13 Violence Against Women

True or False?

_____ 1. To label a remark "sexual harassment" from the legal standpoint, the person making the remark must specifically request some sort of sexual favor.
_____ 2. Women are more likely to be sexually harassed if they work at a job where the clear majority of the employees are male.
_____ 3. Women who have been sexually harassed typically say that the harassment was moderately unpleasant, but it had no long-lasting emotional effects.
_____ 4. About 20% of North American women will be victims of a rape during their lifetime.
_____ 5. The clear majority of rape victims were previously acquainted with the man who raped them.
_____ 6. If women follow a specific set of guidelines for behavior, they can almost completely eliminate the risk of rape.
_____ 7. Men are approximately three times as likely as women to assault a former spouse.
_____ 8. The abuse of women is just as high in the United States as it is in Asia and Latin America.
_____ 9. Unemployment increases the likelihood of partner abuse.
_____10. Most abusive relationships improve spontaneously, but therapy is recommended when the abuse is severe or long lasting.

Sexual harassment, sexual assault, and the abuse of women are among the most terrifying events that a woman could experience. These three forms of violence are especially likely to occur when women are relatively powerless and vulnerable. An especially powerless group is the approximately 500,000 women in the United States who are migrant farmworkers. These women earn low wages by picking fruits and vegetables in the field. Unfortunately, female farmworkers are about 10 times more likely than other female workers to experience sexual harassment and sexual assault.

For example, consider a Mexican American farmworker named Olivia, who lived in California. Her supervisor, Rene—also a Mexican American—repeatedly harassed and assaulted Olivia. He offered to drive her to the work site, and then he raped her. He also came to Olivia's home when her husband was at work, and he raped her again, threatening to kill her if she told anyone. When she reported these incidents to the main office, the bosses protested that she had no proof. Sexual assault is so common for female farmworkers that one woman in Iowa told a lawyer, "We thought it was normal in the United States that in order to keep your job, you had to have sex" (Clarren, 2005, p. 42).

Olivia's story describes both sexual harassment and sexual assault, two of the topics of this chapter. Sexual harassment, sexual assault, and the abuse of women share important similarities. One similarity is that all three situations involve some form of violence—either physical or emotional.

A second similarity in these three situations is that men typically possess more power than women. Sexual harassers are usually persons with power at work or in an academic setting (DeSouza & Fansler, 2003; Foote &

Goodman-Delahunty, 2005: Sigal & Annan, 2008). In rape and abusive situations, men typically have more physical power. As we saw in Chapter 3, children begin to learn these messages about power and gender roles. The media also play an important role in conveying these messages, because they show men who are influential, powerful, physically strong, and violent—especially compared to the women in the media. In a sense, sexual harassment, rape, and the abuse of women all represent a tragic exaggeration of traditional gender roles.

A third similarity focuses on entitlement, a concept we examined in Chapter 7, on women and work (p. 219). In our culture, many men have a sense of **entitlement**; based on their membership in the male social group, they believe they have a right to certain "privileges" and rewards when they interact with women (Sigal & Annan, 2008; A. J. Stewart & McDermott, 2004). For instance, a high-ranking executive assumes he has the right to fondle his secretary. A male college student may assume entitled to force his girlfriend to have sex. A husband may believe that he is entitled to punch his wife if she comes home late from work.

Fourth, in all three kinds of victimization, women are left feeling even less powerful after the violence. They have been forced to accept unwanted sexual attention, or their bodies have been violated or beaten. Powerlessness is yet another variation on one of the themes of this book: Women are often treated differently from men.

A fifth similarity is that women seldom regain power by reporting the violence committed against them. Legal proceedings are often embarrassing and humiliating; they invade a woman's right to woman's privacy even further. All these acts of violence encourage women to become more silent and more invisible (Foote & Goodman-Delahunty, 2005; T. S. Nelson, 2002). The relative invisibility of women is a theme we have emphasized repeatedly throughout this book.

The final similarity—across all three situations—is that people often blame the victim (T. S. Nelson, 2002; J. W. White et al., 2001). A woman is sexually harassed because "those tight pants invite it." A woman is raped because she "asked for it" by her seductive behavior. A woman is beaten because "she probably did something to make her husband angry." In contrast, the aggressor is often perceived as behaving "like any normal male." Although attitudes are changing, the aggressor may receive little blame for the violence.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment refers to unwanted gender-related behavior, such as sexual coercion, offensive sexual attention, sexual touching, and hostile verbal and physical behaviors that focus on gender (Fitzgerald et al., 2001; Gutek, 2007). Most sexual harassment situations occur in either a work setting or a school setting. According to North American surveys, women are between two and ten times as likely as men to report that they have been sexually harassed (Committee on Pediatric Workforce, 2006; DeSouza, 2008; Foote & Goodman-Delahunty, 2005).

The American legal system now prohibits two kinds of sexual harassment. In the first kind, called **quid pro quo harassment**, a powerful individual in a university or the workplace makes it clear that someone with less power must submit to sexual advances to obtain something, such as a good grade in a course, a job offer, or a promotion (Crosby, 2008; Rudman & Glick, 2008; Woodzicka & LaFrance, 2005).

The second kind of sexual harassment is called "hostile environment." **Hostile-environment harassment** applies to a situation in which the atmosphere at school or at work is so intimidating and unpleasant that a student or an employee cannot work effectively (Crosby, 2008; Foote & Goodman-Delahunty, 2005; M. A. Paludi, 2004). Before you read further, try Demonstration 13.1, an exercise designed to assess your thoughts about sexual harassment.

DEMONSTRATION 13.1

Judgments About Sexual Harassment

Rate each of the six statements about sexual harassment, using the scale below. Then check the instructions at the end of the chapter, on page 453

1 2 3 4 5

Strongly disagree Strongly agree

_____ 1. Sexual harassment is clearly related to power.
_____ 2. Women often try to get ahead by encouraging a professor or a supervisor to be sexually interested in them.
_____ 3. Women don't have a sense of humor, and so they make a big deal out of sexual remarks and jokes in the classroom.
_____ 4. Most charges of sexual harassment are made by women who really have experienced harassment.
_____ 5. Women frequently use their sexuality to tease professors and supervisors.
_____ 6. When a female says "No" to a sexual advance from a male professor or supervisor, he should realize that she really does mean "No."

Source: Based on Mazer and Percival (1989) and Kennedy and Gorzalka (2002).

Let's consider several examples of sexual harassment so that we can appreciate the variety of problems in this area.

1. *Quid pro quo sexual coercion.* A woman named Anna and her supervisor, Jason, were on a work-related trip. During this trip, Jason kept talking about sex and rubbing her shoulders and neck. She did not respond, and so he told her to loosen up. Anna later asked about opportunities in the company for promotion. Jason replied, "You'll need to loosen up and be a lot nicer to me

before I can recommend you." Then he placed his arms around her waist and added, "Remember, I can make your life very easy or very difficult here" (Foote & Goodman-Delahunty, 2005, p. 54).

2. *Hostile environment in an academic setting.* At a university in Texas, a professor who taught courses in criminal justice was accused of kissing and hugging several female students. His comments were equally offensive. For example, he told one woman that "she would not know real happiness until she had sex with a married man like himself" (R. Wilson, 2004, p. A12). Notice that this example cannot be classified as quid pro quo harassment because the professor did not specify an academic reward for sexual activity.

3. *Hostile environment in the workplace.* In a study of Black female firefighters, more than 90% said that they had experienced unwanted sexual teasing, jokes, and remarks on the job (J. D. Yoder & Aniakudo, 1997). The women also reported that their male coworkers harassed them by pouring syrup into their firefighting boots and bursting in while they were using the toilet. It's likely that sexism and racism combined to create an especially hostile environment for these women. This hostile workplace variety of sexual harassment could also include suggestive remarks and nonverbal gestures (McDonald et al., 2010).

Most of this section on sexual harassment examines how males sexually harass females whom they perceive to be heterosexual. Keep in mind, however, that lesbian women might be sexually harassed, for example, by males or by other women in positions of power. Males can also be sexually harassed by women or by other men. For instance, a gay male may be sexually harassed by a peer. In 2010, we saw several examples of gay males who committed suicide when they had been "outed" by a peer. However, in the most common situation, a male is harassing a female (DeFour et al., 2003; Foote & Goodman-Delahunty, 2005; Levy, 2008; Magley et al., 2010).

You may read reports about females being harassed by their male classmates, beginning in elementary school and continuing through college; women are also harassed by their peers in the workplace (Duffy et al., 2004; Shute et al., 2008; Strauss, 2003). In addition, women are harassed in public settings by whistles and sexually explicit comments.

Those forms of harassment are certainly worrisome. In this chapter, however, we will focus on two situations in which a female is being harassed by a male with higher status: (1) professors harassing students in college settings and (2) supervisors harassing employees in work settings. Both situations raise particular problems because they involve power inequities and reasonably long-term relationships between the woman and the harasser.

Why Is Sexual Harassment an Important Issue?

Sexual harassment is important for several reasons (Foote & Goodman-Delahunty, 2005; Magley et al., 2010; Norton, 2002; M. A. Paludi, 2004; Piran & Ross, 2006; Sigal & Annan, 2008):

1. Sexual harassment emphasizes that men typically have more power than women in our society.

2. Sexual demands are often coercive because women are offered economic or academic advantages if they comply, but harmful consequences if they say no.
3. Sexual harassment dehumanizes women and treats them in a sexist fashion; women are seen primarily as sexual beings rather than as intelligent and competent employees or students.
4. Women are often forced to be silent, because they are afraid, and yet they need to continue either in the workplace or at school.
5. If sexual harassment occurs in a public setting, without condemnation from supervisors, many onlookers will conclude that sexist behavior is acceptable.

How Often Does Sexual Harassment Occur?

It is extremely difficult to estimate how frequently sexual harassment occurs. The boundaries of sexual harassment are often unclear. Also, people are reluctant to use the label "sexual harassment," even when they have experienced clear-cut harassment (M. A. Paludi, 2004). Furthermore, numerous cases go unreported (Gutek, 2007; Norton, 2002).

Reports of sexual harassment on college campuses suggest that between 20% and 40% of undergraduate and graduate women students have been harassed (Committee on Pediatric Workforce, 2006; Dziech, 2003; Frank et al., 1998). The incidence of sexual harassment in the workplace varies widely throughout the United States and Canada, depending on the employment setting. Women employed in traditionally male occupations are especially likely to experience sexual harassment (DeSouza, 2008; Foote & Goodman-Delahunty, 2005; Morgan & Gruber, 2008). For instance, women in the military frequently report sexual teasing, unwanted touching, and pressure for sexual favors. According to surveys, between 50% and 80% of women in the military said that they had experienced sexual harassment (Buchanan et al., 2008; Magley & Shupe, 2005; S. Nelson, 2002).

Sexual harassment is not limited to North America. Reports come from countries such as England, Germany, the Netherlands, Australia, Pakistan, India, Taiwan, Argentina, and Turkey (Hodges, 2000; Kishwar, 1999; McDonald et al., 2010; M. A. Paludi, 2004; J. Sigal et al., 2005). In all the cultures examined so far, one universal finding is that only a small percentage of women choose to report the sexual harassment to the authorities (Fitzgerald et al., 2001).

