Clinical and Methodological Issues in the Research on the Rape Myth

Ana Pauna, Zbigniew Pleszewski

Abstract—The purpose of this study is to revisit the concept of rape as represented by professionals in the literature as well as its perception (beliefs and attitudes) in the population at large and to propose methodological improvements to its measurement tool. Rape is a serious crime threatening its victim's physical and mental health and integrity; and as such is legally prosecuted in all modern societies. The problem is not in accepting or rejecting rape as a criminal act, but rather in the vagueness of its interpretations and "justifications" maintained in the mentality of modern societies - known in the literature as the phenomenon of "rape-myth". The rape-myth can be studied from different perspectives: criminology, sociology, ethics, medicine and psychology. Its investigation requires rigorous scientific objectivity, free of passion (victims of rape are at risk of emotional bias), free of activism (social activists, even if well-intentioned are also biased), free of any pre-emptive assumptions or prejudices. To apply a rigorous scientific procedure, we need a solid, valid and reliable measurement. Rape is a form of heterosexual or homosexual aggression, violently forcing the victim to give-in in the sexual activity of the aggressor against her/his will. Human beings always try to "understand" or find a reason justifying their acts. Psychological literature provides multiple clinical and experimental examples of it; just to mention the famous studies by Milgram on the level of electroshock delivered by the "teacher" towards the "learner" if "scientifically justifiable" or the studies on the behavior of "prisoners" and the "guards" and many other experiments and field observations. Sigmund Freud presented the phenomenon of unconscious justification and called it rationalization. The multiple justifications, rationalizations and repeated opinions about sexual behavior contribute to a myth maintained in the society. What kind of "rationale" our societies apply to "understand" the non-consensual sexual behavior? There are many, just to mention few:

• Sex is a ludistic activity for both participants, therefore – even if not consented – it should bring pleasure to both.

• Everybody wants sex, but only men are allowed to manifest it openly while women have to pretend the opposite, thus men have to initiate sexual behavior and women would follow.

• A person who strongly needs sex is free to manifest it and struggle to get it; the person who doesn't want it must not reveal her/his sexual attraction and avoid risky situations; otherwise she/he is perceived as a promiscuous seducer.

• A person who doesn't fight against the sexual initiator unconsciously accepts the rape (does it explain why homosexual rapes are reported less frequently than rapes against women?).

• Women who are raped deserve it because their wardrobe is very revealing and seducing and they ''willingly'' go to highly risky places (alleys, dark roads, etc.).

Ana Pauna is with the Department of Psychology, McGill University, Montreal, Canada (e-mail: ana.pauna@mail.mcgill.ca).

Zbigniew Pleszewski is with the Department of Psychology, McGill University and with the Douglas Hospital, Montreal, Canada (e-mail: plezbi@douglas.mcgill.ca)

• Men need to ventilate their sexual energy and if they are deprived of a partner their urge to have sex is difficult to control.

• Men are supposed to initiate and insist even by force to have sex (their testosterone makes them both sexual and aggressive).

The paper overviews numerous cultural beliefs about masculine versus feminine behavior and their impact on the "rape myth".

I. INTRODUCTION

WITHIN political sciences, law, sociology, social and forensic psychology and even marketing there is a great deal of research pertaining to the study of stereotypes, biases and prejudices and how these perceptions and attitudes shape one's behavior. Labels and unsupported generalizations about a certain race, ethnicity, gender or lifestyle, make the individual and also group interactions biased and distorted. These faulty assumptions can have numerous negative consequences like bullying, victimization, segregation, hatred and other forms of verbal or physical violence. Modern societies are shocked by such events as killings motivated by racial prejudices, wrongful accusations and court sentencing based on ethnic stereotypes harbored by the jury. How frequently we learn nowadays that a highly educated professional was declined a job position by a company manager driven by ethnic, language or gender-related prejudices?

