

COERCIVE SEXUALITY: THE EFFECT OF EARLY VICTIMIZATION ON ONE'S VIEWS
AND ATTITUDES TOWARD SEX.

By

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Abstract

The prevalence of childhood sexual abuse is difficult to assess but research is growing on possible long-term consequences of this victimization. Two areas of concern are potential repeat victimization and changed attitudes toward the coercive nature of sexuality. Children who have their sexual boundaries violated at a young age may be more likely to experience sexual assault later in life (Scoglio et al., 2021). Research continues to confirm that many sexual abusers were in fact abused themselves as children (King et al., 2019). This research seeks to make connections between these experiences of sexual victimization and support for coercive sexual attitudes. Among 774 undergraduates at a large Southwestern university, 33% of the female students and 18% of the male students reported childhood sexual abuse. Their attitudes towards coercive sexuality will be considered in regard to past victimizations.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Sexual relationships and the means to obtain them are dominant in our social expectations and the norms are enforced by our environment. It is a staple in all forms of media, from the content to be desired to the suggestiveness that sells non-related products. There are a magnitude of apps and services like Tinder, OkCupid, and Grinder that are all dedicated to finding a partner. With the concept of sex being so prevalent in society, the view of sex and its role is shaped by one's environment and personal experiences.

The constant bombardment of sexual images may imply that sex should be taken when desired, even if it needs to be coaxed, tricked, or taken by force. Viewing sex as coercive may lead to a person being more apathetic about sexual assault and sex crimes (Garrido-Macías, 2022). Understanding what causes and contributes to a person viewing sex as coercive could help reduce future harm.

A large number of children become the victim sex sexual abuse before the age of 18. This translates to around 1 in 10 kids becoming a victim before their 18th birthday (Scoglio et al., 2019). Breaking this down by gender, 1 in 7 girls and 1 in 25 boys will be victimized (Scoglio et al., 2019). What makes this more troubling is that these victims are then more likely to be revictimized later in life (Scoglio et al., 2019). Looking at potential causes of adopting coercive views about sex is important because viewing sex as coercive could be a mechanism that leads to further sexual assault, and trauma (Thomas, Joshi, & Sorenson, 2013).

This research project hopes to aid this understanding by looking at three different potential areas that may influence support for coercive sexual attitudes. The first area to be considered is whether personal sexual victimization may influence coercive attitudes based on experiences of early childhood sexual abuse. Prior research has suggested that childhood abuse

and trauma might normalize a coercive view of sex (Norris et al., 2021). This area looks to see if sexual victimization is a mechanism that causes tolerance of coercive views. The second area being examined is how emotional abuse affects views about coercive sex. Emotional abuse is more prevalent than sexual abuse, and also has lasting negative impacts (Berzenski, 2018). Similar to sexual victimization, this area looks to see if emotional abuse is a mechanism that causes coercive views. The third area that will be considered related to support for coercive sexuality is gender. Gender norms and roles imposed by society have been shown to shape views on sex (Garrido-Macías, 2022). Men are taught to be the dominant ones in relationships while women are taught to be the submissive ones (De Meyer et al., 2017). As such this area aims to see if gender has an impact on adoption of coercive views about sex as a way to fulfill the expectations society places on gender.

From these areas, three research questions were identified and examined by this research project. The first research question is, does experiencing childhood sexual victimization lead to higher tolerance of sexual coercion. Childhood sexual abuse was the independent variable and coercive views about sex was the dependent variable. The second research question is, does experiencing childhood emotional abuse lead to higher tolerance of sexual coercion. Childhood emotional abuse was the independent variable and coercive views about sex was the dependent variable. Lastly, the third research question is, does gender affect tolerance of coercive views about sex. Gender was the independent variable and coercive views about sex was the dependent variable.

To answer these three research questions, first a review of literature was conducted into the specific areas surrounding the questions. The first area being sexual coercion. Specifically, prevalence of sexual coercion, causes of sexual coercion, harms of sexual coercion, and the

lasting effects of sexual coercion on victims. The next area covered in the literature review is childhood victimization. Namely childhood sexual victimization and childhood emotional victimization. This section covers prevalence and harms of experiencing these different types of victimization and the lasting effects they have on a person's life. The last area in the literature review is gender. This section covers how gender is a social construct and is influenced by norms and expectations placed on what it means to be a specific gender.

After the review of literature, two criminological theories were used to ground the research question and explain why childhood victimization and gender may affect coercive views about sex later in life. The first theory used was Differential Association theory. This theory states that criminal activity is learned by internalizing techniques and definitions that make criminal behavior favorable opposed to noncriminal behaviors (Cullen, Agnew, & Wilcox, 2018). The second theory used was Feminist Pathways theory. This theory states that men and women have different responses and pathways into the criminal justice system (Chesney-Lind, 1989). As such there is a gender difference between victimization and offending (Chesney-Lind, 1989).

Lastly, to actually answer the three research questions, responses to a survey titled Attitudes Towards Coercive Sexuality were examined. The survey asked a variety of questions about people's experiences with different types of victimization, views on sexual conservatism, and views on sexual coercion. Based on the responses from the survey, a standard multiple regression model was used to test the significance of childhood sexual victimization, childhood emotional victimization, and gender in the tolerance of sexual coercion.

Sexual victimization is a prevalent issue that harms a wide variety of individuals. Coercive tactics are a tool used to make people engage in sexual activities they would not

normally consent to (Thomas, Joshi, & Sorenson, 2013). As such sexual coercion is used to victimize individuals. Overall, the goal of this research project is to better understand the mechanisms that influence tolerance of sexual coercion to prevent future victimization.

Childhood sexual abuse, childhood emotional abuse, and gender are all potential factors that can lead to tolerance of coercive views about sex. By looking at potential influences of coercive views about sex, future research can be used to better understand causes of coercive sex and prevent future harms and victimization.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

There are three key areas considered in this research project. Sexual coercion is the main behavior that is being examined by this research. Sexual coercion is the act of using coercive tactics in order to obtain sex from an unwilling participant (Garrido-Macias, 2022). These coercive tactics can fall under both verbal and physical actions. Verbal actions including behaviors like mood swings, temper tantrums, and repeated asking and demanding. Physical actions of coercion include violent acts like hitting and strangulation. Sexual coercion leaves lasting harm on the victim. Regardless of the form sexual coercion takes, it is used as a tool to control and manipulate a person into submitting to the user's desires (Thomas, Joshi, & Sorenson, 2013).

The next key area that this research looks at is victimization specifically, childhood sexual victimization and childhood emotional victimization. Childhood abuse is a prevalent harm that affects many people. It is estimated that 10 to 26% of women are sexually victimized in their childhood (Scoglio et al., 2019). Experiencing either type of abuse as a child opens a person up to a multitude of different risk factors and health risks. This includes an increase in rates of depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder (Messman-Moore, Long, & Siegfried, 2000). This is in addition to adoption of a negative self-image and self-esteem (Shapero et al., 2019). All of these negative results from child abuse culminate into a life of dealing with victimization. Nearly half of all victims of childhood sexual victimization are revictimized later in their adult life (Scoglio et al., 2019). Victims of childhood also are more likely to become abusers themselves (King et al., 2019).

The last area that is covered in this research is gender. Even though traditionally gender is viewed as a very basic concept that is forced into a strict binary, gender is a complex and vast

spectrum. There are multiple complex layers that go into what it means to be a specific gender. The social norms and expectations attached to being a man or a woman dictates how a person of that gender will behave (Wenhold & Harrison, 2020).

Coercion

Coercion is commonly defined as the act of making someone do something that they would not otherwise consent to by using persuasion, threats, or force. Taking it a step further, using coercive tactics to obtain sex is known as sexual coercion. Sexual coercion is any unwanted sexual activity that occurs after a person is pressured or forced into consenting to the sexual act (Garrido-Macias, 2022). Sexual coercion is widely seen as a gendered tactic used by men to control women and force them into submission. In nearly all cases of sexual coercion, the man is the one using coercive tactics to gain power and control over a woman in order to obtain sex from the women (Thomas, Joshi, & Sorenson, 2013). In general, coercive tactics are viewed as a bad thing that is frowned upon by society, yet coercive tactics are heavily prevalent tactics used in intimate partner violence and are one of the most common tactics used in unwanted sexual contact (Norris et al, 2018). Contrary to the idea that unwanted sexual contact is perpetrated by strangers, of all of the cases of nonphysical sexual coercion reported in the US national survey in 2010 and 2012, 74.7% of the cases involved a current or past intimate partner (Garrido-Macias, 2022). Sexual coercion is a tactic used by people to maintain control over their partner (Thomas, Joshi, & Sorenson, 2013).