Women's Reactions to Being Sexually Harassed

Sexual harassment is not simply a minor inconvenience to women; it can change their lives. If a woman refuses her boss's sexual advances, she may receive a negative job evaluation, a demotion, or a transfer to another job. She may be fired or pressured into quitting (Foote & Goodman-Delahunty, 2005; Kurth et al., 2000; T. S. Nelson, 2002). A woman who has been harassed in an academic setting may drop out of school or miss classes taught by the harasser (Duffy et al., 2004; Fogg, 2005).

How do women respond emotionally to sexual harassment? One woman described her sense of loneliness: "Most of the time during the harassment I

felt extremely alone. I felt like no one could, or would ever understand what this man was doing to me inside my mind." Another woman reported, "I felt like running away—disappearing—becoming as unnoticeable as possible. I stopped wearing colors in my clothing—wore mostly black and gray to be less noticeable—I felt disbelief and extremely isolated from everyone" (C. V. Wright & Fitzgerald, 2007, p. 73).

Most women experience anxiety, fear, self-doubt, embarrassment, helplessness, and depression when they have been sexually harassed. Understandably, they also report reduced job satisfaction and reduced life satisfaction (Chan et al., 2008). Some develop eating disorders (Buchanan & Fitzgerald, 2008; Huerta et al., 2006). They may also feel ashamed, as if they were somehow responsible for the harassment (Collinsworth et al., 2009; Fogg, 2005; McDonald et al., 2010; Rederstorff et al., 2007). In contrast, women seldom feel responsible when they are victims of crimes such as robbery.

Understandably, a woman who has been sexually harassed may become less self-confident about her academic or occupational abilities (Duffy et al., 2004; Osman, 2004). Common physical reactions include headaches, eating disorders, substance abuse, and sleep disturbances (Foote & Goodman-Delahunty, 2005; Lundberg-Love & Marmion, 2003; Piran & Ross, 2006).

Another problem is that a woman's friends may not think that sexual harassment is an important problem. Researchers in a variety of countries have measured students' attitudes about sexual harassment (Levy, 2008; Russell & Trigg, 2004; Sigal et al., 2005). For example, Kennedy and Gorzalka (2002) asked students at a Canadian university to complete a 19-item questionnaire that included items similar to those in Demonstration 13.1. They found that females were more likely than males to believe that sexual harassment is a serious problem.

What to Do About Sexual Harassment

How should we address the problem of sexual harassment? Ignoring harassment won't make it disappear (Karsten & Igou, 2006). Let's consider how individual women and men can make a difference. Then we'll see how institutions can address sexual harassment.

Individual Action

What can an individual woman do when she has been sexually harassed? Here are some recommendations for students who are concerned about harassment in an academic setting (Fogg, 2005; McDonald et al., 2010; M. A. Paludi, 2004):

1. Become familiar with your campus's policy on sexual harassment, and know which officials are responsible for complaints.
2. If a professor's behavior seems questionable, discuss the situation objectively with someone you trust.
3. If the problem persists, consider informing the harasser that his sexual harassment makes you feel uncomfortable. Some experts recommend sending a formal letter to the harasser, describing your objections to the incident, and stating clearly that you want the actions to stop (Crosby,

2008). Many harassment policies cannot be legally applied unless the harasser has been informed that the behavior is unwanted and inappropriate.
4. Keep careful records of all occurrences—including specific dates and times—and keep copies of all correspondence.
5. If the problem persists, report it to the appropriate officials on campus. An institution that takes no action is responsible if another act of harassment occurs after an incident is reported.
6. Join a feminist group on campus, or help to start one. A strong support group can encourage real empowerment, reduce the chances that other students will experience sexual harassment, and help to change campus policy on this important issue.

These six suggestions can also be adapted for the workplace; employed women can take similar steps to avoid and eliminate sexual harassment (Karsten & Igou, 2006). If a harasser persists, it may be necessary to say that you will report the incidents to the appropriate official. Employees may need to file a formal complaint with a superior, a union official, or a personnel officer. Competent legal advice may also be necessary. Fortunately, a U.S. Supreme Court decision states that employers may be held financially liable when supervisors harass employees, even when the companies are not aware of the misconduct (Fitzgerald et al., 2001).

Some women who file a sexual harassment charge may find that their complaint is treated seriously and compassionately. Unfortunately, however, many women encounter an unsympathetic response from college administrators or company officials (Foote & Goodman-Delahunty, 2005; McDonald et al., 2010). They might be told that the event was simply a misunderstanding or that the harasser is so competent and valuable that this "minor" incident should be forgotten.

Students in women's studies courses often protest that nothing about sexual harassment seems fair. This viewpoint is absolutely correct. A woman shouldn't have to suffer the pain and embarrassment of sexual harassment, see the quality of her work decline, and then—in many cases—find that administrators, supervisors, and the legal system do not support her.

How Men Can Help

Men who care about women and women's issues can be part of the solution. First, they themselves must avoid behaviors that women might perceive as sexual harassment. In addition, men should speak up when they see another man sexually harassing someone. Harassers may be more likely to stop if other males point out that they are offended by sexual harassment.

Some men believe that women often fabricate sexual-harassment cases, so they need to understand the reality about sexual harassment (Lonsway et al., 2008). Furthermore, men who work as supervisors or as counselors can support individuals who have been sexually harassed (T. S. Nelson, 2002).

If you are a male reading this book, think about what steps you might take if you hear that a woman is being sexually harassed by one of your male friends. It's difficult to tell a friend that a woman may not enjoy his

comments about her body. However, if you do not comment, your silence may be interpreted as approval. You can also offer compassion and support to a female friend who tells you that she has been sexually harassed.

Society's Response to the Harassment Problem

Individual women and men need to take action against sexual harassment. However, to stop sexual harassment more effectively, *institutions* must be firmly committed to fighting the problem (Foote & Goodman-Delahunty, 2005; Karsten & Igou, 2006). For example, women in the military typically report that their commanding officers do not treat sexual harassment as a serious problem that must be prevented (Firestone & Harris, 2003; T. S. Nelson, 2002). Clearly, most officers have not been firmly committed to stopping sexual harassment.

Universities and other organizations need to develop clear policies about sexual harassment (Committee on Pediatric Workforce, 2006; Foote & Goodman-Delahunty, 2005; Karsten & Igou, 2006; C. A. Paludi & Paludi, 2003). They should also publicize these policies and training programs—with top administrators in attendance—on sexual harassment issues (Gutek, 2007). Students and employees should receive information about procedures to follow if they believe they have been sexually harassed. These administrators must make it clear that their organization will not tolerate sexual harassment (Kath et al., 2008).

Furthermore, public opinion needs to be changed. People should realize that they must not blame women who have been sexually harassed. The public must also realize that sexual harassment limits women's rights and opportunities in academic and work settings. Men need to know that women often do not appreciate uninvited sexual attention. In addition, behavior that a man regards as flirtation may feel more like sexual harassment to a woman (Norton, 2002). Some men who harass may not be aware that they are creating a problem. Others may believe that they have a sanction to harass because of good-natured responses from other men.

However, the real answer lies in the unequal distribution of power between men and women. If we really want to eliminate sexual harassment, we must move beyond the level of trying to convince individual harassers to alter their behavior. Instead, we need to change the uneven distribution of power that encourages sexual harassment.

SECTION SUMMARY

Sexual Harassment

1. Sexual harassment, rape, and the abuse of women all focus on violence and inequalities in power—situations in which men feel entitled to certain privileges. All of these behaviors make women feel less powerful; in addition, women are often blamed for causing the violence.

(continues)

SECTION SUMMARY *(continued)*

2. Two categories of sexual harassment in the workplace and in academic settings are (a) quid pro quo harassment and (b) harassment that creates a hostile environment.
3. Sexual harassment is an important issue because (a) it emphasizes gender differences in power, (b) it is coercive and dehumanizing, (c) it may force women to be silent, and (d) it may encourage onlookers to believe that sexist behavior is acceptable.
4. Sexual harassment occurs fairly often on college campuses and in the workplace; it is especially frequent for women in traditionally male occupations.
5. Women who have been sexually harassed often quit jobs or leave school; they may experience reactions such as loneliness, anxiety, fear, embarrassment, depression, shame, reduced self-confidence, and physical problems.
6. When we consider how to reduce sexual harassment, we must move beyond the individual actions of women and men. In addition, institutions must develop well-publicized policies. The general public must be well informed about problems related to sexual harassment, as well as the general issue of the unequal distribution of power.

SEXUAL ASSAULT AND RAPE

Sexual assault is a comprehensive term that includes sexual touching and other forms of unwanted sexual contact. Sexual assault is typically accompanied by psychological pressure, coercion, or physical threats (O. Barnett et al., 2005; Kaufman & the Committee on Adolescence, 2008). For example, a man may say, "If you really loved me, you'd have sex with me," or he may threaten to break woman's arm if she does not comply. Katz and Myhr (2008) surveyed female college students who were currently in sexual dating relationships. About 20% of these women reported that their partner had verbally coerced them to have unwanted sex on at least one occasion.

Rape is a more specific kind of sexual assault. **Rape** can be defined as sexual penetration—without the individual's consent—obtained by force or by threat of physical harm, or when the victim is incapable of giving consent (Ahrens et al., 2008; Monson et al., 2009; Worell & Remer, 2003). Most of the discussion here will focus on rape. However, the inclusiveness of the term *sexual assault* helps us understand the many ways in which men have power over women's lives (J. W. White & Frabutt, 2006).

Although strangers commit some rapes, a rapist is more likely to be an acquaintance (Ahrens et al., 2008; J. W. White & Frabutt, 2006). In other words, women who are worried about rape need to be especially concerned about someone they already know, rather than a stranger.

A rapist may even be a woman's husband. According to a common belief, a woman is supposed to have sex with her husband whenever he wants (Platt et al., 2009). According to some estimates in the United States, between 10% and 20% of wives have been raped by a husband or an ex-husband (Herrera et al., 2006; Koss, 2003). In the United States, many of the states have a policy that a man who has forced intercourse with a woman he knows receives a ligher sentence than a man who has forced intercourse with a stranger (Monson et al., 2009; Polisi, 2009).

The incidence of rape varies cross-culturally. Rape is typically more common in cultures where women are clearly subordinate to men (Kar & Garcia-Moreno, 2009; Rudman & Glick, 2008; Sanday, 2003).

One of the most tragic forms of rape occurs during wars and ethnic conflicts. Soldiers kill other soldiers, but they also rape women. If a raped woman survives, her own community may reject her (Murthi, 2009). In recent years, invading soldiers have systematically raped women in countries such as Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Bosnia, Cyprus, Guatemala, Peru, Somalia, Uganda, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, and the Democratic Republic of Congo (Agathangelou, 2000; Barstow, 2001; Borchelt, 2005; Hans, 2004; Marshall, 2010; Nikolic-Ristanovic, 2000; Winship, 2008).

For example, about 2 million people in the Darfur region of Sudan were forced to leave their homes and move to refugee camps. The women in these camps have had to walk great distances away from the camps to gather wood for cooking their food. Men from the attacking militias search for these women and systematically rape them. Rape is therefore a weapon of war as well as a sexual attack on individual women (Agathangelou, 2000; Lalumiere et al., 2005).

