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THE ROLE OF CONTROLLABILITY IN BLAME

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STRANGER VERSUS ACQUAINTANCE RAPE:
THE ROLE OF CONTROLLABILITY IN BLAME

By

Amy Janan Johnson

A THESIS

Submitted to
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ABSTRACT

STRANGER VERSUS ACQUAINTANCE RAPE: THE ROLE OF CONTROLLABILITY IN BLAME

By

Amy Janan Johnson

Blaming a victim of rape can have negative repercussions for both the actual victims and for women in general in this society. This thesis examined the influence of type of rape (either acquaintance or stranger), receiver self-efficacy, and victim controllability on the amount of blame attributed to the victim. One hundred ninety-seven college students completed a questionnaire after reading scenarios depicting a rape. Results suggested that receiver self-efficacy did influence blame by increasing the degree of controllability attributed to the victim when the victim was perceived as similar to the receiver. In the low similarity condition, type of rape influenced the amount of controllability attributed to the victim and thus the amount of blame placed upon the victim.

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INTRODUCTION

The increasing concern about acquaintance rape highlights a continuing question in this society, whether rape victims should be considered partly responsible for their misfortune. Several researchers have explored observers' tendencies to place at least part of the blame on the victim of this crime. Although results have indicated that only low amounts of blame are placed on the victims, different factors within the rape case influence this amount of blame. At least three factors have been tested and shown to influence the amount of blame attributed to the victim: the nature of the assault itself (e.g., whether the rape was completed, Janoff-Bulman, Timko, & Carli, 1985; Kruelewitz & Nash, 1979), characteristics of the victim (e.g., whether the victim was respectable, Luginbuhl & Mullin, 1981; McCaul, Veltum, Boyechko, & Crawford, 1990; Smith, Keating, Hester, & Mitchell, 1976), and characteristics of the receiver of the rape message (e.g., whether the individual identifies with the victim, Smith, et al., 1976; the receiver's education level, Burt, 1980; Loza, 1993).

Two of these three factors are examined in this thesis, both a receiver characteristic (amount of self-efficacy) and the nature of the assault itself (either a stranger rape or an acquaintance rape). Researchers have found that victims of acquaintance rape are blamed more than victims of stranger rape (Bell, Kuriloff, & Lottes, 1994; Greenberg & Busselle, 1993; Johnson & Russ, 1989; Tetreault & Barnett,

1987; Thornton, 1984) and that acquaintance rape is perceived as a less serious crime in which the victim suffers less (Greenberg & Busselle, 1993; Quackenbush, 1989). This study will examine whether the message receiver's self-efficacy affects victim blame. For the purposes of this study, receiver self-efficacy will be defined as the belief whether the message recipient believes she or he could have avoided or prevented the rape from happening had she or he been in that situation. Specifically, it will be posited that if the victim is perceived as similar, high self-efficacy will lead to greater victim blame. Also, it is hypothesized that the acquaintance rape victim will be attributed greater controllability and blame in the low similarity condition.

<center>Why Victim Blame is Significant</center>

Blaming rape victims has aversive consequences both for the victims and for women in general. For victims, to be blamed or to believe that they are blamed by their family, friends, or police, can add pain and slow their recovery. In a survey of rape crisis centers, Janoff-Bulman (1979) found that although fear was the most common response to rape, self-blame was the second most common, with anger rating much lower. Meyer and Taylor (1986) discovered that 50% of the victims in their sample blamed themselves to some extent for the rape. The fear of being blamed by others, especially the judicial establishment, probably contributes to the low reporting rates for rape (Allen, Emmers, Gebhardt, & Giery, 1995). Reporting rates are even lower for acquaintance rape. Koss (1985) estimated that only 10 to 50% of rapes are reported. Additionally, self-blame has been shown to correlate highly with post-rape depression. When women rape victims see themselves as partly to blame, they may begin to doubt their ability to take care of themselves, and unfamiliar situations might become disconcerting (McCahill, Meyer, &

Fischman, 1979). Their self-confidence may be lowered, also reducing their ability to interact successfully in society (Koss, Heise, & Russo, 1994).

There are several reasons why women in general should be concerned about the issue of victim blame. First, women especially are affected because they comprise the majority of rape victims. If women believe that they will be negatively viewed should they become victims of rape, then they may curtail their activities to avoid this outcome (Koss, Heise, & Russo, 1994). Schwarz and Brand's (1983) findings supported the contention that "rape has an intimidating effect on non-raped women" (p. 71), while Whiston (1981) claimed that for women, rape victims represent the "epitome of their individual vulnerability" (p. 364). In addition, Allen, et al., (1995) claimed that if women accept the beliefs that rape victims are to blame for the rape, they are then less likely to offer support to rape victims. Placing the blame on the victim also reinforces stereotypes that women are weak and that if they do not accept this "fact" and take precautions because of this "inherent" weakness, they are responsible for the consequences (Schneider, Ee, & Aronson, 1994).

Blaming the victim for acquaintance rape can be especially harmful. For one thing, victims may be more likely to blame themselves for an acquaintance rape. Katz and Burt (1988, cited in Parrot & Bechhofer, 1991) discovered that acquaintance rape victims blamed themselves significantly more than stranger rape victims. This increased self-blame is important, because the victims who blamed themselves were more likely to be suicidal, need psychiatric hospitalization, and have lower self-esteem. Fonow, Richardson, and Wemmerus (1992) stated that in an acquaintance rape, women "are more likely to question their own behavior and assume responsibility for a failed sexual script"

(p. 111). Increased blame can lead to an increased likelihood of not reporting the rape (Cowan & Curtis, 1994). Parrot and Bechhofer (1991) stated that acquaintance rape victims rarely inform others of their victimization because they fear accusations of lying or blame. Coller and Resick (1987) claimed that acquaintance rape victims are less likely to report because this type of rape is less likely to be accepted as rape. This concern is probably realistic, as Clark and Lewis (1977, cited in Johnson & Russ, 1989) found that conviction rates were lower for acquaintance rapes than stranger rapes. Further, acquaintance rape victims were found to have more severe adjustment problems (McCahill, et al., 1979; Muehlenhard, Friedman, & Thomas, 1985) and less social support (Amick & Calhoun, 1987).

Why Victim Blame is Different in Rape Than in Other Crimes

Blame in rape is an especially important area of research compared to blame for other crimes for four reasons. First, the stereotype that rape is a crime that happens to women is an important consideration. Even though there are male victims of rape, society often views the act of being victimized as "feminizing" (Howard, 1984b). Thus, the perceptions that members of this society have about rape victims influence beliefs about women in general. How women react to rape victims is especially indicative of their acceptance of stereotypes about women (such as the belief that women are weak). A second reason concerns the greater social stigma that exists in a rape case as compared to other crimes. The impression still exists that someone who is raped is somehow "soiled." If the rape victim is blamed for the crime on top of this social stigma, then her or his position as a "good," moral member of society might be endangered. Stevens (1994) emphasized the fact that blaming women for being abuse victims has historical roots.

Another difference between rape and other crimes is that rape is regarded as a crime involving sexual desire rather than violence (Gerdes, Dammann, & Heilig, 1988). Researchers have argued that rape is not a crime that involves sexual desire (Schneider, Ee, & Aronson, 1994), but such beliefs of rape as a crime with sexual causes appear to influence observers' responses to the crime. This effect is represented by studies which illustrate that women who are attractive or who are considered less respectable are often blamed more for rape (Luginbuhl & Mullin, 1981; Tieger, 1981). Howard (1984a; 1984b) claimed that since rape is a sex crime, women's stereotypical roles are more salient. A fourth reason is that although there is a general tendency for society to blame victims for crimes, this tendency is especially strong in the case of rape (Blumberg & Lester, 1991). Gillen and Muncer (1995) claimed that "Rape appears to be the only crime in which victim behavior results in less blame being attached to the criminal" (p. 103).

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES

Previous Attempts to Explain Victim Blame

There have been numerous theoretical attempts to explain why victims of rape are blamed. These include Shaver's defensive attribution hypothesis (1970), the Just World hypothesis (Lerner, 1965; Lerner & Miller, 1978), and Feminist theory.

