

## Positive Evaluations of Rape Predict Sexually Aggressive Behaviour

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## Evaluations

Evaluations (**attitudes**) are theoretically and empirically associated with subsequent behaviour

- **Implicit evaluations:** automatically activated evaluations
- **Explicit evaluations:** deliberative evaluations
- Evaluations are a unique (**distinct**) cognitive construct

## Evaluations of Rape

Few studies have explored the relationship between **evaluations of rape** and **sexually aggressive behaviour**

- Some evidence of a **positive relationship** between implicit and explicit evaluations of rape and indicators of sexually aggressive behaviour
- **Limitations:**
  - Cross-sectional research designs
  - Primarily student samples

## Purpose


Explore the relationships between **implicit** and **explicit** evaluations of rape and sexually aggressive behaviour using a **longitudinal** research design

## Participants

Community Sample (*N* = 248):

- 75.4% were 40 to 60+ years
- 86.3% White
- 62.8% in a relationship
- 46.4% had full time employment
- 60.9% completed college/university

FINDING THE PARTICIPANTS



WANTED \$REWARD\$

## Measures: Implicit Evaluations of Rape

Rape Evaluation Implicit Association Test (REIAT):  
implicit evaluations of rape relative to consenting sex

RAPE	CONSENTING SEX
positive	negative
d	k
FORCE	

Positive scores suggest rape and positive/good are more strongly associated than rape and negative/bad and negative scores suggest the opposite

### Measures: Explicit Evaluations of Rape

**Evaluation of Sexual Aggression Scale**  
(modified SES-TFR Abbey et al., 2005)

- 6 tactics: verbal coercion to physical force
- 6 behaviours: (kissing to oral/vaginal/anal penetration)
- Likert scale: (1) *very negative* to (7) *very positive*
- Average of all 36 items

How **POSITIVE** or **NEGATIVE** do you think the behaviour below is?  
Giving a woman drugs or alcohol without her permission in order to...

(c) Make her have oral sex with you

### Measures: Sexually Aggressive Behaviour

**Sexual Experience Survey – Tactics First Revised**  
(modified Abbey et al., 2005)

- 6 tactics: verbal coercion to physical force
- 6 behaviours: (kissing to oral/vaginal/anal penetration)
- Frequency: (0) *None* to (9) *Nine times or more*
- Weighted total score from Cue Davis et al. (2014)

How many times **SINCE YOU WERE** 16 years old.../  
How many times in the **PAST FOUR MONTHS**...

Have you given a woman drugs or alcohol without her permission in order to...

(c) Make her have oral sex with you

### Procedure

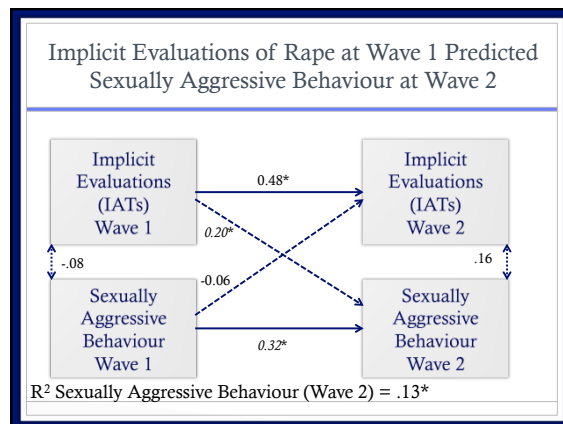
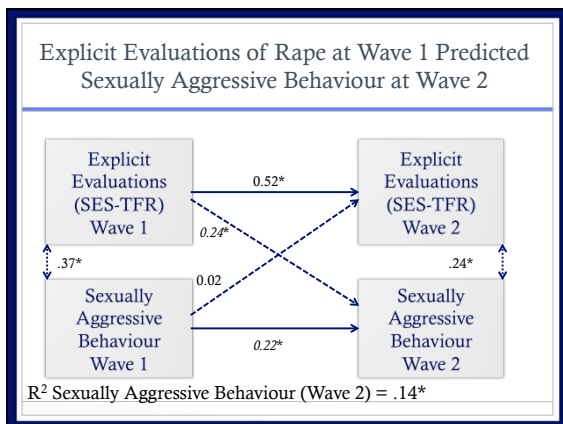
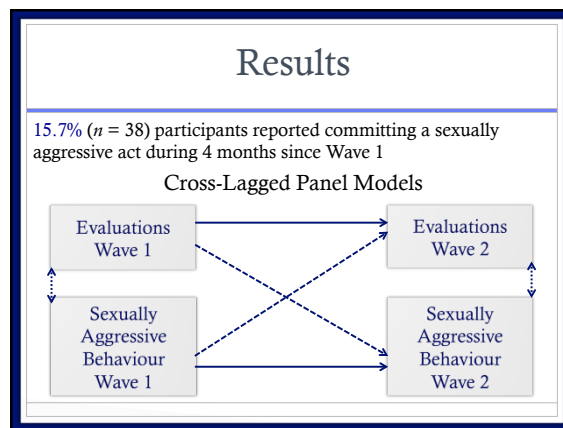
**Wave 1: Online Survey**