How Often Does Rape Occur?

As you can imagine, estimating the incidence of rape is difficult. One problem is that surveys differ in their definitions of rape and sexual assault (Hamby & Koss, 2003). Another problem is that women are reluctant to indicate on a survey that they have been raped. Furthermore, only a fraction of rape survivors report the crime to the police. In the United States, for instance, only about 10% to 30% of rape survivors report the rape, depending on the group that is surveyed (Ahrens et al., 2008; Herrera et al., 2006; Ward & Lundberg-Love, 2006).

DEMONSTRATION 13.2

Knowledge About Rape

For each of the following statements about rape, check the space that represents your response. The correct answers appear on page 453.

	True	False
1. Women who have had a sexual relationship with a man often try to protect their reputation by claiming they have been raped.	_____	_____

(continues)

Demonstration 13.2 *(continued)*

	True	False
2. Women cannot always prevent being raped by resisting their attackers.	_____	_____
3. Men rape because they experience uncontrollable sexual urges.	_____	_____
4. Most women secretly want to be raped.	_____	_____
5. Most rapes are not reported to the police.	_____	_____
6. A woman who is sexually experienced will not really be damaged by rape.	_____	_____
7. Women provoke rape if they dress in a sexually seductive way.	_____	_____
8. Most reported sexual assaults actually were true cases of sexual assaults.	_____	_____
9. Sexual assaults usually occur in isolated areas, away from a woman's home.	_____	_____
10. You can tell whether someone is a rapist by his appearance or general behavior.	_____	_____

Source: Based partly on Worell and Remer (2003, p. 203).

Every year in the United States, an estimated 200,000 to 320,000 women are raped or sexually assaulted (Ahrens et al., 2008; Human Rights Watch, 2008). Current estimates in both the United States and Canada suggest that between 15% and 30% of women have been raped at some point during their lives (Herrera et al., 2006; Rozee, 2005; Ullman, 2010; J. W. White & Frabutt, 2006). The data clearly demonstrate that rape is a genuine problem for women in North America.

The incidence of rape is especially high for U.S. women if they are serving in the military (Campbell & Raja, 2005; Corbett, 2007; A. Wright, 2008). For instance, the data show that a U.S. female soldier who was serving in Iraq was more likely to be raped by another U.S. soldier than to be killed by enemy fire (Harman, 2008).

Before you read further, try Demonstration 13.2 to assess your knowledge about rape. Then you can check the answers at the end of the chapter.

Acquaintance Rape

Research consistently shows that a rapist is not likely to be a stranger attacking in a dark alley. Instead, a rapist may be your chemistry lab partner, your sister's boyfriend, a business acquaintance, or the boy next door. Surveys suggest that about 85% of rape survivors knew the man who raped them (Koss, 2003). **Acquaintance rape** refers to rape by a person known to the rape survivor, who is not related by blood or marriage. For example, a woman who was a senior in high school described the following situation. A classmate had just asked her for a date, and she had turned him down.

> He got angry and told me that I was a tease and he slapped me across the face. So I pulled open the door to my car and tried to get away, but he grabbed my arm and forced me into the back seat. All I remember after that was crying and trying to push him off me. When he had finished he left me in the back seat of my car bleeding and barely conscious. (A. S. Kahn, 2004, p. 11)

Surveys suggest that about 15% of U.S. women will experience acquaintance rape. An additional 35% to 40% of women will experience some other form of sexual assault from an acquaintance (Rickert et al., 2004; J. W. White & Kowalski, 1998). However, women who have been raped by a boyfriend are less likely than other rape survivors to describe the situation as a rape (Ahrens et al., 2008; Frieze, 2005; A. S. Kahn, 2004; Z. D. Peterson & Muehlenhard, 2004).

For example, researchers in Canada and the United States have studied women who had been assaulted by an acquaintance and whose experience met the legal definition for rape. Among these women, only about 40% actually classified the assault as rape (A. S. Kahn & Andreoli Mathie, 2000; Littleton et al., 2006; Shimp & Chartier, 1998). In other words, most of these women had indeed been raped, yet they did not apply that term to the assault. Furthermore, when a woman has been raped by a boyfriend or another acquaintance, she is less likely than other rape survivors to report the rape (Worell & Remer, 2003).

Some cases of acquaintance rape can probably be traced to a particular kind of miscommunication. Specifically, men are more likely than women to perceive other people as being seductive (Abbey et al., 2000, 2001; Lindgren et al., 2008). For example, Saundra may smile pleasantly when talking with Ted. Saundra may intend for her smile to convey platonic friendship. Nevertheless, Ted may interpret her behavior as a sexual invitation. Another kind of miscommunication is that some men believe that women want to have sex, even though they have clearly said "No" (Osman, 2004).

Furthermore, sexually aggressive men and men who have negative attitudes toward women are especially likely to misinterpret neutral behavior (V. Anderson et al., 2004; Jacques-Tiura et al., 2007; Lindgren et al., 2008). Unfortunately, however, people often misconstrue this information. For example, the popular media often blame women for sending the wrong messages, rather than acknowledging that men misinterpret the messages.

The findings on miscommunication have practical implications for both women and men. First, women should be aware that their friendliness may be misperceived by men. Second—and even more important—men must learn that friendly verbal and nonverbal messages from a woman may simply mean "I like you," or "I enjoy talking with you," or "I'm being polite." A smile and extended eye contact do not necessarily mean "I want to have a sexual relationship with you."

The Role of Alcohol and Drugs

By some estimates, about half of rapes in the United States are associated with the use of alcohol by either the perpetrator or the rape survivor (Abbey, 2002; Davis et al., 2004; Kaufman & the Committee on Adolescence, 2008).

Alcohol clearly impairs people's ability to make appropriate decisions (Abbey et al., 2002). For instance, men who have been drinking tend to overestimate a woman's interest in sexual activity. Women who have been drinking are more likely to judge a sexually aggressive situation as being relatively safe, and they are less verbally assertive (Masters et al., 2006; J. W. White & Frabutt, 2006).

You may also have read about a drug called Rohypnol (pronounced row-*hip*-noll), sometimes called "roofie" or the "date rape drug." Mixed with alcohol, Rohypnol increases sleepiness and the sensation of drunkenness (Dobbert, 2004; Ward & Lundberg-Love, 2006). In both the United States and Canada, the media have reported many cases in which Rohypnol or some similar drug has been slipped into a woman's drink. The effect is like an alcohol blackout; the woman typically has no recall of any events that occurred after she passed out, even a rape attack. Obviously, a drug-induced rape can have a devastating effect on a woman.

Women's Reactions to Rape

A woman's reaction to rape depends on the nature of the attack, whether she knows the assailant, the threat of danger, her stage in life, whether she is well informed about rape issues, and other circumstances. However, almost all women who have been raped report that they were terrified, repulsed, confused, and overwhelmed while they were being raped (Lloyd & Emery, 2000; Ward & Lundberg-Love, 2006). Many women are afraid that they will be seriously hurt (Raitt & Zeedyk, 2000; Ullman, 2000). In fact, about 25% of women are injured (Koss, 2003).

During the rape, some women report that they feel detached from their own body (Matsakis, 2003; Ward & Lundberg-Love, 2006). One woman described her reaction to an acquaintance rape:

> The experience moved from heavy petting to forced intercourse. I realized that a fly on the wall watching would have seen two people making love. But inside I was horrified and remembered thinking to myself that this can't be happening to me. I felt like throwing-up, and I shriveled up inside of myself, so that the outside of my body and the parts he was touching were just a shell. (Funderburk, 2001, p. 263)

Short-Term Adjustment

Women report a wide range of feelings during the first few weeks after a rape. Some women have an expressive style. They show their feelings of fear, anger, and anxiety by crying and being restless (A. S. Kahn & Andreoli Mathie, 2000; Ahrens et al., 2008; Matsakis, 2003). Others hide their feelings with a calm and subdued external appearance.

The reactions of other people are crucial. Friends who think that the rape was a woman's fault are not likely to help her (Brown & Testa, 2008). For instance, one survivor's female friend asked her, "What were you wearing?" (Ullman, 2010, p. 4). In contrast, another survivor received emotional

support from her boyfriend. He said that "He was here for me in whatever way I needed him and and that we didn't have to have sex unless I wanted to" (Ullman, 2010, p. 63).

Most rape survivors feel helpless, humiliated, and devalued. Many women blame themselves for the rape (Ahrens et al., 2008; L. S. Brown, 2008; A. S. Kahn & Andreoli Mathie, 2000). For instance, one woman who had been raped by an acquaintance said, "I never thought of it as date rape until very recently. I just always thought of it as my fault that I let things get out of hand" (Lloyd & Emery, 2000, p. 119). Self-blame is a particularly troublesome reaction because, in nearly all cases, the woman did nothing to encourage the assault.

Immediately following a rape, a woman may experience physical pain, and she may also experience gynecological symptoms, such as vaginal discharge and generalized pain. Realistically, a woman who has been raped needs to worry about possible pregnancy, as well as AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases (Kaufman & the Committee on Adolescence, 2008). However, many women are too upset or too ashamed to seek medical attention. Women who do go to a hospital may be treated in a caring manner, but some report that the members of the hospital staff were unsympathetic (Boston Women's Health Book Collective, 2005).

A woman who has been raped must also decide whether to report the crime to the police. Women often decide not to make an official report because "it wouldn't do any good." They believe that the criminal justice system won't handle the case effectively, that officials won't believe them, and that they might be embarrassed by the verifying procedure (Konradi, 2007). These fears may be realistic. The legal system often harasses and frightens women who have been raped, often minimizes their distress, and often blames victims rather than supporting them. In recent years, however, a growing number of women have reported that they were treated with compassion and respect (Konradi, 2007; Ullman, 2010).

Long-Term Adjustment

The effects of a rape do not disappear suddenly. The physical and mental aftereffects may last for years (Ward & Lundberg-Love, 2006). Common physical health problems include pelvic pain, excessive menstrual bleeding, vaginal infections, complications during pregnancy, gastrointestinal problems, and headaches (Reed, 2009; Ullman & Brecklin, 2003; E. A. Walker et al., 2004).

Women who have been raped are also likely to experience depression, excessive weight loss, eating disorders, substance abuse, and sexual dysfunction (Ahrens et al., 2008; Herrera et al., 2006; Ullman & Brecklin, 2003). Some women who have been raped may engage in high-risk sexual behavior (Rheingold et al., 2004; Ullman & Brecklin, 2003). They are also more likely to attempt suicide (Ahrens et al., 2008; Ullman, 2004).

Many rape survivors also meet the criteria for a psychological disorder called **post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)**, a pattern of symptoms such as

intense fear, heightened anxiety, and emotional numbing after a traumatic event (Ahrens et al., 2008; Olff et al., 2007; Littleton & Breitkopf, 2006). A woman experiencing PTSD following a rape may report that she keeps re-experiencing the rape, either in nightmares or in thoughts intruding during daily activities. Her memories of the rape may seem vivid and emotionally intense (Ahrens et al., 2008; Schnurr & Green, 2004). However—consistent with Theme 4—individual differences are striking. For instance, many women report that they feel "more normal" within 3 months of the assault, but some women will continue to have symptoms for several years (Frieze, 2005; Ozer & Weiss, 2004).

