

CONSENTING TO UNWANTED SEXUAL ACTIVITY IN HETEROSEXUAL
RELATIONSHIPS: A SOCIOCULTURAL EXAMINATION

by

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*Abstract***Consenting to Unwanted Sexual Activity in Heterosexual Relationships: A Sociocultural Examination**

The phenomenon of consenting to unwanted sexual activity in heterosexual relationships has made a recent appearance in the empirical literature. However, studies have found that it is a relatively common occurrence. The present study reviews a definition of the concept and the reasons given for consenting to unwanted sexual activity. Three specific theories are outlined that could potentially explain the behavior: attachment theory, evolutionary theory, and the Traditional Sexual Script (TSS). Additionally, the role of sexual communication is explored. A proposed model is presented that focuses on adherence to the TSS and ability to communicate sexual preferences. This model takes into account both individual and dyadic factors, and therefore, provides a strong framework for understanding consenting to unwanted sexual activity. This model was tested in a sample of 77 heterosexual couples of college-age. The results suggest that men and women consent to unwanted sexual activity for different reasons. In the present sample, men were more likely than women to consent to unwanted sex in order to avoid negative consequences, such as conflict within the relationship. The individual and dyadic implications of this are explored. The results also suggest that the woman's level of adherence to the TSS predicts her own, as well as her partner's, consenting to unwanted sex. The ability to communicate sexual preferences moderated the association between adherence to the TSS and consenting to unwanted sex, suggesting that communication is extremely important in predicting the behavior. When an individual was able to communicate his or her sexual desires, adherence to the TSS no longer predicted consenting to unwanted sex. These data suggest that couples should work to foster strong communication skills in order to reduce the likelihood that consenting to unwanted sex will occur.

PRE

Preface

The phenomenon of consenting to unwanted sexual activity in heterosexual relationships has made a recent appearance in the empirical literature. However, studies have found that it is a relatively common occurrence. The present study reviews a definition of the concept and the reasons given for consenting to unwanted sexual activity. Three specific theories are outlined that could potentially explain the behavior: attachment theory, evolutionary theory, and the Traditional Sexual Script (TSS). Additionally, the role of sexual communication is explored. A proposed model is presented that focuses on adherence to the TSS and ability to communicate sexual preferences. This model takes into account both individual and dyadic factors, and therefore, provides a strong framework for understanding consenting to unwanted sexual activity. This model was tested in a sample of 77 heterosexual couples of college-age. In the present sample, men were more likely than women to consent to unwanted sex in order to avoid negative consequences, such as conflict within the relationship. The individual and dyadic implications of this are explored. The results also suggest that the woman's level of adherence to the TSS predicts her own, as well as her partner's, consenting to unwanted sex. The ability to communicate sexual preferences moderated the association between adherence to the TSS and consenting to unwanted sex, suggesting that communication is extremely important in predicting the behavior. When an individual was able to communicate his or her sexual desires, adherence to the TSS no longer predicted consenting to unwanted sex. These data suggest that couples should work to foster strong communication skills in order to reduce the likelihood that consenting to unwanted sex will occur.

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Consenting to Unwanted Sexual Activity in Heterosexual Relationships: A Sociocultural Examination

Sex has long been an area of interest in psychological research. Studies have examined several aspects of sexual interactions including sexual attitudes and behaviors (e.g. Kinsey, 1947) and sex therapy (e.g. Masters & Johnson, 1976). Research in this area has also focused on negative or unpleasant sexual interactions, primarily incest (e.g. Canavan, Meyer, & Higgs, 1992) and sexual assault (Burgess & Holmstrom, 1974). Recently, researchers in these separate, yet intersecting fields of sex-related research have begun to examine the phenomena of consenting to unwanted sexual activity.

One goal of the present investigation is to present and review the available literature on consenting to unwanted sexual activity. This section will review literature pertaining to consent in sexual interactions, sexual coercion, and the reasons individuals report for consenting to unwanted sexual activity. Following this section, three theories, attachment theory, evolutionary theory, and the Traditional Sexual Script (TSS), are discussed. These theories are associated with the actual reasons given for consenting to unwanted sexual activity and could potentially explain the behavior more fully. Ultimately, this theoretical review focuses on the influence of the TSS and thoroughly discusses the implications this script has on sexual attitudes and behavior. Specifically, this section will discuss the sexual double standard that is a reflection of the TSS and the implications the TSS has on an individual's own sexual behavior, as well as on perceptions of other people. The dyadic nature of sexual interactions is addressed and the role of communication is explored. Finally, a new theoretical model is proposed and

tested as a framework for studying and understanding the phenomenon of consenting to unwanted sexual activity.