When verbal persuasion fails, an abuser might resort to physical violence to maintain control over their partner. This form of coercion can take both an active and passive form. Passive coercion takes the form of constant restriction and control over their partner that stays constant over time. This can take the form of physical violence in response to unwanted

behavior, limiting resources and responses, or removing options from their life (Thomas, Joshi, & Sorenson, 2013). These forms of coercion are used to set the precedent that they are in control in the relationship and that only their needs and desires matter. Any deviance from this standard will be responded to with more violent and active forms of coercion. Active coercion are instances of extreme life-threatening violence used to show that they are in control of not only their partner's situation but also their life. This most commonly takes the form of strangulation (Thomas, Joshi, & Sorenson, 2013). In most cases only a single instance of active forceful coercion is enough to completely dissuade any future resistance.

Sexual coercion not only has serious immediate impacts on a person's well-being, but also has lasting consequences. When a person is subjected to sexual coercion, their perceptions of what is acceptable within relationships change to include more tolerance for sexual coercion (Garrido-Macias, 2022). Past victimization changes how a person navigates future situations. Due to the previous instances of sexual coercion experienced in a person's life, their perceived threat and risk recognition is diminished thus opening them up to more potential harm caused by sexual coercion (Garrido-Macias, 2022). Even though sexual coercion is still viewed as a negative thing by victims of sexual coercion, the effect of sexual coercion diminishes the responses to future sexual coercion. Past victims have a harder time leaving and identifying sexually coercive relationships and are more likely to view sexually coercive relationships as normal and reject healthy relationship norms (Garrido-Macias, 2022). In some cases, victims of sexual coercion minimize their experiences because their experiences do not fit the stereotypical form of coercion involving force (Faustino & Gavey 2021).

Within relationships sexually coercive tactics can be used to ignore boundaries set in a relationship as a way for one partner to get what they want. A common form of sexual coercion

that is thought to be mundane is the constant use of coercive tactics over time. This tactic is used to diminish a person's resolve to say no so that eventually they will relent to the other person's desires (Faustino & Gavey 2021). Another common form of sexual coercion that is overlooked as a sexually coercive tactic is using other people's expectations as justification. In other words, pressuring someone to do as you want by saying that everyone is doing it and that it is not a big deal. This tactic undermines a person's boundaries and the importance of consent by showing that these things are socially undesirable and what they want is socially desirable (Faustino & Gavey 2021). Coupled with these individual tactics, any attempt of coercion met with denial could be met with a negative emotional response. A negative emotional response is used to convey that refusing coercive tactics is an undesirable response that will be met with punishment in the form of negative feelings like moodiness, anger, or threatening to end the relationship (Faustino & Gavey 2021). All of these tactics coupled together are used to force sexual desires onto a partner by creating an obligation for them to comply with whatever is asked of them in order to preserve and maintain the relationship. This is doubly true in instances of marriage where there is already a social commitment to a partner. In fact, sexually coercive tactics are harder to identify within marriages due to complying with sexual desires already being viewed as a factor in marriage (Farvid & Saing, 2021). Overall, sexually coercive tactics are present in all stages of relationships and become more normalized and accepted the longer that they are used.

Victimization

Everyone deserves to live their lives without the threat of being sexually victimized. Far too many people suffer from sexual victimization and the lasting health impacts that it causes. Around 1 in 10 children will be sexually victimized before the age of 18 (Scoglio et al., 2019).

This breaks down to 1 in 7 girls and 1 in 25 boys (Scoglio et al., 2019). What makes this statistic even worse is that an indicator for future victimization is experiencing past victimization (Scoglio et al., 2019). Moreover, victims of childhood sexual victimization are also more likely to become abusers themselves later in life (King et al., 2019). In addition to sexual victimization and abuse of children, emotional abuse must also be considered. Just like sexual abuse, emotional abuse also leaves lasting scars and harms like an increase in depressive symptoms (Shapero et al., 2013). These points constitute a cycle of victimization and violence that stems from early childhood abuse and victimization that repeats itself throughout life.

Childhood Sexual Abuse

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention defines childhood sexual abuse as any completed or attempted sexual act, sexual contact with, or exploitation of a child (Scoglio et al., 2019). Around 1 in 7 girls and 1 in 25 boys are victims of childhood sexual victimization. Moreover, it is estimated that around 10% to 26% of women have been affected by childhood sexual victimization (Scoglio et al., 2019). These statistics show just how prevalent childhood sexual victimization is within our society. The harms caused by childhood sexual victimization are lasting and follow the victim throughout life.

Victims of childhood sexual victimization are more likely to take on more aggressive traits and perpetuate sexual violence later in life (King et al., 2019). Victims of childhood sexual abuse are more likely to report being involved in sexual violence as either a victim or a perpetrator than individuals who were not victims of sexual abuse as a child (King et al., 2019). Experiencing multiple forms of childhood sexual abuse like directly experiencing sexual abuse, abuse at the hands of a sibling, and witnessing intimate partner violence from parents increases the effect that childhood abuse has on an individual's likelihood to adopt and perpetuate sexual

violence practices later in life (Scoglio et al., 2019). This is especially important when considering that a third of all youth experience abuse at the hands of a sibling (Finkelhor et al., 2015).

In addition to the increased risk of being more aggressive in regard to sex, childhood sexual victimization also increases a variety of other health risks. Victims are also more likely to develop anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) later in life (Messman-Moore, Long, & Siegfried, 2000). Along with these clinical risk factors, victims also have a higher risk of having lower social skills, low self-esteem, fear and distrust of others, and hostility to other people. Similarly, to sexual aggression risk factors, the more abuse a person experiences the greater the negative effects that person experiences (Messman-Moore, Long, & Siegfried, 2000). All of these risk factors culminate together in a cycle of abuse that follows the victim throughout life. Being a victim of childhood sexual victimization leads to an increased risk of repeat victimization in adult life (Scoglio et al., 2019).

Childhood Emotional Abuse

Just like childhood sexual abuse, childhood emotional abuse leaves lasting scars on the victim that follow them throughout life. While it is difficult to assess the exact rates of childhood emotional abuse due to the many forms that it can take, it is estimated that around 30% of children self-report some form of emotional abuse (Berzenski, 2018). Being a victim of emotional abuse as a child opens up a person to a multitude of different risk factors.

A big effect of childhood emotional abuse is that it compromises the development of self-identity. Experiencing emotional abuse can lead a child to internalize negative traits into their self-worth. This includes things like feelings of shame, low self-worth, and self-hatred (Shapero

et al., 2019). These feelings can go on to cause the victim to internalize their victimization and accept it as being their fault. The internalization of negative emotions due to emotional abuse can also cause poor stress responses (Shapero et al., 2019). In response to stressors experienced in life, victims of childhood emotional abuse are found to have a higher rate of depressive responses to stress (Shapero et al., 2019).

Another risk factor caused by emotional abuse is an increase in aggressive behavior (Wang, Shi, & Jin, 2020). Due to experiencing emotional abuse, children are found to have difficulty forming interpersonal relationships. As such they tend to take on more cautious and cold traits towards people. This can then lead to more aggressive and socially unacceptable behavior when interacting with others. The victims of childhood emotional abuse often do not have the same parental guidance that is fundamental to a child's development of building proper social skills and relationships (Wang, Shi, & Jin, 2020).

Just like with childhood sexual victimization, experiencing more emotional abuse as a child from different sources increases the risk factors involved with emotional abuse. The more emotional abuse a person is subjected to as a child, the greater the chance that they will experience negative side effects in life (Wang, Shi, & Jin, 2020). Childhood emotional abuse leads the victims to have maladapted social skills that can lead to aggressive behaviors, and an internalized script of self-doubt and fear of others.

Gender

Everyone is familiar with gender. Due to the fact that everyone has some form of gender, everyone has experienced living out their gender and the roles and expectations associated with their gender. Gender has taken on a more nuanced and in-depth definition compared to the

traditional and strict binary definition of gender. Some people identify with the gender that was assigned to them at birth while other people find and adopt a new gender that better represents them. Some people even adopt a gender identity that symbolizes having no gender at all. While on the surface all of the many different types of gender identities seem vastly different from each other, one thing ties all of them together, gender is a performative act. Regardless of your gender identity there are norms and expectations associated with every gender that make up what it means to socially be that gender (Wenhold & Harrison, 2020). The social idea of what each gender is and how they are supposed to behave is culturally created and is similar across all structural levels (De Meyer et al., 2017). Children at a young age are taught by parents and peers on the expected behaviors regarding relationships and the proper ways to act (De Meyer et al., 2017). Children then feel compelled to adhere to the norms taught to them in order to fit in and be accepted. Later in life it is childhood experiences with social norms about gender that shapes how they view the way they should behave in relationships (Wenhold & Harrison, 2020).