Many women seek professional psychotherapy to reduce persistent symptoms. Controlled studies indicate that several kinds of psychotherapy are effective (Ullman, 2010). Many current approaches use components of the cognitive-behavioral approach, as discussed in Chapter 12. For example, the therapist may ask the client to gradually confront the painful memories. Then the therapist helps her manage the anxieties that arise as she creates a mental image of the traumatic event (Enns, 2004a). Group counseling can also be beneficial, because women can share their concerns with others who have survived similar experiences (Funderburk, 2001).

Some women who are raped manage to transform their terrifying experience in a way that makes them stronger, more determined, and more resilient (Ahrens et al., 2008; Slater et al., 2003; Ullman, 2010). Many survivors choose to speak out against violence—for example, at a forum on a college campus. As Funderburk (2001) wrote:

> Besides being a therapeutic experience in its own right, speaking out helps transform self-blame to anger and can galvanize the campus to making a commitment to social change through education and awareness. (Funderburk, 2001, p. 278)

Fear of Rape

So far, our discussion of rape has focused on women who have been raped. However, we also need to consider that all women suffer because of the threat of rape (Beneke, 1997; Rozee, 2008). Young girls and elderly women can be raped. Furthermore, many women are raped in the "safety" of their own homes—the one location where they are supposed to feel most secure.

Surveys in both the United States and Canada confirm women's fear of rape and perceived danger (Frieze, 2005; M. B. Harris & Miller, 2000; Statistics Canada, 2000). Men are often astonished to learn about the large number of safety measures that women employ to avoid being raped (Rozee, 2008). One problem is that women take numerous precautions against rape by a stranger but they take significantly fewer precautions to avoid rape by an acquaintance, even though they correctly acknowledge that acquaintance rape is more common (Rozee, 2008).

Fear of rape controls women's behavior and restricts what they can do, no matter where they live. I teach at a college located in a small village in upstate New York farmland. Nevertheless, my female students do not feel safe if they are alone at night. Sadly, the fear of rape drastically reduces women's sense of freedom and power (Rozee, 2008).

DEMONSTRATION 13.3

Assigning Responsibility for Rape

Read the first scenario in this demonstration. Then decide who is responsible for the occurrence of the rape, John or Jane. If you believe that John is entirely responsible, assign a value of 100% to the John column and 0% to the Jane column. If they are both equally responsible, assign a value of 50% to each one. If Jane is entirely responsible, assign a value of 0% to the John column and 100% to the Jane column. Use any values between 0% and 100%, as long as the two values sum to 100. To make the situations comparable, assume that both John and Jane are college students in all five scenarios. After completing the first scenario, read and evaluate each subsequent one.

John	Jane	
_____	_____	1. Jane is walking back to her dorm from the library at 9:00 p.m., taking a route that everyone considers safe. As she passes the science building, John leaps out, knocks her down, drags her to an unlit area, and rapes her.
_____	_____	2. Jane is at a party, where she meets a pleasant-looking student named John. After dancing for a while, he suggests they go outside to cool off. No one else is outside. John knocks her down, drags her to an unlit area, and rapes her.
_____	_____	3. Jane is at a party, and she is wearing a very short skirt. She meets a pleasant-looking student named John. After dancing for a while, he suggests they go outside to cool off. No one else is outside. John knocks her down, drags her to an unlit area, and rapes her.
_____	_____	4. Jane is on a first date with John, whom she knows slightly from her history class. After a movie, they go out for an elegant late-night meal. They decide to split the cost of both the movie and the meal. In the car on the way home, John stops in a secluded area. Jane tries to escape once she realizes what is happening. However, John is much larger than she is, and he pins her down and rapes her.

(continues)

Demonstration 13.3 ***(continued)***

_____ _____ 5. Jane is on a first date with John, whom she knows slightly from her history class. After the movie, they go out for an elegant late-night meal. John pays for the cost of both the movie and the meal. In the car on the way home, John stops in a secluded area. Jane tries to escape once she realizes what is happening. However, John is much larger than she is, and he holds her down and rapes her.

The Public's Attitudes About Rape

Before you read further, try Demonstration 13.3 above, which examines your own perspectives on rape.

Women who are raped are often doubly victimized, first by the assailant and later by the attitudes of other people (R. Campbell & Raja, 2005; J. W. White & Frabutt, 2006; Ullman, 2010). The survivor may find that her own family, her friends, the court system, and society all tend to blame her and treat her negatively because of something that was not her fault. These responses are particularly damaging at a time when she needs help and compassion. In fact, this "second victimization" increases the likelihood that a woman will develop post-traumatic stress disorder (R. Campbell & Raja, 2005).

The legal system's treatment of rape is mostly beyond the scope of this book. However, we hear numerous reports of injustice and mistreatment. For example, a New York City judge recommended leniency for a man who had forcibly sodomized a woman who had cognitive disabilities. Astonishingly, the judge said, "there was no violence here" (Rhode, 1997, p. 122).

People differ in their attitudes about rape. For instance, people with traditional gender roles place a greater proportion of the blame on the woman who has been raped (A. J. Lambert & Raichle, 2000; Simonson & Subich, 1999).

The research also shows that men are somewhat more likely than women to blame the woman who has been raped (Emmers-Sommer et al., 2005; W. H. George & Martínez, 2002). For example, Alan J. Lambert and Katherine Raichle (2000) asked students at a Midwestern university to read an acquaintance rape scenario in which students named Bill and Donna begin talking at a party and then go to her apartment. They undress. Then Donna says she does not want to have sex. However, Bill continues, despite her frequent pleading for him to stop. Participants were asked how much they thought

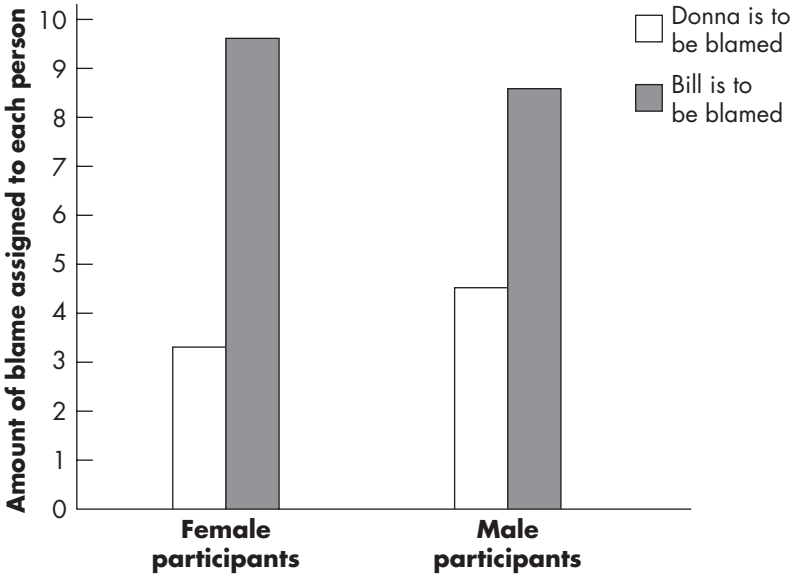

FIGURE **13.1** Responses to an acquaintance rape scenario, as a function of the participant's gender. (Note: 0 = Not at all to be blamed; 10 = very much to be blamed.)

Source: Based on A. J. Lambert and Raichle (2000).

each person could be blamed for what happened. As Figure 13.1 shows, males are somewhat more likely than females to blame Donna.

People's attitudes about rape also depend on the circumstances surrounding the assault. For instance, college students are more likely to blame a woman for a sexual assault if she was verbally coerced, rather than physically forced (Katz et al., 2007).

Furthermore, people are much more likely to blame the woman who has been raped in an acquaintance rape, rather than in a stranger rape (L. A. Morris, 1997; Wallace, 1999). Compare your answers to the first and second scenario in Demonstration 13.3 on page 432. In the first scenario, did you assign all (or almost all) of the blame to John? Did you shift the blame somewhat when Jane had known John for perhaps 30 minutes?

Next look at your response for scenario 3, in which Jane was wearing a short skirt. People are likely to hold a woman more responsible for a rape if she is wearing a short skirt, rather than more conservative clothing (Workman & Freeburg, 1999).

Now see whether your assignment of blame differed for Scenarios 4 and 5. In general, people are more likely to hold a woman responsible for a rape if the man paid for the date (Ahrens et al., 2008; L. A. Morris, 1997; Parrot, 1999). Let's say that the evening cost $100. In Scenario 4, they therefore each paid $50. In Scenario 5, John paid $100. If John pays $50 extra, does he have the right to rape Jane?

Myths About Rape

Numerous myths about rape, rapists, and survivors help to shape the kind of attitudes that we have just examined. As you might imagine, these rape myths can intensify the anguish of a woman who has been raped. Here are four of the more common myths:

Myth 1: Rapists are strangers—that is, people unknown to the victim. We noted earlier that about 85% of rapes are committed by acquaintances (Koss, 2003). However, the percentage may be even higher because women are less likely to report a rape that was committed by a person they know (Z. D. Peterson & Muehlenhard, 2004). Furthermore, if a woman is raped by a former sexual partner, many people believe that it doesn't actually count as a "real rape" (Krahé et al., 2007; Temkin & Krahé, 2008).

Myth 2: Women ask to be raped; they could avoid rape if they wanted to. Some people believe that women invite rape (Frieze, 2005; Matsakis, 2003; Ullman, 2010). Many videogames feature women who invite sexual assault (Dill, 2009). Furthermore, students believe that a woman is asking for rape if she is wearing "suggestive" clothing (Maurer & Robinson, 2008).

In addition, advertisements sometimes glamorize rape. For example, one perfume ad that appeared in several teen magazines included a photo of a very young woman. The message that accompanied the photo said, "Apply generously to your neck so he can smell the scent as you shake your head 'no'" (Kilbourne, 1999, p. 213).

Myth 3: Women who consent to sexual intercourse often claim—later on—that they were raped. Basically, this myth suggests that women don't mind telling a lie and getting men in trouble (DeMarni Cromer & Freyd, 2007; Kahlor & Morrison, 2007; Temkin & Krahé, 2008). As one male college student commented, "Women have the ability to call rape just because they weren't sure if they should have sex" (Clark & Carroll, 2008, p. 624). According to this myth, unless a woman genuinely struggles, she is basically saying "yes" to intercourse (Clark & Carroll, 2008). Kahlor and Morrison (2007) found that politically conservative college women were especially likely to endorse this myth.

Myth 4: Pornography has no effect on men's likelihood to rape. According to research, this myth is false. In fact, pornography that emphasizes violence can definitely be harmful. It can increase men's likelihood of sexual assault, as well as other forms of violence (B. A. Scott, 2008; J. W. White & Frabutt, 2006). Pornography seems to be especially dangerous for men who are high in hostility and high in promiscuity (Malamuth, 1998). Pornography can also provide men with "rape scripts," to show them specific techniques for sexual assault (Bourke, 2007).

Pornography is clearly a complex social, moral, and legal issue (B. A. Scott, 2008; J. W. White & Frabutt, 2006). However, pornography is not simply an innocent form of entertainment.

