Come on, Give It to Me Baby:

Self-Esteem, Narcissism, and Endorsing Sexual Coercion Following Social Rejection

Veronica M. Lamarche [1]

Mark D. Seery [2]

[1] University of Essex

[2] University at Buffalo, The State University of New York

Author's Accepted Version

DOI: 10.1016/j.paid.2019.05.060

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Veronica M. Lamarche, Department of Psychology, University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester, Essex, CO4 3SQ. E-mail: v.lamarche@essex.ac.uk

Abstract

Endorsement and acceptance of sexually coercive strategies as a means to an end contributes to the global problem of sexual victimization. The current research tests how personality traits that make people sensitive to rejection (i.e., self-esteem) and predisposed to non-communal attitudes (i.e., narcissism) interact with a situational factor—perceived social rejection—to predict when people endorse the use of sexual coercion. This work also explores whether different facets of narcissism better predict endorsement of coercion than others. Participants in two online studies (N_{total}=740), completed background measures including the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale and the Narcissistic Admiration and Rivalry Questionnaire. Next, participants were randomly assigned to write about a recent incident of rejection or acceptance by a close other. Finally, endorsement of sexual coercion was measured using a questionnaire (adapted from Shackelford & Goetz, 2004). Consistent with predictions, across two studies, single (but not romantically attached) people with high narcissism and low self-esteem were more likely to endorse sexual coercion following reminders of rejection by close others. Our findings demonstrate that personality and situational factors interact to predict endorsement of sexual coercion, and that focusing on either alone might obscure the path to understanding the "whos" and "whens" of sexual assault.

Keywords: Rejection, Sexual Coercion, Narcissism, Self-Esteem

Come on, Give It to Me Baby:
Self-Esteem, Narcissism, and Endorsing Sexual Coercion Following Social Rejection

In 2017, Time Magazine awarded Person of the Year to "The Silence Breakers" – men and women who had spoken up and exposed rampant sexual assault and misconduct in Hollywood, politics, and academia. Despite heightened awareness and increased efforts to tackle sexual assault in recent decades, sexual victimization continues to burden societies worldwide. In the United States alone, an estimated 1 in 3 women and 1 in 6 men become victims of sexual violence at some point in their lives (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2012). These figures are similar across developed countries (e.g., Office for National Statistics, 2013; Conroy & Cotter, 2017), and worse still in marginalized communities and nations with lower rates of gender equality (Bryant-Davis, Chung, & Tillman, 2009; Kalra & Bhugra, 2013; Sobsey, 1994; Wahab & Olson, 2004). These figures likely represent only the tip of the iceberg, as most people do not formally report their victimization for reasons including reputational harm, fear of persecution, and ostracism (Fisher, Cullen, & Turner, 2000; Sable, Danis, Mauzy, Gallagher, 2006). What is more unsettling still is that the majority of these unwanted advances come from people known to the victim rather than complete strangers (Fisher et al., 2000; Greenfield, 1997). This means that the most likely perpetrator of sexual assault is not someone lurking in the shadows but instead someone known, and likely trusted.

But even in 2017, amid the outpouring support for victims through campaigns such as #MeToo and #TimesUp (Forbes, 2018; Time's Up, 2018), and public condemnation of powerful Hollywood names like Harvey Weinstein and Kevin Spacey, criticisms swiftly emerged arguing that these movements fail to appreciate the nuanced nature of sexual interactions. Notably, in

early 2018, 100 academic and creative women in France penned an open letter accusing movements such as #MeToo of going too far (Collectif, 2018), even as more women in Hollywood and academia continued to be exposed to sexual misconduct worldwide.[1] These disagreements present a clear disconnect between the way people talk about negotiating consensual sex and what they claim they endorse. What is clear, however, is that while most people say that they would not force someone into having sex against their will, the frequency at which these incidents occur suggest otherwise. At the very least, this disconnect suggests that people lack awareness and are not completely cognizant of the factors that can lead to sexual victimization. And while acceptance of and actual engagement in behaviors can diverge—especially when enacted behaviors are seen as socially unacceptable—beliefs are still a reliable predictor of how people might behave in specific situations either as an actor or bystander (Snyder & Tanke, 1976; Axt & Trawalter, 2016; Glasman & Albarracín, 2006).

Part of this disconnect may be driven by rigid scripts regarding what constitutes sexual assault and victimization. Because most people envision sexual victimization as a violent assault being carried out by a random stranger (Ryan, 1988), they tend to overlook the more subtle processes that can lead to victimization, such as the use of sexual coercion. Sexual coercion involves pressuring someone into unwanted sexual activity through non-physical means (Smith et al., 2017). These tactics can include wearing a partner down by repeatedly asking for sex or by making them feel guilty or obligated, promising rewards in exchange for sex, threatening the future of the relationship, threats of harm to a person's body, reputation, loved ones, living situation or career, and the use of alcohol or drugs to get access to sex. Despite legal efforts to categorize the use of sexual coercion as rape (e.g., Affirmative Consent laws in California, Canada, and parts of Europe), myths regarding sexual victimization have left many people with

the inaccurate assumption that sexual coercion is an acceptable means to an end (Adams-Curtis & Forbes, 2004; Bohner, Jarvis, Eyssel, & Siebler, 2005; Byers, 1996; Kahn, Mathie, & Torgler, 1994). Thus, in order to continue the battle against sexual victimization, it is important to understand the personality traits and situational factors that might motivate someone to endorse sexually coercive strategies that put others at risk. We suggest that situational cues signaling relative rejection versus acceptance, and personality traits that make people sensitive to rejection and predisposed to non-communal attitudes should interact to predict condoning sexually coercive strategies.

The Motivating Force of Rejection

Our relationships with others are not unvaryingly positive. A close friend or romantic partner might be helpful and supportive one day, but forget an important commitment they made the next. When people let us down, this signals that we might not be as accepted by others as we initially expected and motivates us to reaffirm our positive self-views (Leary, Haupt, Strausser, & Chokel, 1998; Leary, Tambor, Terdal, & Downs, 1995). The motivational force of perceived rejection is powerful because of the fundamental need to feel included and accepted by the people close to us (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Although some people are able to respond proactively to rejection (Murray, Rose, Bellavia, Holmes, & Kusche, 2002; Stinson, Cameron, Hoplock & Hole, 2014), others engage in self-aggrandizing behaviors without concern for the consequences they have for others (Twenge & Campbell, 2003; Jordan, Spencer, Zanna, Hoshino-Browne, & Correll, 2003). Sex presents an interesting context in which the feeling of acceptance can be restored, with or without concern for the other person involved. Sex is a communal act that can fulfill intimacy needs and provide evidence of caring and responsiveness (Impett, Muise, & Rosen, 2015; Muise, 2017; Muise & Impett, 2015). Because rejection

intensifies the motivation to seek connection, people might show an even stronger tendency to seek out sexual encounters when they are feeling relatively more rejected. Furthermore, if rejection makes some people more self-focused, then they might also be likely to endorse sexually coercive strategies that allow them to get what they want regardless of the cost to others.

Self-Esteem: Tuning to Social Rejection

Not everyone feels rejection as acutely as others. One important dispositional characteristic that predicts sensitivity to rejection is self-esteem. People with high self-esteem are confident that others care about them (Leary et al., 1995). This confidence allows them to more readily dismiss situations where people let them down or disappoint them as non-diagnostic of how accepted or loved they actually are (Lamarche & Murray, 2014; Murray, Holmes, & Griffin, 1996, 2000). Consequently, they are less reactive to cues of social rejection (Onoda et al., 2010). Unfortunately, people with low self-esteem are plagued by self-doubt (Leary et al., 1995) that spills over into how they perceive the intentions of others (Murray, Holmes, Griffin, Bellavia, & Rose, 2001; Murray, Holmes, MacDonald, & Ellsworth, 1998; Marigold, Holmes, & Ross, 2007). This sensitizes them to rejection and has negative consequences for those around them. Although conflicting conclusions exist in the literature (Zeigler-Hill, Dahlen, & Madson, 2017), some evidence supports that people with relatively lower self-esteem are more likely to engage in externalizing behaviors such as aggression and antisocial behavior (Donnellan, Trzesniewski, Robins, Moffitt, & Caspi, 2005). They also feel the pain of rejection more acutely (Onoda et al., 2010; Sommerville, Kelley, & Heatherton, 2010) and are more likely to derogate close others and behave less proactively when they believe another person has let them down (Murray et al., 2002). This does not mean, however, that people with low self-esteem do not still want or crave

intimacy (Cameron, Stinson, Gaetz, & Blachen, 2010). Thus, social rejection should be a strong impetus driving people with low self-esteem to seek what they crave—closeness and intimacy—in one of its most distilled forms, sex.