Traditionally men and women are expected to fill specific roles. This is especially true when it comes to sex. The roles and stereotypes that society places on gender are internalized by people as a way for them to be their gender. Due to people internalizing these norms society places on gender, people feel the need to perpetuate and perform their gender as expected in order to be accepted by society as their gender. Men and women are viewed by society as fundamentally different (McCabe, Tanner, & Heiman, 2009). Men are thought to have a more physical and carnal view of relationships. They are expected to be overly invested in and constantly thinking about obtaining and participating in sex. Their role is to be the dominant one in the relationship, be in charge, and take what they expect to be theirs (McCabe, Tanner, & Heiman, 2009). Women are thought to have more of an emotional and mental view of

relationships. They are expected to be submissive and default to the needs of men over their own. Their role is to be the submissive care giver in the relationship (Wenhold & Harrison, 2020). In other words, men are viewed as placing more value on obtaining sex while women are viewed as placing value on building a relationship (McCabe, Tanner, & Heiman, 2009).

Overall gender is made up of the social norms and behaviors passed down by parents and guardians and perpetuated by peers. Men are taught to be the active and dominant partner in a relationship whose goal is to obtain sex. Women are taught to be the submissive caregivers who serve the needs of men (De Meyer et al., 2017).

Chapter 3: Review of Theory

Everyone experiences things differently. These differences can be based on a multitude of varied factors. A person's age, race, gender, economic status, and so on can all influence how we experience and learn from events. The goal of this research is to better understand how some of these different factors lead to a person holding coercive views about sex. The specific personal factors being assessed are childhood sexual victimization, childhood emotional abuse, and gender. Each of the three areas aim to understand the relationship behind these factors and hold coercive views about sex. In order to ground and guide these questions two theories were used to help understand the interactions between different lived experiences and personal behaviors.

The first theory is Sutherland's Differential Association theory (Cullen, Agnew, & Wilcox, 2018). Sutherland states that criminal behavior is not something people inherently have when they are born. Instead, Sutherland proposes that all criminal behavior is learned by interacting with criminals and learning the behavior. Learning criminal behavior is done by internalizing the techniques and definitions associated with the criminal behavior. The techniques are the actual methods of how to carry out the crime. The definitions are the personal motives, rationalizations, and driving factors that lead to accepting the criminal behavior as favorable. For example, people who have experienced sexual victimization will learn the steps involved and the precursors to coercive sexual interactions. It was found that through the mechanisms outlined within Differential Association theory, victims of sexual assault adopted risk responses as a result of experiencing sexual victimization (Masters et al., 2015). The definitions and techniques involved with coercion are accepted as normal leading to more tolerance towards coercion (Garrido-Macias, 2022). It is assumed based on Differential

Association theory that coercive views about sex will be adopted by victims of childhood sexual victimization and they will be more tolerant of coercive acts in the future.

The last part of Differential Association theory is the quality of the interactions with criminal behavior. Simply viewing and mimicking criminal behavior does not lead to people becoming criminals. The frequency, duration, priority, and intensity greatly affect the rate at which someone will associate with criminal behavior. Frequency and duration are self-explanatory factors that state the importance of how often and how long one is exposed to criminal behaviors. Priority and intensity are the two factors that especially dictate if criminal behavior will be adopted. Priority is the idea that the earlier in life someone is exposed to criminal behavior, the greater impact it will have. For instance, one event in early childhood could hold the same weight as multiple events in someone's adult life (Cullen, Agnew, & Wilcox, 2018). Intensity is that the more influential the source of criminal behavior is the more impactful the event will be coupled with the level of emotional reaction the event causes a person. For example, an event caused by a parent will be more influential than an event caused by a stranger (Cullen, Agnew, & Wilcox, 2018). Similarly, a severely traumatic event will have a greater effect than a mundane event. Applying this theory to the research questions in this paper, the relationship between different early childhood experiences and coercive views are explored.

For this paper coercive views about sex includes the criminal behavior that is learned, and childhood sexual victimization, childhood emotional abuse, and gender are being examined to see if they teach coercive views. Applying the four significance factors (i.e., frequency, duration, priority, and intensity) to these three impacts (i.e., childhood sexual victimization, childhood emotional abuse, and gender) show that they can be influential in learning and normalizing criminal behavior. Childhood sexual victimization and childhood emotional abuse

both rates very high for priority of influence towards Differential Association due to the events occurring in childhood. This is because events that take place early in life have more of an impact than events that take place later in life. Abuse and victimization are also very traumatic events to go through, so they also rate highly for intensity. Intensity is even more important if the abuse and victimization were caused by a parent (Cullen, Agnew, & Wilcox, 2018).

For gender, this falls heavily into frequency and duration because gender is something that is constant in a person's life. Everyone is constantly performing their gender in accordance with the norms society places on their gender. As such each of the three events of childhood sexual victimization, childhood emotional abuse, and gender are significant variables that influence differential association and should cause a person to internalize the techniques and Definitions Associated with coercive views about sex.

The second theory is feminist pathways to crime (Chesney-Lind, 1989). The main principle behind this theory is experiencing gender violence is a risk factor for future juvenile delinquency. The difference is caused by the different interactions men and women have with society and the systems within it. Traditionally the criminal justice system was not designed to handle women or even account for them. As such they have been largely discounted and neglected within the system. Feminist pathways theory looks into how and why women fall into the criminal justice system, why they commit the crimes that they do commit, and how these rates are different compared to men. One of the main influencing factors for women that interact with the criminal justice system is experiencing victimization early in life (Chesney-Lind, 1989). Different types of victimization experienced at different points in life lead to an increase in the likelihood of committing different types of crimes in the future.

Women's responses and coping methods to victimization tend to be criminalized. Instead of the criminal justice system offering aid to women who have been victimized, they are met with additional victimization and sanctions placed upon them for simply trying to survive. The theory sets up a pathway to crime that starts with child abuse. As a response to the childhood abuse, some girls will run away from their abusers and attempt to survive on the street (Chesney-Lind, 1989). This in itself constitutes a status offense. From here prostitution and drug use could be used as coping and survival techniques (DeHart, 2008). By the time they are in their early adult life, women who were victims of child abuse are already involved in the system because of their survival tactics (Steffensmeier & Allan, 1996).

In regard to the current study, feminist pathways theory relates specifically to the third research question regarding genders relationship to the adoption of coercive views about sex. As this theory states, men and women experience different types of rates of victimization and have different responses to victimization. As such it is expected that men and women will internalize coercive views about sex differently after experiencing victimization as a child.

The goal of research question three is to better understand how gender influences the likelihood of internalizing and adopting coercive views of sex. As such using feminist pathways theory demonstrates that there will be a difference in response rate to coercive interactions between men and women. In addition, specifically dealing with research question three, feminist pathways theory also relates to questions one and two. Feminist pathways theory outlines how child abuse leads to further criminal involvement and victimization later in life. Research questions one and two aim to understand how childhood sexual abuse and childhood emotional abuse respectively shape future behaviors. Feminist pathways theory states that for women especially, experiencing childhood abuse will alter their pathway of victimization. As such by

applying this theory, we can expect that these two variables will have an effect on coercive views on sex.

Table 1 outlines the links drawn from the two theories and how they relate to the research areas of interest. The table highlights how each theory is expected to interact with childhood sexual abuse, childhood emotional abuse, and gender.

Table 1. *Links between Theory and Variables*

Hypotheses	Variable	Differential Association	Application in Research	Feminist Pathways	Application in Research
Hypothesis 1: Individuals who experience childhood sexual victimization will view sex as coercive.	Childhood sexual abuse	Behavior is learned early in life by internalizing the actions and motivations of influential people.	Coercive ideology is learned early in life by the actions of parents and gardens.	Men and women have different responses to sexual victimization.	Individuals who experience childhood sexual abuse will have a different response to future coercive sex.
Hypothesis 2: Individuals who experience childhood emotional abuse will view sex as coercive.	Emotional abuse	Behavior is learned early in life by internalizing the actions and motivations of influential people.	Coercive ideology is learned early in life by the actions of parents and gardens.	Men and women have different responses to emotional victimization.	Individuals who experience childhood emotional abuse will have a different response to future coercion.
Hypothesis 3: Men will view sex as more coercive compared to women.	Gender	Society teaches and instills gender norms in people during the course of a person's life.	Coercive ideology is adopted in the pursuit of performing their gender.	Men and women experience different types of victimization and have different responses.	Men and women will internalize coercive tactics differently.