Shaver's Defensive Attribution Hypothesis

Shaver's defensive attribution hypothesis (1970) stated that two factors influence how people perceive victims of misfortunes. The first is harm avoidance, which posits that people seek to defend against the chance of their own random misfortune. If something horrible happens to someone, the observer will rationalize that the victim must be responsible so that the observer can be more confident that such a horrible situation

could never befall him or her. This harm avoidance tendency is tempered by the second factor, blame avoidance. This concept is utilized to defend against the possibility of others blaming the person if he or she is in a similar victim situation. The greater the personal threat that one perceives in the situation, the less likely the respondent is to blame the victim. Lesser blame is indicative of the fact that the observer would not want to be blamed in the same situation.

One major problem that has arisen with Shaver's defensive attribution theory is that this theory suggests that women should blame women victims less and men should blame men victims less because they identify with them. However, women victims have been found to be blamed more by both men and women (Howard, 1984b).

Just World Hypothesis

Another theory that makes predictions related to victim blame is the Just World Hypothesis (Lerner, 1965; Lerner & Miller, 1978). This proposition states that people believe the world is just; thus, people receive in life what they deserve. If a bad occurrence, such as a rape, happens to someone, then the victim must have done something to deserve it or must have caused the tragedy because of his or her character. Lerner and Miller hypothesized that the more random the event, the more people will tend to blame the victim in order to protect themselves from having to consider their own vulnerability.

Although some studies have supported the predictions of the Just World Hypothesis (Coller & Resick, 1987; Graves & Lowe, 1983; Jones & Aronson, 1973; Smith, Keating, Hester, & Mitchell, 1976), others have not (Janoff-Bulman, Timko, & Carli, 1985; Karuza & Carey, 1984; McCaul, Veltum, Boyechko, & Crawford, 1990;

Mueller, Caldwell, & Hunter, 1994; Thornton, Ryckman, & Robbins, 1982). For example, Karuza and Carey (1984) found that even when respondents were given every opportunity to derogate the victim's character, they refused to do so. In addition, Feminist theory posits that acquaintance rape might be perceived as more controllable; thus, this type of rape should cause less blame than a stranger rape according to the Just World Hypothesis. Actually, most researchers have found that acquaintance rape victims are blamed more (i.e., Bell, et al., 1994; Greenberg & Busselle, 1993; Johnson & Russ, 1989; Tetreault & Barnett, 1987; Thornton, 1984). The Just World Theory cannot explain this discrepancy.

Feminist Theory

Because rape is a crime that predominantly happens to women, Feminist theory has often been used to explain blame in rape cases (Bohner, Weisbrod, Barzvi, & Schwarz, 1993; Briere, Malamuth, & Check, 1985; Gillen & Muncer, 1995; Johnson & Russ, 1989; Koss, Heise, & Russo, 1994; Schneider, Ee, & Aronson, 1994). Feminist theories focus on rape blame as distinctive because of the perception of predominantly female victims. According to these researchers, gender norms in this society affect the degree of blame the victim receives. Stereotypical sex roles are especially salient in rape because it is a crime which involves sex (Howard, 1984a, 1984b). If a woman is acquainted with a man, societal norms place the responsibility to control the sexual activity on the woman (Tetreault & Barnett, 1987). Gillen and Muncer (1995) suggested that this belief concerning a woman's responsibility might illustrate why acquaintance rape is perceived as less serious and harmful than stranger rape. Also, false beliefs about women and rape, known as rape myths, are hypothesized to provide support for sexual

violence (Briere, Malamuth, & Check, 1985). Bohner, Weisbrod, Barzvi, and Schwarz (1993) claimed that their results concerning rape myths "support the feminist hypothesis that the threat of rape serves the function to exert social control" and sustain male dominance over women (p. 561). Thus, these researchers claimed that blaming women for rape is purposefully done to keep women in their place. In addition, feminist scholars have claimed that special emphasis should be placed on rape because of the differences between the manner in which society attributes blame to male and female sexual assault victims. Women victims are often blamed more and seen as more vulnerable (Howard, 1984b).

Other Explanations for Victim Blame

Two types of individual factors have been examined to determine if they have an effect on victim blame. The first involves characteristics of the rape scenario that affect the blame attributed to the rape victim. The second involves characteristics of the receiver of the rape message which influence whether the receiver blames the victim of the rape.

Characteristics of the scenario that have been examined can be divided into two types (see Table 1). The first type consists of factors related to the rape situation. The second consists of characteristics of the victim. This second type can be further divided into characteristics which the victim possessed before the rape and factors which are relevant to the particular rape situation. Table 1 delineates the studies which have examined these factors and the results they have produced in regards to victim blame.

A second area of study has examined the effects that characteristics of the receiver of the rape message produce on victim blame (see Table 2). These factors can be

Table 1

Characteristics of the Scenario

SITUATION   VICTIM CHARACTERISTICS

FACTORS WHICH INCREASE BLAME

                                             POSSESSED BEFORE RAPE

Ambiguity   Virgin
    Brems & Wagner, 1993   Macrae & Shepherd, 1989
    Amick & Calhoun, 1987   Respectability
Completion of Rape   Luginbuhl & Mullin, 1981
    Janoff-Bulman, et al., 1985   Smith, et al., 1976
    Kruelewitz & Nash, 1979   McCaul, et al., 1990
Going to Rapist's Apartment   Past Sexual Conduct
    Muehlenhard, et al., 1985   Pugh, 1983
Man Paying for Date   Prior Rape Victim
    Muehlenhard, et al., 1985   Schult & Schneider, 1991
Woman Inviting Man on Date
    Muehlenhard, et al., 1985   IN THE RAPE SITUATION

                                             Carelessness
                                                 Smith, et al., 1976
                                                 Karuza & Carey, 1984
                                                 Pallak & Davies, 1982
                                             Provocativeness
                                                 Smith, et al., 1976
                                                 Schult & Schneider, 1991
                                                 Best & Demmin, 1982
                                             Resistance
                                                 Scroggs, 1976
                                                 McCaul, et al., 1990
                                             Victim Enjoyment
                                                 McCaul, et al., 1990
                                             Drunk
                                                 Richardson & Campbell, 1982

FACTORS WITH CONFLICTING RESULTS
                                             Attractiveness
                                                 McCaul, et al., 1990
                                                 Best & Demmin, 1982

Table 2

Characteristics of the Receiver

PARTICULAR TO SCENARIO   POSSESSED APART FROM SCENARIO

CONSISTENT RELATIONSHIP TO BLAME

Identify with Victim (-)
    Smith, et al., 1976
Liking of Victim (-)
    Smith, et al., 1976
    Pugh, 1983
Degree of Contact with Victim (+)
    Alexander, 1980
Similarity to Victim (-)
    Bell, et al., 1994

Sexual Inhibition (+)
    Briere, et al., 1985
Sex Role Stereotypes/Attitudes Toward
  Women (+)
    Burt, 1980
    Brems & Wagner, 1993
    Check & Malamuth, 1983
    Epps, Haworth, & Swaffer, 1993
    Mayerson & Taylor, 1987
    Thornton, et al., 1982
    Howard, 1984a
    Coller & Resick, 1987
    Acock & Ireland, 1983
    Fonow, et al., 1992
    Fisher, 1986
Adversarial Sexual Beliefs (+)
    Fonow, et al., 1992
Education (-)
    Burt, 1980
    Loza, 1993
Trustworthiness (+)
    Ashton, 1982
Belief in Own Vulnerability to Rape (+)
    Alexander, 1980
Prior Physical Abuse (+)
    Mueller, et al., 1994

NO EFFECT ON BLAME

Aggression
    Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1995
Achievement Motivation
    Schwarz & Brand, 1983
Prior Rape Victimization
    Coller & Resick, 1987

Table 2 (cont'd)

CONFLICTING RESULTS ON BLAME

Locus of Control
    Mueller, et al., 1994
    Schwarz & Brand, 1983
    Thornton, et al., 1982
Rape Myth Acceptance
    Fonow, et al., 1992
    Krahe, 1988
    Epps, et al., 1993
Empathy
    Mueller, et al., 1994
    Bell, et al., 1994
    Coller & Resick, 1987

subdivided into responses of the receiver which are related to the particular rape scenario presented and characteristics which are possessed apart from the rape scenario. Table 2 presents the studies which have examined these factors and the results they have produced in regards to victim blame.

Although these theoretical concepts and proposed factors have been thoroughly tested, they still do not sufficiently explain victim blame. Much research has resulted in conflicting results. There appears to be many additional factors in victim blame that are not being tapped by these theories and variable studies.

