

## THE OVERLOOKED FORCE IN SEXUAL ASSAULT: IMPLICATIONS FOR RECOVERY

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Most perpetrators of sexual assault utilize psychological rather than physical force. To optimize the effectiveness of re-offense prevention, it is imperative that the specific types of psychological force used in the commission of a sexual assault be identified and understood. Two studies are discussed which lend support that psychological force is the most commonly used force in sexual assault. Psychological force is discussed in detail.

Key words: sexual assault, psychological force, sex crime prevention.

Our society is plagued with relationship violence. Everyday, the news describes another assault that occurred, another sexual assault, another child being battered, another woman being raped. Society reacts with what might be considered a swift sword when the force involved is physical in nature, that is when someone is hit, a weapon used against them, they are bound or restrained, or worse yet, mutilated or murdered. I do not believe that the forms of violence are becoming more severe over time but, rather, we have better definitions of what constitutes abuse, and have become better in our efforts to educate people about relationship violence. This paper will focus on psychological abuse, which I believe is grossly overlooked when dealing with child abuse, and sexual abuse: that is to say, relationship violence, as a whole.

Oftentimes, professionals, in our profound desire to have a perfect label for everything, a category with which everything fits, remove sexual abuse from the other categories of abuse. However, all types of abuse often occur during sexual abuse. Sexual abuse, sexual assault, date rape, child molestation and incest may all be used interchangeably, as everything I am about to assert would be true about all types of sexual abuse. I will address the rest of this paper using the term sexual abuse, as this is the topic on which I wish to focus at this time. Again, however, everything in this paper will pertain to all forms of sexual abuse.

Sexual abuse occurs within the context of a relationship. It is not solely an assault upon an object or an unknown person but, rather, occurs within the context of some type of interaction. Whether the perpetrator is a date, father, relative or friend, a relationship between the perpetrator and victim exists. In most sexual abuse situations, the perpetrator or victim have interacted for some time, usually several hours at a minimum. It is in the context of the relationship with which the sexual offender or perpetrator decides to make his move. What I discuss in this paper applies equally to male and female perpetrators. With having said this, I would like to turn to defining the types of abuse.

There are basically four types of abuse: verbal, physical, psychological and sexual (6). Verbal abuse has also been referred to as emotional abuse and refers to the attacking of someone's self-esteem and self-worth. This may include put-downs, name-calling, and belittling of accomplishments. Psychological abuse refers to attacking someone's self-worth and identity and goes a step beyond emotional abuse by attacking the entire person. Common examples include making someone doubt their sanity, destroying their belongings, and threatening to harm them or someone or something they care for. Psychological abuse goes the extra step of attacking the spirituality of the person, the sense of wholeness and belonging, and the sense of safety and security. As a result of psychological abuse, people often feel fear for their physical and sexual safety, fear of losing their sanity, and significant confusion.

Physical abuse refers to attacking someone physically. This includes any unwanted physical contact that can or does result in physical harm or injury. Common examples include slapping, punching, pushing, restraining, or the use of a weapon against someone. When physical force or abuse occurs, that is when the physical safety of the victim is in jeopardy. Physical force also involves any type of touch that is unwanted, whether it be sexual or non-sexual. Sexual abuse refers to attacking someone sexually, including any forced sexual contact. Examples would include being forced to be fondled on the genitals; being forced to fondle another's genitals; any forced penetration, oral, anal, and/or vaginal; being forced to have your clothing removed; being forced to look at someone else nude; being forced to watch pornography together; or being forced to watch the perpetrator have sex with another person.

Sexual abuse inherently involves physical and psychological abuse (6). Although the touches that occur during sexual abuse are primarily sexual in nature, the very fact that physical touch is occurring constitutes physical abuse; it is unwanted touch that can or does harm the person psychologically, physically, and sexually. Sexual abuse also involves psychological abuse because of the entire violation, the total violation of the victim by the perpetrator. Therefore, sexual abuse involves all other forms of abuse.

The types of force which occur during sexual abuse will now be discussed. Several authors and researchers have mentioned and in some way identified the types of force involved in date rape (2, 4, 7, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 3, 13, 1, 8, 9, 10, 17).

There are two types of force, physical and psychological. Physical force is often less complicated to prove, as there is often bruises, scratches, or other types of physical evidence. Physical force involves not only physically abusing the victim but also the mere fact of touching without consent. Physical force is often easier to prove in a court of law and often receives more media attention. There are some common types of physical force which occur in most date rapes which are often overlooked. One example includes restraining a victim. This may occur by physically holding the victim down, or by bounding the victim's hands or feet, either with a rope or with the perpetrator's hands.

Restraint may also occur simply with the body weight of the perpetrator, when the perpetrator has a part of his body that is used to pin the victim down. This may be the perpetrator's leg being placed over the victim's leg or rolling over onto the victim's any part of the body that is used to hold the victim down constitutes physical force. When working with perpetrators who have used physical force to restrain their victim, I often get the impression that the impact of the physical restraint method is minimized and overlooked. It is as though, somehow, the victim should have continued to fight back even to the death despite the perpetrator's strength and/or physical advantage. Further, many perpetrators misinterpret the victim's lack of or actual resistance as consent.

When the perpetrator begins to touch the victim against the victim's will, this also constitutes physical force. The victim now has to deal with the fact that the perpetrator is not likely to listen to her "no's," in that any type of resistance may result in further physical harm, in addition to being sexually assaulted. Another type of physical force that is often overlooked is when a perpetrator kisses the victim and the victim is not able to verbally refuse or to scream for help because of the strength or duration of the kiss. The perpetrator's mouth becomes no different than a hand or gag that prevents the victim from sounding his or her plea for help. All of these forms of overlooked physical force are significant because they begin to indicate that the perpetrator was aware of the fact that they were forcing the victim to be sexual and willing to go to the extent of preventing the victim from verbally communicating their wishes and pleas for help.