Child Sexual Abuse

So far, we have focused on the sexual abuse of college-age adolescents, as well as adult women. We also need to discuss **child sexual abuse**, which

occurs when an adult engages a child in any kind of sexual contact; this contact includes sexual touching, stimulation of the genitals, and intercourse.

Child sexual abuse is one of the most devastating forms of sexual violence. For example, when a girl named Sashima was 9 years old, her mother's boyfriend moved into their house. At first, the boyfriend began by checking on Sashima during the night and caressing her body. After several episodes, he began to touch her breasts and genitals, telling her constantly how much he loved her. He then attempted to have sexual intercourse with her. With the help of a concerned teacher, Sashima reported the events to child protective services. The mother's boyfriend was later arrested (O. Barnett et al., 2005).

Child sexual abuse is particularly cruel because, in most cases, children are abused by relatives, neighbors, and caretakers (Freyd et al., 2005). These abusers are the very individuals who should be protecting them, nurturing them, and acting in their best interests.

The incidence of child sexual abuse depends on the precise definition of the term. Estimations are also difficult because only a fraction of the cases are reported (O. Barnett et al., 2005; Frieze, 2005; Ullman, 2010).

In the past few years, we've learned that numerous young boys have been sexually assaulted by trusted adult males. However, the overall assault rates are typically higher for young girls (Ward & Lundberg-Love, 2006). In fact, estimates suggest that about 15% to 30% of all females in the United States and Canada had experienced some form of child sexual abuse by the time they were 18 years old (O. Barnett et al., 2005; Herrera et al., 2006; Lemieux & Byers, 2008; Olio, 2004). According to the research, ethnicity does not have a consistent effect on the rate of child sexual abuse (Doll et al., 2004).

Incest is a specific kind of child sexual abuse; again, the definitions vary. One accepted definition is that **incest** refers to sexual contact between biologically related individuals; this contact includes sexual touching, stimulation of the genitals, or intercourse. (Frieze, 2005). Unfortunately, relatives commit a large proportion of child sexual abuse incidents—including rape (Olafson, 2004).

Sexual abuse can profoundly affect a child, both immediately and over the long term. The immediate psychological consequences of child sexual abuse include fear, anger, depression, betrayal, and guilt. Nightmares and other sleep disturbances are also common. As you might expect, many victims also stop trusting other people (Slater et al., 2003; Ullman, 2010; Ward & Lundgren-Love, 2006).

The long-term consequences of child sexual abuse may include posttraumatic stress disorder, which we discussed on page 430 (Stern, 2010). Other common symptoms include depression, anxiety disorders, eating disorders, substance abuse, sexual dysfunction, and risky sexual behavior (Black et al., 2009; Lemieux & Byers, 2008; Ward & Lundgren-Love, 2006). Child sexual abuse also affects the long-term physical health of adult women (O. Barnett et al., 2005; Herrera et al., 2006; Zurbriggen & Freyd, 2004).

Some children who have been sexually abused may forget their memory of that experience, especially if the abuser was a close relative or other trusted adult. However, they may recover that memory when a later event triggers recall (L. S. Brown, 2008; DeMarni Cromer & Freyd, 2007; Freyd et al., 2005; Stern, 2010). In other cases, people may "remember" events that never

really happened during their childhood. This is known as "false memory" and is especially likely if the event is plausible (Brainerd & Reyna, 2005; Loftus et al., 2008; McNally, 2003).

One major problem is that we cannot easily determine whether a memory of childhood abuse is accurate. Children are abused in private settings without witnesses. Also, we cannot conduct research about child sexual abuse in a fashion that is both realistic and ethical. Most psychologists in the United States and Canada acknowledge the complexity of these issues. They argue that both recovered memory and false memory can occur (e.g., Enns, 2004b; Frieze, 2005).

The Prevention of Sexual Assault and Rape

We've examined several important characteristics of rape; what can people do to prevent it? Rape prevention is an issue both for individual women and for our entire society. Table 13.1 lists some precautions that individual women can take; it is based on much longer lists in several resources. More than 1,100 different rape-prevention strategies have been listed, and the advice is often confusing and conflicting (Corcoran & Mahlstedt, 1999; Fischhoff, 1992). Furthermore, no specific set of guidelines can prevent rape, although some strategies may reduce the dangers (Gidycz et al., 2006). Let's first consider how women can help prevent rape by strangers and next examine strategies for preventing acquaintance rape. Then we'll discuss how society can work to prevent rape.

Individuals' Prevention of Rape by Strangers

An important issue can be called the "blame-the-victim problem." Notice that many of the items in Table 13.1 will force women to limit their own freedom. For instance, women should not hitchhike or walk in unlighted areas. Why should women—the potential victims—be the ones who have to restrict their behavior? This complaint cannot be answered satisfactorily (Koss, 2003; Rozee, 2008). The situation definitely *is* unjust. However, the reality is that rape is less likely if women take these precautions. This injustice also emphasizes that the real solutions would require changes in society, rather than modifying only a woman's personal behavior.

The research also shows that women significantly reduce their chances of being raped if they try to block, push, or incapacitate their assailants. Women who fight back are also likely to recover their psychological well-being more rapidly (Crooks & Baur, 2008; Gavey, 2005; Rozee, 2005).

Resources on rape avoidance also recommend training in self-defense, especially because self-defense affords women greater empowerment and personal competence (Crooks & Baur, 2008; Gidycz et al., 2006; Ullman, 2010). In a rape situation, a woman must quickly assess the specific situation, as well as her own physical strength, before deciding whether to resist. However, even if a woman is raped, *it is never her fault.*

Individuals' Prevention of Acquaintance Rape

Women may feel comforted to think that they can protect themselves from rape by locking their doors and avoiding late-night walks in dangerous areas.

TABLE 13.1
Safety Precautions to Avoid a Rape Confrontation with a Stranger

Note: Read the section on individuals' prevention of rape by strangers (page 437) before you look at the following information.

General Precautions

1. Before an emergency arises, locate the nearest Rape Crisis Center or similar organization to obtain material on rape prevention.
2. If you have a cell phone, take it with you when you are alone.
3. Make certain that your consumption of alcohol or other drugs does not endanger your alertness. When women use drugs or alcohol before a rape attack, they typically experience more severe bodily injury.
4. Take a self-defense course, and learn the vulnerable body parts of a potential attacker.
5. If you are attacked, do not be afraid to be rude. Instead, yell loudly and throw any available object at the attacker.
6. Women should avoid hitchhiking, and they should try to avoid walking in unlighted areas.

Precautions at Home

1. Make certain to use secure locks on doors and windows.
2. Ask repairmen and deliverymen for identification before you open the door; do not let strangers inside your home to use your phone.
3. If you live in an apartment, don't enter the elevator with a male stranger, and don't enter a deserted basement or laundry room. Insist that the apartment manager keep hallways, entrances, and grounds well lit.

Precautions on the Street

1. When you are walking, walk purposefully; make it clear that you know your destination. Be alert to your surroundings.
2. Avoid being alone on the streets or on campus late at night. If you cannot avoid being alone, carry a whistle that will make a loud noise or a "practical" weapon such as an umbrella, a pen, or keys.
3. If a car is following you, quickly turn around and then walk in the opposite direction to the nearest open store or neighbor.

Precautions in Cars and on Buses or Subways

1. Keep car doors locked, even when you are riding.
2. Keep your gas tank filled and the car in good working order. If you have car trouble, call 911 or another emergency number.
3. If you are being followed while driving, don't pull into your own driveway. Instead, drive to the nearest police or fire station and honk your horn.
4. At bus or subway stations, stay in well-lit sections, near change booths or near a group of people.

Sources: Based on L. L. Alexander et al. (2004), Boston Women's Health Book Collective (2005), Crooks and Baur (2008), Parrot (1999), Rozee (2005), and Ullman (2010)

However, they also need to protect themselves from the more frequent problem: being raped by someone they know (Messman-Moore & Brown, 2006).

Unfortunately, women must use a different set of strategies to protect themselves from an acquaintance rape (Rozee, 2005). One precaution is to avoid a relationship with a man who talks negatively about women in general or with a domineering man who insults you and ignores what you say. These men are likely to ignore your refusals if you say you do not want to have sex (Adams-Curtis & Forbes, 2004; Crooks & Baur, 2008).

Some precautions on dating safety may sound obvious, but they can decrease the chances of acquaintance rape. When you are just getting to know someone, go to public places with a group of people. If possible, agree in advance that everyone will leave together at the end of the event. Limit your alcohol intake, and make sure that no one can slip a drug into your drink (Boston Women's Health Book Collective, 2005; Crooks & Baur, 2008). Also, take some time to think about a backup plan *before* a situation becomes threatening. What would your options be? Throughout a relationship, communicate with your dating partner about any sexual activities that seem appropriate or inappropriate (Abbey, 2002; Kennett et al., 2009).

In the previous section, we discussed effective ways of preventing rape by strangers. When the attacker is an acquaintance, he may respond to verbal assertiveness. For example, a woman can shout something such as, "Stop it right now! This is rape, and I'm calling the police!" Screaming or running away may also be effective.

In an ideal world, women could trust their dates, their classmates, and their friends. In the real world, the clear majority of men would never rape an acquaintance. However, some do, and women must be prepared for this possibility.

Society's Prevention of Rape

An individual may avoid rape by following certain precautions. However, solutions at the individual level mean that women will continue to live in fear of being raped (Rozee, 2008). To prevent rape, we need to take a broader approach, encouraging people to value women and men equally. We must acknowledge that a violent society—which often devalues women—will tend to encourage rape (O. Barnett et al., 2005; Frieze, 2005; Ullman, 2010). Our list starts with concrete suggestions and then considers some problems that require more fundamental changes (Boston Women's Health Book Collective, 2005; Kaufman & the Committee on Adolescence; Rozee, 2005; Temkin & Krahé, 2008; Ullman, 2010):

1. Professionals who work with children and adolescents must be alert for evidence of sexual abuse.
2. Hospitals and medical providers should be sensitive to the emotional and physical needs of girls and women who have been raped.
3. Laws must be reformed so that the legal process is less stressful, less likely to blame the victim, and more supportive of the victim.
4. Education about rape needs to be improved, beginning in middle school (Anderson & Whiston, 2005; Konradi, 2007; Temkin & Krahé, 2008).

Students need this information when they are young because they typically form their attitudes toward rape before they reach high school. To be effective, these rape-prevention programs must continue throughout high school and college. They must emphasize that men *can* control their sexual impulses and that women must not be blamed for rape (L. A. Anderson & Whiston, 2005). These programs must also emphasize the relatively high frequency of acquaintance rape (Messman-Moore & Brown, 2006).

5. Men's groups must become more involved in rape prevention (Louwagie, 2008). On some college campuses, fraternities will join together with campus women's groups to organize a sexual-assault awareness day or a "Take Back the Night" event (Abbey & McAuslan, 2004; Marine, 2004; Ullman, 2010). Men and men's organizations need to emphasize this important quotation: "If you're not part of the solution, you're part of the problem." Programs focusing on men have also been created in India, Brazil, and Cambodia (The Population Council, 2008; Tarrant, 2009).
6. Violence must be less glorified in the media. We now recognize that there is violence on the Internet, as well as violence in films, video games, television programs, and popular music. This violence is widely recognized, yet the situation has not improved in recent years (Dill et al., 2005; Escobar-Chaves et al., 2005; Rozee, 2008; Ullman, 2010). We must emphasize that violent "entertainment" encourages aggression against women.
7. Rape crisis centers need to receive more funding, so that they can provide much more extensive education in our communities (Ullman, 2010).
8. Ultimately, our society must direct more attention toward the needs of women. As we've emphasized throughout this book, women are relatively underpaid, powerless, and invisible. Their needs are often trivialized and ignored. Every woman should be able to feel that her body is safe from attack and that she has the same freedom of movement that men have. Our culture must not tolerate violence toward women.