Narcissism: Antagonistic Self-Protection

Although self-esteem sensitizes people to rejection, it does not necessarily mean that everyone should feel equally entitled to the intimacy they crave. On the other hand, narcissism, a personality trait characterized by aggrandized and overly positive self-concepts, does predict feelings of entitlement and agentic, rather than communal, preoccupations (Campbell, Rudich, & Sedikides, 2002; Raskin & Novacek, 1989). People high in agency focus on their own interests often at the expense of others, while communally minded people are focused on the well-being of others (Abele & Wojcizke, 2007). Consistently, people higher in narcissism tend to feel entitled to sex, regardless of their partner's willingness to participate (Baumeister, Catanese, & Wallace, 2002). Narcissists are not only more aggressive in the face of rejection and hold more rape-supportive beliefs, but they also feel less empathetic towards victims of sexual assault and are more likely to believe that women who deny sex should be punished (Twenge & Campbell, 2003; Baumeister, Smart, & Boden, 1996; Bushman, Bonacci, van Dijk, & Baumeister, 2003). However, the majority of this work has focused on how narcissistic people respond to *sexual* rejection; we tested whether rejection in a *non-sexual* context also motivates people with dispositionally high narcissism to endorse sexual coercion. Furthermore, although it has been shown that self-esteem and narcissism can be independent predictors of aggressive behaviors (Donnellan et al., 2005), it has not been tested whether differences in self-esteem interact with narcissism to predict sexual coercion endorsement following rejection.

How narcissism is expressed in interpersonal contexts can be further understood in terms of a two-dimensional model of narcissism. The Narcissistic Admiration and Rivalry Concept (Back et al., 2013; Leckelt et al., 2018) separates the assertive self-enhancing qualities of narcissism—admiration—characterized by positive self-views, popularity, leadership, and short-term interpersonal success, from the antagonistic self-protecting qualities of narcissism—rivalry—characterized by interpersonal failure such as negative peer evaluations, relationship difficulties, conflict and aggression (Back et al., 2010; Campbell & Campbell, 2009; Lange, Crusius, & Hagemeyer, 2016; Leckelt, Küfner, Nestler, & Back, 2015; Wurst et al., 2016). Although both of these dimensions are related to the desire to maintain a grandiose sense of self (Back et al., 2010), treating narcissism unidimensionally has led to somewhat mixed results when assessing the maladaptive consequences of the trait (Rosenthal & Hooley, 2010; Rosenthal, Montoya, Ridings, Rieck, & Hooley, 2011). Thus, using a two-dimensional model approach to narcissism should help elucidate whether narcissists endorsing sexual coercion following rejection is driven predominantly by a need for self-enhancement or antagonistic self-protection.

Hypotheses

Sex provides people with an opportunity to regain feelings of acceptance, connection and positivity, by engaging in an intimate and pleasurable act. When people feel socially isolated and alone, sexual intimacy can provide them with a sense of reconnection and perceived responsiveness to their needs. Sexual coercion is a tactic that people can engage in to increase the likelihood of compliance, and mitigate the likelihood of further rejection (Davis, 2006). We predicted that non-sexual social rejection, self-esteem, and narcissism would interact to predict endorsement of sexual coercion. Specifically, we expected that among highly narcissistic people with low self-esteem, priming social rejection would lead to greater endorsement of sexual

coercion compared to priming social acceptance. Furthermore, people with high self-esteem, who are less sensitive to rejection, and people with low narcissism, who are more communally minded, were not expected to show differences in sexual coercion as a function of rejection or acceptance.

We also explored whether relationship status would further moderate the pattern of results. Because we did not have strong predictions for which of three outcomes was most likely, we pitted them against each other:

(1) *Single* people with low self-esteem and high narcissism might show the highest levels of coercion endorsement when primed with rejection versus acceptance because the targets of coercion are relatively abstract and therefore easier to regard as a means to an end without discomfort than a specific, actual partner (Orehek & Weaverling, 2017).

(2) *Romantically attached* people with low self-esteem and high narcissism might show the highest levels of endorsement when primed with rejection because they may feel especially entitled to sex from a partner, since partners are supposed to be responsive to their needs (Twenge & Campbell, 2003; Muise, Impett, Kogan, & Desmarais, 2013).

(3) Because narcissists tend to form weak ties, demonstrate an unwillingness to empathize, lack commitment to their relationships and devalue others, their relationship status may be irrelevant to them (Campbell, Foster, & Finkel, 2002; Foster, Shrira, & Campbell, 2006; Hepper, Hart, & Sedikides, 2014; Lee, Ahn, & Kim, 2014).

Finally, we explored whether the hypothesized effects generalize across the overall narcissistic tendency to maintain the grandiose self, or whether they are driven more specifically by the need for assertive self-enhancement (admiration) versus antagonistic self-protection (rivalry). Given prior evidence linking narcissistic rivalry to negative, anti-social tendencies and

the need for antagonistic self-protection (Back et al., 2010, 2013), we tentatively predicted that any effects for overall narcissism would be driven primarily by the dimension of narcissistic rivalry. Furthermore, both the admiration and rivalry subscales can be broken down into three dimensions each: admiration can incorporate grandiosity, striving for uniqueness, and charmingness, whereas rivalry can incorporate devaluation of others, striving for supremacy, and aggressiveness. Of these, we also tentatively predicted that a tendency to devalue others and aggressiveness would be particularly important for endorsement of sexual coercion, as both the devaluation of other people and aggression are associated with harmful thoughts and behaviors towards others (Howells, Daffern, & Day, 2008; Kteily, Bruneau, Waytz, & Cotterill, 2015; Rudman & Mescher, 2012).

Given the exploratory facets of our hypotheses, we conducted initial tests in Study 1 followed by a direct replication in Study 2. We interpreted effects that were reliable across both studies using a meta-analytic strategy.

Study 1

Method

Participants. In Study 1, a total of 424 volunteers completed the study online. This should have provided adequate power (>.80) to detect a small effect size ($\eta^2_{partial}$ =.02). Participants were 44.88 years old on average (*SD*=15.95), predominantly White (85.61%), and most identified as women (78.72%). Approximately 70% of participants were romantically attached (46.70% married; 25.00% living together/engaged/in a committed relationship/casually dating; 28.30% single).

Procedures. Participants were invited to participate in an online survey using the online recruitment platform ResearchMatch. After completing background questions and the self-

esteem and narcissism measures, participants were randomly assigned to either write about a time a close other had hurt or disappointed them (rejection condition) or a time a close other had been responsive to their needs (acceptance condition).[2] This manipulation has been found to reliably induce acute feelings of rejection and doubt about a close other's caring (Murray et al., 2011). Participants then completed filler questions about their sexual activity (e.g., their contraceptive use) which were unrelated to the current study, followed by the target measure of sexual coercion. Table 1 summarizes the descriptive statistics for the measures in this study.

Table 1. Study 1 Correlations and Descriptive Statistics

Measure	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Self-Esteem	--					
2. Overall Narcissism	.11*	--				
3. Narcissistic Admiration	.47***	.77***	--			
4. Narcissistic Rivalry	-.36***	.71***	.10*	--		
5. Relationship Status	.13**	.0001	.04	-.04	--	
6. Sexual Coercion	-.09†	.23***	.05	.30	-.03	--
M	5.38	2.69	3.29	2.09	--	1.37
SD	1.17	.59	.84	.75	--	.54
Response Range	2 - 7	1.17 - 4.67	1 - 5.56	1 - 4.56	--	1 - 5.67
Scale Range	1-7	1-6	1-6	1-6	--	1-9

*Note. †p<0.1 *p<.05 **p<.01 *** p<.001*

Self-esteem. A 10-item measure (α=.93; Rosenberg, 1965) assessed dispositional self-esteem (e.g., "I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal basis with others"; 1=strongly disagree, 7=strongly agree).

Narcissism. The 18-item Narcissistic Admiration and Rivalry Questionnaire (α=.80; Back et al., 2013) was used to assess narcissism (e.g., "I show others how special I am"; 1=disagree completely, 6=completely agree). The NARQ can be separated into two dimensions with corresponding facets. The first dimension is Narcissistic Admiration (9 items) and the

second dimension is Narcissistic Rivalry (9 items). Both of these dimensions are comprised of three facets (3 items per facet). The Admiration facets are Grandiosity, Strive for Uniqueness, and Charmingness. The Rivalry facets are Devaluation, Strive for Supremacy, and Aggressiveness.

Sexual coercion. A 16-item (α=.76) scale adapted from the Sexual Coercion in Intimate Relationships Scale (Shackelford & Goetz, 2004)[3] was used to assess endorsement of sexual coercion (e.g. "It is OK to threaten violence against a partner if they will not have sex with you", "It is OK to persist in asking for sex, even if you know the other person doesn't want to"; 1=disagree completely, 9=agree completely). See Supplemental Materials for the scales used in Study 1 & 2.