Chapter 4: Methodology

Research Questions

This research study sought to better understand the influences and relationships between childhood sexual victimization, childhood emotional abuse, and gender with adoption of coercive views about sex. The first area of research examined the relationship between childhood sexual victimization and coercive views about sex. Research Question One: Does childhood sexual victimization impact tolerance for sexually coercive attitudes? Hypothesis one: Individuals who experience childhood sexual victimization will view sex as coercive.

The second area sought to address the relationship between childhood emotional abuse and coercive views about sex. Research Question Two: Does childhood emotional abuse impact tolerance for sexually coercive attitudes? Hypothesis two: Individuals who experience childhood emotional abuse will view sex as coercive.

The third area sought to address the relationship between gender and coercive views about sex. Research Question Three: Does a person's gender impact tolerance for sexually coercive attitudes? Hypothesis three: Men will view sex as more coercive compared to women.

Procedures

The study used secondary data gathered from a survey titled Attitudes Towards Coercive Sexuality which was administered from September 2015 through May 2016. IRB approval was granted for the original survey and only the end results were used for the purpose of this paper. The participants were students enrolled in an introductory criminal justice course at a large southwestern university. The students were given the option to participate in this survey as one

way for them to earn credit towards the completion of their class. The goal of the survey was to gather information on students' views towards coercive sex, sexual behaviors, social views about sex, and personal experiences with victimization.

Participants

To answer the research questions, a survey was conducted at a large Southwest university. The demographics of the 774 respondents, who chose to complete this research, more identified as women at 59.6% and 40.4% identified as men. Note that respondents were only given the choice to respond as male or female, so any other gender identities are not reflected in the findings. The largest self-reported racial identity was Caucasian (42.7% or 322 participants). Other self-reported racial identities were Hispanic (32.1% or 242), African American (15.5% or 117), Asian/PI (18.2% or 137), and 3.3% identified as Other (25). All participants were at least 21 years of age.

Measures

Childhood Sexual Abuse

The first research question explored childhood sexual victimization and how it affects tolerance for coercive views about sex. In order to measure childhood sexual victimization, questions from Sanders and Becker-Lausen's child abuse and trauma scale (CAT) were included in the survey administered to the respondents. The child abuse and trauma scale, also known as the CAT scale, asks a total of 38 questions that were designed to gauge experiences of childhood trauma. The questions were designed to get an understanding of the respondents' perception of their own subjective perception of the degree of trauma that was faced in their childhood. Based

on the respondents' answers to the CAT scale questions, childhood sexual victimization is gauged using the average of their responses. The average value is obtained by assigning a numeric value to the five responses available to the questions. Never was assigned to 0, rarely to 1, sometimes to 2, very often to 3, and always to 4. In other words, the higher a person's average score to the CAT scale questions is, the more abuse they reported. The specific questions used to measure childhood sexual victimization were all of the Sexual Assault items from Sanders and Becker-Lausen child abuse and trauma scale. These questions are: Before you were 14, did you engage in any sexual activity with an adult? Were there traumatic or upsetting sexual experiences when you were a child or teenager that you couldn't speak to adults about? Did you ever witness the sexual mistreatment of another family member? Did you have traumatic sexual experiences as a child or teenager? When either of your parents was intoxicated, were you ever afraid of being sexually mistreated? Did your relationship with your parents ever involve a sexual experience?

Childhood sexual abuse is the independent variable used to answer the first research question with coercive views about sex being the dependent variable. The total of the 6 childhood sexual victimization items were taken and used as the independent variable. With never assigned to 0, rarely to 1, sometimes to 2, very often to 3, and always to 4. The range of this measurement was from 0 to 24. The higher the number showing higher agreement to the CAT items.

Childhood Emotional Abuse

The second research question considered childhood emotional abuse and how it affects tolerance for coercive views about sex. In order to measure childhood emotional abuse, Kent and

Waller's expansion of the child abuse and trauma scale was used. Kent and Waller argued that the original CAT scale included questions on childhood emotional abuse. The questions that Kent and Waller highlighted that target the presence of childhood emotional abuse was used for the measurement of childhood emotional abuse in this project. Childhood emotional abuse items were used to create an emotional abuse score and include an average of their responses. The average value is obtained by assigning a numeric value to the survey responses. Just like for childhood sexual victimization, never was assigned to 0, rarely to 1, sometimes to 2, very often to 3, and always to 4. In other words, the higher a person's average score on the expanded CAT scale questions is, the more abuse they reported. The specific questions used were: Did your parents ridicule you? Did your parents insult you or call you names? As a child or teenager, did you feel disliked by either of your parents? How often did your parents get really angry with you? Did your parents ever verbally lash out at you when you did not expect it? Did your parents yell at you? Did your parents blame you for things you did not do?

Childhood emotional abuse is the independent variable used to answer the second research question with coercive views about sex being the dependent variable. The total of the 7 childhood emotional victimization items were taken and used as the independent variable. Never assigned to 0, rarely to 1, sometimes to 2, very often to 3, and always to 4. The range of this measurement was from 0 to 28. The higher the number showing higher agreement to the CAT items.

Gender

The third research question three considered the gender differences in tolerance for coercive views about sex. Gender is simply being measured by a self-report question. The two options given in the survey were male and female. As went over in the gender section of the

literature review, gender is a social construct that is fluid and performative. Gender is experienced by participating and perpetuating the social norms surrounding the gender that each person labels them self as. As such the gender measurement is using the self-reported gender identity as an indicator of the personal experiences and expectations society has placed upon them in their pursuit of fulfilling their gender.

Due to only having the two options available in the survey, no other gender identities are reflected in the results. As such any respondents who may have identified as Transgender, Nonbinary, or any other gender that does not fit into the generic gender binary are not represented. Instead, these respondents are reflected in the option of male or female that they chose that best describes their identity, or if the respondent did not answer the question in the survey their response was filtered out of the results. A third Other/Not Reported category was not created due to the number of respondents that would fall into this category being too small to examine. Also adding another category that covers all other gender identities besides male and female fails to consider the different experiences and minutiae that comes with other gender identities.

Gender is used as the independent variable to answer the third research question with coercive views about sex being the dependent variable. Gender was measured as a dummy variable with male being the reference category.

Coercive Views about Sex

To measure coercive views about sex, questions were created specifically for this survey to measure the respondents' views, attitudes, and tolerance of coercion. The questions are designed to be about other people's views and the tolerance of coercive views in order to understand the respondents' personal views without blatantly asking in order to avoid a response

bias. Five specific questions were selected from the overall survey that were felt to best address the respondent's tolerance for coercive views about sex. The questions are ordered from least coercive to most coercive. The first question is: I treat sex as a casual act sometimes. This question looks to measure the respondent's level of casual treatment towards sex. The question measures coercion by looking to see how much personal meaning they place onto sex. Less meaning placed on sex is assumed to signal that obtaining and engaging in sex is a trivial matter. The second question looked at is: I have had sex with someone the same night that I met that person. This question measures willingness to engage in casual sexual acts. Similar to the first question, coercion is measured by looking at how much weight is placed on sex. For this question it is assumed that engaging in sex is the main goal of meeting people. As such coercive tactics could be used to obtain sex on the same night that a person was met. The third question is: I think that in Las Vegas women are portrayed as sex objects. This question measures tolerance of coercive views about women. This is done by looking to see if the respondent views Las Vegas women as tools engaging in sex. The fourth question examined is: Most Las Vegas women engage in sexual activity because they feel it is expected. This question looks at the respondents view of women's involvement in sexually coercive situations. This question measures coercive tolerance by directly asking if the respondent thinks that women in Las Vegas are coerced into sex. The fifth and last question looked at is: I have pressured someone into having sex because sex is really no big deal in Las Vegas. This question measures the respondent's personal involvement in coercive sexual activity. This question directly measures coercion by asking the respondent if they have directly coerced someone into having sex with them in the past. The responses available for the five questions were a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

Coercive views about sex are the dependent variable for each of the three research questions. Each of the five coercion questions are treated as their own dependent variable. Meaning that each of the three research questions is looked at with childhood sexual abuse, childhood emotional abuse, and gender each being the respected independent variable and the five coercion questions being five separate dependent variables for each research question.

Analyses

To answer the different research questions proposed, a standard multiple regression model was used to test the significance of childhood sexual victimization, childhood emotional victimization, and gender in the tolerance of sexual coercion. In addition to the standard multiple regression models, the frequencies and means of the responses to the coercion questions were included. Lastly the frequencies of rates of childhood sexual victimization as measured by the CAT scale along with the frequencies of childhood emotional victimization as measured by the CAT scale was examined.