SECTION SUMMARY

Sexual Assault and Rape

1. Rape is more common in cultures where women have relatively little power; invading soldiers have systematically raped women during wartime.
2. According to U.S. and Canadian estimates, between 15% and 30% of women have been raped at some point during their lives.
3. Frequently, women who have been raped by an acquaintance do not consider the assault to be a "real" rape. Some instances of acquaintance rape can be traced to misinterpretations of sexual interest.
4. Alcohol and other drugs increase the likelihood of sexual assault.

(continues)

SECTION SUMMARY *(continued)*

5. Women who have been raped report that, during the assault, they felt terrified, confused, and overwhelmed. Afterward, they often feel helpless and devalued. Long-term consequences for a rape survivor may include post-traumatic stress disorder and physical health problems, although individual differences are substantial.
6. Because of the threat of rape, many women feel unsafe, and they restrict their activities.
7. A woman who has been raped may be blamed by her family, the legal system, and the general public; people's attitudes about rape depend on factors such as gender, and whether a stranger or an acquaintance raped the woman.
8. Some widely held ideas about rape are not consistent with the research findings. In reality, rapists are often acquaintances; women do not "ask" to be raped; women are not likely to lie about being raped; and pornography can increase the incidence of rape.
9. Child sexual abuse has both immediate and long-term effects on mental and physical health; some memories of child sexual abuse can be forgotten and then recovered later, but some adults may construct false memories of abuse that did not occur.
10. Safety precautions that may prevent rape by a stranger typically limit women's freedom at home and in public places; however, it is important not to blame the person who has been raped.
11. Precautions for reducing the likelihood of acquaintance rape include avoiding men who downgrade women; dating in groups at the beginning of a relationship; and being verbally assertive.
12. Ultimately, the number of rapes can be reduced only by greater societal attention to women's needs. The issues include increasing the sensitivity of relevant professionals, educating students, and encouraging men to become more active.
13. The media must reduce their emphasis on violence, and women's issues must receive more attention.

THE ABUSE OF WOMEN

Consider the following passage, in which a woman described how her husband had abused her:

> Little by little, he isolated me from my friends, he convinced me to quit working, he complained about how I kept the house, he kept track of the mileage on the car to make sure that I wasn't going anywhere. Eventually, when the beatings were regular and severe, I had no one to turn to, and I felt completely alone. (Boston Women's Health Book Collective, 2005)

The terms **abuse of women** and **intimate partner violence** refer to intentional acts that injure someone; these acts include physical, psychological, and sexual abuse. (We discussed sexual abuse in the previous section.) These two terms are broader than many similar terms. For example, the term *domestic violence* implies that two people are living together. Therefore, this term seems to exclude the kind of violence that often occurs in dating relationships, including high school and college students (Roberts, 2007; J. W. White & Frabutt, 2006). A second term, *battered women,* also implies *physical* abuse (J. W. White et al., 2001). However, many women who have been abused report that the emotional abuse is the most destructive component of the abusive relationship (Offman & Matheson, 2004; K. D. O'Leary & Maiuro, 2001).

Physical abuse can include hitting, kicking, burning, pushing, choking, throwing objects, and using a weapon. Emotional abuse can include humiliation, name calling, intimidation, extreme jealousy, refusal to speak, and isolating someone from friends and family members (D. A. Hines & Malley-Morrison, 2005; Stahly, 2008; Straus, 2005). Another form of emotional abuse focuses on finances, for example, when a man withholds money or destroys his wife's credit cards (Castañeda & Burns-Glover, 2004; Mandel, 2009). It is important to know that—in a substantial percentage of intimate relationships—men sexually assault their female partner, in addition to using other forms of violence (J. Katz et al., 2008).

Because of space limitations, in this section we will focus on male violence against females. The research demonstrates that some females abuse their male partners. However, most research shows that men abuse their female partners more frequently and more severely (McHugh et al., 2008; Statistics Canada, 2006). For example, men are about nine times as likely as women to assault a former spouse (Loseke & Kurz, 2005). Before you read further, try Demonstration 13.4.

DEMONSTRATION 13.4

Thinking About Your Own Romantic Relationship

As you can imagine, no simple questionnaire can assess whether a relationship shows signs of abuse. However, look at the following questions and see whether they may apply to a current relationship, a previous relationship, or to a couple whom you know well.

Does your partner:

1. Make fun of you or make demeaning comments when other people are present?
2. Tell you that everything is your fault?
3. Check up on you at work or other locations, to make certain that you are at the place where you said you'd be?
4. Make you feel unsafe in the current relationship?
5. Make you feel that he (or she) would explode if you did the wrong thing?

(continues)

Demonstration 13.4 *(continued)*

6. Act very suspicious about any potential romantic relationship with another person?
7. Try to keep you from developing nonromantic friendships with other people?
8. Try to make you do things you don't want to do?
9. Criticize you frequently?
10. Decide what you will wear, eat, or buy—when you have expressed a preference for something else?
11. Threaten to hurt you?
12. Intentionally hurt you physically?

Sources: Frieze (2005), Shaw and Lee (2001), and Warshaw (2001).

We also will not examine abuse in lesbian relationships. However, other resources discuss this topic (e.g., D. A. Hines & Malley-Morrison, 2005; Peplau & Fingerhut, 2007). In addition, the items shown in Demonstration 13.4 can also apply to lesbian relationships.

How Often Does the Abuse of Women Occur?

Earlier in this chapter, we discussed the difficulty of estimating how many women experience sexual harassment and rape. Most women believe that they must not let others know that they have been abused; this silence prevents us from obtaining accurate data about violence in intimate relationships (Jiwani, 2000). According to estimates, however, about 20–35% of women in the United States and Canada will experience abuse during their lifetime (Christopher & Lloyd, 2000; Statistics Canada, 2006). To consider the statistics another way, male partners physically abuse between 1 million and 3 million U.S. women each year (Roberts, 2007; Stahly, 2008; J. W. White & Frabutt, 2006).

Between 30% and 55% of women who are treated in U.S. hospital emergency departments have injuries related to domestic violence. Furthermore, pregnancy actually increases the risk of abuse. As many as 20% of all pregnant women experience physical or sexual abuse. These kinds of abuse sometimes cause substantial birth defects (Logan et al., 2006; J. W. White & Frabutt, 2006).

According to Canadian and U.S. surveys, males abuse their girlfriends as early as elementary school, and the abuse continues through high school and college (DeKeseredy & Schwartz, 1998, 2002; Frieze, 2005; J. Katz, Carino, & Hilton, 2002). For instance, a large-scale survey of Canadian university students revealed that 31% of the women had been pushed, grabbed, or shoved by someone they were dating. Emotional abuse was even more common: 65% of the women said they had been degraded in front of friends or family, and 65% had experienced insults or swearing (DeKeseredy &

Schwartz, 1998). Many women report that the emotional abuse is worse than physical abuse (Burks, 2006).

The abuse of women is not limited to North America. The rate of abuse in European countries is similar to the North American rate (O. Barnett et al., 2005). Data gathered in Asia, Latin America, and Africa reveal even higher rates of abuse (e.g., O. Barnett et al., 2005; Ferrer, 2007; Krahé et al., 2005; Levy, 2008; Parrot & Cummings, 2006). Partner abuse is also relatively common when people emigrate from Latin America or Asia to North America (Green & Viani, 2007; Lee & Au, 2007).

Throughout the world, women are especially likely to experience abuse in the turmoil of a war or a natural disaster, such as the tsunami that hit southern Asia in 2004. As one woman said, "The silence regarding violence against women is louder than the tsunami waves" (Chew, 2005, p. 1).

In many countries, more than half of adult women reported that a partner had physically assaulted them. For example, an interviewer asked a man in South Korea if he had beaten his wife. He replied:

> I was married at 28, and I'm 52 now. How could I have been married all these years and not beaten my wife? … For me, it's better to release that anger and get it over with. Otherwise, I just get sick inside. (Kristof, 1996, p. 17A)

Notice how this man felt entitled to batter his wife (Stahly, 2008). He never considered whether the abuse was also better for his wife.

Women's Reactions to Abuse

As you might expect, women typically react to abuse with fear, depression, and mistrust. Women who have been abused may be hyper-alert, searching for signs that their partner may be ready to strike again (Martz & Saraurer, 2002; Statistics Canada, 2006). Understandably, women in long-term violent relationships report that they are dissatisfied with these relationships (S. L. Williams & Frieze, 2005). Women who have been abused typically feel anxious, isolated, and low in self-esteem. Many abused women also develop depression (Stahly, 2008; Stark, 2009).

Abused women also experience many problems with their physical health. Women may suffer from bruises, cuts, burns, broken bones, bullet wounds, and brain damage as a direct result of an assault (Chrisler & Ferguson, 2006; Stark, 2009). Abusers may even prevent women from seeking medical care. Many months afterward, women may still experience headaches, sleep disturbances, extreme fatigue, abdominal pain, pelvic pain, gynecological problems, and other chronic disorders (O. Barnett et al., 2005; Logan et al., 2006). Naturally, these physical problems may intensify their psychological problems. These physical problems may also prevent women from going to work, resulting in numerous additional problems (Mighty, 2004; Riger et al., 2004).

Characteristics Related to Abusive Relationships

Researchers have examined several factors related to the abuse of women. For example, some family characteristics may be associated with abuse. In

addition, certain personal attributes are especially common among men who abuse their partners.

Family Variables Associated with Abuse

Reported abuse is somewhat more common among low-income families, although the relationship between abuse and social class is complex (Logan et al., 2006; Marmion & Faulkner, 2006; Stahly, 2008). Furthermore, high-income families might be less likely to report abuse. It's clear, however, that no woman is immune. For example, a female professor at a prestigious college described her own experiences, when she was married to a well-educated man who was verbally and physically abusive for 12 years. When she finally left her husband, he committed suicide (Bates, 2005).

The relationship between ethnicity and family violence is both complex and inconsistent (Flores-Ortiz, 2004; Logan et al., 2006). For instance, Statistics Canada (2006) noted that Aboriginal/First Nations women are three times as likely as other Canadian women to report domestic violence. In the United States, American Indian/Native American women provided higher estimates of domestic violence for their ethnic group, compared to estimates from European Americans (Tehee & Willis Esqueda, 2008). However, many analyses do not take social class into account, and we have just seen that social class is somewhat related to patterns of abuse.

In contrast, the number of reported cases of domestic abuse is relatively low in Asian American communities (O. Barnett et al., 2005; Marmion & Faulkner, 2006). One reason may be that Asian American families are extremely reluctant to let anyone outside the immediate family know about domestic problems (McHugh & Bartoszek, 2000). According to Asian American researchers, many Asian cultures believe that women should accept their suffering and endure their hardships. This value system would discourage women from reporting domestic violence (G. C. N. Hall, 2002; Tran & Des Jardins, 2000).