The most overlooked force in sexual abuse is the psychological force. Psychological force is often difficult to prove because there may not be physical evidence of having been forced into sexual activity. In addition, it often comes down to the victim's word against the perpetrator's word and the end result is, whomever has the better attorney or the more accepted reputation is more likely to win the case.

There are seven forms of psychological force and, I believe it is imperative for anyone who works with perpetrators or victims of any type of sexual abuse to be aware of and closely assess the type of psychological force which occurred during the offense.

The first type of psychological force is emotional blackmail. This involves using emotions to pressure and trick the victim into being sexual. Common examples include, "If you love me, prove it"; "We have been dating so long and I spent so much money on you, now you owe me sex"; and "Show me how much you care for me." Emotional blackmail plays on the emotions of care, love, respect, and obligation.

The second type is game-playing. Game-playing involves manipulating situations, so as to place the perpetrator at a distinct advantage. Common examples include beginning to literally play a game, such as strip poker, tickling or wrestling and, when the timing is right, the perpetrator takes advantage and begins to take sexual touch or pressure the victim into being sexual. Game-playing and manipulation can include misusing a hug or backrub, laying next to someone, or sitting next to someone, taking advantage of the closeness to make sexual advances. This may occur repeatedly over the course of an evening until sexual contact has occurred.

Pressuring is the third type of psychological force. Pressuring involves repeated demands or requests for sexual contact for which the victims have already refused. As children, we were all experts at begging and pressuring. It was not uncommon to repeat requests such as, "Oh, please, please can't I stay up late" or "Can I have just one more cookie, just one." Pressuring used in this situation was innocent and hurt no one. However, when pressure and begging are used to get sexual contact from one's partner, it becomes abusive and dangerous. Oftentimes, the message heard by the victim is that the perpetrator is going to continue to make requests until they give in and the perpetrator may do whatever they can to isolate the victim, so as to decrease the likelihood of escaping the situation without being sexual.

The fourth type of psychological force is boundary violations. This basically involves crossing into someone else's space, making unwanted physical advances, and/or taking advantage of situations to observe someone's body without their knowledge or consent. Common examples would include watching someone dress/undress through a window or open doorway, looking down someone's shirt or up their shorts or skirt, and also may include making repeated requests or gestures of a sexual nature that are unwanted. Boundary violations are typical of sexual harassment. Continuing to ask someone out on a date or for sex when they have already refused constitutes a boundary violation and/or sexual harassment. In addition, it may include being in the victim's bedroom or other personal space and not allowing them privacy.

The fifth type of psychological abuse is lying. This basically involves not keeping one's word and it is often used in a date rape situation. Common examples would include agreeing to fondle and then the perpetrator attempts to go further by attempting intercourse. Other forms of lying may include promising to make a commitment for the relationship, or that they will become engaged and eventually marry after sexual contact. When these promises are not kept, lying occurred and that should be viewed no differently than a case of fraud which is a felony.

The above five steps of psychological force are referred to as psychological strategies on my continuum of force. These are often the most subtle forms of force and their powerful effects are easily overlooked and underestimated. Perpetrators use the above five methods of psychological force because they are aware that it is difficult to prove that psychological force was being used, as there may be no physical evidence. In addition, the perpetrator is aware that the victim will experience confusion, may begin to doubt whether they are giving enough, or putting enough, or committing enough into the relationship with the perpetrator. There is fear of physical and sexual safety, and a sense of craziness as the victim attempts to sort through the inappropriate and forceful requests being made of them. It is as though the victim counts for little more, at this point, other than having a vagina and breasts.

The last two types of psychological force are oftentimes more believable and, yet, are still minimized when it comes to prosecuting perpetrators. The sixth type of psychological force is intimidation. Intimidation is causing the victim to experience fear; fear not only for their physical and sexual safety, but also fear for their life. Examples of intimidation include making statements such as: "What is wrong with you"; why don't you want to do this"; "everyone else is doing it"; "everyone else is doing it, why can't you." Intimidation can be behavioral, such a clenching of fists; beginning to remove the victim's clothing; or gestures and/or comments that indicate that it will not be acceptable for the victim to refuse the perpetrator in any way. If the victim has seen the perpetrator become abusive in the past, or is aware of a physically abusive or assaultive past, the intimidation may encourage the victim to submit once the perpetrator has shown signs of escalation.

The last type of psychological force are threats. Threats are direct statements of impending harm. Common examples would include: "If you don't give in, I will take it from you"; "If you don't do this for me, then I will do even more to you later or to your friend." Threats take intimidation one step further by actually giving the either/or ultimatum. Both threats and intimidation are indicative of more severe violence and perpetrators who use intimidation and threats should be considered far more dangerous and more pathological than those who do not. These perpetrators tend to be more comfortable causing physical and sexual pain and are more likely to become physically assaultive during the sexual assault, as well, especially if any

lessor demands are not met.

The seven types of psychological force should be understood and the specific types used in an offense identified. It is imperative that we not minimize force that we cannot see, that we hold perpetrators accountable for any type of force whether it be physical or psychological. The majority of the perpetrators I have worked with have denied using psychological force when initially questioned about their offense behaviors. However, through the treatment process, they were able to identify specific types of psychological force they used in their offense. It is important to know that whenever we choose to use force, we are aware of it. Whether this be a non-harmful mode of force or coercion such as talking our friends or family into going to a different movie other than what they wanted, or a dangerous type of force where we are talking someone into going further sexually than they wish to.