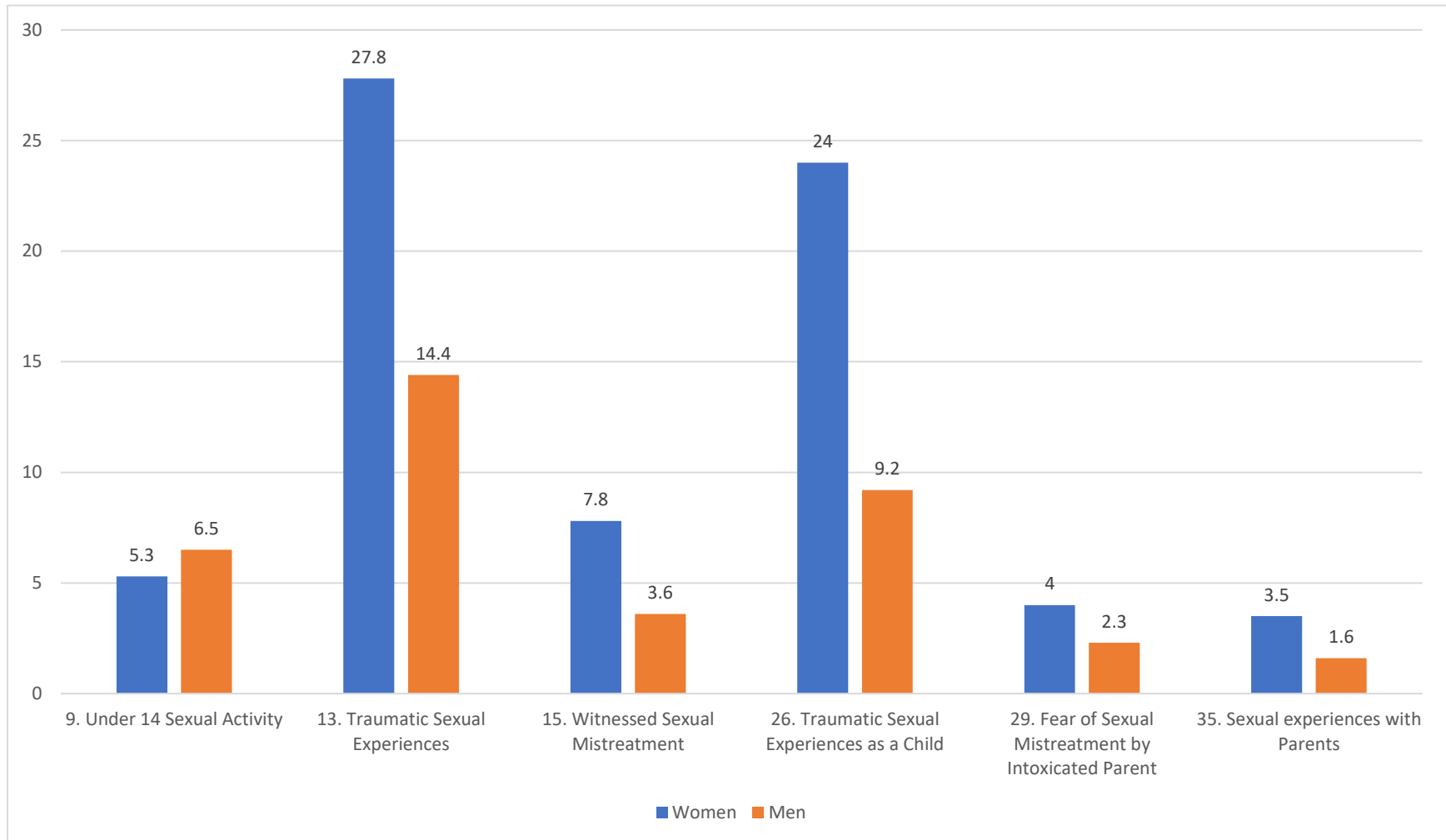
Chapter 5: Findings

To start the findings, the frequencies for childhood emotional and sexual abuse between men and women were looked for the sample. For childhood sex abuse, 18.9% of the male respondents reported experiencing sex abuse as a child. The mean for child sex abuse for men from the sample that did report sex abuse as a child, was found to be .1009. For women, 33.6% reported experiencing sex abuse as a child. The mean for child sex abuse for women from the sample was found to be .2245. For childhood emotional abuse, 99% of male respondents reported childhood emotional abuse. The mean for child emotional abuse for men from the sample was found to be 1.0927. For women, 98.2% of respondents reported childhood emotional abuse. The mean for child emotional abuse for women from the sample was found to be 1.2317.

Overall, there was a gendered difference between the means of both men and women showing that women reported experiencing more sexual abuse and emotional abuse during childhood. Figures 1 and 2 show the frequencies of responses towards the childhood sexual and emotional trauma scales separated by gender. The questions included in Figures 1 and 2 are as follows. CAT 9: Before you were 14, did you engage in any sexual activity with an adult? CAT 13: Were there traumatic or upsetting sexual experiences when you were a child or teenager that you couldn't speak to adults about? CAT 15: Did you ever witness the sexual mistreatment of another family member? CAT 26: Did you have traumatic sexual experiences as a child or teenager? CAT 29: When either of your parents was intoxicated, were you ever afraid of being sexually mistreated? CAT 35: Did your relationship with your parents ever involve a sexual experience? CEA 1: Did your parents ridicule you? CEA 8: Did your parents insult you or call you names? CEA 19: As a child or teenager, did you feel disliked by either of your parents? CEA 20: How often did your parents get really angry with you? CEA 25: Did your parents ever

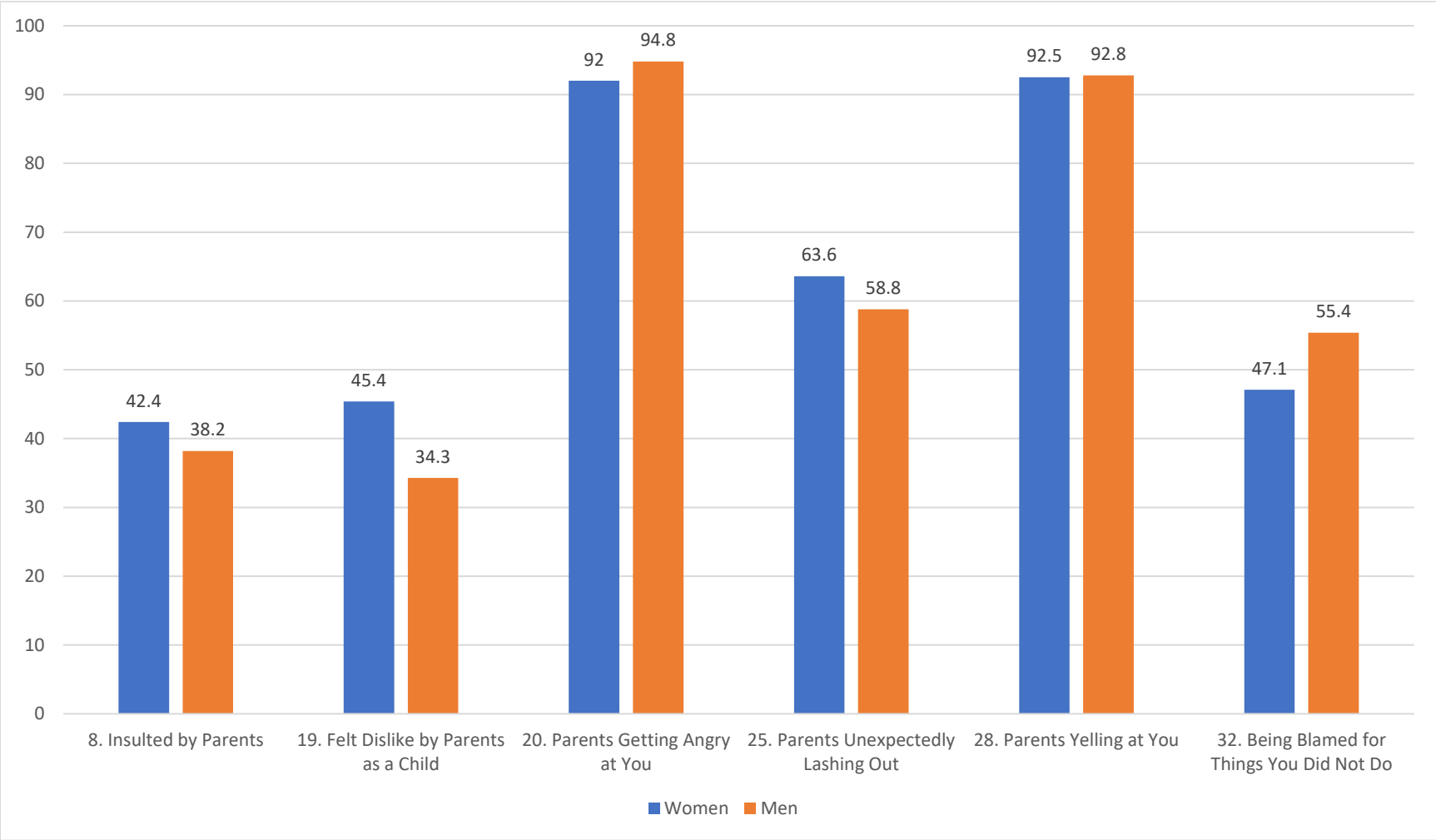
verbally lash out at you when you did not expect it? CEA 28: Did your parents yell at you? CEA
32: Did your parents blame you for things you didn't do?