Results and Discussion

We conducted hierarchical regression analyses predicting endorsement of sexual coercion from (1) rejection condition (1=rejection; -1=acceptance), relationship status (1=in a relationship; -1=single), centered self-esteem, and centered overall narcissism; (2) all possible two-way interactions, (3) all possible three-way interactions, and (4) the four-way interaction. In both studies, high versus low values of continuous predictors were represented as the centered mean ±1 *SD*. Although divergent, the subscales share agreement as well (Back et al., 2013; Paulhus & Jones, 2015). Thus, because it was unclear whether the effects would be driven by need to maintain the grandiose self—shared by both sub-dimensions—or whether the effects were going to be driven solely by a single dimension of self-enhancement or self-protection, we ran separate analyses, first testing for overall narcissism, followed by separate tests for the admiration and rivalry sub-dimensions.

Primary Analyses.

Main Effects Model. Tests of the main effects of social rejection condition, self-esteem, and overall narcissism replicated previous findings of the suppressing effects of self-esteem and narcissism on interpersonal outcomes (Donnellan et al., 2005; Paulhus et al., 2004). Specifically, removing their shared variance by including both self-esteem and narcissism simultaneously amplified their opposing effects on sexual coercion. Self-esteem was negatively associated with endorsement of sexual coercion (b=-.05, t(420)=-2.51, p=.01, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.01), and narcissism was positively associated with endorsement of sexual coercion (b=.22, t(420)=5.04, p<.001, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.06). Furthermore, endorsement of sexual coercion did not reliably differ as a function of social rejection condition on its own (b=-.01, t(420)=-.32, p=.75, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.0002).

Interaction Model. First, we tested the proposed model and whether relationship status significantly moderated it by testing both the 3-way Social Rejection Condition by Self-Esteem by Overall Narcissism and the 4-way Social Rejection Condition by Self-Esteem by Overall Narcissism by Relationship Status interaction models. The 3-way interaction model with relationship status as a covariate was not significant, b=.002, t(416)=.06, p=.96, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.0004, but the 4-way interaction model with relationship status as a predictor was significant, b=.10, t(408)=2.28, p=.02, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.01.[4] Thus, for the remaining analyses, we tested our proposed model while accounting for differences in relationship status. Figure 1 presents the predicted scores for the significant 4-way interaction model, and Table 2 summarizes the model tests.

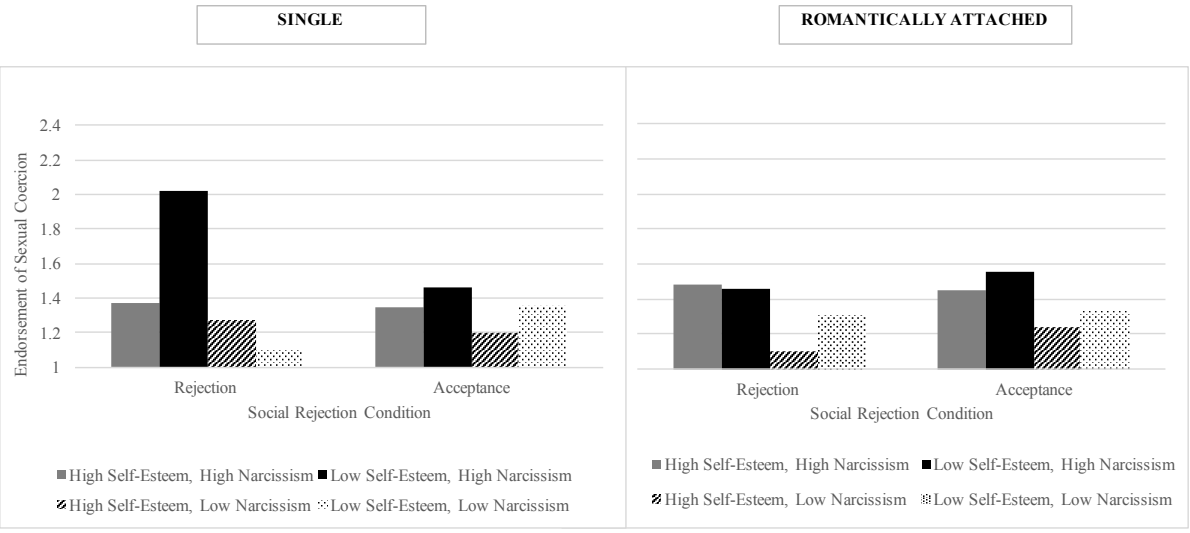

Figure 1. Self-esteem, overall narcissism and rejection condition predicting endorsement of sexual coercion for single and romantically attached people.

Table 2. Study 1 Model Coefficients for Endorsement of Sexual Coercion

Predictor	b	t
Rejection Condition	.01	.38
Self-Esteem	-.06	-2.48*
Overall Narcissism	.24	4.75***
Relationship Status	-.01	-.48
Rejection x Self-Esteem	-.01	-.43
Rejection x Narcissism	.09	1.81†
Rejection x Relationship Status	-.04	-1.37
Self-Esteem x Narcissism	-.51	-1.19
Self-Esteem x Relationship Status	.02	.84
Narcissism x Relationship Status	-.03	-.61
Rejection x Self-Esteem x Narcissism	-.06	-1.28
Rejection x Self-Esteem x Relationship Status	.01	.44
Rejection x Narcissism x Relationship Status	-.07	-1.37
Self-Esteem x Narcissism x Relationship Status	.09	2.07*
Rejection x Self-Esteem x Narcissism x Relationship Status	.10	2.28*

Note. †$p<0.1$ *$p<.05$ **$p<.01$ *** $p<.001$

Next, we tested whether the 3-way Social Rejection Condition by Self-Esteem by Overall Narcissism interaction was significant for both single and attached participants. The predicted 3-way interaction was significant for single people, b=-.15, t(408)=-2.06, p=.04, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.01, but not for people in relationships, b=.04, t(408)=.99, p=.32, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.002. We therefore decomposed simple effects for single people only.

Simple effects for single people. We first tested the 2-way Social Rejection Condition by Self-Esteem interactions for single people high and low in overall narcissism. The interaction approached significance for people high in narcissism, b=-.11, t(408)=-1.77, p=.08, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.01, but not for people low in narcissism, b=.07, t(408)=1.28, p=.20, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.004.

Consistent with our predictions, single people high in both overall narcissism and self-esteem did not show differences in their endorsement of sexual coercion when they were primed with social rejection versus acceptance, b=.01, t(408)=.14, p=.89, $\eta^2_{partial}$<.0001. However, single people who were high in overall narcissism and low in self-esteem reported greater endorsement of sexual coercion when they were primed with social rejection compared to acceptance, b=.27, t(408)=2.59, p=.01, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.02. Thus, single people high in narcissism and low in self-esteem felt more positively towards coercing partners into having sex when they had been reminded of memories of social rejection compared to acceptance.

Finally, to confirm that these effects were specific to situations of social rejection and not just differences in self-esteem and narcissism, we tested the 2-way Self-Esteem by Overall Narcissism interactions for single people in the social rejection and acceptance conditions. As expected, the 2-way interaction was significant for single people in the social rejection condition, b=-.29, t(408)=-2.51, p=.01, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.02, but not for single people in the acceptance condition, b=.02, t(408)=.19, p=.85, $\eta^2_{partial}$<.0001.

Narcissistic Admiration & Rivalry. Consistent with our expectations that the socially maladaptive aspects of narcissistic rivalry would account for observed effects more so than narcissistic admiration, the 4-way Social Rejection Condition by Self-Esteem by Narcissistic Rivalry by Relationship Status interaction predicting endorsement of sexual coercion was significant, b=.06, t(408)=2.12, p=.04, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.01. As expected, the 4-way interaction replacing rivalry with admiration was not significant, b=.02, t(408)=.73, p=.47, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.001. Tables S-1 and S-2 in the supplemental materials summarize the results from the tests for each model. Given that the analysis with narcissistic rivalry was significant, we further tested the rivalry facets of aggressiveness, devaluation, and striving for supremacy as predictors. Consistent with our

tentative predictions, the 4-way interaction replacing rivalry with narcissistic rivalrous aggressiveness significantly predicted endorsement of sexual coercion, b=.06, t(408)=2.08, p=.04, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.01, as did the 4-way interaction with narcissistic rivalrous devaluation, b=.09, t(408)=3.29, p=.001, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.03. However, the 4-way interaction with narcissistic rivalrous striving for supremacy was not significant, b=*01*, t(408)=.37, p=.71, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.0003 (Table S-3 in the supplemental materials).

We next ran the same tests for the devaluation and aggressiveness subscales as the overall narcissism measure and found parallel simple effects: Single people with low self-esteem who were high in narcissistic rivalrous aggressiveness and single people with low self-esteem who were high in narcissistic rivalrous devaluation were more likely to endorse sexually coercive strategies when they were reminded of social rejection compared to social acceptance (ps<0.01). These tentatively suggest that the effects in Study 1 might be best accounted for by narcissistic tendencies that predispose people to aggression and the devaluation of others.