Whereas much research has been conducted on racial, ethnic or sexist discriminations, few studies have looked into another sort of stereotyping based on a person's behavior or what has happened to the person, e.g. prejudices about victims of rape, called "acceptance of rape myths" (such as blaming women for provoking it or being reckless). These myths are proven to be shockingly prevalent in Western societies as they support the commonly accepted ''just-world'' theory. The just-world theory is a belief that bad things can only happen to bad people; that bad people get what they deserve; in this case women who are victims of rape must have been somewhat ''bad'' for the traumatic experience to have occurred in the first place. In an article by M.R. Burt [1], the author ''suggested that rape myths are the mechanism that people use to justify dismissing an incident of sexual assault from the category or real rape … such beliefs deny the reality of actual rapes'' [2]. The consequences instigated by such erroneous beliefs are victim blame, less sympathy for the assaulted woman and less initiative to develop effective treatments and invest in programs meant to help victims of rape to cope with

the Post Traumatic Stress after the incident. It is therefore essential to understand and pinpoint all personal and demographic factors contributing to the acceptance of rape myths.

Rape is a serious crime threatening its victim's physical and mental health and integrity; and as such is legally prosecuted in all modern societies. Whiles nobody (perhaps with an exception of severe psychopaths) would question it in principle, many would vaguely interpret what rape is and what it is not. The problem is not in accepting or rejecting rape as a criminal act, but rather in the vagueness of its interpretations and "justifications" maintained in the mentality of modern societies - known in the literature as the phenomenon of " acceptance of rape-myths". Rape-myths can be studied from different perspectives: criminology, sociology, ethics, medicine and psychology. Its investigation requires rigorous scientific objectivity, free of passion (victims of rape are at risk of emotional bias), free of activism (social activists, even if well-intentioned are also biased), free of any pre-emptive assumptions or prejudices. Nota bene: the very notion of any social myth is already a form of prejudice or bias. To apply a rigorous scientific procedure, we also need a solid, valid and reliable measurement. Do the existing scales satisfy the criteria of scientific measurement?

Definition of rape

Rape is a form of heterosexual or homosexual aggression that consists of violently forcing the victim to give-into the sexual activity of the aggressor against her/his will [3]. The act of rape includes not only coital penetration but any attempt to impose physical intimacy (touching, masturbating, exposing etc.) on the victim. As a form of severe aggression and violation of victim's privacy, it represents a serious traumatic experience threatening the physical and mental wellbeing and further functioning of the victim.

Prejudices, rationalizations and myths about sexuality

Human beings always try to "understand" or find a reason justifying their acts. Psychological literature provides multiple clinical and experimental examples of it; such as the famous studies by Milgram including the one where electroshocks were delivered by the "teacher" to "learner", or the studies on the behavior of "prisoners" and "guards" and many other experiments and field observations. Sigmund Freud presented the phenomenon of unconscious justification and called it rationalization. The multiple justifications, rationalizations and repeated opinions about sexual behavior contribute to myths maintained in society. What kind of "rationale" our societies apply to "understand" the non-consensual sexual behavior? There are many, just to mention few [4]:

Sex is a ludistic activity for both participants, therefore – even if not consented – should bring pleasure to both.

Everybody wants sex, but only men are allowed to manifest it openly while women have to pretend the opposite, thus men have to initiate the sexual behavior and women would follow.

A person who strongly needs sex is free to manifest it and struggle to get it; the person who doesn't want it must not reveal her/his sexual attraction and avoid risky situations; otherwise she/he is perceived as a promiscuous seducer.

A person who doesn't fight against the sexual initiator unconsciously accepts the rape.

Women who are raped deserve it because they dress in a very revealing and seducing manner and they willingly go to risky places (alleys, empty parking lots).

Men need to ventilate their sexual energy and if they are deprived of a partner their urge to have sex is difficult to control.

Men are supposed to initiate and insist (even by force) to have sex (Testosterone makes them both sexual and aggressive).

In the literature, there are many studies on "the acceptance of rape myth" but the first person that attempted to measure and conduct research on this phenomenon is Martha Burt with the paper entitled "Cultural Myths and Supports for Rape" [1]. Further studies extrapolated her initial list of items including such as:

The victim asked for it (seductive dress, drinking alcohol, inviting to apartment).

It wasn't really rape (no physical fight, no bruises, she lubricated).