Figure 1. *Frequencies for Child Sexual Abuse Items*



Note: These numbers represent the percentage of participants answering yes to these questions.

Figure 2. Frequencies for Child Emotional Abuse items

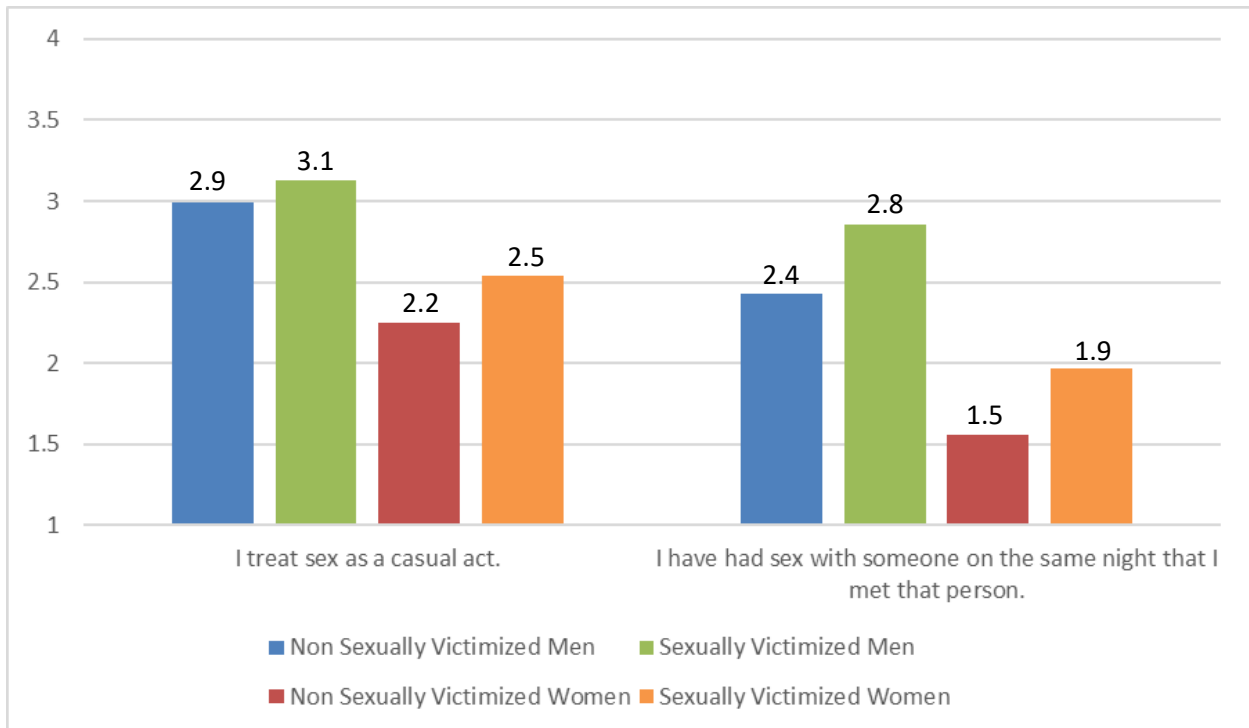


Note: These numbers represent the percentage of participants answering yes to these questions.

The next part of the findings will be discussing if childhood sexual and emotional abuse along with gender were significant predictors of agreeing with the survey questions dealing with sexual coercion. Each of the three independent variables were run to see their influence over the five coercion questions that were used as the dependent variables. The coercion questions for the dependent variable are ordered from least coercive to most coercive. Each of the 5 regression models used to examine the 5 coercion questions met the requirements for regression by following normality and having an acceptable rate of outliers and skewness.

Figure 3 presents the mean agreement for coercion questions 1 and 2. The responses are split by men and women and again by whether or not they had experienced childhood sexual victimization. Higher means indicate higher agreement or endorsement of the item.

Figure 3. Mean Agreement for Coercive Questions 1 and 2



Note: The responses can range from 5 = strongly agree to 1 = strongly disagree.

The first coercion question in the analyses asked if the respondent treats sex as a casual act sometimes. Two of the three variables proved to be significant predictors of casual sexual activity as measured by reporting that they treat sex as a casual act. The standard multiple regression model was significant for this item ($F = 21.07 (3, 731), p = .001$). Table 2 shows that gender and childhood sexual abuse significantly predicted endorsing this behavior. Men were more likely to endorse this behavior than women. People who had experienced childhood sexual abuse were more likely to report engaging in this casual sex.

Table 2. *Treating sex as a casual act.*

	<i>B</i>	<i>S.E.</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Gender	-0.726	0.096	-0.272	-7.553	.001***
EA	0.015	0.008	0.066	1.785	.075
SA	0.053	0.021	0.096	2.570	.010**

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

The second question in the lineup asked respondents if they have ever had sex with someone the same night that they met someone. Two of the three variables proved to be significant predictors of casual sexual activity as measured by reporting that they had engaged in sex on the same night that they met someone. The standard multiple regression model was significant for this item ($F = 31.32 (3, 734), p = .001$). Table 3 shows that gender and childhood sexual abuse significantly predicted endorsing this behavior. Men were more likely to endorse

this behavior. People who had experienced childhood sexual abuse were also more likely to report engaging in this sexual behavior.

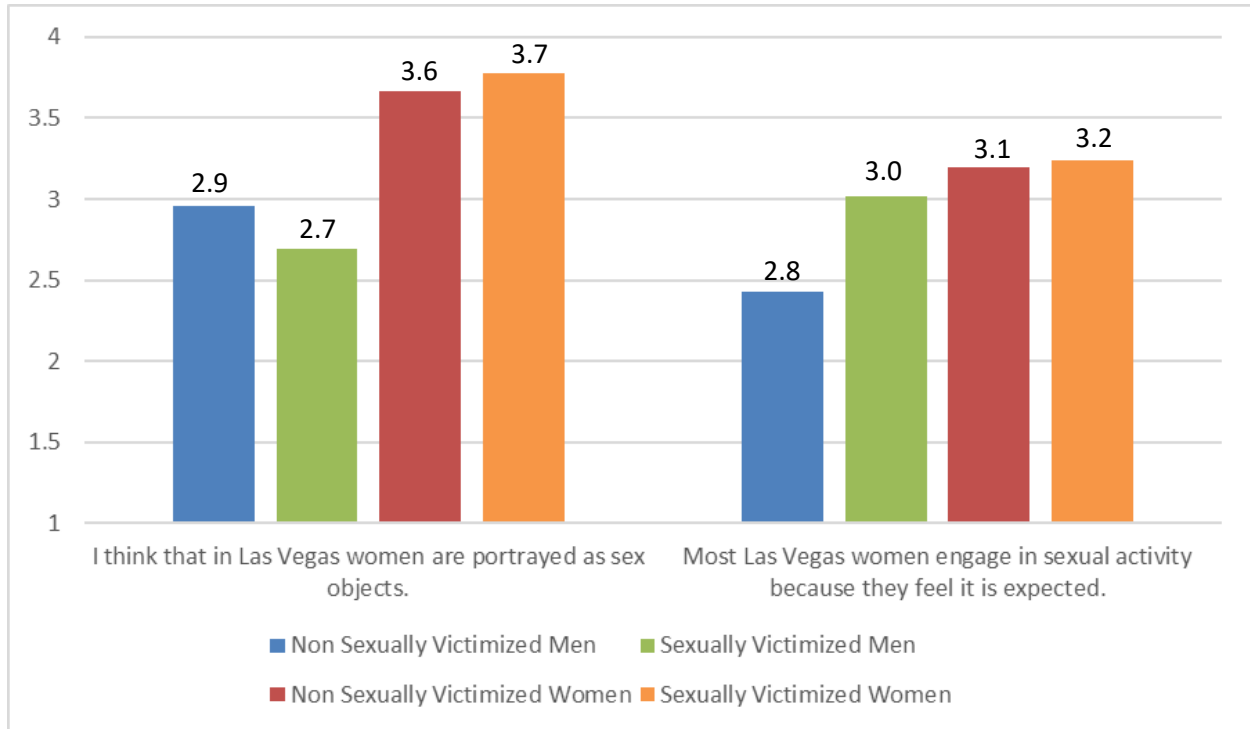
Table 3. *Engaging in sexual activity on the same night that they meet a person.*

	<i>B</i>	<i>S.E.</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Gender	-0.897	0.100	-0.316	-8.975	.001***
EA	0.012	0.009	0.048	1.321	.187
SA	0.094	0.022	0.159	4.367	.001***

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

The third and fourth questions asked about the objectification of women and how they might be pressured into sexual activity. The means are presented in Figure 4 split by gender and childhood sexual victimization.