On the continuum of force, psychological strategies begin the perpetrator's abuse history. From the first six psychological strategies, the perpetrator gains power and control over his victim. However, when the psychological strategies no longer allow the perpetrator to feel empowered and satisfied, he will gradually move into the seventh strategy which is threats. When a perpetrator has progressed to threats, it is a very short step to using physical force. It does not matter whether the type of threat was simply to spread rumors or to end the relationship if sex was not granted, or whether physical harm was threatened. A threat is a threat, no matter how you twist it and turn it, no matter where it placed on the continuum of threats, it is dangerous. Perpetrators who use threats are almost always going to progress to using physical force. When threats no longer give the perpetrator the sense of control, empowerment, and satisfaction they need, physical force is right around the corner. This may be physically abusing the victim by hitting, slapping, or restraining, etc., or physically forcing sexual contact.

As we pay attention to grooming patterns, the process by which a perpetrator sets his or victims up for the sexual abuse, psychological force plays a significant role. The perpetrator begins to build a trusting and fear-based relationships with the victim, with an end goal of being able to set sexual favors without significant resistance. When examining incest situations in which the father has sexually abused his daughter, it is common to find that the father had increased physical activities with the daughter. Playing sports, tickling, wrestling, spending more time alone with and giving more attention to his daughter, giving hugs and kisses, all seem to be common and hoped for relationships between father and daughter.

However, the sex offender has an agenda, that is to establish a trusting relationship in which the victim will offer the least resistance possible and, one in which, if someone were to notice this, the sexual behavior could be easily explained as an accident. For example if a dad is wrestling with his daughter and decides to slip his

hand down her pants and fondle her vagina, he will have an already excuse to justify his actions. For him, it may be, in his mind, easy to explain that during the wrestling, his hand went to push her off and my hand slipped down her pants. He did not mean to do it and says it won't happen again. This type of situation happens often and it is imperative that professionals are aware of the different types of psychological strategies that are involved in the grooming process. We see them so often and need to be able to label what the behavior was: a conscious, preplanned decision to sexually abuse another person. It is never an accident.

I have gathered data pertaining to the prevalence of psychological force. The first study contains of responses from high school students about situations in which they would justify using psychological or physical force to get sexual contact from their partner. The second study contains responses from sex offenders identifying the types of psychological and physical force they used in their sex offense. Neither study have been previously published, however, I have presented the data at several conferences.

### SURVEY

Several researchers have documented the prevalence of sexual assault within the adolescent population. The beliefs that adolescents maintain concerning date and acquaintance rape impact not only how sex offenders justify sexual assault, but also the acceptance of sexual assault by victims. This survey requested that adolescents respond to statements about the appropriateness of a male using psychological or physical coercion/force to get sexual contact from a female. I hypothesize that more males than females will justify and condone the use of psychological and physical force to attain sexual behavior from their female partners.

### METHOD

This survey was adapted from *No Is Not Enough: Helping Teenagers Avoid Sexual Assault* (C) 1981 by Caren Adams, Jennifer Fay, and Jan Loreen-Martin, by permission of Impact Publishers, Inc., PO Box 1094 San Luis Obispo, Ca 93406. Permission was also granted by study originator Jacqueline Goodchilds, Ph.D., Department of Psychology, UCLA, Los Angeles, CA 90024. Further reproduction is prohibited. The survey is included in its entirety.

The data was gathered while employed by the Rape & Sexual Assault Center in Minneapolis, where I worked as an Educator. A two day lecture on sexual assault, date rape and incest was provided. The students were asked to complete this survey prior to the lecture beginning on the first day. I administered the survey and collected them as each survey was completed. The only instructions given were to answer each question as openly as possible. The surveys were anonymous. The data from each class was tallied and discussed on the second day to provide the students with

feedback about the beliefs held by their peers. Follow-up surveys were administered to the students by their teachers approximately one to three weeks after the presentation to attain whether the presentations impacted the beliefs and attitudes of the students.

Surveys were collected during the 1990-91 school year. Thirteen high-schools in all were included in this study, and involved 1,011 males and 1,062 females between the ages of fifteen and eighteen. Seven of the schools were city and 6 were suburban high schools.

The primary question which prompted the collection of this data was to ascertain the attitudes and beliefs of high-school students involving coerced and forced sexual activity.

### DISCUSSION

The survey yielded expected results. There were four possible answers that were scored: No Pressure, Some Pressure, Coercion/Intimidation and Physical Force. The two middle scores were combined into one score. This allowed a comparison to other research by producing three answers. The students answers were then scored as either no pressure/force was appropriate to use in the given situation, that the use of psychological pressure/force was appropriate, or that the use of physical force was appropriate in the given situation.

90 to 99% of the males and females agreed that the woman does not owe sex as a result of the male spending a lot of money on a date. These results were significantly lower than was expected. However, 28% of the males and 9% of the female students contradicted themselves by responding that it was appropriate for the male to use psychological force in this situation, and 1% of both males and females agreed that physical force was appropriate as well.

26 to 58% of the males and 9 to 38% of the females endorsed the use of psychological force in certain situations. 1 to 4% of the males and 1 to 2% of the females endorsed the use of physical force in certain situations.

The questions which the males most supported the use of psychological force to most were questions 10, 8 and 7C. The questions which the females most supported the use of psychological force were questions the same, questions 10, 8 and 7C.

Blaming the victim appeared to be a common theme in the responses. 75% of the males and 76% of the females responded that they feel pressure from their peer groups to be sexual when they do not want to be. This appears consistent with other research results.

The data from the follow-up surveys were not presented here as a result of protocol not being followed. Only about one-half of the follow-up surveys were returned. Further, many of the teachers administering the follow-up surveys could not guarantee that the students who were present for the two-day presentation (who



guarantee that the students who were present for the two-day presentation (who took the survey prior to the presentation) were present when the follow-up surveys were administered. Also, not all students attended both days of the presentation (although most did). The purpose of the follow-up surveys was to assess if the two-day presentation impacted and changed the student's beliefs concerning the use of force to attain sexual contact.