Secondary Analyses

Gender Effects. Although rape myths and sexual coercion are endorsed by both men and women, they are typically endorsed by men to a greater extent (Chapleau, Oswald, & Russell, 2008; Struckman-Johnson, Struckman-Johnson, & Anderson, 2003). Men also tend to report higher self-esteem and narcissism compared to women (Bleidorn et al., 2016; Grijalva et al., 2015). We wanted to test whether our findings remained significant when controlling for the interaction between gender and the other factors in our model, as well as whether the observed effects were stronger for men than for women.

First, the 4-way Social Rejection Condition by Self-Esteem by Overall Narcissism by Relationship Status interaction predicting sexual coercion remained significant even when

controlling for gender and its interaction with each predictor in our model, b=.31, t(391)=4.68, p<.001, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.05. Furthermore, the 5-way interaction created by adding gender to this 4-way interaction was also significant, b=.28, t(391)=4.28, p<.001, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.04. Decomposing these effects by gender revealed that the simple 4-way interaction was significant for men, b=.37, t(391)=4.77, p<.001, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.05, but not for women, b=-.08, t(391)=-1.46, p=.14, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.005.

Next we tested whether these effects were driven by single or romantically attached men. Consistent with the test of the overall model without gender, the 3-way Social Rejection Condition by Self-Esteem by Overall Narcissism interaction was significant for single men, b=-.69, t(391)=-5.12, p<.001, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.06, but not for romantically attached men, b=.05, t(391)=.68, p=.50, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.001. Additional tests revealed that the 2-way Social Rejection Condition by Self-Esteem interaction was significant for single men both high, b=-.52, t(391)=-5.73, p<.001, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.08, and low in narcissism, b=.29, t(391)=2.64, p=.01, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.02, albeit in opposite directions. We therefore decomposed the simple effects of social rejection condition at high and low self-esteem for men both high and low in narcissism.

First, consistent with the pattern of findings from the overall model without gender, the simple effect of social rejection condition was significant for highly narcissistic single men with low self-esteem, b=.84, t(391)=6.89, p<.001, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.11. However, unlike with the overall model, this effect was also significant among highly narcissistic single men with high self-esteem, b=-.38, t(391)=-2.33, p=.02, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.01. Thus, whereas highly narcissistic single men with low self-esteem were more likely to endorse sexually coercive strategies when they were reminded of social rejection versus acceptance, highly narcissistic single men with high self-esteem were *less* likely to do so.

Furthermore, the simple effect of social rejection condition for single men with low narcissism was not significant for those with high self-esteem, b=.09, t(391)=.54, p=.59, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.001, but was significant for those with low self-esteem, b=-.59, t(391)=-3.50, p=.001, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.03, such that single men low in both narcissism and self-esteem were less likely to endorse sexual coercion when they were reminded of social rejection than acceptance. These findings may highlight differences in how self-esteem may lead to relatively more or less prosocial tendencies when people feel rejected. However, we hesitate to draw strong conclusions from these tests as this study was not designed to test for the 5-way interaction including gender and because these differences were not found in the model tests excluding or controlling for gender.

Study 2

The findings from Study 1 suggest that relationship status is an important moderating factor in this model. Specifically, single people with low self-esteem and high narcissism were more likely to endorse sexual coercion when they were reminded of social rejection. The same pattern did not emerge for people who were romantically attached. However, the majority of participants in Study 1 were romantically attached. In order to have more confidence in the reliability of these effects for single people, we ran an additional replication study that recruited single people only.

We also added an additional measure assessing endorsement of coercion in a non-sexual context (i.e., favors). This measure allowed us to test whether the findings from Study 1 are specific to sexual coercion above and beyond a tendency to endorse coercion more generally.

Method

Participants. Three hundred and nineteen undergraduate students from a large public university in the United States completed the study online for course credit. Of those, 3 stopped part way through the study and were removed from the final analyses, leaving a final sample of 316. This should have provided adequate power (>.80) to detect a small effect size ($\eta^2_{partial}$ =.02). Participants were 19.01 years old on average (*SD*=1.43), predominantly White (49.05%) or Asian/Pacific Islander/Asian-American (34.18%), and most were men (55.56%).

Procedures. The procedures and measures in Study 2 were identical to those used in Study 1 with the addition that participants completed a measure of endorsement of coercion in non-sexual situations at the end of the study. Table 3 summarizes the descriptive statistics for Study 2.

Table 3. Study 2 Correlations and Descriptive Statistics

Measure	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Self-Esteem	--					
2. Overall Narcissism	.19***	--				
3. Narcissistic Admiration	.56***	.77***	--			
4. Narcissistic Rivalry	-.24***	.79***	.22***	--		
5. Sexual Coercion	-.09	.28***	.25**	.28***	--	
6. Non-Sexual Coercion	-.06	.35***	.19***	.35***	.62***	--
M	4.97	3.12	3.77	2.47	1.47	1.86
SD	1.10	.64	.80	.84	.82	1.16
Response Range	1.9 - 7	1.55 - 5.33	1.56 - 6	1 - 5.78	1 - 7.69	1 - 6.27
Scale Range	1-7	1-6	1-6	1-6	1-9	1-9

Note. †*p<0.1* **p<.05* ***p<.01* *** *p<.001*

Non-sexual coercion. In order to rule out whether our findings were specific to sexual coercion or reflect higher coercive tendencies more broadly, an 11-item measure (α=.92) was adapted based on the sexual coercion measure used in Study 1 (e.g., "It is OK to threaten

violence against a friend if they will not do a favor for you"; 1=disagree completely, 9=agree completely).

Results and Discussion

Using the same analytical strategy as Study 1, we conducted hierarchical regression analyses predicting endorsement of sexual coercion from (1) social rejection condition (1=rejection; -1=acceptance), centered self-esteem, centered overall narcissism; (2) all possible two-way interactions; and, (3) the three-way interaction with non-sexual coercion included as a covariate.[5] High versus low values of continuous predictors were represented as the centered mean ±1 *SD*.

Primary Analyses.

Main Effects Model. Consistent with Study 1, self-esteem was negatively associated with endorsement of sexual coercion, b=-.11, $t(312)$=-2.68, p=.01, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.02, and narcissism was positively associated with endorsement of sexual coercion, b=.40, $t(312)$=5.65, p<.001, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.09. Furthermore, endorsement of sexual coercion did not reliably differ as a function of social rejection condition on its own, b=.03, $t(312)$=.62, p=.54, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.001. However, once we accounted for individual differences in the tendency to endorse coercion in a non-sexual context, only endorsement of non-sexual coercion reliably predicted endorsement of sexual coercion b=.41, $t(311)$=12.33, p<.001, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.34. The main effects for self-esteem, b=-.05, $t(311)$=-1.50, p=.13, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.01, and narcissism, b=.12, $t(311)$=1.92, p=.056, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.01, were no longer significant.

Interaction Model. Next we tested the 3-way Social Rejection Condition by Self-Esteem by Overall Narcissism interaction model controlling for endorsement of non-sexual coercion, which was significant, b=-.11, $t(307)$=-2.32, p=.02, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.02.[6] This suggests that the response

to endorse coercion in a sexual context is capturing something unique above and beyond more general tendencies to endorse coercion. Table 4 summarizes the results of the model tests and Figure 2 presents the predicted scores.

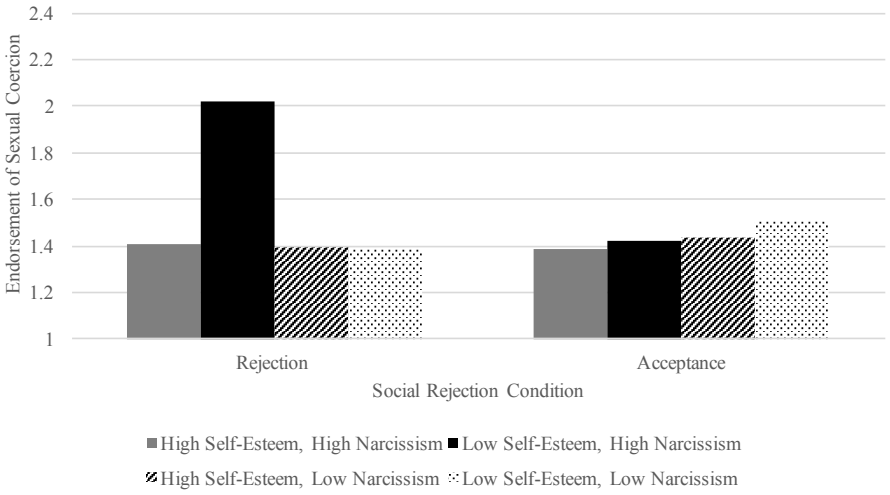

Figure 2. Self-esteem, overall narcissism and rejection condition predicting endorsement of sexual coercion.