The aggressor didn't mean it (his sex drive was high, he was drunk).

The victim lied (after being caught in flagrante, the victim pretends to be raped or to get some legal or financial benefits).

The real rapists are easily identifiable (visibly deviant) so the victims should know it and avoid them.

The rape is a trivial event, exaggerated by the feminist activists.

Social factors contributing to the acceptance of rape-myths

Only some major factor will be discussed here for the purpose of the paper:

1. Gender training

Parents exhibit different behaviors and responses to boys versus girls. Starting at a very young age, small boys are encouraged to mimic and express themselves in a ''masculine'' manner which is encouraged not only by his caregivers but also by other members of society like peers and teachers. It is expected of boys to be more assertive, violent, and more sexual. On the other hand, girls are expected and in a way trained to be submissive, shy, and not to be interested in eroticism [5]. Parents are also known to be more protective of girls, advising them on how to dress and what precautions to take in order to avoid giving boys the ''wrong idea'' or to ''lead them on'' [6]. Some authors point to these suggestions as promoting rape myths through indoctrinating children to think that if a woman gets raped or sexually assaulted it is because she was not careful [6]. However these accusations are not supported and the actual intentions behind the parents' suggestions are good (to protect their children at all costs).

2. Ethnic/religious beliefs

Some ethnic and or religious communities seem to be more permissive while others seem to be more restrictive towards sexuality in general [7]. That being said, they also differently

judge who is to blame and whose responsibility it is to prevent the rape to happen in the first place [7]. Such beliefs might contribute in the post-factum blame of the victim and "excuses" for the aggressor. Further studies are needed to clarify this assumption.

3. Socio-demographic factors

Numerous authors [7] suggest that the following factors correlate with a leniency or rather "rape-supportive" opinions and attitudes:

- Low education
- Increased level of general hostility (as a personality trait)
- Traditional attitudes towards gender roles ("macho-style")
- Orthodox religious beliefs.

II. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY: PROBLEMS AND HYPOTHESES

The first purpose of this study is clinical: to identify personal characteristics of people prone to accept rape myths. Such findings would greatly benefit further research on the topic and also help generate a plan of action on how to educate the population about the tragedy of rape. Further development and testing of The Acceptance of Modern Myths about Rape Scale (A.M.M.R.) should verify the hypothesis that out of the four common types of rape myths, victim blame is the most common. The paper will also look at possible factors that might contribute to a higher score on the scale, testing the hypothesis that men from cultures and religions that view women as inferior will score highest on the A.M.M.R.

The second purpose of this study is methodological: to further improve the existing tool to measure the phenomenon known as ''Rape Myth Acceptance''; its reliability, consistency and the discriminative value (saturation) of the scale items. The hypothetical assumption here is that the most saturating scores of the questionnaire are linked to the "victim blame" aspect of the myth.

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III. PROCEDURE: METHODS AND RESULT ANALYSIS

Twenty four students attending the Psychological Tests class (PSYC 406) were asked to complete The Acceptance of Modern Myths about Rape Scale (see Appendix) via Google Docs (the respondents were selected randomly by the teaching assistant of the course: Nicola Hermanto). There were a total of 7 males and 21 females in the study; all students were at the undergraduate university level. The average age was M = 21.3, SD = 0.6 thus 67% of the participants were between the ages 20.7 and 21.9. Fifty percent of participants were born in Canada others were born elsewhere. 75% of the sample declared their race as Caucasian, 17.6% as Asiatic and 8.3% as Latino-American. In terms of religious faith they revealed to be Atheists/Agnostics (37.5%), Christians (33.4%), Jews (12.5%) or Moslems (8.3%). Regarding sexual orientation, 91.6% declared to be Heterosexual and 8.3% Bisexual. 79.16% answered ''Yes'' to the question ''Have you ever had sexual relations with a partner (e.g. penile-vaginal, penile-anal, oral sex or mutual masturbation)?'' And finally, 95.8% said to have never been a victim of any type of sexual assault. One person admitted to be victim of childhood sexual abuse.