What Does Consenting to Unwanted Sexual Activity Mean?

Given that the term “consenting to unwanted sexual activity” has made a relatively recent appearance in the empirical literature, defining the concept is vital. In order to understand the topic, it is necessary to examine the two primary components of consensual unwanted sexual activity: what is meant by consent and what is meant by unwanted sexual activity.

According to O’Sullivan and Allgeier (1998), consensual but unwanted sex is characterized by one partner fully consenting to sexual activity despite not wanting to engage in the activity or having a lack of sexual desire at that time. It is important to stress that in order to be considered consensual unwanted sex or sexual activity, both partners must freely provide consent to engage in the sexual activity, but this activity is unwanted or undesired for at least one partner. If consent is given under duress or as the result of coercion, it cannot be considered consensual sex. For example, research has indicated that women report choosing to engage in unwanted sexual activity in order to avoid adverse consequences that their partner has threatened. If a woman’s consent is given because her partner threatened to terminate the relationship or to seek sexual satisfaction outside of the relationship, she has been verbally coerced (Basile, 1999). In situations such as this, consent may be given, but it has been elicited in a coercive manner and, therefore is not considered to have been given freely. Therefore, the above illustration is not an example of consensual unwanted sexual activity.

Consent Versus Coercion

It is imperative to distinguish consent from coercion. According to Muehlenhard (1995/1996), knowledge and free choice are the defining attributes of consent. In order to offer consent, one must know what is being consented to and must have knowledge of any information that could influence the decision as to whether or not to engage in the sexual activity. In addition, this definition of consent requires the individual to have a true ability to decide whether or not to engage in the activity. In other words, the person does not consent under duress or as a result of actual pressure, verbal or physical, from their partner.

Muehlenhard (1995/1996) also argued that acquiescing, or giving in to sex, does not fulfill the above requirements for truly consensual sex. She pointed out that factors such as a desire to maintain interpersonal or socioeconomic status can affect a person's perceived freedom of choice. Accordingly, then, this assertion means that these real or perceived forces limit a person's ability to freely engage in sexual activity, instead, they are acquiescing to the activity because of these factors. Other authors, however, have considered these types of situations to be consensual because both partners have agreed to participate in the sexual activity and this agreement did not occur as the result of physical or verbal pressure (e.g., O'Sullivan & Allgeier, 1998). One partner may not have desired the sexual activity, but consented to participate, for whatever reason. As Spitzberg (1998) pointed out, a person may have a preference to avoid sexual activity, but will, nevertheless, voluntarily engage in the sexual activity for any number of reasons.

Researchers have yet to agree on a definition of consensual unwanted sexual activity, but O'Sullivan and Allgeier's (1998) definition of consensual unwanted sexual

activity is the most clearly outlined and will be used for the purposes of this study. According to O'Sullivan and Allgeier (1998), consensual unwanted sexual activity occurs when one partner does not desire the sexual interaction, but agrees to participate in the sexual activity for reasons other than verbal or physical coercion from their partner. This definition is preferred because it highlights the important role of one's partner in determining whether a sexual interaction is consensual. It requires that, in order for nonconsensual sexual activity to take place, one's partner must use either verbal or physical coercion in order to obtain the desired sexual activity. To illustrate, consider the following example: individuals who do not want to engage in a sexual activity, but consent to participate because their partner has threatened to end the relationship if they do not participate are engaging in nonconsensual sexual activity. However, individuals who do not want to engage in a sexual activity, but consent to participate because they *think* their partner will end the relationship if they do not engage in the activity, despite the absence of such a threat from the partner, have consented to unwanted sexual activity.