Table 4. Study 2 Model Coefficients for Endorsement of Sexual Coercion

Predictor	b	t
Rejection Condition	.06	1.59
Self-Esteem	-.08	-2.40
Overall Narcissism	.10	1.64
Rejection x Self-Esteem	-.06	-1.67†
Rejection x Narcissism	.15	2.64**
Self-Esteem x Narcissism	-.10	-2.09*
Rejection x Self-Esteem x Narcissism	-.11	-2.32*
Non-sexual Coercion	.40	12.23***

*Note. †p<0.1 *p<.05 **p<.01 *** p<.001*

Next we tested the 2-way Social Rejection Condition by Self-Esteem interactions for people high and low in overall narcissism. Consistent with Study 1, the 2-way interaction was significant for people high in narcissism, b=-.13, t(307)=-2.68, p=.01, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.02, but not for those low in narcissism, b=.02, t(307)=.39, p=.70, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.0005. We therefore focused tests of simple effects on people with high narcissism only. Consistent with Study 1, the simple effect of social rejection condition was significant for highly narcissistic people with low self-esteem, b=.30, t(307)=3,81, p<.001, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.05, but not for those with high self-esteem, b=.10, t(307)=.16, p=.88, $\eta^2_{partial}$<.0001.

Narcissistic Admiration & Rivalry. Inconsistent with the previous study, the 3-way Social Rejection Condition by Self-Esteem by Narcissistic Rivalry interaction predicting endorsement of sexual coercion was not significant, but was trending in the same direction as Study 1, b=-.07, t(307)=-1.88, p=.061, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.01, while the 3-way Social Rejection Condition by Self-Esteem by Narcissistic Admiration interaction was on the threshold of significance, b=-.08, t(307)=-1.98, p=.048, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.01.[7] Thus, Study 2 did not replicate the findings from Study 1 that suggest the rivalry dimension of narcissism may uniquely contribute to the observed effects. Furthermore, additional tests substituting rivalry with rivalrous aggressiveness, b=-.03, t(307)=-.96, p=.336, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.003, rivalrous devaluation, b=-.06, t(307)=-1.82, p=.07, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.01, and rivalrous striving for superiority, b=-.05, t(307)=-1.74, p=.08, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.01, were also not significant, although the effects for devaluation were trending in the same direction as Study 1. Tables S-4 to S-6 in the supplemental materials summarize the results from the tests for each model.

Secondary Analyses

Gender Effects. Finally, we again tested models controlling for gender's potential interaction with the other predictors, as well as the potential moderating effect of gender[8] in Study 2. Unlike in Study 1, the 3-way Social Rejection Condition by Self-Esteem by Overall Narcissism interaction predicting sexual coercion was no longer significant when controlling for gender and its interaction with each predictor in our model, b=-.09, t(295)=-1.64, p=.10, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.01. However, the 4-way Social Rejection Condition by Self-Esteem by Overall Narcissism by Gender interaction was significant, b=-.13, t(295)=-2.33, p=.02, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.02.

Consistent with Study 1, decomposing the model for men and women found that the 3-way interaction was significant for men, b=-.22, t(295)=-2.98, p=.003, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.03, but not for women, b=.04, t(295)=-.46, p=.64, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.001. Furthermore, the 2-way Social Rejection Condition by Self-Esteem interaction was significant for men high, b=-.19, t(295)=-3.44, p=.001, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.04, but not low in narcissism, b=.09, t(295)=1.16, p=.25, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.005. Finally, consistent with Study 1, highly narcissistic men were more likely to endorse sexual coercion when they were reminded of social rejection compared to social acceptance when they were low, b=.39, t(295)=4.41, p<.001, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.06, but not high, b=-.04, t(295)=-.45, p=.65, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.001, in self-esteem. Overall, these findings, in conjunction with the findings from Study 1, suggest that it is highly narcissistic single men with low self-esteem who are more likely to endorse sexually coercive strategies when they are reminded of social rejection compared to social acceptance.

Meta-Analytic Summary

Studies 1 and 2 provided support for our hypothesis that people high in narcissism and low in self-esteem are more likely to endorse sexual coercion following reminders of social rejection than acceptance. Furthermore, this is particularly the case for single men. However,

there were some inconsistencies across studies, in particular across the sub-facets of narcissism, and some of the tests involving gender. In order to examine the consistency of the lower-order effects across studies, we used the strategy of testing our effects meta-analytically using Winer's (1971) method of combined *t*-tests. Small meta-analyses are a useful way of embracing inconsistencies across studies (Maner, 2014), while homing in on the reliability of effects across studies (Goh, Hall, & Rosenthal, 2016).

Reliability of the Overall Model. First, we examined the reliability of the 3-way Social Rejection Condition by Self-Esteem by Overall Narcissism interaction across studies.[9] This effect was significant across studies, z=-3.09, p=.002, r=-.12, as were the corresponding lower-order tests (ps<.005).[10] Thus, reliably across studies, single people high in narcissism and low in self-esteem were more likely to endorse sexual coercion when they were reminded of social rejection compared to social acceptance.

Reliability of the Narcissism Subscales. Next, we examined which, if any, of the narcissism subscales reliably accounted for the overall effects. First, the 3-way Social Rejection Condition by Self-Esteem by Narcissistic Admiration interaction was not significant, z=-1.41, p=.16, r=-.06. However, the 3-way Social Rejection Condition by Self-Esteem by Narcissistic Rivalry interaction was significant across studies, z=-3.09, p=.002, r=-.12, as were the corresponding lower-order tests (ps<.01). Neither rivalrous aggressiveness nor striving for superiority reliably interacted with social rejection or self-esteem to predict endorsement of sexual coercion across studies (ps>.22). However, the Social Rejection Condition by Self-Esteem by Narcissistic Rivalrous Devaluation interaction was significant across studies, z=-4.03, p<.001, r=-.15, and these effects were consistent across the lower-order effects (ps<.01). Thus, across studies, it was the rivalrous aspect of narcissism, and in particular the tendency to devalue

others, which best accounted for the endorsement of sexual coercion following reminders of social rejection among highly narcissistic single people with low self-esteem.

Reliability of Gender as a Moderator. Finally, we tested whether gender reliably moderated the observed effects. First, the 3-way Social Rejection Condition by Self-Esteem by Overall Narcissism interaction remained significant across studies when controlling for the interaction between gender and the other predictors in the model, z=-4.62, p<.001, r=-.17, suggesting that the overall model is consistent regardless of the effects of gender. Furthermore, the 4-way Social Rejection Condition by Self-Esteem by Overall Narcissism by Gender interaction for single people was also significant across studies, z=-5.20, p<.001, r=-.19. Consistent with earlier tests, the 3-way Social Rejection Condition by Self-Esteem by Overall Narcissism interaction was reliably significant for single men, z=-5,61, p<.001, r=-.21, as were the lower-order effects (ps<.001). An unexpected effect also emerged for women across studies, z=2.04, p=.04, r=.07. Unlike highly narcissistic men, highly narcissistic single women with low self-esteem were marginally *less likely* to endorse sexual coercion following reminders of social rejection compared to acceptance, z=-1.94, p=.052, r=-.07. Overall, these meta-analytic results suggest that highly narcissistic single men with low self-esteem were more likely to endorse sexual coercion following reminders of social rejection than acceptance, while women may do the opposite. Furthermore, an unexpected simple effect of social rejection condition also emerged across studies for single men low in both self-esteem and narcissism, z=-3.74, p<.001, r=-.14, and single men high in both self-esteem and narcissism, z=-1.96, p=.001, r=-.07, such that rejection led to *lower* endorsement than acceptance.

General Discussion

Sexual victimization remains a major problem for men and women globally. A willingness to endorse, accept and use sexually coercive strategies to persuade a partner into having sex contributes significantly to this issue. Thus, part of figuring out how to curtail the prevalence of sexual violence in society entails understanding the personality traits (e.g., self-esteem, narcissism) and social contexts (e.g., rejection, relationship status) that interact to shift perceptions of when sexual coercion is more or less acceptable. The present research takes some initial steps toward illustrating how self-esteem, narcissism and relationship status interact with feeling relatively accepted or rejected in the moment to predict when people endorse sexual coercion. Endorsement of sexual coercion differed as a function of personality, relationship status and feelings of relative acceptance versus rejection. Across two studies—one a student sample and the other a community sample with relatively older adults—single people with low self-esteem and high narcissism were more likely to approve of sexual coercion when they remembered a time they had been let down by a close other. These effects did not extend to endorsement of non-sexual coercion (e.g., "favors"). Sex is a communal, responsive and connecting act, whereas favors are broader in scope, encompassing a larger range of actions that can be utility based but do not necessarily provide the coercer with a sense of reconnection. This highlights an opportunity for additional research to examine how people use coercion to meet their social needs for acceptance and connection.