### SUMMARY

This survey produced results which appear to be consistent with other validated studies. The data support the need for continued efforts to educate adolescents about psychological, physical and sexual abuse.

If you are interested in utilizing this survey, or an adapted version of it please contact the author.

	No Force	Psychological Force	Physical Force
1. a) If a guy spends a lot of money on a date, does the woman owe him sex in return??	Yes M: 7% F: 1%	No M: 92% F: 99%	
b) How much pressure is OK for him to use to get sex in this situation?	M: 69% F: 89%	28% 9%	3% 2%
2. If a guy is "so turned on" that he can't stop, how much pressure is OK for him to use on his partner to get sex?	M: 48% F: 73%	48% 25%	3% 2%
3. a) Is it OK to get anyone drunk or stoned so they will have sex?	Yes M: 28% F: 1%	No M: 71% F: 99%	
b) If someone is drunk or stoned, how much pressure is OK to use to get sex from them?	M: 68% F: 85%	29% 12%	2% 2%
4. If a female has a reputation for having sex with a lot of different guys but she says NO to one guy, how much pressure is OK for him to use to get sex from her?	M: 55% F: 76%	42% 22%	3% 2%
5. a) If a woman enjoys kissing and touching, does this mean she wants to have intercourse?	Yes M: 14% F: 2%	No M: 84% F: 98%	
b) How much pressure is OK for him to use to get sex from her if she let him kiss and touch her but does not want intercourse?	M: 55% F: 75%	42% 24%	2% 1%
6. A couple has had sex before, but one of them doesn't want to be sexual this time. How much pressure is OK to use to get sex in this situation?	M: 57% F: 74%	40% 25%	2% 1%

	No Force	Psychological Force	Physical Force
7. A couple had agreed earlier to have intercourse, but then one of them changes their mind and says NO in the middle of being sexual.			
a) Can a woman say NO to sex in this situation?	Yes M: 91% F: 98%	No M: 9% F: 2%	
b) Can a man say NO to sex in this situation?	Yes M: 86% F: 95%	No M: 13% F: 4%	
c) How much pressure is OK to use to get sex in this situation?	M: 46% F: 68%	52% 32%	1% 1%
8. A guy feels like his partner is just saying NO to "tease" him or as a get-back. How much pressure is OK for him to use to get sex in this situation?			
	M: 41% F: 65%	57% 33%	2% 1%
9. A couple who were living or going together have separated or broken-up. How much pressure is OK to use to get sex from the ex-partner?			
	M: 70% F: 85%	26% 14%	4% 1%
10. Two people are married. The wife does not want to have sex when her husband does. How much pressure is OK for him to use to get her to have sex with him?			
	M: 38% F: 61%	58% 38%	2% 1%
11. How much pressure do teenagers feel from their peer groups to be sexual when they don't want to be?			
	M: 24% F: 24%	71% 74%	4% 2%
12. If a female is wearing revealing clothing or acting seductively, is she asking to be raped?			
Yes	M: 17% F: 9%	No M: 81% F: 90%	
13. If a hitchhiker gets raped, is it their own fault?			
Yes	M: 29% F: 18%	No M: 68% F: 80%	
14. Does a woman out walking alone at night deserve to be raped?			
Yes	M: 5% F: 2%	No M: 94% F: 97%	
15. Are males ever pressured or forced into unwanted sexual contacts?			
Yes	M: 79% F: 88%	No M: 20% F: 11%	
16. a) Did you or anyone you know ever been tricked into unwanted sexual contact?			
Yes	M: 29% F: 58%	No M: 71% F: 41%	
b) Did you or your friend(s) ever tell anyone who could help? Or would you tell if this ever happened to you?			
Yes	M: 48% F: 64%	No M: 48% F: 31%	

The second survey gathered data on the specific types of force used by sex offenders.

Most perpetrators of physical and sexual violence utilize psychological force prior to becoming physically and sexually violent, as well as continuing to be psy-

chologically abusive after the abusive incident/s. When working with perpetrators of physical and sexual violence in therapy, I postulate that it is imperative that each perpetrator identify the types of psychological force he/she used, and that they give specific examples of how each type of psychological force was used. This data may be used to facilitate therapist, perpetrator and court personnel to develop specific guidelines for identifying perpetrator's use of psychological force BEFORE allowing the perpetrator to have contact with their victim. Many therapist have allowed visitation between perpetrator and victim when the perpetrator no longer appears to pose a significant risk of PHYSICALLY OR SEXUALLY abusing their victim, despite significant psychological force and psychological abuse occurring.

Several sex offender treatment programs in Minnesota participated in this study. Programs were contacted by telephone and those that were interested in participating were sent a letter containing the above paragraph and questionnaires. The sex offender treatment programs were not selected randomly. To be included in the study each man would need to have committed a sex offense and currently be involved in primary sex offender treatment.

### METHODOLOGY

The questionnaire was completed in a group setting and each client completed their own questionnaire. The therapist read the questions aloud in order to account for the issue of illiteracy. The therapist then returned the questionnaires at which point the questionnaires were sent to an independent researcher for tabulation. I was not involved in the tabulation of the questionnaires to avoid researcher contamination.

### STUDY RESULTS

The sex offenders were involved in sex offender programs in Minnesota. A total of 115 offenders responded to this survey, and they identified a total of 530 victims. Originally the offenders were categorized under the appropriate legal charge, such as criminal sexual contact in the 1st through 4th degree. However, due to the prevalence of plea bargaining, it was impossible to determine the appropriate legal charge for each offender. As a result the data describing the legal charges were omitted.