In contrast, sexual coercion is defined as an action "taken with the intent of imposing harm on another person or forcing compliance" (Tedeschi & Felson, 1994, p. 348). Using this definition, threats, bodily harm, and punishments are classified as coercive actions. Muehlenhard and Schrag (1991) identified two types of sexual coercion: indirect and direct. Indirect coercion involves pressure or enticements towards a mandate of engaging in sexual activity. For example, according to Muehlenhard and Schrag, societal messages that normalize and even glamorize sexual intercourse are thought to coerce people in to having sex. This definition is difficult to operationalize and therefore, a definition of direct coercion is often preferred by researchers because

these behaviors are more readily identified. Muehlenhard and Schrag argued that direct coercion involves verbal pressure, the use of alcohol or drugs to limit a person's decision-making ability, and engaging in sexual intercourse despite the other person's protest.

Given the problems with distinguishing sexual coercion from consensual yet unwanted sexual activity, it is difficult to estimate the extent to which each occurs in societies throughout the world. The problems with the definitions of sexual coercion and consensual unwanted sexual activity extends to many of the tools used to assess the prevalence of sexual aggression. For example, the Sexual Experiences Survey (SES; Koss & Gidycz, 1985; Koss & Oros, 1982), which is a self-report questionnaire that purports to assess the experience of sexual aggression, seems to contain some items that may be assessing consensual, unwanted sexual activity and classifying these situations as sexually aggressive. For example, Kahn, Jackson, Kully, Badger, and Halvorsen (2003) investigated differences in women who do and do not label sexual assault experiences as rape, using the SES. However, some of the items involved situations in which the woman initially refused to engage in sexual activity, but then gave in to her boyfriend's whining, pleading, arguing, or begging. Furthermore, any participant responding "yes" to questions such as, "Have you ever had sexual intercourse with a man because he misinterpreted your desired level of intimacy?" or "Have your ever had sexual intercourse with a man after genuinely saying no?" was considered to have been coerced; however, these statements could also be interpreted as consenting to unwanted sex. The woman in the scenario is genuinely uninterested in the sexual activity, but this statement does not indicate that she is forced or threatened to engage in the act. Instead, it is possible that she chose to participate despite a lack of desire to do so.

In addition, the specific wording used on a measure also influences how participants respond. Respondents may interpret items that are attempting to measure the same construct differently based on the words that are used. For example, “unwanted” seems to be interpreted less severely than “unwilling” or “didn’t want to” (Hogben, Bryne, & Hamburger, 1996). Despite the problems surrounding the definitions of sexual coercion and consenting to unwanted sexual activity, attempts have been made to determine the extent of these situations and the results are unsettling.

The prevalence of sexual coercion has been more extensively studied than the prevalence of consenting to unwanted sex. These prevalence rates differ depending on exactly how sexual coercion is defined. For example, Hogben et al. (1996) examined the prevalence of coercion in dating relationships. Male and female participants were asked about their experiences as the unwilling target of sexual activity, experiences as the initiator of such activities, and whether coercion attempts were successful or unsuccessful. The results indicated that a higher proportion of men (41%) than women (24%) reported sexually coercing a partner at least once. In addition, a significantly higher proportion of women (79%) than men (52%) reported that a partner had sexually coerced them. It is important to note that the coercive techniques of the men in the study typically consisted of verbal threats or physical attempts, whereas the women tended to use enticement, such as removing an article of clothing, which may or may not be considered coercive, depending on which definition of coercion is being applied.

Less information is available regarding the prevalence of consensual, yet unwanted sexual activity due to its recent appearance in the scientific literature. O’Sullivan and Allgeier (1998) have conducted the most thorough empirical investigation

to date. They examined reports of freely consenting to undesired sexual activity from male and female participants. Male and female participants completed a structured diary over a two-week period in which they recorded their dating and sexual experiences. The results indicated that approximately 38% of the participants reported that they had engaged in consensual unwanted sexual activity in the two-week period; some of the participants (8%) indicated that they had engaged in unwanted sexual activity more than once during this time. Studies have also found that women consent to unwanted sexual contact to a greater extent than do men (Impett & Peplau, 2003; O'Sullivan & Allgeier, 1998). O'Sullivan and Allgeier (1998) found that a significantly higher proportion of women (50%) than men (26%) reported engaging in unwanted sexual activity during a two-week period. The authors suggested that this is related to their finding that men were significantly more likely to initiate sexual activity, so that women are more frequently put in the position of consenting than are men.