Considering Controllability in Blaming the Victim

A new way to look at the problem of victim blame posits that an observer decides how much blame to attribute to the victim by looking at whether the observer believes he or she could have avoided or handled the situation. The self-efficacy of the observer regarding the situation is one relevant factor.

The first factor to be considered is type of rape. There have been many studies comparing acquaintance and stranger rape (i.e., Bell, et al., 1994; Johnson & Russ, 1989; Kormos & Brooks, 1994; Quackenbush, 1989; Smith, et al., 1976). Most of these studies have defined acquaintance rape as happening on a date, although others found that even slight acquaintance with the rapist (such as a classmate) changed the attributions of blame by the observers to the victim (e.g., Gerdes, et al., 1988). In this study acquaintance rape was defined as happening between an acquaintance (not a romantic partner) and the victim in order to make the two rape scenarios as similar as possible on all other factors.

The second factor is the perceived self-efficacy of the observer. Beck and Frankel (1981) defined self-efficacy as the degree to which one believes he or she can cope with a

threat successfully. The assessment of self-efficacy tends to be situation-specific (e.g.,

Beck and Frankel, 1981; Witte, 1992), but can also include a more general sense of self-

efficacy. Bandura (1977) claimed that one's general beliefs about one's ability to perform

actions will not predict behavior unless considered in some specific context. A person

evaluates personal factors (such as strength or fighting behaviors) and situational factors

(such as whether one knows the attacker) to determine one's self-efficacy in a particular

situation (Bandura, Adams, Hardy, & Howells, 1980). For example, a woman may

believe in her ability to fight in general but this belief does not necessarily predict her

feelings about her ability to fight when a rapist is holding a knife to her throat. Therefore,

if one wishes to utilize a measure of self-efficacy as a predictor for behavior (or beliefs

about behavior) in a specific situation, one should ask questions that reflect that specific

situation. Since this study seeks to predict victim blame from a receiver's self-efficacy

concerning a rape situation, a situation-specific definition of self-efficacy was utilized. In

the case of rape, two dimensions of self-efficacy appear to be pertinent: whether one

believes he or she could avoid the rape situation and whether one believes he or she could

handle an attempted rape situation in such a way to avoid being raped.

A third factor which is posited to mediate the relationship between type of rape,

self-efficacy, and victim blame is the victim's perceived control over the situation.

Lazarus (1991) defined perceived control as "the control one has over what is happening

in an encounter" (p. 136). If the victim had control over behavior that, in the observer's

opinion, led to the rape or could have prevented the rape, the victim will receive at least

some of the blame. Some factors which relate to victim control that have been found to

lead to increased blame include whether the woman asked the man out or went to his

apartment (Muehlenhard, et al. 1985), the clothing the victim was wearing (Edmonds &

Calhoun, 1986), and the setting in which the victim was raped, such as coming out of the

library as compared to coming out of a bar (Best & Demmin, 1982). The amount of

control that one attributes to the situation may be much higher than actually exists in the

situation (Langer, 1975). Victim controllability should be an important factor in victim

blame.

The variable of perceived similarity is posited to moderate the relationship

between self-efficacy and perceived behavior control. Perceived similarity was defined by

Roger and Bhowmik (1970) under the name subjective homophily. This concept consists

of the receiver's perception regarding how similar or dissimilar his or her characteristics

are to the person involved in the message. If one believes that the victim is similar to

oneself, then information about one's own ability to control the situation can be perceived

as relevant to the decision regarding victim control. In the case where perceived similarity

between the observer and the victim is high and the observer's self-efficacy in regards to

the rape case is high, the observer will see the victim's control over the situation as high.

The similar victim must have done something wrong that resulted in the rape since they

are similar and therefore the victim probably had the capacity to avoid the situation. If the

similarity is high but the observer has low self-efficacy, one does not believe in one's

own ability to avoid/handle the situation. The victim probably could not have avoided the

situation either: victim control is perceived as low. If one does not perceive similarity

between the victim and oneself, one's own assessment of self-efficacy has no relevance to

the assessment of victim control. There should be no relationship between self-efficacy

and controllability in this condition. The above reasoning leads to the following hypothesis:

> H1: Perceived similarity moderates the relationship between self-efficacy and perceived victim control in the following way:
>
>> H1a: If perceived similarity is high, there will be a positive relationship between self-efficacy and victim control.
>>
>> H1b: If perceived similarity is low, there will be no relationship between self-efficacy and victim control.

If similarity is low and self-efficacy is not relevant, one would then fall back on society's definition of the situation (type of rape) or other information to determine the amount of control the victim had, suggesting that the acquaintance rape victim will be perceived as having more control over the situation. Feminist theory might help explain the blame process in this case. It claims that in acquaintance rape situations, women rape victims are blamed more than in stranger rape situations because they have the responsibility to control the sexual activity (Tetreault & Barnett, 1987). Rape represents a failed sexual script, and the woman is more responsible (and thus blameworthy) in this situation than in the stranger rape situation (Gillen & Muncer, 1995). The woman is perceived as having more control over the situation in the acquaintance rape. Thus, in the case of low similarity, there should be a direct relationship between type of rape and victim behavioral control, such that an acquaintance rape leads to attributions of greater control. In high similarity, there should be no relationship between type of rape and victim controllability. The above reasoning leads to the following hypothesis:

H2: Perceived similarity moderates the relationship between type of rape and perceived victim control in the following way:

H2a: If perceived similarity is high, there will be no relationship between type of rape and victim control.

H2b: If perceived similarity is low, there will be a positive relationship between type of rape and victim control so that an acquaintance rape should lead to higher degrees of victim controllability.

The last concept is blame, which entails responsibility for an outcome. Blame has often been treated as a quantity that can be divided, with participants in studies asked to decide how much blame should be placed on such entities as the victim, the rapist, the situation, society, and chance (Alexander, 1980; Mueller & Major, 1989). In this model, there is a posited positive relationship between perceived victim behavioral control and blame. If one holds a person accountable, one blames this person for his or her misfortune. Lazarus (1991) stated that if a person is not seen as having control over a situation, one resists laying blame on them or becoming angry with them. One may still seek to blame others, however. Perceived behavioral control over the rape is important because if it is low, the receiver might be able to see herself or himself in the same situation (Bell, et al. 1994). Because the person would not want to be blamed, the defensive attribution hypothesis (Shaver, 1970) would predict that the observer would blame a victim less in the less controllable situation. This reasoning leads to the following hypothesis:

H3: Perceived behavioral control of the victim for the rape and blame are positively correlated.

A path model to test this rationale is advanced (see Figure 1). The path model is a beneficial research tool in this situation, especially because of the conflict concerning the directionality of the influence of self-efficacy and blame discussed next. This method can establish causal ordering without a longitudinal design.

```
TYPE
RAPE
      ↘
              VICTIM        →    BLAME
      ↗       CONTROL
SELF-EFFICACY


      ↑
PERCEIVED
SIMILARITY
```

1=STRANGER RAPE
2=ACQUAINTANCE RAPE
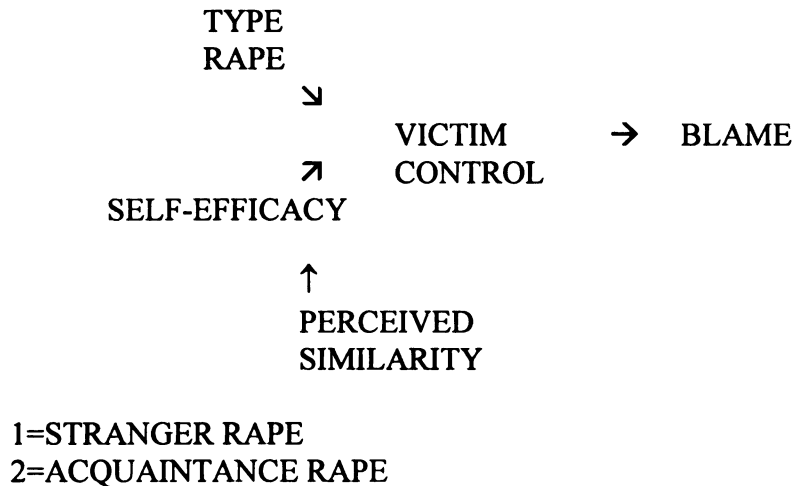
Figure 1—Predicted Path Model

Previous research has posited different relationships between self-efficacy, victim controllability, and blame than the above. Walster (1965) examined the role of controllability in blame for accidents. She claimed that if perceivers believe that the victim had control over the situation, then their own beliefs in their abilities to avoid accidents through their own behaviors will increase. If the victim had little control over the accident, then the perceivers' beliefs in their abilities to avoid accidents will be lowered. Thus, the receiver of the message will want to attribute high control to the victim so that the receiver then can believe that he or she will not fall victim to such a horrible occurrence. Walster suggested that attributing control to a victim allows for greater self-efficacy perceptions in the receiver of the message in terms of avoiding the

situation, thus eliciting greater victim blame. This thesis concurs that greater

controllability by the victim will lead to greater blame; however, it suggests that one's

self-efficacy is not a result of one's assessment of victim controllability, but rather that

self-efficacy is a preceding cause of this assessment.