Of the 530 victims, 386 were female and 144 were male. Of the female victims 128 were between the ages of 21-30, 113 were between the ages of 11-15, 84 were under the age of 10, 38 were between the ages of 16-20, and 23 were between the ages of 31-40. Of the male victims 35 were under the age of 10, 35 were between the ages of 11-15, 26 were between the ages of 16-20, and 34 were between the ages of 21-30, 7 were between the ages of 31-40, and 7 were 41 or older.

There are two types of force, psychological and physical. There are seven forms of psychological force; emotional blackmail, boundary violations, game playing/

manipulation, lying, begging/pressuring, intimidation and threats. Some of the examples for each of these forms of psychological force may occur in several of the forms. However, I placed the specific examples in the category that appeared to best describe the example. The most commonly occurring type of force was psychological force.

Approximately 48% of the sex offenders in this study engaged in begging/pressuring, 43% engaged in boundary violations, 31% in lying, 31% in game playing/manipulation, 28% engaged in intimidation, 22% in emotional blackmail, 22% in physical force, and approximately 13% engaged in intimidation.

The most frequently used form of psychological force was begging and/or pressuring. The most common example of this type of force involved verbally pressuring their victim to get their own way, and verbally pressuring their victims for sex.

Boundary violations was the second most commonly used force in this questionnaire. The most common forms would include stealing or sneaking a kiss and misusing a position of power or authority.

Game playing/manipulation and lying ranked equally the third and fourth most commonly used types of force. The most frequently used forms of game playing/manipulation included playing on their feelings to get what you wanted; giving a back rub or massage; then moving hands to genitals; taking advantage of victim's emotional state (depressed, lonely, or hurting); and wrestling, tickling or other playful activities before or during sexual contact.

The most frequently used forms of lying included telling the victim that "it (abusive behavior) will never happen again", but it does; "I'm doing this because I love you"; "come on in, we'll only talk"; and agreeing to certain sexual behaviors, and going further than agreed.

The fifth type of force used was intimidation. The most frequently used forms included placing their hands on your genitals; raising your voice; and standing in their way, preventing escape.

Emotional blackmail and physical force ranked equally 5th and 6th in this study. The most frequently used examples of this included giving a sob story to gain sympathy and then asking for sex to feel better; and statements such as "don't you love me"; "if you love me, prove it"; and "this means I love you".

The sixth type of force used was physical force. The most frequently used examples included holding down, using restraint; and hitting, slapping or punching.

The least used type of force involved the use of threats. Specific examples of this included statements such as "if you tell, mom/dad and I will get divorced"; "if you tell, I'll go to jail; and threatening to end the relationship if they don't do as you say.

Interestingly, the men who participated in this study would appear not to utilize threats, but would engage in other forms of force. The results of this study indicate

that most sex offenders utilize psychological force rather than physical force in the commission of their crimes. Clinical data and data from collateral sources such as criminal complaints and police reports appear to support this data.

### DISCUSSION

The results support the premise that sex offenders utilize psychological force prior to and during their offense. As the data show, the majority of sex offenders in this study did not admit to using physical force. Of course sex offenders have been known to be dishonest. Court materials including victim statements offer support that in most sex abuse offenses, psychological force not physical force was used during the offenses. This appears to support the premise of this study.

The primary motive for this study was to identify the specific types of psychological and physical force sex offenders used in the commission of their offenses. This study was not without flaws. However, the data appear reliable given other study data and again, from collateral information such as working directly with the offenders, as well as information from court and victim reports. The questionnaire may undergo revision and be part of a larger study in the future.

Identifying the types of psychological force utilized in the perpetrator's offense is crucial. It would be nearly impossible to construct an offense cycle or reoffense prevention plan without an understanding of the types of force used. Psychological force occurs throughout sex offenses, and may occur in many forms.

The language used, verbal tonations, certain phrases, gestures and eye movements may have played a role in the grooming process or during the actual offense. Most offenders are not even aware of how they groomed their victim until a thorough examination of their precursor and offense behavior occurs. It is therefore crucial to examine the grooming process in depth, as well as the actual behaviors that occurred as part of the offense in order to identify the type of psychological force used.

### POWER OF ON-GOING VICTIMIZATION

Psychological force often continues long after the physical or sexual abuse cease. I believe that the power of ongoing victimization is significant and often overlooked. Remembering that sexual abuse occurs within the context of a relationship, simply separating a perpetrator and victim may not be easily accomplished. The data presented above offer support that most sex offenders utilize psychological rather than physical force in the commission of their offense. This means that they may employ the same psychological strategies against others in seemingly innocent situations. The end result however, is that the victim may be re-victimized by the perpetrator's gestures, facial expressions, verbal tonations and words and phrases (which may have a special meaning to the victim).

Perpetrators and victims may share the same set of friends, attend the same school, work together, and may attend the same church. The on-going victimization includes people who could be as simple as someone being around a person that the perpetrator knows, for example or in a situation similar to that of the rape situation. If the sexual abuse was a date rape, for example, and occurred at a party where the victim and perpetrator share that set of friends, future socialization with those friends may bring back the memory of the sexual abuse. It is not easy to simply let go of one's support network and begin building new friendships. What can worsen the situation is when the perpetrator and victim know each other's family and interact well with family members.

If the family of the victim does not fully blame the perpetrator but, rather, places some of the blame with the victim, the victim experiences ongoing re-victimization because she is aware of the fact that her family does not support her. If the perpetrator's family does not blame him for his abusive behaviors, this also has an effect, as just mentioned. The same is true when the victim and perpetrator work together or attend the same church. If the support people in the victim's life are aware of what happened and are supportive that she was, in fact, victimized, then she has a better sense of being able to cope with the sexual assault. If they choose, however, to not be supportive of her, but rather blaming her for the situation, then the re-victimization is ongoing, as other people are re-victimizing her by their choice to penalize her for having been a victim.