Furthermore, these effects emerged among men in particular. Whereas highly narcissistic single men with low self-esteem were more likely to endorse sexual coercion following reminders of social rejection, highly narcissistic single women with low self-esteem, single men high in both self-esteem and narcissism, and single men low in both self-esteem and narcissism were less likely to endorse sexual coercion when reminded of social rejection. These findings

underscore the need to disentangle the aspects of gender (e.g., perceived powerlessness; victimization risks; sexual entitlement; social norms and scripts) that may lead men and women to differentially endorse sexual coercion when they are feeling socially vulnerable.

Using the Narcissistic Admiration and Rivalry Questionnaire (Back et al., 2013) instead of other omnibus measures of narcissism provided us with the opportunity to test whether specific dimensions of narcissism best predicted our overall effect. Consistent with previous work pointing to the negative interpersonal consequences of narcissistic rivalry (Back et al., 2013; Leckelt et al., 2018; Wurst et al., 2016), we found that our effects were most likely being driven by people high in this dimension of narcissism. Looking at the different facets of narcissistic rivalry suggests that it is single people with low self-esteem and high narcissistic devaluation that are most likely to endorse sexual coercion following interpersonal rejection. This is consistent with research showing that people are more likely to excuse harm committed against others viewed as inferior (Bandura, 1999; Kteily et al., 2015). Interestingly, there were no consistent effects across both studies for the aggressiveness facet of narcissistic rivalry, suggesting that endorsement of sexual coercion may not be driven by anger or aggression, but instead by processes that facilitate thinking of others as means to an end, such as the devaluation of others.

It is worth noting that differences in self-esteem and narcissism did not predict endorsement of sexually coercive strategies when people were primed with acceptance. This is consistent with narcissistic individuals being humbled and less self-aggrandizing following acceptance (Rhodewalt & Eddings, 2002). It also highlights the importance of the social context. People who may typically disavow sexual coercion, and vice versa, are capable of shifting their endorsement of sexual coercion fluidly as a function of their feelings of inclusion. Programs

interested in developing interventions against sexual assault need to be mindful of how dispositional qualities interact with situational factors to change how people feel about sexual interactions. Additionally, our findings were further moderated by gender. Consistent with existing research suggesting men are more likely to endorse and engage in behaviors associated with sexual assault than women (Bohner et al., 2005; Chapleau et al., 2008), we found that it was highly narcissistic, single men with low self-esteem who were most likely to endorse sexual coercion following rejection. These findings may help explain the popularity and appeal of misogynistic online communities (for an overview see: Lilly, 2016; Marwick & Caplan, 2018) extolling men's right to sex, which often target socially excluded or vulnerable young men and have recently been linked to acts of violence and domestic terrorism.[11] However, it is worth noting that our findings remained consistent even when collapsing across gender. While women may endorse these types of behaviors to a lesser extent compared to men, women can also be participants in sexual victimization, either as perpetrators or bystanders. Whether these similarities in endorsement across gender translate into similar behavioral outcomes for men and women should be a focus for future investigation.

Limitations & Future Directions

The overall effects found in these studies were small. In part, this might be explained by social norms leading people to underreport the extent to which they endorse sexual coercion (Fisher, 1993). Using less explicit measures of sexual coercion could test this possibility.

The present work raises numerous directions for future research. First, it would be interesting to test whether being reminded of social rejection or acceptance by a real or potential sexual partner amplifies or attenuates the current findings. Given that feeling rejected leads people to dehumanize their rejectors (Bastian & Haslam, 2010), and that dehumanization is

associated with the mistreatment of others (Bandura, Underwood, & Fromson, 1975; Goff, Eberhardt, Williams, & Jackson, 2008), it seems plausible that the current effects could be amplified if people have the opportunity to coerce the person who has rejected them. Alternatively, the fact that our effects differed as a function of relationship status suggests that relationship maintenance strategies might inhibit people from endorsing sexual coercion against someone they know and care about, making their devaluation more difficult.

Relatedly, the current studies only highlight situations in which people are more likely to condone or endorse sexually coercive strategies. However, intents and attitudes do not always translate into enacted behaviors (Snyder & Tanke, 1976; Glasman & Albarracín, 2006). Someone might feel entitled to sex or devalue another person after a rejection but not act on those sentiments. Or, the temptation of an available other might prove too great for people in spite of what they say. Thus, future research should test whether these differences in endorsement translate into actual behavioral outcomes. Understanding the behavioral consequences of the interaction between dispositional and situational factors will help with the development of interventions aimed at stopping sexual assault and harassment from happening.

This work also suggests that the motivators driving endorsement may differ as a function of relationship status. In Study 1 (not tested in Study 2), it was single people who were low in self-esteem and high in narcissism who showed the greatest endorsement of sexual coercion when they were primed with rejection compared to acceptance. We theorized that this might be due to the relative abstractness the coerced other represents to single people compared to people in relationships. Consistent with the effects being driven by narcissistic devaluation, viewing another person as a means to an end may be less discomforting and easier to achieve when individuals do not have someone they care about in mind. Conversely, among people in

relationships, findings suggested that it was people high in both narcissism and self-esteem who were most likely to endorse sexual coercion. As mentioned previously, this could speak again to what the partner represents to them (e.g., someone responsive to their needs; a reliable source of sexual affection). In this instance, the concreteness of the partner and the presumed relational contract might facilitate compensatory responses to rejection that support sexual coercion. Although these assumptions are speculative at this time, they point to the important need to continue to consider the social contexts that shape assumptions around sex, coercion and consent, in tandem with situational and dispositional factors.

Finally, the current findings have potentially important ramifications for policy and legal cases. A logical next step to test is whether the endorsement of sexual coercion is associated with the likelihood that someone is willing to dismiss a victim's claim of sexual assault, or fail to condemn a perpetrator of a sexual crime.

Conclusions

Our findings suggest that rejection might push some people to endorse sexual coercion when they would otherwise not support such tactics. Personality factors (i.e., narcissism, self-esteem) and social contexts (i.e., relationship status) influenced the extent to which coercion was endorsed as a function of rejection. These findings highlight how focusing on personality or situational factors alone might obscure the path to understanding the "whos" and "whens" of sexual victimization.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Funding

The author(s) received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

References

Abele, A.E., & Wojciszke, B. (2007). Agency and communion from the perspective of self versus others. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 93,* 751-763. doi: 10.1037/0022-3514.93.5.751

Adams-Curtis, L. E., & Forbes, G. B. (2004). College women's experiences of sexual coercion: A review of cultural, perpetrator, victim, and situational variables. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse, 5*, 91-122.

Axt, J., & Trawalter, S. (2016). Whites demonstrate anti-Black associations but do not reinforce them. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 70,* 8-18. doi: 10.1016/j.jesp.2016.11.013

Back, M.D., Küfner, A.C.P., Dufner, M., Gerlach, T.M., Rauthmann, J.F., & Denissen, J.J.A. (2013). Narcissistic admiration and rivalry: Disentangling the bright and dark sides of narcissism. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 105,* 1013-1037. doi: 10.1037/A0034431

Back, M.D., Schmukle, S.C., & Egloff, B. (2010). Why are narcissists so charming at first sight? Decoding the narcissism-popularity link at zero acquaintance. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 98,* 132-145. doi:10.1037/A0016338

Bandura, A. (1999). Moral disengagement in the perpetration of inhumanities. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, *3*, 193-209. doi: 10.1207/s15327957pspr0303_3

Bandura, A., Underwood, B., & Fromson, M.E. (1975). Disinhibition of aggression through diffusion of responsibility and dehumanization of victims. *Journal of Research in Personality, 9,* 253-269. Doi:10.1016/0092-6566(75)90001-X

Bastian, B., & Haslam, N. (2010). Excluded from humanity: The dehumanizing effects of social ostracism. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 46*, 107-113. doi:10.1016/j.jesp.2009.06.022

Baumeister, R.F., Catanese, K.R., & Wallace, H.M. (2002). Conquest by force: A narcissistic reactance theory of rape and sexual coercion. *Review of General Psychology, 6,* 92–135. doi: 10.1037/1089-2680.6.1.92

Baumeister, R. F., & Leary, M. R. (1995). The need to belong: Desire for interpersonal attachments as a fundamental human motivation. *Psychological Bulletin, 117*, 497-529. doi:10.1037/0033-2909.117.3.497

Baumeister, R.F., Smart, L., & Boden, J.M. (1996). Relation of threatened egotism to violence and aggression: the dark side of high self-esteem. *Psychological Review*, *103*, 5-33. doi:10.1037/0033-295X.103.1.5

Bleidorn, W., Arslan, R. C., Denissen, J. J., Rentfrow, P. J., Gebauer, J. E., Potter, J., & Gosling, S. D. (2016). Age and gender differences in self-esteem—A cross-cultural window. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 111,* 396-410. DOI:10.1037/pspp0000078.supp

Bohner, G., Jarvis, C. I., Eyssel, F., & Siebler, F. (2005). The causal impact of rape myth acceptance on men's rape proclivity: Comparing sexually coercive and noncoercive men. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 35*, 819-828.