Figure 4. Mean Agreement for Coercive Questions 3 and 4



Note: The responses can range from 5 = strongly agree to 1 = strongly disagree.

The third question in the lineup asked respondents if they think that Las Vegas women are portrayed as sex objects. Two of the three variables proved to be significant predictors of coercive sexual ideology as measured by reporting that they believe that Las Vegas women are portrayed as sex objects. The standard multiple regression model was significant for this item ($F = 27.334 (3, 736), p = .001$). Table 4 shows that gender and childhood emotional abuse significantly predicted endorsing this ideology. Men were less likely to endorse this behavior. People who had experienced childhood emotional abuse were more likely to report engaging in this belief.

Table 4. *Believing Las Vegas women are portrayed as sex objects.*

	<i>B</i>	<i>S.E.</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Gender	0.789	0.095	0.293	8.261	.001***
EA	0.025	0.008	0.110	3.017	.003**
SA	-0.012	0.021	-0.022	-0.596	.551

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

The fourth question in the lineup asked respondents if they believe that Las Vegas women engage in sexual activities because they feel that it is expected of them. Two of the three variables proved to be significant predictors of coercive sexual ideology as measured by reporting that they thought that Las Vegas women engaged in sexual activities because it was expected. The standard multiple regression model was significant for this item ($F = 9.239$ (3, 736), $p = .001$). Table 4 shows that gender and childhood emotional abuse significantly predicted endorsing this behavior. Men were less likely to endorse this behavior. People who had experienced childhood emotional abuse were more likely to report engaging in this casual sex.

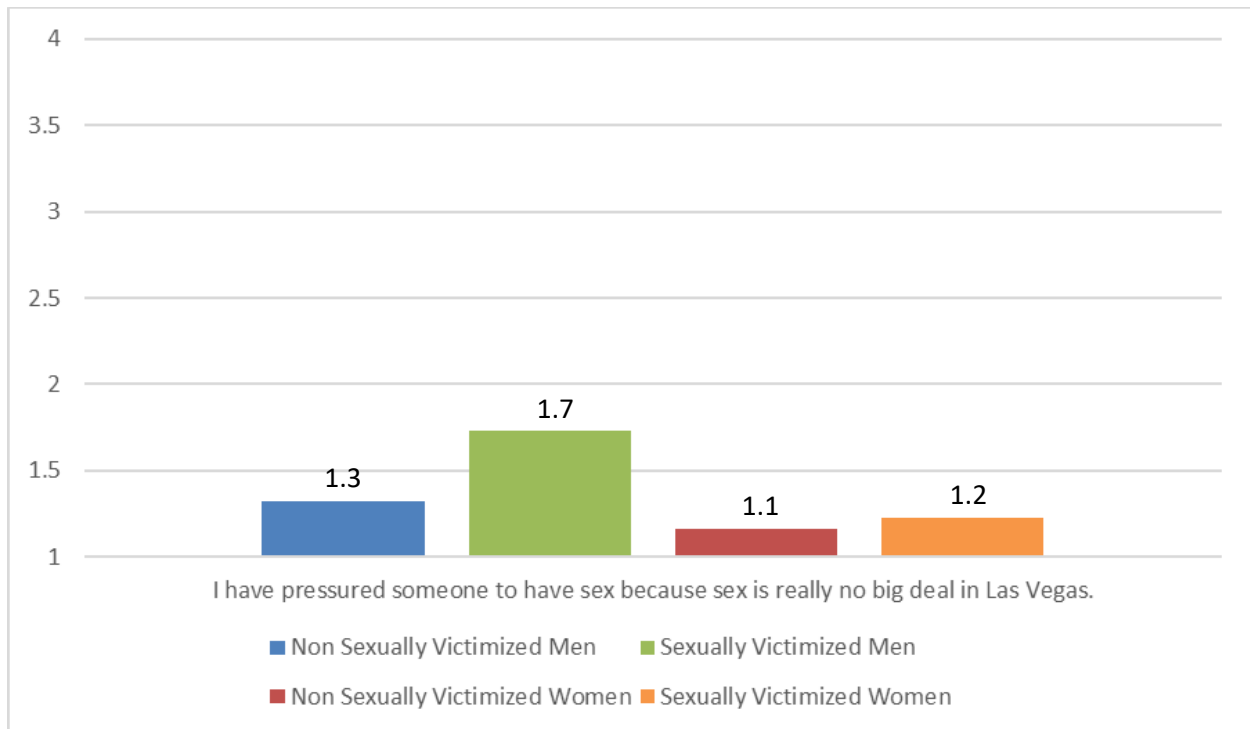
Table 5. *Believing Las Vegas women engage in sexual activities because they feel it is expected.*

	<i>B</i>	<i>S.E.</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Gender	0.307	0.077	0.145	3.968	.001***
EA	0.020	0.007	0.110	2.937	.003**
SA	0.001	0.017	0.002	0.056	.955

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

The last question asked was if respondents had ever pressured someone to have sex because sex is not a big deal in Las Vegas. Figure 5 presents the average levels of endorsement split by gender.

Figure 5. Mean Agreement for Coercive Question 5



Note: The responses can range from 5 = strongly agree to 1 = strongly disagree.

Two of the three variables proved to be significant predictors of coercive sexual activity as measured by reporting that they pressured someone into having sex with them. The standard multiple regression model was significant for this item ($F = 10.933 (3, 736), p = .001$). Table shows that gender and childhood sexual abuse significantly predicted endorsing this behavior. Men were more likely to endorse this behavior. People who had experienced childhood sexual abuse were more likely to report engaging in this coercive sexual act.

Table 6. *Pressuring someone to have sex because they believe sex is no big deal in Las Vegas.*

	<i>B</i>	<i>S.E.</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Gender	-0.241	0.050	-0.174	-4.774	.001***
EA	0.006	0.004	0.054	1.453	.147
SA	0.034	0.011	0.117	3.098	.002**

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Chapter 6: Discussion

To prevent sexual violence, we have to understand more about sexually coercive mindsets. Attitudes towards coercive sexual interactions vary by gender and personal history of victimization. In every regression, gender was a significant factor when it came to predicting agreement with coercive ideology. For questions about viewing sex as a casual act, having sex with someone the first night they met, and pressuring someone into having sex, men were shown to agree with the questions. Each of these questions pertained to personal views and actions. While for the questions that refer to societal views and norms, women were found to endorse these coercive views. The questions specifically were about women being portrayed as sex objects and women feeling sex is expected of them. The significance of childhood sexual and emotional abuse changed with each of the five questions that were looked at. Childhood sexual abuse was found to be significant in questions pertaining to personal beliefs and experiences. Specifically, respondents who had childhood sexual victimization were found to agree with viewing sex as a casual act, participating in sex the first night they met someone, and pressuring someone into having sex with them. Childhood emotional abuse was significant for the questions that dealt with societal views and norms. When childhood emotional abuse was significant, respondents who had childhood emotional abuse were found to agree more with the coercive questions. These questions were about the belief that women in Las Vegas are portrayed as sex objects and that Las Vegas women engage in sex because they feel like it is expected from them.

The first research area dealt with examining the relationship between childhood sexual victimization and tolerance with coercive attitudes. It was hypothesized that individuals who experience childhood sexual victimization would view sex as coercive. After the analysis it was found that the findings support the hypothesis. Childhood sexual victimization was a significant

predictor for coercive behavior in the three regressions. For each of the three significant regressions the t-values were all positive. Meaning that those who experienced sexual victimization as a child actually are more likely to tolerate sexually coercive attitudes. Childhood sexual abuse was a significant predictor for the questions pertaining to treating sex as a casual act, having sex with someone the same night that you met them, and pressuring someone into having sex.