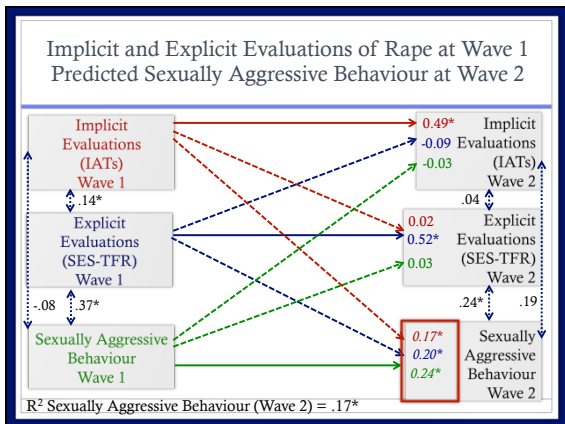
- Implicit evaluations of rape (1 of 4 IAT measures)
- Explicit evaluations of rape
- Past sexually aggressive behaviour (since 16 years old)

4 months

**Wave 2: Online Survey**

- Implicit evaluations of rape
- Explicit evaluations of rape
- Sexually aggressive behaviour (4 month period between Wave 1 and Wave 2)





## Discussion

Implicit and explicit evaluations of rape **independently** predicted **subsequent sexually aggressive behaviour** in a sample of community men

- Consistent with notion that **evaluations of rape** play a causal role in sexually aggressive behaviour
- Consistent with social psychological theory and research that suggests attitudes can be important determinants of behaviour

## Implications

**Theory:**

- Evaluations of rape should be considered in theories explaining sexual offending against adults

**Research:**

- Replicate and expand upon these findings

**Correctional Practice:**

- Assessment
- Treatment

## Limitations

- (1) Self-report measures of sexually aggressive behaviour
- (2) Validity of implicit and explicit measures of evaluations of rape
- (3) Use of the word 'rape' in measures of implicit evaluations of rape

## Future Directions

Replicate and expand on current results

- (1) Longitudinal studies with samples of incarcerated men and official indicators of sexually aggressive behaviour (sexual recidivism)
  - Do evaluations of rape predict sexual recidivism?
  - Does change in evaluations of rape predict sexual recidivism?
- (2) Experiments manipulating evaluations of rape
- (3) Explore the validity of measures of evaluations of rape

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How many participants reported **past** sexually aggressive behaviour (since 16 years old)?

**Community Men (N = 248)**

Sexually Aggressive Tactic	%	n
Arguments and pressure	30.7%	76
Made promises you knew were untrue	18.2%	45
Shown you were not happy by making a woman feel guilty, swearing sulking, or getting angry	24.2%	60
Giving a woman drugs or alcohol without her permission	4.0%	10
Woman passed out or too drunk to stop what was happening	8.9%	22
Used physical force	2.4%	6

How many participants reported sexually aggressive behaviour **during 4 months** between Wave 1 and 2?

**Community Men (N = 242)**

Sexually Aggressive Tactic	%	n
Arguments and pressure	8.3%	20
Made promises you knew were untrue	5.0%	12
Shown you were not happy by making a woman feel guilty, swearing sulking, or getting angry	8.3%	20
Giving a woman drugs or alcohol without her permission	2.1%	5
Woman passed out or too drunk to stop what was happening	3.7%	9
Used physical force	2.5%	6