The A.M.M.R. is a Likert-type scale aimed at the measurement of attitudes and opinions about abusive sexual behavior (rape). The Likert-type scale assumes a certain level of internal consistency between all the items contributing to the measured domain; thus the items are supposed to be logically and clinically coherent. To prove this internal coherence, the items were pretested to select only those with the highest correlation (saturation). Another assumption is that the scores for each item can be summated, as R. Likert suggested in 1921 proposing his method of summated ratings [8]. It is a very risky assumption because the mathematical summation is allowed in principle when there is a metric system starting with zero and when the distance between consecutive numbers on the scale is identical (equidistant items are separated by equivalent intervals). If the intervals between elements of the scale are equivalent (which is hard to prove) we can justly apply parametric statistics, e.g. variance analysis; otherwise we should treat the scale as an ordinal scale and apply one of the non-parametric statistics. To avoid a tendency to choose one side of a scale, a technique of symmetry was applied where half of the "positive" answers on the 0-5 point Likert-type subscales were given a high digit (5) and half of the "negative" answers were given a high digit (5). After the data was collected, the answers were transformed into one unified system, where high digit represents "stronger" blaming attitude. Additional transformation of data was also applied from scale 1-5 into scale 0-4 to make the data more suitable for mathematical operations. The results obtained from the studied sample were statistically processed twice: first as a set of all items and second as a set of selected items representing the highest discrimination value.

TABLE I
BASIC STATISTICS FOR THE RAW 25 ITEMS DATA
==

All participants: Average score M = 23.96   standard deviation   SD = 8.47

Median: Me = 25.5 Mode: Mo = 29.0

Males: Average score M = 27.60   standard deviation   SD = 6.70

Females: Average score M = 22.47   standard deviation   SD = 8.85

Males versus females T-Test = 0.82   df = 1   non-significant difference
==
Cronbach's Alpha: 0.657236117
Split-Half (odd-even) Correlation: 0.599848633
Spearman-Brown Prophecy: 0.749881733
==

The Cronbach's coefficient - as a solid indicator of both internal consistency and reliability of a psychometric test - has been calculated twice: once for all subscales Cronbach's Alpha = 0.66 and second time for the moderately (r ≥ .30) and strongly (r ≥ .50) saturating subscales only Cronbach's Alpha = 0.72.   The elimination of the weakly saturating subscales from further analysis has contributed to a substantial improvement of the reliability of the questionnaire used in the study (see Table 2).

TABLE II
SCALE SATURATION INDICES

Subscale	Pearson correlation coefficient	Discriminative value
Q1	r = 0.63	**strong**
Q2	r = 0.26	weak
Q3	r = 0.32	**moderate**
Q4	r = 0.12	weak
Q5	r = 0.29	weak
Q6	r = 0.13	weak
Q7	r = 0.16	weak
Q8	r = 0.39	**moderate**
Q9	r = 0.15	weak
Q10	r = 0.33	**moderate**
Q11	r = 0.11	weak
Q12	r = 0.67	**strong**
Q13	r = 0.25	weak
Q14	r = 0.48	**moderate**
Q15	r = 0.39	**moderate**
Q16	r = 0.61	**strong**
Q17	r = 0.34	**moderate**
Q18	r = 0.18	weak
Q19	r = 0.50	**strong**
Q20	r = 0.24	weak
Q21	r = 0.46	**moderate**
Q22	r = 0.31	**moderate**
Q23	r = 0.22	weak
Q24	r = 0.48	**moderate**
Q25	r = 0.22	weak

Statistical recalculation of the data obtained only from the better saturating items shows an improvement of the internal consistency and reliability of the questionnaire (see Table 3).

TABLE III
STATISTICS BASED ON MODERATELY AND STRONGLY SATURATED SUBSCALES

All participants: Average score M = 11.8   standard deviation SD = 6.4

Median Me = 12.5

Males: Average score M = 14.1 standard deviation SD = 5.9

Females: Average score M = 10.8 standard deviation SD = 6.4

Males versus females T-Test = 0.40   df = 1   non-significant

Once again, the males versus females T-Test indicated a non-significant difference as it equalled 0.40. It might suggest that among many factors contributing to the attitude towards rape victims gender is an important but not decisive one. The impact of gender might be overshadowed by other more important factors such as the cultural background of the respondent thus his/her ethnicity and religion. While there is no sufficient statistical support to make any decisive conclusion, some interesting trends require further investigation. Taking these trends into account, Table 4 ranks the characteristics of the participants starting with the highest scores (i.e. stronger tendency to blame the victim and to accept rape myths) on the A.M.M.R.