The second research area looked at the relationship between childhood emotional abuse and tolerance for coercive views. It was hypothesized that individuals who experience childhood emotional abuse will view sex as coercive. The findings also supported this hypothesis. Just like with sexual abuse, emotional abuse was a significant predicting factor for coercive tolerance. Those who experienced childhood emotional abuse were more likely to tolerate coercive views about sex. Childhood emotional abuse was a significant predictor for the questions about Las Vegas women being viewed as sex objects and thinking that Las Vegas women feel pressured into having sex because it is expected.

The third and last research area was interested in the link between gender and coercive ideology. The hypothesis was that men will view sex as more coercive compared to women. Overall, the findings did support this hypothesis. Gender was the one variable that was a constant significant predictor in each of the models. However, in two of the five models there was a negative relationship between gender and tolerance for coercive views. The two questions that had a negative relationship were the questions asking about Las Vegas women being viewed as sex objects and thinking that Las Vegas women feel pressured into having sex because it is expected. For these two questions, women were more likely to agree with the coercive questions.

An interesting pattern emerged with the results of the five regression models. For the two questions where childhood emotional abuse was significant, the t-value for gender was positive. Meaning that the social norms, expectations, and pressures that come with being a woman and experiencing childhood emotional abuse have similar effects on a person's tolerance for sexually coerciveness. The questions where this similarity was present were the question asking if Las Vegas women are portrayed as sex objects and Las Vegas women engage in sex because they feel it is expected. These two questions pertained to social expectations regarding sex and pertained to other people. For the three questions where childhood sexual abuse was significant, the t-value for gender was negative. Meaning that the in this case social norms, expectations, and pressures that come with being a man and experiencing childhood sexual abuse have similar effects on a person's tolerance for sexually coerciveness. The three questions that followed this pattern all pertained to personal actions and beliefs. The questions being, I sometimes treat sex as a casual act, I have had sex with someone the first night I met them, and I have pressured someone into having sex with me because sex is no big deal in Las Vegas. This pattern indicates that there could be a relationship between gender and adoption of social views about coercive sexuality.

Referring back to Table 1 *Links between theory and variables* where the theories used to guide the research questions and the outcomes expected were presented, the theories used supported the findings. Under Differential Association theory it was expected that coercive ideology is learned early in life by viewing and internalizing the actions of parents and guardians. The findings ended up supporting this. In every instance where childhood sexual or emotional victimization was significant, the t-value was positive. Meaning that witnessing and internalizing the behavior of coercion after experiencing it from parents and guardians leads to

the adoption of coercive views. In other words, support for coercion increases after experiencing childhood sexual or emotional victimization. Showing that the coercive behaviors were learned. Differential Association theory was also supported by the findings when it came to gender. The questions pertaining to other people's behavior and social standing, women had more tolerance for coercive views than men. For the questions pertaining to personal actions and beliefs, men had more tolerance for coercive views. This coincides with the idea that society teaches and instills gender norms in people during their life.

As for Feminist Pathways theory, the other theory used to guide the research, the findings coincided with the expectations gathered from the theory. Feminist Pathways theory says that men and women have different responses to early victimization. This difference was reflected in the findings. Men agreed with questions about carrying out coercive sexual acts while women agreed with questions about sexually coercive attitudes. Overall men and women responded differently to the coercive items that were examined.

Limitations

There are a few limitations that affect this research. The first and largest limitation is the potential of Las Vegas being a confounding variable and lack of generalizability. The data examined in order to perform this research was adopted from a study aimed at examining the influence of Las Vegas on risk factors. As such a majority of the questions within the initial survey pertain specifically to the city of Las Vegas and its residents. Due to the culture and hypersexualized nature surrounding Las Vegas, it is possible that the presence of Las Vegas in some of the survey questions altered the results. If the same questions were to be asked in a different environment, the results may differ. This limitation leads to the issue of generalizability. The findings of this study cannot be applied to other populations due to the unique characteristics

present caused by the city of Las Vegas within the sample. Lack of generalizability is also affected by the use of a convenience sample.

Another limitation is that the respondents for the survey used for this research were all enrolled in a criminal justice class. This hinders the study's external reliability. Due to the enrollment in a criminal justice class, there may be a response bias with the participants. The respondents may have altered or under-reported in some areas to be seen as more socially desirable and to satisfy their standing as a criminal justice student. If the same study were to be completed with respondents outside of the criminal justice field, the results may be different.

The last limitation of this study is that no gender identities outside of male or female were examined. The exclusion of other gender identities leads to a gap in the findings. For example, transgender individuals have very different experiences with societal gender norms. As such their responses compared to their cisgender counterparts may result in varying results. In addition to having different experiences with societal gender norms, childhood sexual and emotional abuse may have a different effect on other gender identities when compared to men and women. This limitation can be addressed by future research.

Similarly, this study did not look at ethnicity and instead focused on gender as a factor of coercive views about sex. This leads to a gap in the data that limits the internal validity of the findings. Ethnicity could play a role in shaping tolerance for coercive views about sex.

Chapter 7: Conclusion & Future Research

Far too many people fall victim to sexual victimization. One instance of sexual victimization then can lead to a cycle of continued victimization throughout life (Scoglio et al., 2019). Social gender norms and pressures only help to further the expectation that sex needs to be taken by men and the women are responsible for allowing it (McCabe, Tanner, & Heiman, 2009). Sexual and emotional abuse in childhood further diminishes personal self-worth and opens a person up to more harm down the line (Shapero et al., 2019). The common theme throughout all of these points is coercion. Holding sexually coercive views alters what that person views as socially acceptable relationships (Garrido-Macias, 2022). Coercive views make it so that the person is more willing to relent and become victimized again due to them not viewing the abuse that they are enduring as a crime.

The goal of this research project was to answer three questions. Firstly, does experiencing childhood sexual victimization lead to higher tolerance of sexual coercion. Based on the analysis of the data, overall experiencing childhood sexual victimization leads a person to have more coercive views about sex compared to individuals who have not experiencing childhood sexual victimization. The second question asked was, does experiencing childhood emotional abuse lead to higher tolerance of sexual coercion. Based on the analysis of the data, experiencing childhood emotional abuse was also found to generally lead to more coercive views about sex compared to individuals who have not experiencing childhood emotional abuse. The last question asked was, does gender affect tolerance of coercive views about sex. Analysis of the data showed that men and women internalize coercion differently. Men agreeing with more physically coercive measurements and women agreeing with more social measurements of coercion.

The result of this research shows that childhood sexual abuse, childhood emotional abuse, and gender are all in some capacity significant predictors of agreeing to coercive ideologies. As such the link between past abuse and the gender roles society places on people affect the views people have on sex. Understanding what leads to a person adopting coercive views could be an essential part of preventing future victimization.

Future Research

Future research should use these findings to further look at the social mechanisms that cause sexually coercive views and the effects that early victimization has on the tolerance of sexually coercive views. The findings show that there is a difference between the effects of childhood sexual abuse and emotional abuse. The two areas were significant predictors for different types of questions concerning coercion. Childhood Emotional abuse was significant for questions surrounding social perceptions of people regarding their participation in sexual acts, while childhood sexual abuse was significant for questions surrounding personal actions and beliefs. Future research should look into the differences between sexual and emotional abuse on inward versus outward tolerance of sexually coercive ideology.

Another aspect for future research is to conduct a similar study at different locations. This would not only see if the results are generalizable to other areas but also remove the potential confounding variable of Las Vegas. While the findings of this research are significant, conducting the same survey in other areas could show more regional patterns in the tolerance of coercive views on sex. Another benefit of conducting a similar study at different locations is to

possibly look at different cultural factors that exist in specific locations that could influence tolerance of coercive views about sex.

As mentioned in the limitations section, no gender identities outside of male or female were examined. Future research can fill this gap by looking to see how different gender identities compare against each other. Specifically transgender and nonbinary identities views about sex compared to cisgender identities views about sex. Another study could look at one specific gender identity to see how childhood sexual and emotional abuse affects their views about sex. Future research can go in depth and expand upon how gender and the norms placed on gender identities shapes how individuals view and approach sex.

In addition to other gender identities, ethnicity was not looked at in this study. As such future research should look at how a person's ethnicity interacts with the adoption of coercive views about sex. Every ethnicity has its own culture and norms that shapes the identity, as such those cultural norms could alter how a person approaches and internalizes coercive views about sex. Future research should look at not only the effect of ethnicity on coercive views, but also how it interacts with childhood sexual abuse, childhood emotional abuse, and gender in affecting coercive views about sex.

The last potential area for future research is looking specifically at if the city of Las Vegas has an impact on the tolerance of sexually coercive views. The city of Las Vegas is known for hosting a wide variety of vice and adult entertainment. Those who live in the city and have grown accustomed to the high amounts of sexual advertising and culture of the city may have different views towards coercive sex than those visiting the city and those outside of the city.

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