In Thornton's (1984) discussion of the defensive attribution theory, he claimed

that differences in similarity between the victim and the perceiver lead the perceiver to

either blame the victim based on their character or their behavior. This blame leads to

greater self-efficacy concerning the ability to avoid such a situation on the part of the

perceiver. This greater self-efficacy leads to less fear. Although contradictory to what this

thesis posits, his views illustrate how self-efficacy is relevant to the defensive attribution

theory (Shaver, 1970).

METHODS AND RESULTS

Overview of Current Project

This experiment was conducted in three main stages. The first consisted of the

creation of hypothetical rape scenarios, one representing an acquaintance rape and one a

stranger rape. The second stage was a pretest which included these scenarios and the

complete questionnaire planned for use in the final project. The pretest was conducted in

order to assess whether the scenarios were correctly identified as an acquaintance or

stranger rape, whether these scenarios were rated as plausible, and whether the questions

for the final scales elicited sufficient variability between subjects. The third stage utilized

a slightly altered version of the pretest questionnaire and scenarios for the final data

collection.

Scenario Generation

As type of rape was the independent variable in this experiment, the goal was to present half of the subjects with an acquaintance rape scenario and half with a stranger rape scenario. Drawing on previous research, two hypothetical scenarios were created. These two scenarios were differentiated by identifying the alleged rapist as someone the victim did not know (stranger) or identifying the alleged rapist as someone whom the victim had met several times previously through her boyfriend (acquaintance). Previous research has defined acquaintance rapists as romantic partners or slight acquaintances such as classmates (Gerdes, et al. 1988). This study defined the acquaintance rape condition as happening between an acquaintance (not a romantic partner) and the victim in order to make the two rape scenarios as similar as possible on all other factors. In both scenarios, the victim walks home from the library with her boyfriend's friend. In the acquaintance condition, this person rapes the victim. In the stranger condition, after her boyfriend's friend leaves, a stranger attacks her. The original two scenarios were utilized in the pretest and can be found in Appendix A.

Pretest

Procedures

Thirty-seven students (21 women, 15 men, 1 refused to answer) from an undergraduate communication class were utilized in the pretest. They were randomly assigned to the stranger or rape condition. During regular class time, they read the original scenarios and completed the full questionnaire. They were compensated for their time with extra-credit points toward their final grade.

<u>Measures</u>

The independent variables in this experiment were type of rape (manipulated) and self-efficacy (measured). Type of rape was manipulated by respondents reading either an acquaintance rape or stranger rape scenario. Dependent variables included victim controllability and blame, while similarity was a moderating variable. Many of the questions for the questionnaire were modified forms of questions or based on questions from the following studies: (Bell, et al. 1994; Greenberg & Busselle, 1993; Johnson & Russ, 1989; Luginbuhl & Mullin, 1981; Quackenbush, 1989; Schult & Schneider, 1991; Witte, 1994). Questions were measured using a seven-point Likert-type scale anchored by strongly agree and strongly disagree. Three methods of measuring self-efficacy were examined in the pretest: one in which respondents reported how often they engaged in risky behaviors, one which questioned their beliefs about their general safety, and one which measured two dimensions: the confidence the respondents had in their ability to avoid the rape situation, and the confidence the respondents had in their ability to handle a situation that might lead to rape. The perceived behavioral control that the victim had over the rape situation was assessed by questions that also reflected the two dimensions of avoiding the rape situation and handling the situation once it begins. A manipulation check was included to determine whether the individuals perceived the difference between the two rape scenarios. A semantic differential was also included (with a scale from one to seven) to assess whether the respondents found the scenarios plausible, likely, believable, possible, probable, and realistic. The scales for the pretest are included in Appendix B.

Results

The t-test results indicated that the students identified the difference between the
acquaintance and the stranger rape scenario ($\underline{t}(30) = 5.77$, $\underline{p} < .0001$; range=1-2; M_1
=1.79; SD_1 =.426; M_2 =1.06; SD_2 =.236). The semantic differentials illustrated that the
scenarios were rated as realistic in that each of the questions were rated above the
midpoint of the 7-point scale (see Table 3). The means and the standard deviations of the
other scales illustrated that there was significant variance between subjects in each of the
scales (see Table 4). All of the scales were approximately normally distributed except
blame which was skewed to the right. This was expected because previous research has
shown that levels of blame of the rape victim tend to be low among college students (e.g.,
Bell, et al., 1994; Gerdes, et al., 1988).

Table 3

Means of Semantic Differentials to Measure Scenario Plausibility

Item	Mean	Stand. Dev.	Range
Plausible	2.35	1.27	1=Plausible/7=Not Plausible
Likely	2.92	1.53	1=Likely/7=Not Likely
Believable	2.27	1.24	1=Believable/7=Not Believable
Possible	1.84	.93	1=Possible/7=Not Possible
Probable	3.32	1.65	1=Probable/7=Not Probable
Realistic	2.65	1.40	1=Realistic/7=Not Realistic

Table 4

<u>Variance in Pretest Questionnaire Scales</u>

<u>Variable</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Stand. Dev.</u>	<u>Range</u>	<u>Median</u>	<u>Skewness</u>
SS	3.15	.36	1-5	3.20	-.48
SO	4.48	.85	1-7	4.40	.49
SR	5.25	.92	1-7	5.29	-.19
SIM	4.35	1.47	1-7	4.67	-.69
CONT	3.15	.82	1-7	3.22	.003
BLA	1.86	1.10	1-7	1.50	1.41

Key:

SS= Self-efficacy in regards to actual behaviors

SO= General self-efficacy

SR= Self-efficacy in regards to rape

SIM= Similarity

CONT= Victim Controllability

BLA= Blame

Main Project

Procedures

One hundred ninety-seven college students (133 women, 62 men, 2 refused to answer) recruited from Communication and Telecommunication classes at a large Midwestern university were the sample for the final part of this study. Because of concern about differences between women and men on the variables, women subjects were utilized in the hypotheses and path results. Subjects were randomly assigned to receive either the stranger rape condition or the acquaintance rape. condition. Before reading the scenarios, the participants answered questions concerning their self-efficacy to avoid or handle an attempted rape. The first scenario described a female who later was introduced as the victim of a rape. This scenario was followed by questions concerning how similar the respondent considered himself or herself to the described person. The second scenario presented the person introduced in the previous scenario as the victim of either an acquaintance or a stranger rape. The participants then answered questions concerning the victim's control over the situation and what blame, if any, should be placed on the victim. A manipulation check was included to ascertain whether the individuals were distinguishing between the two types of rape scenarios correctly. After reading the scenarios and completing the questionnaires, the respondents were dismissed. They received extra-credit in their classes for their participation in this study.

Measures

Based on the pretest results, the two scenarios representing the acquaintance rape and the stranger rape were slightly modified to make them more understandable. The altered scenarios can be found in Appendix C. For the final data collection, the

plausibility semantic differentials were dropped, and two questions were added to the manipulation check. Several of the other questions were altered, but the rest of the questionnaire was the same as the pretest questionnaire. The altered and additional questions are included in Appendix D.

Results

Preliminary Analysis.

Confirmatory factor analysis was performed on the questionnaire using Hamilton and Hunter's CFA program (1988). Individual items were assessed for content, internal consistency, and parallelism. Items which did not meet these criteria were dropped, resulting in a questionnaire with twenty-three items (see Table 5). Since the method of examining self-efficacy in regards to the rape situation fit best with the rationale of this paper and met the criteria best for internal consistency, it was utilized in the results. Table 6 includes the items that were dropped for the variables of situation-specific self-efficacy, victim controllability, and blame. Errors for the items which were kept and the scale reliabilities are listed in Table 5.