Bushman, B.J., Bonacci, A.M., van Dijk, M., & Baumeister, R.F. (2003). Narcissism, sexual refusal, and aggression: Testing a narcissistic reactance model of sexual coercion. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology,* 84, 1027-1040. Doi:10.1037/0022-3514.84.5.1027

Bryant-Davis, T., Chung, H., & Tillman, S. (2009). From the margins to the center: Ethnic minority women and the mental health effects of sexual assault. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse, 10,* 330-357. doi:10.1177/1524838009339755

Byers, E. S. (1996). How well does the traditional sexual script explain sexual coercion? Review of a program of research. *Journal of Psychology & Human Sexuality, 8*, 7-25.

Campbell, W.K., & Campbell, S.M. (2009). On the self-regulatory dynamics created by the peculiar benefits and costs of narcissism: A contextual reinforcement model and examination of leadership. *Self and Identity, 8,* 214-232. doi: 10.1080/15298860802505129

Campbell, W. K., Foster, C. A., & Finkel, E. J. (2002). Does self-love lead to love for others? A story of narcissistic game playing. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 83,* 340. doi: 10.1037//0022-3514.83.2.340

Campbell, W.K., Rudich, E.A., & Sedikides, C. (2002). Narcissism, self-esteem, and the positivity of self-views: Two portraits of self-love. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 28,* 358-368. Doi:10.1177/0146167202286007

Cameron, J.J., Stinson, D.A., Gaetz, R., & Blachen, S. (2010). Acceptance is in the eye of the beholder: Self-esteem and motivated perceptions of acceptance from the opposite sex. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 99,* 513-529. Doi:10.1037/a0018558

Center for Disease Control and Prevention. (2012). Sexual violence facts at a glance. Retrieved from https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/sexualviolence/datasources.html.

Chapleau, K. M., Oswald, D. L., & Russell, B. L. (2008). Male rape myths: The role of gender, violence, and sexism. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 23,* 600-615. DOI: 10.1177/0886260507313529

Collectif. (2018). *Nous défendons une liberté d'importuner, indispensable à la liberté sexuelle*. Retrieved from http://www.lemonde.fr/idees/article/2018/01/09/nous-defendons-une-liberte-d-importuner-indispensable-a-la-liberte-sexuelle_5239134_3232.html#eaS2UVg9T1IXi0cj.99

Conroy, S., & Cotter, A. Statistics Canada (2017). Self-reported sexual assault in Canada, 2014. Retrieved from http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/2017001/article/14842-eng.htm.

Davis, D. (2006). Attachment-related pathways to sexual coercion. In M. Mikulincer & G. S. Goodman (Eds.), Dynamics of romantic love: Attachment, caregiving, and sex (pp. 293-336). New York, NY, US: The Guilford Press.

Donnellan, M.B., Trzeniewski, K.H., Robins, R.W., Moffitt, T.E., & Caspi, A. (2005). Low self-esteem is related to aggression, antisocial behavior, and delinquency. *Psychological Science, 16,* 328-335. Doi:10.1111/j.0956-7976.2005.01535.x

Fisher, R.J. (1993). Social desirability bias and the validity of indirect questioning. *Journal of Consumer Research*, *20*, 303-315. doi: 10.1086/209351

Fisher, B.S., Cullen, F.T., & Turner, M.G. (2000). The Sexual Victimization of College Women. Research Report: U.S. Department of Justice.

Forbes. (2018). *Sexual Harassment In The Workplace In A #MeToo World*. Retrieved from https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbeshumanresourcescouncil/2017/12/20/sexual-harassment-in-the-workplace-in-a-metoo-world/#1c173bd95a42

Foster, J.D., Shrira, I. & Campbell, W.K. (2006). Theoretical models of narcissism, sexuality, and relationship commitment. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 23,* 367-386. Doi:10.1177/0265407506064204

Glasman, L.R., & Albarracín, D. (2006). Forming attitudes that predict future behavior: a meta-analysis of the attitude-behavior relation. *Psychological Bulletin*, *132*, 778. doi: 10.1037/0033-2909.132.5.778

Goetz, A. T., & Shackelford, T. K. (2010). Sexual coercion in intimate relationships scale. In T.D. Fisher, C.M. Davis, W.L. Yarber, & S.L. Davis (Eds.), Handbook of Sexuality-Related Measures (p.p., 125-127). Routledge.

Goff, P.A., Eberhardt, J.L., Williams, M.J., & Jackson, M.C. (2008). Not yet human: Implicit knowledge, historical dehumanization, and contemporary consequences. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 94,* 292-306. Doi:10.1037/00220-3514.94.2.292

Goh, J.X., Hall, J.A., & Rosenthal, R. (2016). Mini meta-analysis of your own studies: Some arguments on why and a primer on how. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, *10,* 535-549. doi: 10.1111/spc3.12267

Greenfield, L.A. (1997). Sex offenses and offenders: An analysis of data on rape and sexual assault. Bureau of Justice Statistics, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice.

Grijalva, E., Newman, D. A., Tay, L., Donnellan, M. B., Harms, P. D., Robins, R. W., & Yan, T. (2015). Gender differences in narcissism: A meta-analytic review. *Psychological Bulletin, 141,* 261. DOI: 10.1037/a0038231

Hepper, E. G., Hart, C. M., & Sedikides, C. (2014). Moving Narcissus: Can narcissists be empathic? *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 40, 1079-1091.

Howells, K., Daffern, M.D., & Day. A. (2008). Aggression and violence. In K. Soothill, P., Rogers, & M. Dolan (Eds.), Handbook of Forensic Mental Health (1st ed., pp.351-374). UK: Willan Publishing.

Impett, E.A., Muise, A., & Rosen, N.O. (2015). Is it good to be giving in the bedroom? A prosocial perspective on sexual health and well-being in romantic relationships. *Current Sexual Health Reports*, *7*, 180-190. doi: 10.1007/s1193

Jordan, C.H., Spencer, S.J., Zanna, M.P., Hoshino-Browne, E., & Correll, J. (2003). Secure and defensive high self-esteem. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *85*, 969-978. doi:10.1037/0022-3514.85.5.969

Kahn, A. S., Mathie, V. A., & Torgler, C. (1994). Rape scripts and rape acknowledgment. *Psychology of Women Quarterly, 18*, 53-66.

Kalra, G., & Bhugra, D. (2013). Sexual violence against women: Understanding cross-cultural intersections. *Indian Journal of Psychiatry, 55,* 244-249. doi:10.4103/0019-5545.117139

Kteily, N., Bruneau, E., Waytz, A., & Cotterill, S. (2015). The ascent of man: Theoretical and empirical evidence for blatant dehumanization. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 109*, 901-931. doi:10.1037/pspp0000048

Lamarche, V.M., & Murray, S.L. (2014). Selectively myopic? Self-esteem and attentional bias in response to potential relationship threats. *Social Psychological and Personality Science, 5,* 785-795. Doi:10.1177/1948550614532377

Lange, J., Crusius, J., & Hagemeyer, B. (2016). The Evil Queen's dilemma: Linking narcissistic admiration and rivalry to benign and malicious envy. *European Journal of Personality, 30,* 168-188. doi:10.1002/per.2047

Leary, M.R., Haupt, A.L., Strausser, K.S., & Chockel, J.T. (1998). Calibrating the sociometer: The relationship between interpersonal appraisals and state self-esteem. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 74,* 1290-1299. Doi:10.1037/0022-3514.74.5.1290

Leary, M.R., Tambor, E.S., Terdal, S.K., & Downs, D.L. (1995). Self-esteem as an interpersonal monitor: The sociometer hypothesis. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 68,* 518-530. Doi:10.1037/0022-3514.68.3.518

Leckelt, M., Küfner, A.C., Nestler, S., & Back, M.D. (2015). Behavioral processes underlying the decline of narcissists' popularity over time. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 109,* 856-871. doi:10.1037/pspp0000057

Leckelt, M., Wetzel, E., Gerlach, T.M., Ackerman, R.A., Miller, J.D., Chopik, W.J., . . . Back, M.D. (2018). Validation of the Narcissistic Admiration and Rivalry Questionnaire Short Scale (NARQ-S) in convenience and representative samples. *Psychological Assessment, 30,* 86-96. doi:10.1037/pas0000433

Lee, E., Ahn, J., & Kim, Y. J. (2014). Personality traits and self-presentation at Facebook. Personality and Individual Differences, 69, 162-167.

Lilly, M. (2016). 'The World is Not a Safe Place for Men': The Representational Politics of the Manosphere (Doctoral dissertation, Université d'Ottawa/University of Ottawa).