Victims are often re-victimized by the church. For example, if the church does not condone drinking and dancing and the victim engaged in these behaviors prior to being sexually assaulted, then they may place the blame with her for having acted out in ways that were not condoned by the church. This is, of course, an ongoing victimization but of a worse nature.

Spiritually, what is happening is that people are portraying that God is blaming victims; that when people make mistakes, they deserve to be punished. This is not the message that the Bible gives and I would never choose to believe in a God that believed that people should be victimized for unhealthy choices. Ongoing victimization of the perpetrator also occurs. When people do not place responsibility on the perpetrator for his actions, it is now worse than saying simply, "You did the right thing"; "You did not break the law"; "You did not abuse anyone"; "You are an okay person." While we are not debating the integral worth of the perpetrator at this point, it is victimizing because the perpetrator understands that, on some level, what he did was wrong. The fact that perpetrators identify a sense of shame, dirtiness, guilt, and anger with themselves for their behaviors, indicates that they are aware that what they did was wrong and abusive. The perpetrator desperately needs people to believe that he is responsible and to hold him responsible for his behaviors.

Without the support of being held accountable, without taking 100 percent responsibility for their behaviors, the perpetrator cannot heal.

One last area of ongoing victimization that is so often overlooked is the relationship between the victim and perpetrator. It is imperative when working with sexual abuse to examine the relationship between them. Overlooking the dynamics of the relationship simply serves to further victimize both by not attending to what might have been positive qualities in the relationship, as well as making it possible to identify the potential of ongoing victimization between them. Research has proven that abuse occurs in cycles. It is not an ongoing, 24-hour a day event. The victim and perpetrator chose to engage in a relationship because of the positive qualities that they saw in each other, whether it was a first date or whether they are involved in a relationship of several years.

It is imperative that professionals examine and identify the positive, healthy characteristics of the relationship and help the perpetrator and victim understand that they are capable of having a healthy relationship. They chose to get together for many reasons, all of which were not negative or unhealthy. They may not be able to identify all of these positive aspects of their relationship without guidance because of the amount of shame and guilt and sense of distorted or damaged self. Also, it is important to examine what the negative aspects of the relationship were. Where did things go wrong; what cues and warning signs were there that they chose to ignore or minimize? Basically, what I am saying is that the relationship between the victim and perpetrator is a historical event which holds immense learning potential for both. Another reason why it is important to examine the relationship between the victim and perpetrator is that they may have contact in some other context and it will be important to understand how they got along; is there a physical safety threat; is there a threat of another sexual assault occurring? Additionally, there is the psychological effect of having interaction following sexual abuse. As we all know, simply apologizing for having committed the sexual abuse and allowing several weeks to pass does not take away the effects, nor does it make it easier for the two, once again, to get back together.

To summarize the effects of sexual abuse, both the victim and the perpetrator experience significant trauma. It is imperative to not only address the initial concerns of the victim and perpetrator, such as the emotional, physical, sexual, or spiritual needs, but also to focus on the psychological force that was used during the assault. Pay attention to how the victim was trapped by emotional confusion, because in most sexual abuse situations, psychological, not physical force was used. Help the victim, not just the perpetrator, identify the other forms of abuse that may have occurred. Be aware that, when sexual abuse occurs, physical, emotional, and psychological abuse occurred, as well. You cannot sexually abuse someone without

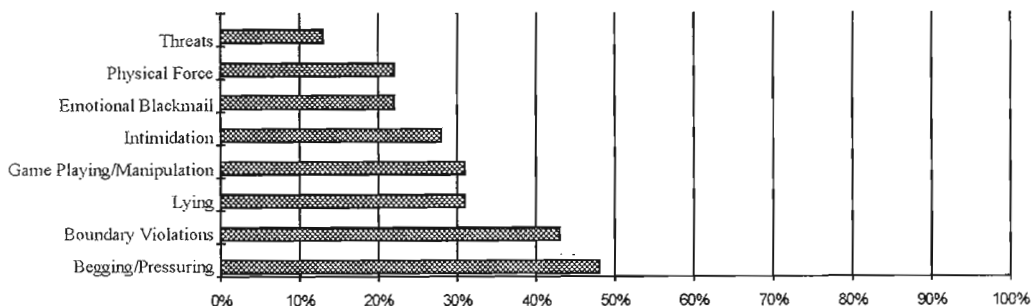
committing physical, psychological, and emotional abuse, ever.

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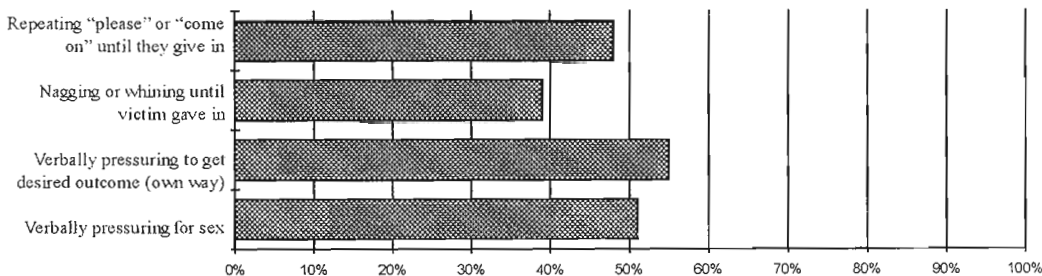
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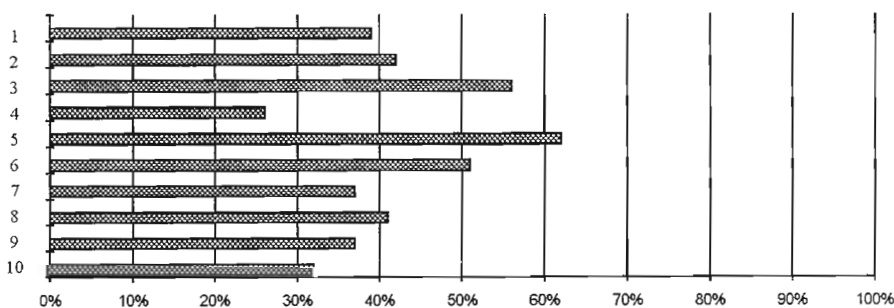
% of Violence Used