There also appear to be cultural differences in the prevalence of consensual unwanted sexual activity. For example, a study examining its occurrence in three different countries, found that the Japanese sample had the lowest rate (27%), followed by the Russian sample (32%), and the American sample reported the highest rate (55%) of consenting to unwanted sex (Sprecher, Hatfield, Cortese, Potapova, & Levitskaya, 1994). Interestingly, in the American sample, a greater proportion of women consented to unwanted sex than did men; however, no gender differences were found in either the Japanese or Russian samples. Sprecher et al. suggested that these cultural differences are related to the persistence of American men in sexual situations. They also argued that

women from different cultures are better able to rely on traditional excuses for refusing sex, such as the unacceptability of sex outside of the marital relationship.

The Importance of Consent

Based on the fine line that often distinguishes consensual unwanted sexual activity from nonconsensual interactions, it is evident that the issue of consent is an important one and needs to be explored in further detail. Consent is considered to be an integral component of sexual interactions according to both men and women; however, women seem to be better able to list and explain behaviors that would indicate consent than are men (Verberg, Wood, Desmarais, & Senn, 2000). Much of the research on consent has illustrated that consent is often ambiguous. This ambiguity seems to be a result of the various ways in which consent can be communicated and the ways in which these forms of communication can be interpreted.

The Communication of Consent

Muehlenhard (1995/1996) asserted that there are two primary ways in which consent can be communicated: mentally and verbally. She argued that if consent is a mental act, then one person can never know with 100 percent certainty that the other person has, in fact, consented. In contrast, if consent is given verbally, one can be more certain that the other individual has agreed to engage in the sexual act. However, research has found that the majority of sexual acts that are considered consensual do not involve explicit verbal statements of consent (O'Sullivan & Byers, 1992). Often, consent is communicated behaviorally. For example, results from one study indicated that both men and women commonly communicate consent to intercourse by simply not resisting the sexual advances of their partner (Hickman & Muehlenhard, 1999). However, Lim

and Roloff (1999) found that both men and women perceive greater consent when verbal consent has occurred rather than nonverbal consent. This suggests that nonverbal consent may be the norm in sexual interactions, but that men and women tend to agree that verbal consent is more indicative of consent. Disturbingly, it also suggests that for many people, the failure to explicitly say “no” to sexual activity is equivalent to saying “yes.”

Factors Influencing the (Mis)perception of Consent

Misperceptions of consent occur when one person incorrectly assumes that another person is interested in engaging in sexual activity (Abbey, McAuslan, & Ross, 1998). Results from one study found that a strong majority (67%) of college students have had their acts of friendliness misinterpreted as an indication of sexual intentions at least once (Abbey, 1987). Given that the misperception of consent is a widespread problem, particularly among college students, it is necessary to examine the factors that influence its occurrence.

The results of numerous studies indicate that gender seems to play an integral role in the communication of consent and in the perceptions of the behaviors that frequently occur in sexual interactions. Specifically, the signals that men and women frequently employ in order to express consent are different (Hickman & Muehlenhard, 1999). Men tend to use indirect nonverbal signals, such as kissing and petting, more so than women, whereas women tend to use indirect verbal signals, such as asking about a condom, more so than men. These gender differences are also evident when the behavior in question is not one’s own, but that of hypothetical strangers. Semonsky and Rosenfeld (1994) compared American men’s and women’s perceptions of individuals involved in what the authors described as a “minor” sexual violation. Participants read a scenario in which

either a female target denied consent for a kiss and the male target kissed her regardless of her refusal or one in which a male target denied consent for a kiss and the female kissed him regardless of his refusal. When the female target violated the male's consent, her behavior was rated as more complimentary than if the male target violated the female's consent. In addition, both male and female participants judged the male target's violation of consent and denial of consent to be less acceptable than that of the female target. Collectively, these results suggest that gender plays an important role in both the communication and perception of consent, at least among American men and women. As will be discussed in further detail later in the paper, gender may play an integral role because of biological differences between the sexes and/or because of differences in the sexual scripts for males and females.

Gender may also influence perceptions of consent through the stereotypes that men and women associate with the other sex. Overall, men have been found to oversexualize their interactions with women (e.g., Abbey & Melby, 1986; Levesque, Nave, & Lowe, 2006; Willan & Pollard, 2003). Men have been found to attribute more sexual traits to female targets than do women. In one study, male participants rated female targets as significantly more sexy, promiscuous, and seductive than did female participants (Abbey & Melby, 1986). Male participants also rated their own and a hypothetical woman's sexual desire as higher than did female participants rating their own and a hypothetical man's sexual desire (Willan & Pollard, 2003). This indicates that men may judge people, including themselves, to have higher levels of sexual desire than do women. These gender differences in interpreting sexual intentions may contribute to the misperceptions of consent in sexual interactions.