Personal Characteristics of Male Abusers

One of the most commonly reported characteristics of male abusers is that they feel they are entitled to hurt their partners. From their egocentric perspective, their own needs come first (Kilmartin & Allison, 2007; Stahly, 2008). A good example of this male entitlement perspective is the Korean man who felt he was better off releasing his anger by beating his wife (p. 444).

Abusers are also likely to believe that the male should be the head of the family, along with other traditional concepts about gender roles (D. A. Hines & Malley-Morrison, 2005; Stark, 2009). Not surprisingly, abusers have more positive attitudes toward physical and verbal aggression, compared to men who are not abusers (D. A. Hines & Malley-Morrison, 2005; J. W. White & Frabutt, 2006). Furthermore, abusers are more likely than nonabusers to have witnessed family violence during childhood (Cares, 2009; Kilmartin & Allison, 2007; Stark, 2009).

Situational factors also increase the likelihood of partner abuse. For example, men who are unemployed have a relatively high rate of domestic violence (Frieze, 2005; Marin & Russo, 1999). Men who have served in the

Armed Forces in a war zone are especially likely to abuse their partner (Alvarez, 2008).

Research also suggests that males who have a drinking problem are more likely to abuse women (D. A. Hines & Malley-Morrison, 2005; J. W. White & Frabutt, 2006). It's possible that alcohol plays an important role because it affects judgment and other cognitive processes. However, alcohol may not directly *cause* violence. For instance, some men simply use alcohol as an excuse for their violence (Gelles & Cavanaugh, 2005; Roberts, 2007). A man might try to justify his violence by saying, "I don't know what got into me. It must have been the liquor."

The Public's Attitudes About the Abuse of Women

In earlier chapters, we discussed the negative impact of the media on such issues as children's beliefs about gender, as well as adults' gender stereotypes and body images. In contrast, North American research suggests that the media have had a generally positive impact on knowledge about domestic violence (Goldfarb, 2005; Rapoza, 2004). For example, 93% of U.S. residents in a nationwide survey said that they had learned from media coverage that domestic violence is a serious problem (E. Klein et al., 1997). We should be pleased when feminist educational efforts combine with the media and legal reform to change societal attitudes (Frieze, 2005; C. M. Sullivan, 2006; Yllö, 2005). In a Canadian public opinion survey, for instance, 77% of the respondents said that the prevention of family violence should be an important priority for the federal government (Dookie, 2004).

In general, women are more likely than men to have negative attitudes toward the abuse of women. In contrast, men are more likely than women to say that a woman must have done something to deserve the punishment (Frieze, 2005; D. A. Hines & Malley-Morrison, 2005).

A study by Nayak and her colleagues (2003) assessed attitudes toward men who physically abuse their wives. These researchers gathered data from college classrooms in four countries: the United States, India, Japan, and Kuwait. (Kuwait is a Middle Eastern country where women could not vote at the time this study was conducted.)

Figure 13.2 shows the students' tendency to believe that wives deserve to be physically abused. Consistent with the other research, the women in each country were less likely than the men to believe that wives deserved abuse. Furthermore, students in the United States were less likely than students in the other three countries to endorse abuse. However, are the cross-national differences as large as you would have expected?

Myths About the Abuse of Women

We have already discussed the evidence against several commonly accepted myths about the abuse of women. For example, each of the following four myths is *not correct* because the research *contradicts* these myths:

Myth 1: Abuse is rare.
Myth 2: Men experience as much abuse as women.
Myth 3: Abuse is limited to the lower social classes.

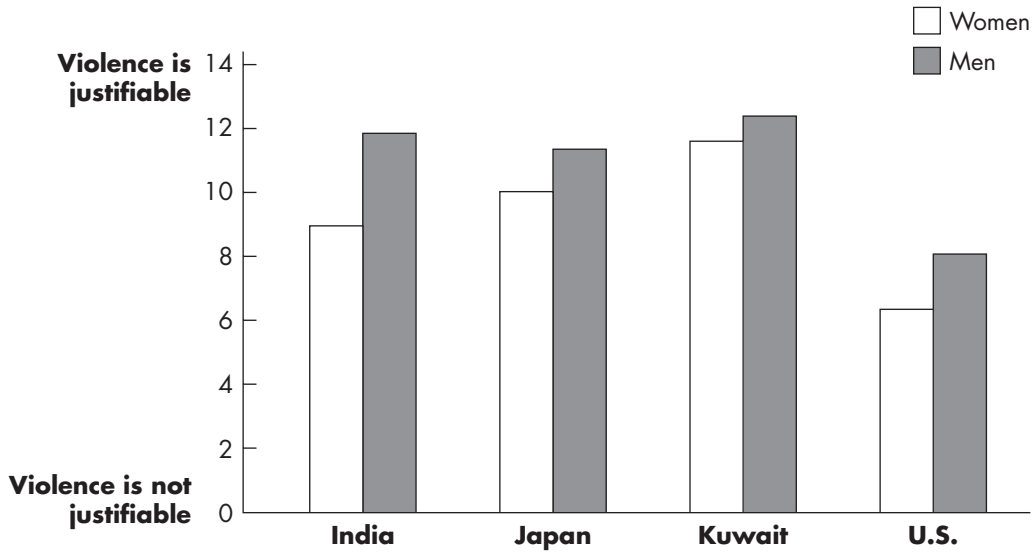

FIGURE **13.2** College students' attitudes about whether a man's physical violence toward his wife is justifiable, as a function of gender and country of residence. (Note: High scores = violence is justifiable; low scores = violence is not justifiable.)

Source: From M. B. Nayak et al. (2003).

Myth 4: Abuse is much more common among ethnic minority groups than among European Americans.

Let's examine two other myths. In each case, think how the myth encourages people to blame women for being abused.

Myth 5: Abused women deserve to be beaten and humiliated. According to this myth, when a woman oversteps the boundaries of a proper girlfriend or wife, she ought to be beaten. In other words, people may blame the woman's behavior, not the man's response (O. Barnett et al., 2005; Grothues & Marmion, 2006; Stahly, 2008). A student in my psychology of women course related an incident in which she had described a wife-abuse case to a group of friends. Specifically, a husband had seriously injured his wife because dinner was not ready as soon as he came home from work. A male friend in this student's group—whom my student had previously considered enlightened about feminism—responded, "Yes, but she really should have prepared dinner on time."

Myth 6: Abused women could easily leave, if they really wanted to. This myth ignores both the interpersonal factors and the practical factors that prevent a woman from leaving a relationship. An abused woman may sincerely believe that her boyfriend or husband is basically a good man who can be reformed (Frieze, 2005; Stahly, 2008).

Many abused women also face practical barriers. A woman may have no place to go, no money, and no way of escaping (O. Barnett et al., 2005; Frieze, 2005).

Another important concern is that the abuser may threaten to retaliate if she leaves. In fact, the research shows that the majority of abusers become even more violent after a woman has moved out of the home (Grothues & Marmion, 2006; D. A. Hines & Malley-Morrison, 2005; Stahly, 2008).

Reducing Intimate Partner Violence

Some women remain in abusive relationships, and some may seek support from family members or friends. A woman's strategies for handling abuse depend on her family background. For example, some families emphasize persevering in unpleasant situations and hiding domestic problems (O. Barnett et al., 2005). Community members and religious leaders may oppose the breakup of a marriage (McCallum & Lauzon, 2005). In these circumstances, women are less likely to leave an abusive relationship.

Beginning in the 1970s, the U.S. criminal justice system began prosecuting abuse cases and requiring the abusers to attend "batterer intervention programs." Currently, there are approximately 2000 programs nationwide that focus on the abuser. Some useful resources are available (e.g., Wexler, 2006); however, there has been little systematic research on their effectiveness (Maxwell et al., 2009; Rosenbaum & Kunkel, 2009).

An abusive relationship seldom improves spontaneously. What options does a woman have for herself? We'll discuss three of them: (1) therapy; (2) using services in the community, such as a shelter for abused women; and (3) leaving the relationship.

Therapy

Women often seek the services of therapists, who are usually aware that society's attitudes can encourage the abuse of women. Ideally, therapists who work with abused women will adopt a feminist-therapy approach (see pp. 411–412). Therapists should respect a woman's strengths and difficulties. They should also help women think about themselves with compassion, rather than with criticism. Like other forms of women-centered therapy, this approach empowers women to pursue their own goals, rather than simply focusing on other people's needs (Frieze, 2005; Logan et al., 2006).

Consider the feminist-therapy approach that Rinfret-Raynor and Cantin (1997) used in working with French Canadian women who were abused and who had decided to remain in the relationship. A major message throughout therapy was that the abuser, not the victim, is responsible for the violence. The therapists also worked to increase the women's self-esteem and sense of independence. Compared to women who had received standard nonsexist therapy, the women who had received feminist therapy experienced a greater decrease in physical violence.

Psychotherapists acknowledge that there is no "one-size-fits-all" approach to therapy for partner abuse. However, cognitive-behavioral therapy is often an effective approach (see p. 410). In some cases, group therapy can also be helpful (Murphy et al., 2009). However, in many cases, even the most competent therapist cannot reduce the overall level of physical or psychological violence in an abusive relationship.

Services for Abused Women

Most communities in North America provide services for women who have been abused. Some communities also have shelters where an abused woman and her children can go for safety, support, and information about social services available locally. Many shelters also offer counseling services and support groups for the residents (O. Barnett et al., 2005; C. M. Sullivan, 2006). On a typical day in 2007, for example, 25,321 women were living in a U.S. shelter for abused women (DeBare, 2009).

Canada currently has about 500 shelters that focus on domestic violence (Statistics Canada, 2006). The United States—with about nine times the population of Canada—currently has only about 2,000 shelters (D. A. Hines & Malley-Morrison, 2005).

Unfortunately, these shelters operate on extremely limited budgets, and we need hundreds of additional shelters throughout North America. Thousands of women are turned away each year from shelters that are filled to capacity (Marmion, 2006). Many of these women become homeless (Toro, 2007). Others return to their homes, where they risk being beaten once again.

Ironically, as of February 13, 2011, the U.S. government had spent more than $774 billion on the Iraq War (National Priorities Project, 2011), even though Iraq was not responsible for the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Meanwhile, the government is decreasing its funding for abused women's shelters and other relevant services, so these facilities must struggle to locate funding from individuals and organizations in the community (Logan et al., 2006).

Deciding to Leave a Relationship

Many women decide that abuse is too high a price to pay for the advantages of remaining in a relationship. Many women reach a crisis point after a particularly violent episode (Lloyd & Emery, 2000). For instance, one woman decided to leave after her husband broke her ribs (Martz & Saraurer, 2002).

Some women decide to leave after they have been attacked in front of their children. For example, one woman left after her husband threatened to kill her in front of her children. Others leave after their partner breaks a promise about stopping the abuse or after they realize that the relationship will not improve (O. Barnett et al., 2005).

Unfortunately, people are so intrigued by the question, "Why do battered women stay?" that they forget to ask other important questions (Stahly, 2008). Some of these questions include "Why are violent men allowed to stay?" and "How can our society make it clear that emotional and physical abuse is not acceptable?"

