [0.51, 3.93], $p=0.50$).

Engaging in Sex Despite Ambivalence

Prior experience with a partner and sexual behavior (Wald $\chi^2=17.94$, $\beta=0.83$, $OR=2.29$, 95% CI [1.56, 3.37] $p<0.001$) was significantly predictive of engaging in a sexual activity despite experiencing ambivalence. Gender (Wald $\chi^2=0.03$, $\beta=-0.03$, $OR=0.97$, 95% CI [0.66, 1.42], $p=0.87$) and history of sexual violence (Wald $\chi^2=0.31$, $\beta=0.23$, $OR=1.26$, 95% CI [0.56, 2.82], $p=0.58$) were not significantly associated with engaging in a sexual behavior despite ambivalence.

Discussion

This study sought to evaluate whether prior experience with a partner and a specific sexual activity, and a history of sexual violence victimization predicted feelings of sexual ambivalence during a specific sexual encounter. Our preliminary analyses found that though there were no significant differences among men and women in their experiences of sexual violence victimization, women were more likely than men to report having ever experienced sexual ambivalence, and experienced more ambivalence before, during, and after a sexual encounter as compared to men. One potential explanation for these gender differences could be sexual script theory (Simon & Gagnon, 1986), which posits that individuals make meaning out of behaviors and emotions based on internalized scripts, shaped within a social context. Sexual scripts provide a sense of direction for responding to sexual cues and situations

(Wiederman, 2005). For example, feeling able to refuse or ask for sex may be rooted in societal gender norms (Fahs et al., 2020). Though individuals within the same cultural context may develop similar scripts, men and women follow separate guidelines for sexual behavior (Wiederman, 2005). Sexual script theory offers one possible explanation for the gender differences in our findings, however, we are unable to determine if our participants' ambivalence was caused by a reaction to their scripts, as this was beyond the scope of our study.

For women, subscribing to feminine gender roles may impact the likelihood of experiencing sexual ambivalence. Women are taught to be compliant and passive with their sexual partners (Conroy et al., 2015; Morgan et al., 2006), and to focus their sexual activity on the pleasure of a male partner rather than their own (Kettrey, 2018). Women also experience higher levels of guilt surrounding sex as compared to their male counterparts (Emmers-Sommer et al., 2018), often due to the judgment they receive about engaging in sexual behavior. Consequently, a woman may simultaneously desire sex, yet experience sexual guilt, resulting in ambivalence. Further, when feeling sexually aroused, women are less likely than men to view their arousal in a positive manner (Allen et al., 2007), likely because women are socialized to view sexual gratification with caution. In other words, even when sexually aroused, women may hesitate to perceive their arousal in a positive manner, which may result in feelings of sexual ambivalence. Therefore, the women in our study may have experienced significantly more sexual ambivalence than men due to the societal pressures they feel to comply to sex and prioritize their partners' pleasure, as well as experiencing guilt and shame surrounding sex.

Our results varied regarding whether the participant felt ambivalent before, during, or after the sexual experience. First, we found that identifying as a man was significantly associated with feeling ambivalent both during and after a sexual activity. These findings may also be explained by sexual scripts, such that men are taught to view sex as a goal-directed activity, centered around self-pleasure (Katz & Tirone, 2010). When the opportunity to engage in sex is present, men are expected to engage in, and often initiate, sex. Further, men are more likely than women to engage in "token seduction" whereby they feign sexual interest without the intention of actually engaging in sex (Dreznick et al., 2003). Given that men may frequently initiate sex that is undesired, this may explain why men were more likely to feel ambivalent during and after a sexual activity.

We also found that a history of sexual violence victimization was predictive of experiencing sexual ambivalence prior to engaging in a sexual behavior. This finding extends upon the limited research demonstrating that sexual violence is related to sexual decision-making (Katz & Tirone, 2010), particularly regarding its relationship to sexual ambivalence. Specifically, individuals who have experienced sexual violence are more likely to comply with unwanted sexual behaviors since compliance may be a learned behavior in response to past experiences of coercion (Conroy et al., 2015). In terms of our sample, it is possible that participants with a history of sexual violence victimization felt ambivalent before a sexual encounter due to the learned response of compliance. In other words, they may have not wanted to engage in sex, but felt obligated to do so given a learned response from past experiences of coercion.