Gender is not the only factor that influences perceptions of consent. A study exploring the effect of sexual precedence on interpretations of sexual behavior found that participants rated a female target as having more sexual intent if she had engaged in sexual intercourse with the man on ten prior occasions, despite the female target protesting against the present sexual encounter (Shotland & Goodstein, 1992). Results from this study also revealed that when the couple in the sexual scenario had a sexual history, participants viewed the person who stopped the sexual encounter as more obligated to engage in the sexual activity than if the couple had no sexual history. These results suggest that sexual precedence influences perceptions of behavior in sexual interactions; having a sexual history with the other person involved appears to make it more likely that consent is inferred, even when verbal protests are present.

Adherence to rape supportive beliefs (e.g., Abbey et al., 1998; Anderson, Simpson-Taylor, & Hermann, 2004; Bartels, Oswald, & Russell, 2006) and amount of alcohol consumption (Abbey et al., 1998) may also influence perceptions of consent. Results from Abbey et al. (1998) indicated that the more strongly men held rape supportive beliefs, the more likely they were to misinterpret a woman's intentions as sexual. For example, men who adhere to rape supportive beliefs are more likely to believe that a woman's style of dress, her acceptance of a date or an invitation to return to the man's apartment, or allowing the man to pay for the date are behaviors that are indicative of sexual interest than are men who do not hold rape supportive beliefs. In addition, the more alcohol men drank, the more frequently they misperceived a woman's intentions. Similarly, Bartels et al. (2006) found that support of rape myths was positively associated with mock jurors misperceiving a woman's consent to sexual

intercourse for a date rape scenario. In addition, in an examination of 218 college students, Morr and Mongeau (2004) found that men have higher sexual expectations for a first date than do women and that alcohol consumption increases sexual expectations.

In sum, numerous factors might contribute to the misperceptions of consent. Clearly, examining these potential factors is important, and will be undertaken shortly. However, it is also important to examine the potential consequences of consenting to unwanted sex.

Consequences of Consensual Unwanted Sexual Activity

The results of the available research suggest that consenting to unwanted sexual activity has both positive and negative consequences. Research has also determined that both the individual who did not desire the sexual activity and the relationship may be affected.

Positive Consequences

Consenting to unwanted sexual activity has been found have positive outcomes. In fact, individuals who consented to unwanted sexual activity typically rated the experience as pleasant (O'Sullivan & Allgeier, 1998). O'Sullivan and Allgeier (1998) found that the most frequent positive outcomes were the satisfaction of one's partner, the promotion of intimacy within the relationship, and the prevention of relational discord. They found no significant differences between the positive outcomes reported by men and women. Similarly, Impett and Peplau (2003) reported that positive emotions can result from engaging in consensual unwanted sexual activity. However, positive emotions only resulted when consent was given in hopes that the experience would be

positive or pleasurable, not when consent was given in order to avoid negative or painful outcomes.

Negative Consequences

Despite the aforementioned positive consequences that can arise from consenting to unwanted sexual activity, negative consequences have also been documented. In their review of the available literature, Impett and Peplau (2003) found that consenting to unwanted sexual activity can lead to risky sexual behavior and is associated with an increased risk of sexual victimization. In fact, Krahe et al. (2000) found that women who had consented to unwanted sex at least once were three times more likely to be sexually assaulted with the use of physical force or when they were under the influence of alcohol or drugs than women who had never consented to unwanted sex.

Negative outcomes seem to be more likely if consent was given to avoid negative consequences (Impett & Peplau, 2003; Livingston et al., 2004). In one study, the majority of women reported that consenting to unwanted sexual activity negatively impacted their relationship and resulted in feelings of anger, resentment, and distrust (Livingston et al., 2004). Only 13% of the female sample indicated that the experience did not have any consequences, whereas 2% reported that their relationship improved after engaging in the unwanted activity. Those women who had not had sexual intercourse with their partner prior to this experience were more likely than women who had a sexual history with their partner to report a negative impact on the relationship and were also more likely to report self-blame and regret. In contrast, in their co-educational sample, O'Sullivan and Allgeier (1998) found that relationship quality did not seem to suffer after one partner consented to unwanted sexual activity. In fact, not one of their

160 participants reported a radical decrease in the level of romantic interest in their partner.