Self-efficacy had been posited to consist of two subdimensions, one's belief about his or her own ability to avoid a rape situation and one's belief about his or her own ability to handle an attempted rape situation. Confirmatory factor analysis illustrated that rather than being two subdimensions of an overall construct of self-efficacy, these two represented separate dimensions. One can determine this because of the large errors present when the items from the two dimensions were combined into one measure in a confirmatory factor analysis (see Table 7). Therefore, for the rest of the analyses, these two dimensions were treated separately.

Table 5

Confirmatory Factor Analysis Scale Errors (1/100)

Self-Efficacy to Handle: Alpha=.972

	1	2	3	4	5
1	1	0	3	-1	-1
2	0	0	0	2	-1
3	3	0	1	-1	0
4	-1	2	-1	1	1
5	-1	-1	0	1	0

If someone tried to sexually assault me, I could successfully protect myself.

I could fend off someone who tried to sexually assault me.

If someone tried to sexually assault me, I could successfully defend myself.

If someone attacked me with the intent to sexually assault me, I believe that I could fend them off.

If someone I knew tried to sexually assault me, I believe that I could fight them off.

Self-Efficacy to Avoid: Alpha=.83

	1	2	3	4
1	0	-1	-2	6
2	-1	1	6	-3
3	-2	6	1	-2
4	6	-3	-2	0

Table 5 (cont'd)

I am confident that anyone I dated would not attempt to sexually assault me.

I am confident that I can avoid being sexually assaulted.

I am confident that I will not be a victim of sexual assault.

I am confident that I can choose dates who do not put me in danger of being sexually assaulted.

Similarity: Alpha=.955

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	1	3	-1	1	-1	0
2	3	0	-2	-1	2	1
3	-1	-2	0	8	-3	-3
4	1	-1	8	-1	-1	-5
5	-1	2	-3	-1	1	7
6	0	1	-3	-5	7	-1

I can definitely see similarity between Beth and me.

Beth is definitely different from me.

Beth and I have a lot in common.

Beth resembles me a good deal.

Beth is not like me at all.

Beth does not resemble me at all.

Table 5 (cont'd)

Victim Controllability: Alpha=.703

	1	2	3	4
1	1	-6	3	4
2	-6	0	4	3
3	3	4	0	-6
4	4	3	-6	0

Beth probably did something that made getting raped more likely.

If Beth had fought harder, she probably would not have been raped.

Beth probably did something to encourage being raped.

The likelihood that Beth's behavior contributed to this rape is low.

Blame: Alpha=.862

	1	2	3	4
1	-2	-1	-1	0
2	-1	0	0	0
3	-1	0	0	-1
4	0	0	-1	-1

Beth should accept at least some of the responsibility for the rape.

Beth should accept at least part of the blame for this incident.

Beth should not blame herself at all.

Beth was at least partially responsible for being raped.

Table 6

Items Dropped from Scale

Self-Efficacy to Handle:

If someone tried to force me into having sex when I did not want to, I could keep them from having sex with me.

Self-Efficacy to Avoid:

I am confident that I can choose friends who do not put me in danger of being sexually assaulted.

I am confident that I can avoid places that might make sexual assault more likely.

I am confident that anyone I dated would not force me to have sex.

I am confident that I can avoid situations which might increase the chances of sexual assault.

Victim Controllability:

Beth was probably just in the wrong place at the wrong time.

Beth probably could not have done anything to avoid being raped.

Beth should have been able to avoid this rape if she had been more careful.

Beth probably resisted as much as was safely possible.

Beth should have never let herself be susceptible to this type of situation.

Blame:

When looking for people to blame for this incident, one should not look any farther than the rapist.

This incident is entirely the rapist's fault.

Table 7

Errors for Self-Efficacy as One Dimension (1/100)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	0	10	13	22	-10	-11	-10	-3	-9
2	10	0	22	16	-9	-10	-9	-10	-8
3	13	22	1	21	-10	-13	-12	-9	-10
4	22	16	21	0	-13	-13	-13	-8	-10
5	-10	-9	-10	-13	0	13	15	6	8
6	-11	-10	-13	-13	13	1	14	12	11
7	-10	-9	-12	-13	15	14	1	6	10
8	-3	-10	-9	-8	6	12	6	0	7
9	-9	-8	-10	-10	8	11	10	7	0

A manipulation check consisting of five items was included in the final questionnaire to determine whether the participants distinguished the difference between the acquaintance rape scenario and the stranger rape scenario. This manipulation check determined that the respondents interpreted correctly the difference between the two types of scenarios ($\underline{t}$ (191) = 24.93, $\underline{p}$<.0001, range=1-2, M_1 =1.88, SD_1 =.298, M_2 =1.05, SD_2 =.133).

Tests of Hypotheses.

Hypothesis one posited that perceived similarity would moderate the relationship between self-efficacy and victim control. To examine this hypothesis, similarity was split at the median, 4.17 (range 1-7), resulting in 58 individuals in the low similarity condition and 75 individuals in the high similarity condition. This median split was deemed acceptable because the variable similarity was approximately normally distributed (mean=4.19; SD=1.35; skewness= -.23). In the high similarity condition, a positive correlation was found between self-efficacy to handle a rape situation (SHA) and victim controllability ($\underline{r}$ = .33; P(.134 < $\underline{r}$ < .526) = .95). A positive correlation was also found between the other dimension of self-efficacy, one's belief about one's ability to avoid a rape situation (SAV), and victim controllability ($\underline{r}$ = .25; P(.034 < $\underline{r}$ < .466) = .95).

In the low similarity condition there was a nonsignificant correlation between SHA and victim control ($\underline{r}$ = .18; P(-.075 < $\underline{r}$ < .435) = .95) and a nonsignificant correlation between SAV and victim control ($\underline{r}$ = .10; P(-.155 < $\underline{r}$ < .355) = .95). These patterns of findings support hypothesis one that similarity acts as a moderator on the relationship between self-efficacy and victim control.

Hypothesis two predicted that type of rape would have no relationship to victim control in the high similarity and that type of rape would have a positive relationship to victim control in the low similarity condition. In the high similarity condition, a nonsignificant correlation was found between type of rape and victim control (r = -.03; P(-.265 < r < .205) = .95) supporting the first part of hypothesis two. In the low similarity condition, there was a significant negative correlation between type of rape and victim control (r = -.29; P(-.525 < r < -.055) = .95). However, a positive correlation between type of rape and victim control was predicted in the low similarity condition. The second part of the hypothesis was not supported as the results suggested that the stranger rape was perceived as more controllable.

Hypothesis three posited a positive relationship between victim control and blame. The data were significant with a significant positive correlation (r = .652; p < .001). Because the correlation between these two constructs was high, an inference that one might draw is that these two constructs are unidimensional. A confirmatory factor analysis (Hamilton & Hunter, 1988) was performed to see if these two factors were unidimensional. The analysis showed that these two scales were indeed two separate constructs as shown by the large errors when the items from both of these constructs were combined (see Table 8). This error matrix deviates substantially from what one would suspect if the two constructs were unidimensional.

Tests of Path Model

As noted previously, these hypotheses can be represented as a full causal model. This path model was analyzed utilizing Hunter and Hamilton's Path.Bas program (1995), and is presented in Table 9. One had to analyze the path model separately for high and

Table 8

Errors for Victim Controllability and Blame as One Dimension (1/100)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	0	-1	3	9	-6	-2	-2	2
2	-1	0	7	10	-7	-4	-3	-1
3	3	7	0	-4	-3	-3	-4	5
4	9	10	-4	0	-8	-6	6	-6
5	-6	-7	-3	-8	0	14	4	5
6	-2	-4	-3	-6	14	1	2	0
7	-2	-3	-4	6	4	2	0	-4
8	2	-1	5	-6	5	0	-4	0

Table 9

Path Models

Perceived Similarity High:

Self-efficacy to Handle

Type -.02
Rape   .68
      ↘
              Victim   →   Blame
      ↗   Control
SHA .33
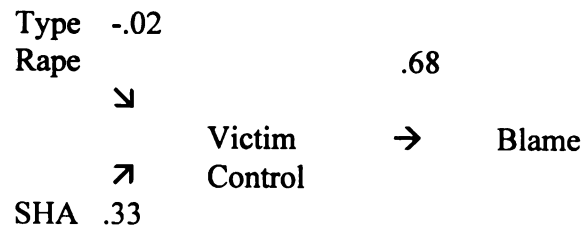
Path Coefficients

r = -.02   P(-.255<r<.215)=.95

r = .33   P(.134<r<.526)=.95

r =.68   P(.562<r<.798)=.95

χ (2) = .28 p=.867

Self-efficacy to Avoid

Type -.04
Rape   .68
      ↘
              Victim   →   Blame
      ↗   Control
SAV .25
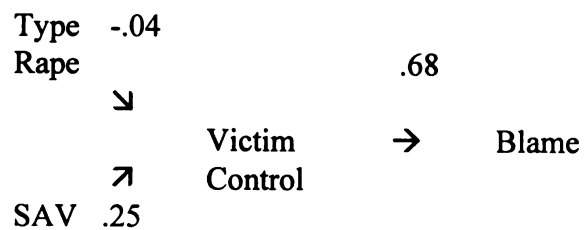
Path Coefficients

r = -.04   P(-.275<r<.195)=.95

r =.25   P(.034<r<.466)=.95

r =.68   P(.562<r<.798)=.95

χ (2) =.50 p=.781

Table 9 (cont'd)

Perceived Similarity Low:

<u>Self-efficacy to Handle</u>

```
Type   -.29
Rape                              .66
         ↘
               Victim      →     Blame
         ↗     Control
SHA    .18
```
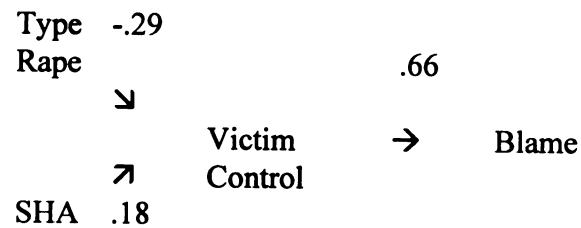
Path Coefficients

r = -.29   P(-.525<r< -.055)=.95

r =.18   P(-.075<r<.435)=.95

r =.66   P(.503<r<.817)=.95

χ (2) = .02   p= 1.000

<u>Self-efficacy to Avoid</u>

```
Type   -.29
Rape                              .66
         ↘
               Victim      →     Blame
         ↗     Control
SAV    .10
```
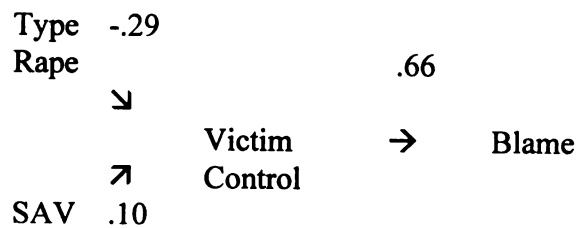
Path Coefficients

r = -.29   P(-.545<r< -.035)=.95

r =.10   P(-.155<r<.355)=.95

r =.66   P(.503<r<.817)=.95

χ (2) = .08   p=1.000

low similarity because similarity is a moderating variable. Additionally, the path model was examined with each of the dimensions of self-efficacy separately.

When determining whether a path model fits, one wants to fail to reject the proposed model. Therefore, a small chi squared and a p higher than .05 is desired. From Table 9, one can determine that the path models presented fit these criteria and thus describe the data well. The path model results echo the correlation results from hypothesis one, hypothesis two, and hypothesis three, providing further evidence for their validity. In the high similarity condition, there is a significant relationship between each of the dimensions of self-efficacy and victim controllability. These relationships disappear in the low similarity condition. There is a negative relationship between type of rape and victim controllability in the low similarity condition and no relationship between these two variables in the high similarity condition. Again, this negative relationship is opposite what this thesis posited, but this pattern of results does provide support for similarity being a moderating variable between self-efficacy and victim controllability and between type of rape and victim controllability. In all of the paths there is a strong positive relationship between victim controllability and blame, providing evidence for hypothesis three.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this thesis was to address the effects of type of rape and receiver self-efficacy on victim blame. Hypothesis one suggested that reported self-efficacy would have a positive effect on the amount of perceived victim controllability, but this relationship was believed to be moderated by similarity. In the condition in which the receiver perceived high similarity between himself or herself and the victim, the amount

of self-efficacy was believed to have a positive relationship with victim controllability, in that the higher the amount of receiver self-efficacy, the higher the degree of control over the rape the receiver should attribute to the victim. In the low similarity condition, the receiver's self-efficacy was posited to have no relationship with victim controllability. In hypothesis two, this thesis suggested that in the high similarity condition there would be no relationship between type of rape and victim controllability and in the low similarity condition there would be a direct positive relationship between type of rape and perceived victim controllability, so that a victim of an acquaintance rape should elicit a higher degree of perceived control. Finally, hypothesis three posited that perceived victim controllability over the rape was positively related to blame.

The results suggest that in the high perceived similarity condition, receiver self-efficacy did have an effect on the amount of control attributed to the victim, and thus the amount of blame placed on the victim. However, in the low similarity condition, there was no relationship between self-efficacy and victim controllability, confirming that similarity did moderate the relationship between these two variables. In the high similarity condition there was not a significant relationship between type of rape and victim controllability. In the low similarity condition, there was a negative relationship between type of rape and perceived victim controllability, such that in the stranger rape condition, the victim was perceived as having more control than in the acquaintance rape condition. In all cases, victim controllability and blame were strongly positively related. Thus, hypothesis one was supported. The first part of hypothesis two was supported, while the second part was not. Finally, hypothesis three was strongly supported.

When similarity was low, this thesis predicted that acquaintance victims would be perceived as possessing more control than stranger victims. However, the data reflected the opposite trend, with low similarity receivers attributing greater control to the stranger rape victim than the acquaintance rape victim (reflected by the negative correlation between type of rape and victim controllability in this condition). Rationale for the original hypothesis consisted of the Feminist theory's claim that women are attributed more control in the acquaintance rape situation. Feminist theory posits that acquaintance rape can be viewed as a failed sexual script (Gillen & Muncer, 1995) and suggests that with any acquaintance, the woman has the responsibility to control the sexual behavior. However, perhaps a victim would have to be in a situation in which the rapist would expect sex (such as a romantic relationship) to cause the sexual script to be relevant and thus cause a difference in blame. Therefore, there might be a difference in how people perceive a situation which involves date rape and one which involves rape by an acquaintance who was not a romantic interest. Perhaps the predicted finding was not obtained because of the degree of acquaintance between the rapist and victim: they were acquaintances, not romantic partners. The predicted relationship might have been found if the relationship between the victim and rapist was one in which sexual activity might be expected. If the findings of this study are generalizable, one might find that stranger rape would be in the middle of the range of controllability, with date rape being perceived as more controllable and acquaintance rape perceived as least controllable. However, the stranger rape may also have been perceived as more controllable because of the scenario in this study. Perhaps the stranger rape was perceived as more controllable because an individual should be able to trust an acquaintance not to rape, but had the control to

decide not to walk home alone. Walking home alone could be perceived as a voluntary risk (Wiegman & Gutteling, 1985), while having an acquaintance suddenly decide to rape a person might be perceived as less voluntary. The date rape situation might be perceived as more controllable and voluntary than the stranger rape situation, because a woman should have control over the sexual activity in the romantic relationship.

The results of this hypothesis illustrated how different degrees of acquaintanceship might affect blame. The factors which might differ an acquaintance rape from a date rape need to be explicated to determine which factors might lead to this variation in blame. Some of those factors might be the duration of the relationship and the intimacy of the relationship. Intimacy of the relationship could include both sexual and emotional intimacy. Previous research have shown that when individuals had dated for a longer period of time, a rape was seen as less damaging to the victim (Bridges, 1991). Also, when the rapist and victim were a couple who had previously had prior consensual sex, victims were blamed more than victims of stranger rapes or victims who had not engaged in sex before with their partner who raped them (L'Armand & Pepitone, 1982).

This failed hypothesis points toward the practical need of determining what factors in a rape situation encourage the receiver to perceive the situation as more or less controllable. A future direction for research would be to provide subjects with scenarios which illustrate a date rape, an acquaintance rape, and a stranger rape to determine if the amount of acquaintanceship does affect the degree of self-efficacy, blame, and controllability attributed to the victim. Scenarios portraying the rapes as happening in different situations could also help determine which factors might contribute to victim controllability in addition to type of rape. These factors would be very important to know

because they could either help women avoid these situations or provide a basis for convincing individuals that these factors are not realistic (for example, many women walk home alone out of necessity, not because they are asking to be raped). The better one can understand blame, the more successful one can be in convincing rape victims to not fear blame, hopefully resulting in greater reporting rates for rape and better recovery.