Society's Response to the Problem of Abuse

In recent years, the criminal justice system and the general public have become much more aware that abuse is a serious problem. Still, government policies have no consistent plan for providing shelters, services, and assistance for abused women. These policies also do not require counseling for the abusers. Government officials and agencies must publicize the fact that abuse of any kind is unacceptable.

High schools and colleges should require anti-violence programs that address sexual assault and family violence. Programs also need to be developed for children who have witnessed family violence (Foshee et al., 2009).

Unfortunately, community organizations are often silent about the issue of abused women. Imagine what could happen if religious groups, parent-teacher associations, and service organizations (such as the Rotary Club and the Kiwanis) were to sponsor programs on domestic violence. These organizations often set the moral tone for a community, and they could send a strong message that abuse of women cannot be tolerated (Marmion, 2006).

One positive development is that physicians are now paying more attention to the issue of abused women (Kaufman & the Committee on Adolescence, 2008; Logan et al., 2006). For example, physicians are now encouraged to screen all women by telling them that partner abuse is a very important health problem, so they now ask all of their patients a few questions. This issue is especially important for physicians, because partner abuse is a major reason that women seek medical attention (Williamson, 2009). Physicians should be less likely to ignore the evidence of abuse now that a new norm of concern has been established.

Individual men can also make a difference (Kilmartin & Allison, 2007; Poling et al., 2002). For example, James Poling describes how he and two male colleagues "moved from a lack of awareness of abusive behaviors, to a period of growing awareness because of the honest sharing of women about their experiences of violence, to belief in a set of principles that opened our eyes." As a result, they incorporated anti-violence messages into the religious services that they conduct.

Concern about the abuse of women is emerging more slowly in developing countries. For instance, most countries do not offer legal protection for women who have been abused (R. J. R. Levesque, 2001). Still, some of the efforts are encouraging. On a trip to Nicaragua—a low-income country in Central America—I found several resources on violence against women. One brochure, developed for church groups in Nicaragua, debunked common myths, such as that women deserve to be mistreated, that abuse is God's will, and that abuse occurs only in lower-class couples (M. West & Fernández, 1997). A brief handbook is also available to educate health-care workers about the problem of the abuse of women (Ellsberg et al., 1998).

Ultimately, however, any attempt to solve the problem of abuse must acknowledge that the power imbalance in intimate relationships reflects the power imbalance in our society (Goldfarb, 2005; Pickup, 2001). In addition, our culture trains some men to control their intimate partners through physical and emotional abuse. Some television programs, music videos, and other media reinforce the images of men's violence toward women. We can help to counteract these attitudes by encouraging the media to provide less violent entertainment (Kimmel, 2004). We must work toward a world in which violence is not directed at women as a group in order to keep them powerless.

SECTION SUMMARY

The Abuse of Women

1. About one-quarter of women in the United States and Canada will experience abuse during their lifetime; abuse is also common in dating relationships; abuse is more likely in some regions of the world, including Asia, Latin America, and Africa.
2. Women who have been abused may feel afraid, depressed, and anxious; they also experience many physical health problems.
3. Abuse is somewhat correlated with social class, but its relationship with ethnicity is complex; male abusers typically have a sense of entitlement; unemployed men and men who have served in military war zones are at risk for abusing their partners.
4. Most North Americans consider abuse to be a serious issue; women are more likely than men to have negative attitudes about abuse, and country of residence is also related to attitudes.
5. Two additional myths about abused women—which the research does not support—are that abused women deserve to be beaten and that they could easily leave the relationship.
6. The U.S. criminal justice system is now more likely to require batterers to attend battering-intervention programs.
7. Therapy for abused women focuses on reducing self-criticism and emphasizing their own needs.
8. Shelters for abused women are helpful, but they are poorly funded; many women decide to leave an abusive relationship after they reach a specific crisis point.
9. Government policies have no uniform provisions about shelters or services for abused women; health-care providers now have better training about abuse issues.
10. As in other issues of violence, the problem of battered women requires gender equality at the societal level and reduced violence in our culture.

CHAPTER REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Throughout this chapter, we emphasized that people often blame female victims for problems that are beyond the control of these women. Describe how this process operates in sexual harassment, rape, and the abuse of women.
2. According to the introduction of this chapter, a culture that values men more than women encourages some men to feel that they are entitled to certain privileges. Explain how this sense of entitlement is relevant in sexual harassment, rape, and the abuse of women.
3. What are the two general categories of sexual harassment? Provide at least one example for each category, based on the recent media or on reports from friends. How do these examples illustrate why sexual harassment is an important issue?

4. Summarize the information about acquaintance rape and child sexual abuse. What does this information tell us about the balance of power and sexual violence in close personal relationships?
5. What are some of the common myths about sexual harassment, rape, and abuse? What do all these myths reveal about society's attitudes toward men and women?
6. In this chapter, we examined attitudes about rape and abuse. Identify any similarities that apply to both of these topics. Also, comment on gender comparisons in these attitudes and the relationship between gender roles and these attitudes.
7. What information do we have about sexual harassment, rape, and abuse, with respect to countries outside Canada and the United States? Is this information substantially different from information about violence against women in these two North American countries?
8. Imagine that you have been appointed to a national committee to address the problems of sexual harassment, rape, and abuse. What recommendations would you make for government policy, the legal system, universities, business institutions, the media, and educational programs? Provide several of your own suggestions in addition to those mentioned in this chapter.
9. According to Theme 3 of your textbook, women are less visible than men in many important areas; topics important in women's lives are also considered relatively unimportant. How often had you heard about the topics of sexual harassment, rape, and abuse before the course for which you are reading this book? What are some factors that encourage these three topics to be relatively invisible?
10. Think about a high-school female whom you know well. Imagine that she is about to go off to college. What kind of information could you supply from this chapter that would be helpful for her to know, with respect to violence against women? Now think about a high-school male whom you know. If he were preparing to go to college, what information would you supply? Provide information about how he could avoid violence against women and how he could support women who have experienced violence. (Better still, figure out how you can have an actual conversation about these topics with those individuals!)

KEY TERMS

entitlement (p. 418)
sexual harassment (p. 418)
quid pro quo harassment (p. 419)
hostile-environment harassment (p. 419)
sexual assault (p. 425)
rape (p. 425)
acquaintance rape (p. 427)
post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (p. 430)
child sexual abuse (p. 435)
incest (p. 436)
abuse of women (p. 442)
intimate partner violence (p. 442)

RECOMMENDED READINGS

Chrisler, J. C., Golden, C., & Rozee, P. D. (Eds.). (2008). *Lectures on the psychology of women* (4th ed.). Boston: McGraw-Hill. This wonderful resource book includes 24 chapters on topics relevant to women's lives. The chapters on fear of rape, pornography, and the abuse of women are particularly relevant to the current chapter.

Denmark, F. L., & Paludi, M. A. (Eds.). (2008). *Psychology of women: A handbook of issues and theories* (2nd ed.). Westport, CT: Praeger. You'll find many interesting chapters in this book. The ones on rape, intimate partner violence, and sexual harassment are especially related to violence against women.

Stark, E., & Buzawa, E. S. (Eds.). (2009). *Violence against women in families and relationships* (Volumes 1–4). Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO. This four-volume set explores such topics as victimization, the community response, the context of the family, criminal justice issues, and media representations of family violence.

Ullman, S. E. (2010). *Talking about sexual assault: Society's response to survivors.* Washington DC: American Psychological Association. I strongly recommend this book, which provides a review of the research on sexual assault, as well as Ullman's own research and quotations from women who have experienced sexual assault.

ANSWERS TO THE DEMONSTRATIONS

Demonstration 13.1: Calculate a subtotal by adding together your ratings for items 1, 4, and 6. Then calculate an overall score by subtracting the ratings that you gave for items 2, 3, and 5. If your overall score is negative, you tend to be tolerant of sexual harassment. If your overall score is positive, you are aware that sexual harassment can be a serious problem.

Demonstration 13.2: 1. False; 2. True; 3. False; 4. False; 5. True; 6. False; 7. False; 8. True; 9. False; 10. False.

ANSWERS TO THE TRUE-FALSE STATEMENTS

1. False (p. 423); 2. True (p. 421); 3. False (pp. 421–422); 4. True (p. 427); 5. True (p. 427); 6. False (p. 437); 7. False (p. 442); 8. False (p. 444); 9. True (p. 445); 10. False (p. 448).

7e

The Psychology of WOMEN

MARGARET W. MATLIN

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Four General Themes About the Psychology of Women

THEME 1 Psychological gender differences are typically small and inconsistent.

THEME 2 People react differently to men and women.

THEME 3 Women are less visible than men in many important areas.

THEME 4 Women vary widely from one another.

Pages 28 through 31 discuss the four themes in greater detail.

SEVENTH EDITION

The Psychology of Women

Margaret W. Matlin
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To the students in my Psychology of Women classes

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Margaret W. Matlin earned her bachelor's degree from Stanford University and her PhD from the University of Michigan. She holds the title of Distinguished Teaching Professor at SUNY Geneseo, where she has taught courses in the Psychology of Women for 36 years. Dr. Matlin is a well-known textbook author. In addition to *The Psychology of Women*, she is also the author of *Cognition*, 7th edition, and the coauthor (with Hugh J. Foley) of *Sensation and Perception*, 5th edition.

Dr. Matlin received the State University of New York Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching in 1977. She has also won three national teaching awards: the American Psychological Association Teaching Award for 4-year institution in 1985, the American Psychological Foundation's Distinguished Teaching Award in 1995, and the Society for the Psychology of Women's Heritage Award in 2001, for lifetime contributions to the teaching of the psychology of women. In addition, she is the editor of the Teaching the Psychology of Women articles in *The Psychology of Women Quarterly*.

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BRIEF CONTENTS

CONTENTS

PREFACE

I began writing the first edition of *Psychology of Women* in 1983. By this point, I had taught my course on the psychology of women for 9 years. Every year, I tried a different textbook. One book was too brief. Another was too psychodynamic. The third book was a collection of research articles that didn't capture women's voices.

By the early 1980s, I had written textbooks in three other areas, and I genuinely enjoyed the challenge of these large-scale projects. One of my editors then asked whether I would be interested in writing a book in some other area. The answer was easy: I wanted to write a textbook about the psychology of women. This new project was especially appealing because I had been raised in a family with a long-standing focus on social justice. My parents had lived for two years in remote regions of Mexico before I was born, and my mother later taught seventh grade in a low-income community in the San Francisco Bay Area.

One of my goals in writing the first edition of *Psychology of Women* was to demonstrate how the empirical research about women and gender often contradicts popular opinion. A second goal was to include women's descriptions of their experiences and thoughts, because my own students were especially responsive when they heard women's own words. My third goal was to create pedagogical features that would help students learn and remember the material more effectively.

These three goals are even more important in the current decade than they were in the 1980s. The amount of research about women and gender has increased dramatically. For instance, *PsycINFO* shows that about 11,300 articles were published—listing "women" or "gender" as a keyword—during the period from 1980 through 1985. In contrast, *PsycINFO* shows about 90,200 articles from 2005 through 2010 that list these same two