TABLE IV
RANKING FROM THE HARSHEST TO THE MOST LENIENT ATTITUDES TOWARDS WOMEN AND THE PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCORERS

Rank	All subscales		The best saturating subscales only	
I	Asiatic males	32.5	Asiatic males	17.0
II	Judaic males	31.0	Judaic males	17.0
III	Atheist/Agnostic males	27.7	Islamic females	15.0
IV	Bisexuals	27.5	Asiatic females	15.0
V	Asiatic females	27.5	Atheist/Agnostic males	14.7
VI	Islamic females	27.5	Caucasian males	13.0
VII	Christian males	26.5	No sexual experience	12.8
VIII	Caucasian males	25.6	Bisexuals	12.5
IX	Latino-American females	25.5	Christian males	12.0
X	No sexual experience	25.2	Heterosexuals	11.7
XI	Heterosexual persons	23.6	No sexual experience	11.5
XII	With sexual experience	23.6	Judaic females	11.5
XIII	Atheist females	21.8	Latino-American females	10.5
XIV	Judaic females	21.0	Caucasian females	10.3
XV	Caucasian females	20.8	Atheist/Agnostic females	10.0
XVI	Christian females	20.5	Christian females	9.5

The results presented in the Table 4 show that Asiatic males score the highest on the scale followed by Judaic males and Atheist/Agnostic males. On the other hand, Christian females scored the lowest on The Acceptance of Modern Myths about Rape Scale, followed by Judaic females and Atheist/Agnostic females.

IV. DISCUSSION

Considering the results of the study, all the participants (being highly educated and part of a socially progressive generation) actually present a very modern and generally lenient attitude towards victims of rape. In other words, the

studied sample does not manifest any strong indications of the acceptance of rape myths. This could mean one of two things.

First, the results could be an indication that the acceptance of rape myths has indeed decreased since the first test conducted by Martha R. Burt [1]. with the Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (R.M.A.). Extensive support from scholarly articles [5] [7] and the development of SlutWalk in 2011 disprove this possibility. The SlutWalk being a women's march against victim-blaming that spread throughout North America because of a police officer which made the remark in a school presentation that women should not dress like ''sluts'' in order to avoid getting raped [5]. Based on this evidence, it is clear that the issue regarding the acceptance of rape myths is far from being resolved. And since there have been many studies confirming the link between a high score on the R.M.A. and the increased probability of committing sexual assault (rape proclivity along with a negative view of women and women's sexuality), it is of crucial importance to try and better understand why the low scores on the scale do not match with the high rates of sexual assault in Western societies [4]. Moving on, the second interpretation of the results consist of the realization that there has been an increased pressure on society to overtly express only ''politically correct'' ideas and beliefs. A reason for such low scores on the A.M.M.R. scale can thus be traced to the desire of being socially acceptable and simply regurgitating what authoritarian figures want being said. Further research should investigate this hypothesis (by including The Social Desirability Scale) and see if indeed there are intrinsic and maybe even unconscious prejudices regarding victims of rape; and if, political correctness aside, participants' results on the scale are higher than what they report. However, there are some individual differences in the ''harshness-leniency'' towards the rape issue and as such it deserves further studies. The ranking presented in the Table 4 is purely illustrative and does not allow any conclusion for the following reasons: some categories are overlapping therefore cannot serve as real indices of the phenomenon of ''Rape Myth Acceptance'' the number of participants was too small to allow sufficient statistical basis for any clinical or social conclusion, yet it might inspire further investigation of this phenomenon.