The hypotheses that were supported helped to distinguish among many of the theories advanced to explain victim blame. The support of hypothesis one illustrated how this study is linked to Shaver's defensive attribution theory's (1970) components of blame and harm avoidance. When the perceived similarity of the victim was high, both high self-efficacy to handle an attempted rape and high self-efficacy to avoid the rape situation were associated with high victim controllabillity (and thus higher blame), while low self-efficacy to handle and low self-efficacy to avoid were associated with low victim controllability (and thus lower blame). These findings are supportive of Shaver's defensive attribution theory's (1970) component of blame avoidance. Since the victim is perceived as similar, an individual would not want to be held accountable if he or she were in the same situation. If the receiver's self-efficacy to avoid the rape situation or handle the situation if it should arise is high, the individual should not worry about being in the same situation even if the victim is similar. The receiver attributes her or his own beliefs of high self-efficacy to the victim, deciding that the victim too must have had the ability to avoid or handle the situation. Thus, no tempering of blame is found even though the victim is similar. However, if the victim is perceived as similar, but the receiver's sense of self-efficacy to avoid or handle the rape situation is low, the receiver might be able to imagine himself or herself in a similar position. If this happened, the receiver

would not want to be blamed. This would result in the blame avoidance tendency which Shaver predicted: the victim would be blamed less. In the low perceived similarity group, since the victim is not similar, the receiver can believe that he or she would not be in a similar situation no matter their sense of self-efficacy. Thus, the tendency for harm avoidance would encourage a high degree of control to be attributed to the victim. There would be no relationship between self-efficacy and control, because one can dismiss the threat based on low similarity to the victim and does not have to assess his or her degree of self-efficacy to determine if he or she has the resources to avoid the threatening situation.

Type of rape appeared only to have a noticeable effect on victim controllability in the low similarity condition. In the high similarity condition, individuals appeared to assess their self-efficacy in the situation and utilize this information to determine victim controllability. When self-efficacy was relevant, type of rape did not have a significant influence on blame, suggesting that individual only use this more broad categorical variable to judge victim controllability when the more personal variables such as self-efficacy are not relevant because of low similarity.

Another finding of theoretical significance concerned the strong positive relationship between victim controllability and blame. Although Shaver's arguments (1970) predicted such a relationship, this finding contradicts the belief of the Just World Theory (Lerner, 1965; Lerner & Miller, 1978). The Just World Theory argued that to protect themselves from the possibility of harm, individuals should blame victims more who are perceived as having low control over their crime. Thus, the receiver of the message can distance themselves from the victim and the possibility that such a terrible

occurrence could happen to them. This study provides evidence that contradicts this part of the Just World Theory. Individuals may have to find different ways to deal with the possibility of being raped rather than blaming a victim with low control over the situation (such as attributing their own degree of self-efficacy to a similar victim). Of a more practical nature, if controllability is positively related to victim blame, finding out why individuals attribute controllability to the victim could lead to ways to persuade individuals to blame rape victims less, perhaps by illustrating that the victim really did not have as much control over the situation as the receiver is attributing to the victim.

The results of the path model are also of theoretical significance. There has been some disagreement about the causal order among the variables of self-efficacy, controllability, and blame. Walster (1965) believed that a receiver's self-efficacy was a result of his or her assessment of victim controllability. Thornton (1984) claimed that blaming a victim led to higher self-efficacy. The results of the path analysis support the position posited in this thesis that self-efficacy is a preceding cause of the assessment of victim controllability and blame, not a result of either.

One limitation of the path analysis is that the data could fit the path specified or the opposite path. One cannot distinguish between these two paths without a longitudinal design. The reverse path would posit that blaming the victim causes one to believe the victim had more control over the situation which would increase self-efficacy of the receiver in the high similarity condition but not the low similarity condition. No previous research has posited such a path, though as stated previous Walster (1965) posited that victim controllability led to increased receiver self-efficacy which led to greater blame. Victim controllability appears to be a predictive factor for blame. Previous research, such

as Shaver's defensive attribution theory (1970) and the Just World Theory (Lerner, 1965; Lerner & Miller, 1978), have posited that amount of victim controllability leads to blame. Also, Lazarus (1991) stated that if a person is not seen as having control over a situation, one resists laying blame on them or becoming angry with them. However, self-efficacy has been posited to be a predecessor to blame (Walster, 1965) and a result of blame (Thornton, 1984). However, no previous research has posited that victim controllability mediates the relationship between blame and self-efficacy. Thus, the path model posited by this thesis appears to be more plausible than the reverse. Only a longitudinal analysis could definitely solve this question of alternative path models, and perhaps future research should examine this possible research design.

Because of the format of the questionnaire in which the receivers were questioned concerning their self-efficacy before being exposed to an acquaintance or stranger rape, a possible relationship between type of rape and self-efficacy could not be explored. Perhaps such a relationship might exist in which an acquaintance rape might elicit a higher degree of self-efficacy, at least in a date rape scenario. This effect might be a result of the different risks which the two types of rape present to the receiver. Wiegman and Gutteling (1985) emphasized the importance of distinguishing between voluntary risk and involuntary risk. They found that a person exposed to an involuntary risk had lower self-efficacy in regards to this risk. A voluntary risk resulted in higher self-efficacy and the perception of the situation as less serious. This finding can be generalized to the case of rape by perceiving the stranger rape as a less voluntary risk. The case of a stranger jumping out of a bush, the stereotype of a stranger rape, is probably perceived as less voluntary than going out on a date with someone who turns out to be a rapist. Thus, being

exposed to a stranger rape might elicit lower levels of self-efficacy than being exposed to an acquaintance rape. Subjects might especially believe in their ability to avoid an acquaintance rape. Future research should examine this possible relationship, though the results of this study might suggest that this rationale might hold for a date rape scenario but not one in which the victim and the rapist are only acquaintances.

The amount of research on rape is vast. Tables 1 and 2 seek to provide some structure for this literature, but this effort represents only a beginning. Although many characteristics are often found to affect victim blame, there is a lack of an overall explanation structure into which these characteristics fit. One way to encourage an organizational structure is to utilize the theories that have been advanced to explain victim blame. This paper illustrates how type of rape, self-efficacy, similarity, and victim controllability relate to Shaver's defensive attribution theory (1970). Thus, this paper links receiver characteristics and the nature of the scenario, two of the three categories into which previous research regarding victim blame can be divided, to one of the main theories advanced to explain victim blame. If future studies would utilize the same method, a more coherent literature on the important issue of rape victim blame would result. Not only would this illuminate the current theories to a greater extent, but it would also illustrate how the findings of the literature can be organized in such a way to be of practical use to rape victims and members of society.

This paper started with the goal of explaining why victims are blamed through the consideration of self-efficacy and type of rape. Similarity was found to be an important factor in that when the receiver perceived the victim as similar, self-efficacy had an influence on victim controllability and thus on blame. On the other hand, when the

receiver did not perceive the victim as similar, type of rape had an effect on victim

controllability and thus on blame such that the stranger rape was seen as more

controllable.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Original Scenarios Utilized in the Pretest

<u>Acquaintance Rape Scenario</u>

Beth stands outside of the library and looks impatiently at her watch. Her boyfriend, Mark, was supposed to pick her up at 9:00, but it is now 9:30. She is going to be late for her group meeting again, and the other members will kill her if she does not get there in time. She finally decides to give up on Mark and starts walking back to her dorm alone. As she is walking along, she notices a friend of Mark's named John up ahead. She does not know this man well, but she hurries ahead to join him so that she does not have to walk alone, which always scares her at night. She and John walk along toward her dorm.

As they walk through a darker area on campus, Beth is glad that she had run into John so she does not have to be afraid. Suddenly she notices that he has stopped talking and when she turns to see what is wrong, she notices a strange expression on his face. He grabs her and pulls her further into the dark behind a tree. She screams and kicks him. He puts his hand over her mouth and silences her, threatening to hurt her if she resists. Beth continues to struggle, but cannot get away. He rapes her, and then runs off.

Stranger Rape Scenario

Beth stands outside of the library and looks impatiently at her watch. Her boyfriend, Mark, was supposed to pick her up at 9:00, but it is now 9:30. She is going to be late for her group meeting again, and the other members will kill her if she does not get there in time. She finally decides to give up on Mark and starts walking back to her dorm alone. As she is walking along, she notices a friend of Mark's named John up ahead. She does not know this man well, but she hurries ahead to join him so that she does not have to walk alone, which always scares her at night. She and John walk along toward her dorm.