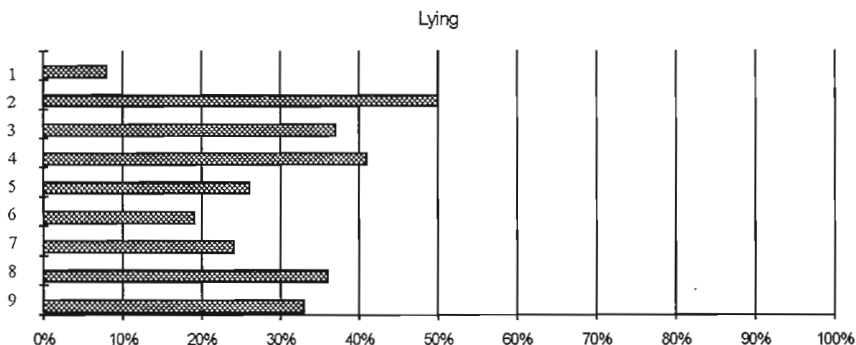
Begging/Pressuring



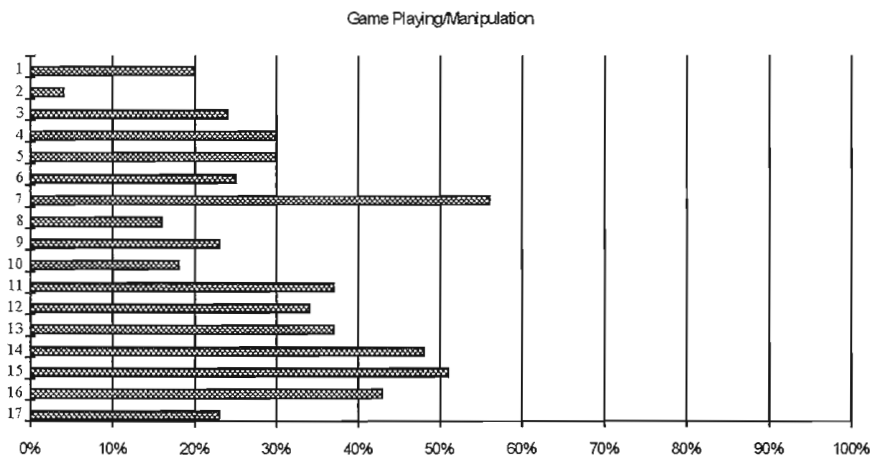
Boundary Violations



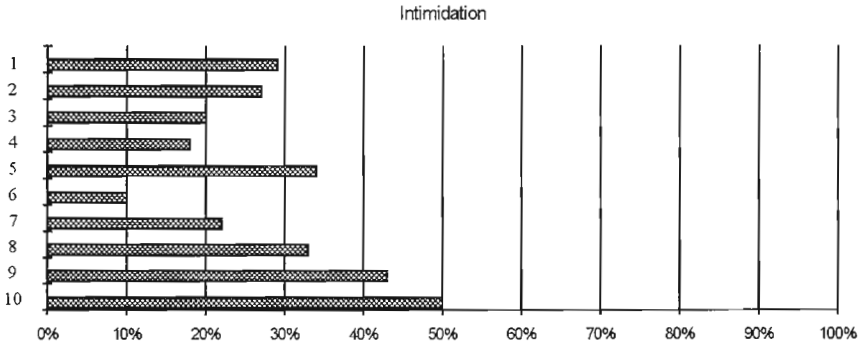
1 – Exposing or voyeurizing; 2 – Failure to discourage or tell others of sexually provocative behavior; 3 – Misusing a position of power or authority; 4 – Borrowing or taking things from victim without permission; 5 – Stealing or sneaking a kiss or touch; 6 – Behaving seductively or sexually with an inappropriate person; 7 – Making repeated sexual requests after being told there was no interest; 8 – Behaving seductively or sexually with children or adolescents; 9 – Expecting children or adolescents to meet your needs sexually; 10 – Making adult requests of children or adolescents.



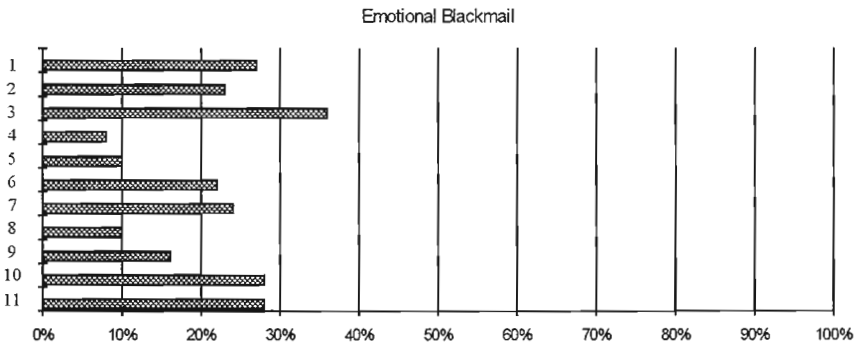
1 – “All kids have sex with their parents, minister, family members”; 2 – “It (abusive behavior) will never happen again”, but it does; 3 – “Come on in, we’ll only talk”; 4 – “I’m doing this because I love you”; 5 – “This is how men/women show love”; 6 – Promising to give something in return for sex, but then not giving; 7 – Promising to remain in the relationships if having sex, but then not doing; 8 – Agreeing to certain sexual behaviors, and then going farther; 9 – Telling children or adults it is all right to engage in sexual behavior.