There is also a possibility that a methodological weakness of the applied measurement tool contributed to such a high variance (dispersion) of scores. This might have contributed to the inability to confirm any hypothesis about the impact of such factors as gender, ethnicity and religion on the acceptance of rape myths. Another possible cause of the weaknesses of the scale might be its low validity, or the low validity of some subscales. Question 3 clearly illustrates this issue: "A woman that dresses in provocative clothing is just asking to be sexually harassed." Depending how it is understood, Q3 might measure the respondent's attitude towards the rape victim or the respondent's knowledge about cases of rape. High score might mean either a strong tendency to blame women or a strong knowledge of police reports indicating that among victims of sexual harassment the number of women dressed provocatively predominated the number of women dressed in a modest manner. Another

example is question 1: "When a woman accepts to go to the apartment of a man she just met at a club, this means that she agrees to have sex with him". This question might measure two different things: the respondent's acceptance of the rape myth or the respondent's knowledge about socially accepted "erotic cues" or "signals of intention". Such questions have low face validity and require further process of validation before its application for clinical-social studies.

IV. CONCLUSION

The methodological purpose of the study has been met: reliability of the original scale has been improved by calculating the saturation and eliminating the subscales (items) that did not correlate substantially with the total score. The second, clinical purpose was met partially: we were able to detect interesting trends yet (due to low N) not reaching statistical significance. The trends seem to promote the assumed hypothesis that men from cultures and religious faith that view women as inferior score highest on the A.M.M.R. Both methodological and clinical aspects of the study require further investigations. Future research on issues related with The Acceptance of Modern Myths about Rape Scale need to include a much larger random weighted sample that would represent all social strata rather than only university students. There also needs to be a more equal division between male and female participants since the current study had very few male subjects (thus the results could not be generalized). It should also include the Social Desirability Scale, due to the delicate nature of the questions which may lead a high proportion of participants to respond in an ethically correct and socially acceptable manner. Much like racial and ethnic stereotypes, the acceptance of rape myths can and does have a great impact on people's behaviour and reaction to victims of sexual assault. Women currently living in Western societies are faced with frightening statistics such as the fact that ''one out of every two females will be sexually assaulted at least once in her lifetime'' [9]. And since there have been many studies confirming the link between a high score on rape myth acceptance scales and the increased probability of committing sexual assault (rape proclivity along with a negative view of women and women's sexuality), it is crucial that more research be conducted on this topic [4]. Finally, a higher score on an acceptance of rape myths scale also leads to a long list of social injustice in the courtroom, the hospital and in daily life. It is indeed difficult to win a rape trial when members of the jury perceive the victim as partially to blame for the incident. It is also harder for the women who have been sexually assaulted to take the first steps in seeking help or even reporting the incident out of shame or feeling of guilt which should not occur in such a situation. So the A.M.M.R. can become an important tool in better understanding the problem at hand; and can lead to better education of the population on the subject of rape, a more effective treatment for victims of rape and a fair trial and sentence of sex offenders.

APPENDIX

The Acceptance of Modern Myths about Rape Scale (A.M.M.R.)

-Attitudes and Beliefs about Sexually Related Topics-

PART 1

Please begin by answering the following questions.

Nota bene* The information you provide will remain anonymous and confidential at all times.

PSYC 406 *

Gender *

☐ Female

☐ Male

Age *in years

What is your ethnicity? *e.g. Canadian, Polish, Russian..

What is your race? *e.g. Caucasian, African American, Hispanic

What is your religious affiliation? *e.g. Christian, Atheist, Buddhist.

What is your sexual orientation? *e.g. Heterosexual, Homosexual...

Have you ever had sexual relations with a partner? *e.g. penile-vaginal, penile-anal, oral sex or mutual masturbation

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Prefer not to answer

Have you ever been a victim of any form of sexual assault? *Check as many as apply to your situation

☐ Child sexual abuse

☐ Sexual harassment (unwelcome sexual advances, verbal threats, requests for sexual favours)

☐ Incest

☐ Rape

☐ Other

☐ No, I have never been a victim of any of the above

☐ Prefer not to disclose such information

-Attitudes and Beliefs about Sexually Related Topics-

PART 2 (I)

For each of the following statements regarding sexually related topics, please indicate whether you: Strongly Agree (1) - Somewhat Agree (2) - Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)- Somewhat Disagree (4) - Strongly Disagree (5).