Finally, we found that individuals who have previously engaged in the same sexual activity with the same partner were not only more likely to engage in a sexual activity despite ambivalence, but to experience ambivalence during the sexual encounter. This finding is consistent with previous research demonstrating that either prior engagement with a sexual partner, or with a sexual activity, increases the likelihood of engaging in sex while feeling ambivalent (Conroy et al., 2015; O'Sullivan & Allgeier, 1998). In accordance with the Theory of Planned Behavior, participants who had experience with that particular partner or sexual activity may have engaged in sex despite their ambivalence since past behavior is a key predictor of future behavior (Ajzen, 1991). For example, people who have engaged in a sexual behavior previously are likely to do so again in the future (Owen et al., 2011). Further, people may have sex with someone if they have engaged in sex with that person in the past, often due to a feeling of commitment toward that partner (Impett & Peplau, 2003). Therefore, our participants may have felt committed to a past sexual partner, and felt an unspoken obligation to engage in sex despite their feelings of ambivalence.

Limitations & Future Directions

When interpreting our results, it is important to consider the limitations to this study. First, though we measured prior experience with a partner and sexual activity, we did not measure the type of relationship each participant had with the partner in question. It is possible that some participants were in long-term romantic partnerships, some were in ongoing casual hookups, and others were recalling experiences in which they had only been with that partner and engaged in that particular sexual activity once before. If our participants were recalling experiences outside of romantic relationships, our understanding of an implicit contract within a relationship may not have applied to our predictions in the way we intended. Additionally, given the cross-sectional nature of our study, we are unable to establish temporal precedence for our outcomes. In other words, though experiences of sexual violence are predictive of ambivalent outcomes, we are unable to determine if these experiences of sexual violence occurred prior to the experiences of sexual ambivalence.

Future researchers may utilize a longitudinal approach to understand the impact of experiences of sexual violence that occur prior to sexually ambivalent experiences and their respective outcomes. By establishing temporal precedence, future studies may be able to establish a stronger connection between prior experiences of sexual violence and sexual decision-making when feeling ambivalent. Future studies on sexual ambivalence can also extend upon our research by assessing how different types of relationships play a role in saying yes to sexual activity despite feeling ambivalent, and explore how past experiences of sexual violence relate to similar concepts of sexual ambivalence and sexual decision-making.

Our study adds to the limited research on sexual ambivalence to create better understanding of the factors that play into the decision to engage in sex despite ambivalence. The results of this study not only indicate that prior experience with a partner and activity may increase the likelihood of engaging in sex while

feeling ambivalent, but that prior experiences of sexual violence are related to feeling ambivalent before a sexual activity. This research is applicable to the development of sexual violence prevention programs, as well as existing sexual education programs, to broaden students' understanding of the nuances of sexual consent and sexual decision-making.

Funding Open access funding provided by Rowan University. The authors have no relevant financial or non-financial interests to disclose. All authors certify that they have no affiliations with or involvement in any organization or entity with any financial interest or non-financial interest in the subject matter or materials discussed in this manuscript. The authors have no financial or proprietary interests in any material discussed in this article.

Declarations

Conflict of interest The authors have no competing interests to declare that are relevant to the content of this article.

Open Access This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License, which permits use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons licence, and indicate if changes were made. The images or other third party material in this article are included in the article's Creative Commons licence, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the article's Creative Commons licence and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder. To view a copy of this licence, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>.

References

- Allen, M., Emmers-Sommer, T. M., D'Alessio, D., Timmerman, L., Hanzal, A., & Korus, J. (2007). The connection between the physiological and psychological reactions to sexually explicit materials: A literature summary using meta-analysis. *Communication Monographs*, *74*(4), 541–560. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03637750701578648>
- Azjen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behavior. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, *50*, 179–211.
- Basile, K. C., Smith, S. G., Breiding, M. J., Black, M. C., & Mahendra, R. R. (2014). *Sexual Violence Surveillance: Uniform Definitions and Recommended Data Elements, Version 2.0*. Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/sv_surveillance_definitions-2009-a.pdf
- Chen, L. P., Murad, M. H., Paras, M. L., Colbenson, K. M., Sattler, A. L., Goranson, E. N., Elamin, M. B., Seime, R. J., Shinozaki, G., Prokop, L. J., & Zirakzadeh, A. (2010). Sexual abuse and lifetime diagnosis of psychiatric disorders: systematic review and meta-analysis. *Mayo Clinic Proceedings*, *85*(7), 618–629. <https://doi.org/10.4065/mcp.2009.0583>
- Conroy, N. E., Krishnakumar, A., & Leone, J. M. (2015). Reexamining issues of conceptualization and willing consent: the hidden role of coercion in experiences of sexual acquiescence. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, *30*(11), 1828–1846. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260514549050>
- Dreznick, M. T., Cronin, J. M., Waterman, C. K., & Glasheen, C. (2003). Saying yes when meaning no: an investigation of gender and individual differences in token seduction. *Journal of Psychology & Human Sexuality*, *15*(1), 69–84. https://doi.org/10.1300/J056v15n01_06
- Emmers-Sommer, T. M., Allen, M., Schoenbauer, K. V., & Burrell, N. (2018). Implications of sex guilt: A meta-analysis. *Marriage & Family Review*, *54*(5), 417–437. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01494929.2017.1359815>