As they walk through a darker area on campus, Beth is glad that she had run into John so she does not have to be afraid. Soon, they reach his dorm, and he leaves. She walks on toward her dorm alone. She notices a man behind her who is talking to a friend. Suddenly she realizes that he has stopped talking and when she turns to check out the situation, she notices that he is alone and has a strange expression on his face. As she speeds up to put some distance between him and her, he grabs her and pulls her into the dark behind a tree. She screams and kicks him. He puts his hand over her mouth and silences her, threatening to hurt her if she resists. Beth continues to struggle, but cannot get away. He rapes her, and then runs off.

APPENDIX B

Pretest Questionnaire

Please estimate how often you engage in the following behaviors on a scale from Always to Never:

1. I walk alone at night.

5	4	3	2	1
Always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Never

2. I drink too much at parties.

5	4	3	2	1
Always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Never

3. I'm not nervous about dating individuals who I have just met.

5	4	3	2	1
Always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Never

4. I have taken a self-defense class.

3	2	1
More than once	Once	Never

5. I carry a personal alarm or other safety device.

5	4	3	2	1
Always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Never

Please answer the following questions:

6. In general, I believe that I am <u>more</u> careful about my safety than other people are.

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

7. I believe that other people have more of a chance of being sexually assaulted than I do.

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

8. I believe that I am more careful when I am out alone than other individuals are.

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

9. I believe that I am more aware of my environment regarding safety than other individuals.

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

10. I believe that I am more careful than other individuals when choosing dates who are not going to sexually assault me.

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

11. I believe that I would be better able to fight off a person who attempted to sexually assault me than other individuals would be.

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

12. I believe that other individuals are more careless than I am concerning their personal safety.

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

13. I believe that I am <u>more</u> aware of my safety than other individuals are.

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

14. I believe that I am more aware of my safety on campus than other individuals are.

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

15. I believe it is highly unlikely that I would ever be sexually assaulted.

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

Please answer the following questions:

16. I am confident that anyone I dated would not attempt to sexually assault me.

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

17. If someone attacked me with the intent to sexually assault me, I doubt that I could fend them off.

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

18. I am confident that I can choose friends who do not put me in danger of being sexually assaulted.

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

19. I could fend off someone who tried to sexually assault me.

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

20. If someone tried to sexually assault me, I could successfully defend myself.

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

21. I am confident that I can avoid being sexually assaulted.

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

22. I am confident that I will not be a victim of sexual assault.

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

23. If someone I knew tried to sexually assault me, I doubt that I could fight them off.

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

24. If someone tried to force me into having sex when I did not want to, I could keep them from having sex with me.

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

25. I am confident that I can avoid places that might make sexual assault more likely.

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

26. I am confident that anyone I dated would not force me to have sex.

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

27. I am confident that I can avoid situations which might increase the chances of sexual assault.

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

28. I am confident that I can choose dates who do not put me in danger of being sexually assaulted.

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

29. If someone tried to sexually assault me, I could successfully protect myself.

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

30. I can definitely see similarity between Beth and me.

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

31. Beth is definitely different from me.

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

32. Beth and I have a lot in common.

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

33. Beth resembles me a good deal.

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

34. Beth is not like me at all.

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

35. Beth does not resemble me at all.

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

Please answer the following questions about the scenario you just read:

36. Did the woman in the scenario know her attacker?   YES   NO

37. Was the person who attacked the woman a friend or a stranger?

FRIEND or **STRANGER**

38. Would you classify this crime as a crime committed by an acquaintance or a crime committed by a stranger?

ACQUAINTANCE or **STRANGER**

39. I believe that this scenario is:

Plausible	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Not plausible
Likely	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Not likely
Believable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Not believable
Possible	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Not possible
Probable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Not probable
Realistic	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Not realistic

40. Beth was probably just in the wrong place at the wrong time.

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

41. Beth should accept at least some of the responsibility for the rape.

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

42. Beth probably could not have done anything to avoid being raped.

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

43. Beth should accept at least part of the blame for this incident.

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

44. Beth probably did something that made getting raped more likely.

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

45. If Beth had fought harder, she probably would not have been raped.

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

46. Beth should not blame herself at all.

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

47. Beth probably did something to encourage being raped.

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

48. Beth was at least partially responsible for being raped.

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

49. The likelihood that Beth's behavior contributed to this rape is low.

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

50. Beth should have been able to avoid this rape if she had been more careful.

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

51. When looking for people to blame for this incident, one should not look any farther than the rapist.

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

52. Beth probably resisted as much as was safely possible.

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

53. Beth should have never let herself be susceptible to this type of situation.

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

54. This incident is entirely the rapist's fault.

7	6	5	4	3	2	1
Strongly Agree	Agree	Slightly Agree	Neutral	Slightly Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

Please answer the following questions:

55. I am **FEMALE MALE**

56. I am a
    a. Freshman
    b. Sophomore
    c. Junior
    d. Senior
    e. Graduate student

57. Have you ever been forced to have sexual intercourse against your will? **YES   NO**

58. Do you know anyone who has been forced to have sexual intercourse against their will?
    YES   NO

APPENDIX C

Final Scenarios

<u>Similarity Scenario</u>

Beth is a Sophomore at Michigan State University. She is the oldest of three children and is from a suburb of Detroit. She is not sure of her major yet, but is thinking that Psychology might be interesting. Otherwise, she might become an Education major. She likes being at a big university and enjoys the friends she has met. She is still trying to find a balance between having fun at college, studying, and working part time. She is looking forward to summer break.

Acquaintance Rape Scenario

Beth stands outside of the library and looks impatiently at her watch. Her boyfriend, Mark, was supposed to pick her up at 9 PM, but it is now 9:30. She is going to be late for her group meeting again, and the other members will kill her if she does not get there in time. She finally decides to give up on Mark and starts walking back to her dorm alone. As she is walking along, she notices Mark's friend John up ahead. She has met this man a few times, and she hurries ahead to join him so that she does not have to walk alone, which always scares her at night. She and John walk along toward her dorm.

As they walk through a darker area on campus, Beth is glad that she has run into John so she does not have to be afraid. Suddenly she notices that he has stopped talking and when she turns to see what is wrong, she notices a strange expression on his face. He grabs her and pulls her further into the dark behind a tree. She screams and kicks him. He puts his hand over her mouth and silences her, threatening to hurt her if she resists. Beth continues to struggle, but cannot get away. He rapes her, and then runs off.

Stranger Rape Scenario

Beth stands outside of the library and looks impatiently at her watch. Her boyfriend, Mark, was supposed to pick her up at 9 PM, but it is now 9:30. She is going to be late for her group meeting again, and the other members will kill her if she does not get there in time. She finally decides to give up on Mark and starts walking back to her dorm alone. As she is walking along, she notices Mark's friend John up ahead. She has met this man a few times, and she hurries ahead to join him so that she does not have to walk alone, which always scares her at night. She and John walk along toward her dorm.

As they walk through a darker area on campus, Beth is glad that she has run into John so she does not have to be afraid. Soon, they reach his dorm, and he leaves. She walks on toward her dorm alone. She notices a man behind her who is talking to a friend. Suddenly she realizes that he has stopped talking and when she turns to check out the situation, she notices that he is alone and has a strange expression on his face. As she speeds up to put some distance between him and her, he grabs her and pulls her into the dark behind a tree. She screams and kicks him. He puts his hand over her mouth and silences her, threatening to hurt her if she resists. Beth continues to struggle, but cannot get away. He rapes her, and then runs off.

APPENDIX D

Altered Questions in the Final Questionnaire

8. I believe that I am less careful when I am out alone than other individuals are.

11. I believe that I would be less able to fight off a person who attempted to sexually assault me than other individuals would be.

14. I believe that I am <u>less</u> aware of my safety on campus than other individuals are.

15. In general, I believe that I have a higher likelihood of being sexually assaulted than other people do.

17. If someone attacked me with the intent to sexually assault me, I believe that I could fend them off.

23. If someone I knew tried to sexually assault me, I believe that I could fight them off.

37. Was the person who attacked the woman an acquaintance or a stranger?

ACQUAINTANCE or **STRANGER**

Additional Questions

Would you classify the attacker as someone who was known or unknown to Beth?

KNOWN or **UNKNOWN**

Had Beth met her attacker before?

YES or **NO**

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