Q.1. When a woman accepts to go to the apartment of a man she just met at a club, this means that she agrees to have sex with him.

(1) Strongly Agree	(2) Somewhat Agree	(3) Neither Agree nor Disagree	(4) Somewhat Disagree	(5) Strongly Disagree
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Q.2. Even if a woman starts kissing a man passionately and petting occurs, it does not mean that she has agreed to have sex with him.

(1) Strongly Agree	(2) Somewhat Agree	(3) Neither Agree nor Disagree	(4) Somewhat Disagree	(5) Strongly Disagree
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Q.3. A woman that dresses in provocative clothing is just asking to be sexually harassed (unwanted sexual advances, requests for sexual favours).

(1) Strongly Agree	(2) Somewhat Agree	(3) Neither Agree nor Disagree	(4) Somewhat Disagree	(5) Strongly Disagree
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Q.4. A woman that chose to walk in a "dark alley" alone at night and gets sexually assaulted should have known better.

(1) Strongly Agree	(2) Somewhat Agree	(3) Neither Agree nor Disagree	(4) Somewhat Disagree	(5) Strongly Disagree
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Q.5. Even if a woman drinks and uses drugs in a public place she should not be held responsible for getting raped.

(1) Strongly Agree	(2) Somewhat Agree	(3) Neither Agree nor Disagree	(4) Somewhat Disagree	(5) Strongly Disagree
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Q.6. A man should not persist when trying to persuade a woman to have sex with him if she refuses it.

(1) Strongly Agree	(2) Somewhat Agree	(3) Neither Agree nor Disagree	(4) Somewhat Disagree	(5) Strongly Disagree
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Q.7. Women sometimes use rape as a weapon to harm ex-boyfriends or ex-husbands when the relationship failed.

(1) Strongly Agree	(2) Somewhat Agree	(3) Neither Agree nor Disagree	(4) Somewhat Disagree	(5) Strongly Disagree

(1) Strongly Agree	(2) Somewhat Agree	(3) Neither Agree nor Disagree	(4) Somewhat Disagree	(5) Strongly Disagree
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Q.8. Rapists are not easy to spot on the street because they don't just "look like rapists".

(1) Strongly Agree	(2) Somewhat Agree	(3) Neither Agree nor Disagree	(4) Somewhat Disagree	(5) Strongly Disagree
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Q.9. When a man was under the influence of alcohol or other drugs he cannot be held fully accountable for having raped a woman.

(1) Strongly Agree	(2) Somewhat Agree	(3) Neither Agree nor Disagree	(4) Somewhat Disagree	(5) Strongly Disagree
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Q.10. Women tend to under-report (or hide) sexual harassment and rape.

(1) Strongly Agree	(2) Somewhat Agree	(3) Neither Agree nor Disagree	(4) Somewhat Disagree	(5) Strongly Disagree
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

-Attitudes and Beliefs about Sexually Related Topics-
PART 2 (II)

For each of the following statements regarding sexually related topics, please indicate whether you: Strongly Agree (1) - Somewhat Agree (2) - Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)- Somewhat Disagree (4) - Strongly Disagree (5)

Q.11. Most rapes are committed by strangers, unrelated to the victim.

(1) Strongly Agree	(2) Somewhat Agree	(3) Neither Agree nor Disagree	(4) Somewhat Disagree	(5) Strongly Disagree
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Q.12. Women often misinterpret men's innocent, playful gestures as being "sexual harassment".

(1) Strongly Agree	(2) Somewhat Agree	(3) Neither Agree nor Disagree	(4) Somewhat Disagree	(5) Strongly Disagree
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Q.13. Rapists are psychologically unstable men.

(1) Strongly Agree	(2) Somewhat Agree	(3) Neither Agree nor Disagree	(4) Somewhat Disagree	(5) Strongly Disagree
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Q.14. Women that get raped are not more promiscuous than other women.