1 – “I’ll teach you the right way to please a man/woman”; 2 – “Your mother/father won’t have sex with me, so you have to”; 3 – “I’m doing this so you’ll learn how to do it right”; 4 – If you do what I tell you, I’ll do whatever you want”; 5 – “If you have sex with me, I’ll do whatever you want”; 6 – If you don’t have sex with me, I’ll find someone who will”; 7 – Playing on their feelings to get what you want; 8 – Using discipline as an excuse to touch sexually; 9 – Leaving sexually explicit magazines or videos in accessible; 10 – Showing pornography to children or adolescents; 11 – Paying for affection or sex with money, drugs, alcohol, food, gifts; 12 – Withholding sex or affection in order to punish/gain something; 13 – Sulking or refusal to talk in order to gain something; 14 – Taking advantage of victims’ emotional state (depressed, lonely); 15 – Giving a back rub or massage, then moving hand to genitals; 16 – Wrestling, tickling or other playful activities before or during sexual activity; 17 – Giving them drugs or alcohol.

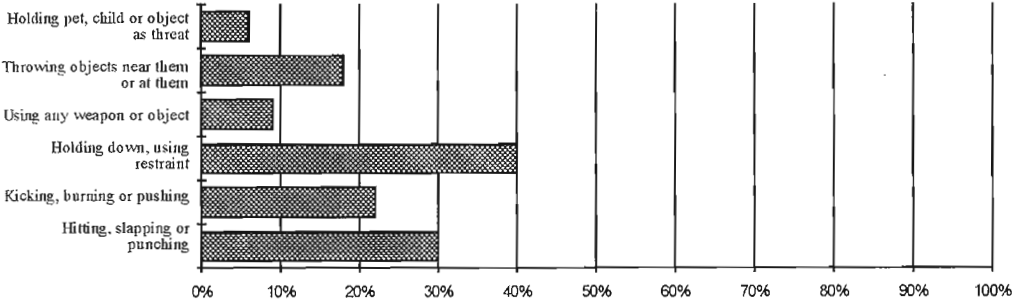


1 – “You got me turned on, now you have to finish”; 2 – “What’s wrong with you. Everyone else is doing this”; 3 – “Don’t stop until I tell you to”; 4 – “I want you to touch me, now”; 5 – Standing in their way, preventing escape; 6 – Demanding they pay for something you want; 7 – Raising your hand as if to hit; 8 – Demanding they do what you want; 9 – Raising your voice; 10 – Placing their hands on your genitals.

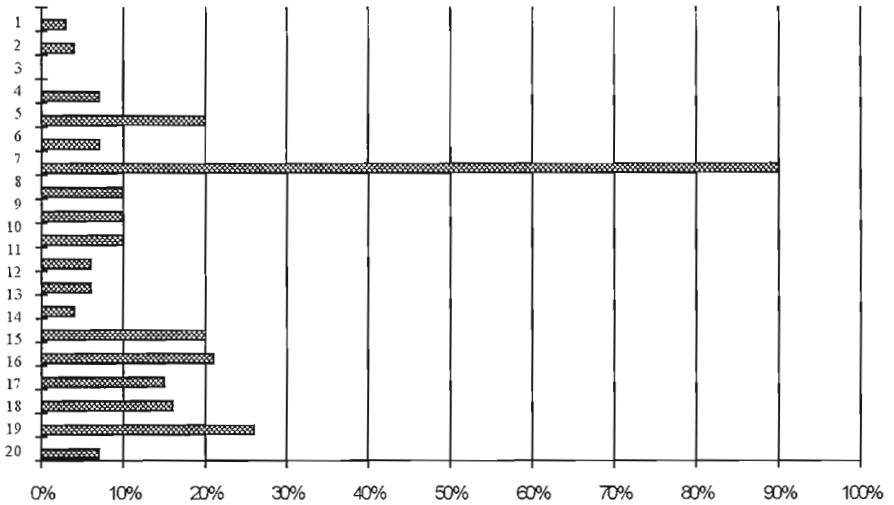


1 – “This means I love you”; 2 – “This is the way I love you”; 3 – “Don’t you love me”; 4 – “Your parents would want you to take care of me”; 5 – “Your parents would want you to make me happy”; 6 – “I am lonely and you should want to take care of me/make me feel good”; 7 – “You should want to please me”; 8 – “We have dated so long, now you owe me”; 9 – If you love me, do this or buy this for me”; 10 – “If you love me, prove it”; 11 – Giving a sob story to gain sympathy and then asking for sex.

Physical Force



Threats



1 – “If you tell, I’ll kill someone”; 2 – “If you tell, you will have to move out”; 3 – “If you tell, I’ll kill your pet”; 4 – “If you tell, I’ll kill myself”; 5 – “If you tell, I’ll go to jail”; 6 – “If you tell, they won’t believe you”; 7 – “If you tell, mom/dad won’t love you anymore”; 8 – “If you tell, mom/dad and I will get divorced”; 9 – “If you don’t, I’ll kill you”; 10 – “Do what I tell you or I’ll get you in trouble”; 11 – “I’ll tell the authorities or family you are a bad parent”; 12 – “I’ll tell the kids you don’t love them”; 13 – “Buy me this or I’ll leave”; 14 – “You won’t see the kids unless you do this”; 15 – “If you don’t touch me, I’ll touch you anyway”; 16 – Reminding them of past abuse; 17 – Threatening to physically abuse them; 18 – Threatening to have an affair; 19 – Threatening to end the relationship if they don’t do what you say; 20 – Driving to a remote area and threatening to and/or leaving.