Emotional discomfort and negative self-evaluations have also been linked to consenting to unwanted sexual activity (O'Sullivan & Allgeier, 1998). Specifically, both men and women reported feeling uncomfortable about having meaningless sex. Crawford and Popp (2003) theorize that women's internalization of the sexual double standard may influence these negative self-evaluations. For example, if women adhere to the belief put forth in the traditional sexual script that women are the gatekeepers of sexual activity and have a less active role than men, they may view themselves as objects or victims of sexual interactions. In addition, Crawford and Popp (2003) assert that the sexual double standard may cause women to sacrifice their sexual independence. Specifically, if a woman only engages in sexual activity when her partner initiates and consents at times when she does not desire the activity, she may be unlikely to initiate the desired activity and may find it difficult to become aroused. In addition, although not yet empirically investigated, it is possible that women may resent their male partner following consensual unwanted sex because she engaged in the activity to please him; as the TSS teaches, she has put his desires before hers. The tenets of the TSS may also be related to the negative reactions experienced by men. For example, men may feel disappointment and guilt following consensual unwanted sex because they have given in to societal or peer pressure, and have not been true to their own wants.

Impett and Peplau (2003) assert that positive outcomes are likely when an individual consents to unwanted sex in order to express feelings of love and support. For instance, they suggest that a woman who consents to unwanted sex to show her love for

her husband may feel glad that she was able to demonstrate her feelings and fulfill her role as a wife. In contrast, individuals who consent to unwanted sex in order to avoid negative consequences, such as their partner becoming angry, are more likely to report negative outcomes. In addition, although many of the findings presented above focus solely on women, there is value in examining the outcomes experienced by men who have consented to unwanted sexual activity. As the results from O'Sullivan and Allgeier (1998) suggest, the outcomes appear to be similar for men and women. However, this is the only known study that has examined the impact on men. Other studies have investigated men's experiences with consensual unwanted sex and their reasons for engaging in it, but have not evaluated the effects it had on the men (e.g., Muehlenhard & Cook, 1988). Therefore, more research involving men is needed in order to make more reliable conclusions.

As previously stated, consenting to unwanted sexual activity does not happen in every situation and it does not appear to occur equally across men and women. Therefore, in order to gain a better understanding of the phenomenon, it is important to explore reasons for willingly engaging in unwanted sexual activity and to attempt to differentiate individuals who choose to engage in the unwanted sexual activity from those who do not. It is also important to examine whether there are specific circumstances that make consenting to unwanted sexual activity more likely.

Actual Reported Reasons for Consenting to Unwanted Sexual Activity

Consenting to unwanted sexual activity does not occur in all situations and is not used by all people. Given these circumstances, it is important to determine when it does occur and who is most likely to consent to sexual activity when it is not desired. Several

studies have investigated reasons for consenting to unwanted sex and have explored situational and individual characteristics that are associated with the behavior

One study classified the reasons women provided for, what they termed, sexual compliance, into two categories: extrinsic and intrinsic (Livingston, Buddie, Testa, & VanZile-Tamsen, 2004). Reasons were considered to be extrinsic if compliance was given in order to alleviate pressure or to avoid consequences from an external source. In contrast, intrinsic reasons were those in which the individual complied because of an internal pressure of some kind. Reported intrinsic reasons for consenting included internal feelings of guilt, a sense of obligation, or a desire to please one's partner. Extrinsic reasons were found to be more common than intrinsic reasons, the most common of which was negative reinforcement. Namely, many women reported consenting to the sexual activity because they wanted their male partner to stop pestering them. Other extrinsic motivators included a desire to save the relationship and in order to avoid aggression from their partner. It was also determined that women who had a sexual history with their partner were more likely to report consenting in order to keep the peace in the relationship or to get the man to stop pestering her, whereas women who did not have a sexual history with their partner were more likely to consent because they were afraid their partner would terminate the relationship if they did not engage in the desired sexual activity. It should be noted that in this study it is not always clear if compliance to sexual intercourse meets the definition of consenting to unwanted sex, as some situations appeared to have some level of coercion.

The distinction of intrinsic and extrinsic categories is useful for interpreting results of other studies investigating reasons for consenting to unwanted sex. Among