(1) Strongly Agree	(2) Somewhat Agree	(3) Neither Agree nor Disagree	(4) Somewhat Disagree	(5) Strongly Disagree

Q.15. Women don't often want to have sex so they don't initiate it; that is why men need to persuade them a little bit in the beginning.

(1) Strongly Agree	(2) Somewhat Agree	(3) Neither Agree nor Disagree	(4) Somewhat Disagree	(5) Strongly Disagree
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Q.16. Most rapes are committed in dark alleys, fields, or other secluded areas where the victim is taken by force.

(1) Strongly Agree	(2) Somewhat Agree	(3) Neither Agree nor Disagree	(4) Somewhat Disagree	(5) Strongly Disagree
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Q.17. Even if a woman lubricates whiles a man is penetrating her against her will, this cannot be considered as proof of consent.

(1) Strongly Agree	(2) Somewhat Agree	(3) Neither Agree nor Disagree	(4) Somewhat Disagree	(5) Strongly Disagree
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Q.18. Women don't have any conscious or unconscious desire to get raped.

(1) Strongly Agree	(2) Somewhat Agree	(3) Neither Agree nor Disagree	(4) Somewhat Disagree	(5) Strongly Disagree
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Q.19. When a woman flirts with a man at a party or at a club; this means that she eventually wants to have sex with him.

(1) Strongly Agree	(2) Somewhat Agree	(3) Neither Agree nor Disagree	(4) Somewhat Disagree	(5) Strongly Disagree
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Q.20. In the courtroom, a woman rarely uses sexual assault or rape as weapons against her ex-husband to win custody of her children.

(1) Strongly Agree	(2) Somewhat Agree	(3) Neither Agree nor Disagree	(4) Somewhat Disagree	(5) Strongly Disagree
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

-Attitudes and Beliefs about Sexually Related Topics-

PART 2 (III)

For each of the following statements regarding sexually related topics, please indicate whether you: Strongly Agree (1) - Somewhat Agree (2) - Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)- Somewhat Disagree (4) - Strongly Disagree (5).

Q.21. A physically fit woman could fight off a rapist if she really wanted to.

(1) Strongly Agree	(2) Somewhat Agree	(3) Neither Agree nor Disagree	(4) Somewhat Disagree	(5) Strongly Disagree
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Q.22. Women are never raped by their boyfriends or husbands.

(1) Strongly Agree	(2) Somewhat Agree	(3) Neither Agree nor Disagree	(4) Somewhat Disagree	(5) Strongly Disagree
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Q.23. Rape victims often exaggerate how much the "rape" impacted their lives.

(1) Strongly Agree	(2) Somewhat Agree	(3) Neither Agree nor Disagree	(4) Somewhat Disagree	(5) Strongly Disagree
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Q.24. During sex, if a woman "changes her mind" this cannot be considered "rape" because she initially said "yes".

(1) Strongly Agree	(2) Somewhat Agree	(3) Neither Agree nor Disagree	(4) Somewhat Disagree	(5) Strongly Disagree
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Q.25. If a woman said "NO" or physically fought back during the sexual act, this should be classified as "rape".

(1) Strongly Agree	(2) Somewhat Agree	(3) Neither Agree nor Disagree	(4) Somewhat Disagree	(5) Strongly Disagree
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Thank you for your participation.

This form was created by Ana Pauna as a project for PSYC 406 - Psychological Tests. McGill University 2012. PLEASE READ THE NEXT PAGE FOR DEBRIEFING.

-Attitudes and Beliefs about Sexually Related Topics-
Debriefing

As a study participant you have the right to be debriefed from any psychological study or experiment. The intention behind the form is to measure university student's acceptance of rape myths. The Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (R.M.A.) created by Martha Burt in 1980 and the Acceptance of Modern Myths About Sexual Aggression Scale (A.M.M.S.A.) invented by Heike Gerger, Kley H., Bohner G. and Siebler F.[10] and Payne D.L. [11] in 2007 were both analysed and criticized in order to design an improved scale measuring the acceptance of such myths. For more information, please do not hesitate to contact me at ana.pauna@mail.mcgill.ca Thank you for your participation.

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