- Fahs, B., Swank, E., & Shambe, A. (2020). "I just go with it": negotiating sexual desire discrepancies for women in partnered relationships. *Sex Roles*, 83(3–4), 226–239. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-019-01098-w>
- Fair, C., & Vanyur, J. (2011). Sexual coercion, verbal aggression, and condom use consistency among college students. *Journal of American College Health*, 59(4), 273–280. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07448481.2010.508085>
- Fielder, R. L., & Carey, M. P. (2010). Predictors and consequences of sexual "hookups" among college students: A short-term prospective study. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 39(5), 1105–1119. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10508-008-9448-4>
- Impett, E. A., & Peplau, L. A. (2003). Sexual compliance: Gender, motivational, and relationship perspectives. *Journal of Sex Research*, 40(1), 87–100. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00224490309552169>
- Katz, J., & Tirone, V. (2010). Going along with it: Sexually coercive partner behavior predicts dating women's compliance with unwanted sex. *Violence against Women*, 16(7), 730–742. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077801210374867>
- Kettrey, H. H. (2018). "Bad girls" say no and "good girls" say yes: Sexual subjectivity and participation in undesired sex during heterosexual college hookups. *Sexuality & Culture*, 22(3), 685–705. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12119-018-9498-2>
- Koss, M. P., Abbey, A., Campbell, R., Cook, S., Norris, J., Testa, M., Ullman, S., West, C., & White, J. (2007). Revising the SES: A collaborative process to improve assessment of sexual aggression and victimization. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 31(4), 357–370. APA PsycInfo®. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.14716402.2007.00385.x>
- Maniglio, R. (2009). The impact of child sexual abuse on health: A systematic review of reviews. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 29(7), 647–657. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cpr.2009.08.003>
- Morgan, E., Johnson, I., & Sigler, R. (2006). Gender differences in perceptions for women's participation in unwanted sexual intercourse. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 34(5), 515–522. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcrimjus.2006.09.006>
- Muehlenhard, C. L., & Peterson, Z. D. (2005). III wanting and not wanting sex: the missing discourse of ambivalence. *Feminism & Psychology*, 15(1), 15–20. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0959353505049698>
- Muehlenhard, C. L., & Rodgers, C. S. (1998). Token resistance to sex: New perspectives on an old stereotype. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 22(3), 443–463. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1471-6402.1998.tb00167.x>
- O'Sullivan, L. F., & Allgeier, E. R. (1998). Feigning sexual desire: Consenting to unwanted sexual activity in heterosexual dating relationships. *Journal of Sex Research*, 35(3), 234–243. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00224499809551938>
- O'Sullivan, L. F., & Gaines, M. E. (1998). Decision-making in college students' heterosexual dating relationships: Ambivalence about engaging in sexual activity. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 15(3), 347–363.
- Ouellette, J. A., & Wood, W. (1998). *Habit and Intention in Everyday Life: The Multiple Processes by Which Past Behavior Predicts Future Behavior*. 21.
- Owen, J., Fincham, F. D., & Moore, J. (2011). Short-term prospective study of hooking up among college students. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 40(2), 331–341. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10508-010-9697-x>
- Peterson, Z. D., & Muehlenhard, C. L. (2007). What is sex and why does it matter? A motivational approach to exploring individuals' definitions of sex. *The Journal of Sex Research*, 44(3), 256–268. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00224490701443932>
- Simon, W., & Gagnon, J. H. (1986). Sexual scripts: Permanence and change. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 15(2), 97–120.
- Vannier, S. A., & O'Sullivan, L. F. (2011). Communicating Interest in Sex: verbal and nonverbal initiation of sexual activity in young adults' romantic dating relationships. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 40(5), 961–969. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10508-010-9663-7>
- Wiederman, M. W. (2005). The gendered nature of sexual scripts. *The Family Journal*, 13(4), 496–502. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1066480705278729>