Maner, J. K. (2014). Let's put our money where our mouth is: If authors are to change their ways, reviewers (and editors) must change with them. *Perspectives on Psychological Science, 9,* 343–351. doi:10.1177/1745691614528215

Marigold, D.C., Holmes, J.G., & Ross, M. (2007). More than words: Reframing compliments from romantic partners fosters relationship security in low self-esteem individuals. *Jouranl of Personality and Social Psychology, 92,* 232-248. Doi:10.1037/0022-3514.82.2.232

Marwick, A. E. & Caplan, R. (2018) Drinking male tears: Language, the manosphere, and networked harassment. *Feminist Media Studies, 18*, 543-559, DOI:10.1080/14680777.2018.1450568

Muise, A. (2017). When and for whom is sex most beneficial? Sexual motivation in romantic relationships. *Canadian Psychology/Psychologie canadienne*, *58*, 69-74. doi:/10.1037/cap0000094

Muise, A., & Impett, E.A. (2015). Good, giving, and game: The relationship benefits of communal sexual motivation. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, *6*, 164-172.

Muise, A., Impett, E. A., Kogan, A., & Desmarais, S. (2013). Keeping the spark alive: Being motivated to meet a partner's sexual needs sustains sexual desire in long-term romantic relationships. *Social Psychological and Personality Science, 4,* 267-273. doi:10.1177/1948550612457185

Murray, S.L., Holmes, J.G., & Griffin, D.W. (1996). The self-fulfilling nature of positive illusions in romantic relationships: Love is not blind, but prescient. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 71,* 1155-1180. Doi:10.1037/0022-3514.71.6.1155

Murray, S.L., Holmes, J.G., & Griffin, D.W. (2000). Self-esteem and the quest for felt security: How perceived regard regulates attachment processes. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 78*, 478-498. doi: 10.1037/0022-3514.78.3.478

Murray, S.L., Holmes, J.G., & Griffin, D.W., Bellavia, G., & Rose, P. (2001). The mismeasure of love: How self-doubt contaminates relationship beliefs. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 27,* 423-436.

Murray, S.L., Holmes, J.G., & MacDonald, G., & Ellsworth, P. (1998). Through the looking glass darkly? When self-doubt turns into relationship insecurities. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 75,* 1459-1480.

Murray, S. L., Pinkus, R. T., Holmes, J. G., Harris, B., Gomillion, S., Aloni, M., ... & Leder, S. (2011). Signaling when (and when not) to be cautious and self-protective: Impulsive and reflective trust in close relationships. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 101,* 485. doi:10.1037/a0023233

Murray, S.L., Rose, P., Bellavia, G.M., Holmes, J.G., & Kusche, A.G. (2002). When rejection stings: How self-esteem contrains relationship-enhancement processes. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 83,* 556-573. Doi:10.1037/0022-3514.83.5.556

Office for National Statistics. (2013). An overview of sexual offending in England and Wales. Retrieved from http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20160106113426/http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/crime-stats/an-overview-of-sexual-offending-in-england---wales/december-2012/index.html.

Onoda, K., Okamoto, Y., Nakashima, K.I., Nittono, H., Yoshimura, S., Yamawaki, S., ... & Ura, M. (2010). Does low self-esteem enhance social pain? The relationship between trait self-esteem and anterior cingulate cortex activation induced by ostracism. *Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience, 5*, 385-391. doi:10.1093/scan/nsq002

Orehek, E. & Weaverling, C.G. (2017). On the nature of objectification: Implications of considering people as means to goals. *Perspective on Psychological Science, 12,* 719-730. Doi:10.1177/1745691617691139

Paulhus, D. L., & Jones, D. N. (2015). Measures of dark personalities. In *Measures of Personality and Social Psychological Constructs* (pp. 562-594).

Paulhus, D.L., Robins, R.W., Trzesniewski, K.H., & Tracy, J.L. (2004). Two replicable suppressor situations in personality research. *Multivariate Behavioral Resarch, 39,* 301-326

Raskin, R., & Novacek, J. (1989). An MMPI description of the narcissistic personality. *Journal of Personality Assessment, 53,* 66-80. Doi:10.1207/s15327752jpa5301_8

Rhodewalt, F., & Eddings, S.K. (2002). Narcissus reflects: Memory distortion in response to ego-relevant feedback among high-and low-narcissistic men. *Journal of Research in Personality*, *36*, 97-116. doi.org/10.1006/jrpe.2002.2342

Rosenberg, M. (1965). Society and the adolescent self-image. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Rosenthal, S.A., & Hooley, J.M. (2010). Narcissism assessment in social-personality research: Does the association between narcissism and psychological health result from a confound with self-esteem? *Journal of Research in Personality, 44*, 453-465. doi:10.1016/j.jrp.2010.05.008

Rosenthal, S.A., Montoya, R.M., Ridings, L.E., Rieck, S. M., & Hooley, J.M. (2011). Further evidence of the Narcissistic Personality Inventory's validity problems: A meta-analytic investigation—Response to Miller, Maples, and Campbell. *Journal of Research in Personality, 45*, 408-416. doi:10.1016/j.jrp.2011.06.004

Rudman, L.A., & Mescher, K. (2012). Of animals and objects: Men's implicit dehumanization of women and likelihood of sexual aggression. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *38*, 734-746. doi:10.1177/0146167212436401

Ryan, K. M. (1988). Rape and seduction scripts. Psychology of Women Quarterly, 12, 237-245.

Sable, M.R., Danis, F., Mauzy, D.L., & Gallagher, S.K. (2006). Barriers to reporting sexual assault for women and men: Perspectives of college students. *Journal of American College Health*, *55*, 157-162. doi:10.3200/JACH.55.3.157-162

Shackelford, T.K., & Goetz, A.T. (2004). Men's sexual coercion in intimate relationships: Development and initial validation of the sexual coercion in intimate relationships scale. *Violence and Victims, 19,* 541-556.

Smith, S. G., Basile, K. C., Gilbert, L. K., Merrick, M. T., Patel, N., Walling, M., & Jain, A. (2017). National intimate partner and sexual violence survey (NISVS): 2010-2012 State report. Retrieved from: https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/NISVS-StateReportBook.pdf

Snyder, M., & Tanke, E.D. (1976). Behavior and attitude: Some people are more consistent than others. *Journal of Personality*, *44*, 501-517. doi:10.1111/j.1467-6494.1976.tb00135.x

Sobsey, D. (1994). Violence and abuse in the lives of people with disabilities. *The End of Silent Acceptance*. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brooks Publishing Co, Inc.

Somerville, L. H., Kelley, W. M., & Heatherton, T. F. (2010). Self-esteem modulates medial prefrontal cortical responses to evaluative social feedback. *Cerebral Cortex, 20,* 3005-3013. doi: 10.1093/cercor/bhq049

Stinson, D.A., Cameron, J.J., Hoplock, L.B., & Hole, C. (2014). Warming up and cooling down: Self-esteem and behavioral responses to social threat during relationship initiation. *Self and Identity*, *14*, 189-213. doi:10.1080/15298868.2014.969301

Struckman-Johnson, C., Struckman-Johnson, D., & Anderson, P. B. (2003). Tactics of sexual coercion: When men and women won't take no for an answer. *Journal of Sex Research, 40*, 76-86. DOI: 10.1080/00224490309552168

Time's Up. (2018). *Time's Up Now*. Retrieved from https://www.timesupnow.com/

Twenge, J.M., & Campbell, W.K. (2003). Isn't it fun to get the respect that we're going to deserve? Narcissism, social rejection, and aggression. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 29,* 261-272. Doi:10.1177/0146167202239051

Wahab, S., & Olson, L. (2004). Intimate partner violence and sexual assault in native American communities. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse, 5,* 353-366. doi:10.1177/1524838004269489

Winer, B.J. (1971). Statistical principles in experimental design (2nd ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Wurst, S.N., Gerlach, T.M., Dufner, M., Rauthmann, J.F., Grosz, M.P., Küfner, A. C.P., . . . & Back, M.D. (2016). Narcissism and romantic relationships: The differential impact of narcissistic Admiration and Rivalry. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology. Advance online publication. doi: 10.1037/pspp0000113

Zeigler-Hill, V., Dahlen, E.R., & Madson, M.B. (2017). Self-esteem and alcohol use: Implications for aggressive behavior. *International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction, 15*, 1103-1117. doi: 10.1007/s11469-017-9764-9

Notes

[1] As of December 2017, a spreadsheet maintained by Dr. Karen Kelsky, recorded approximately 1,900 anonymous reports from people who had suffered sexual harassment in academia. The spreadsheet was still accessible on her blog (https://theprofessorisin.com/2017/12/01/a-crowdsourced-survey-of-sexual-harassment-in-the-academy/) as of October 1, 2018, at which point it had surpassed 2,400 reports.

[2] No participant wrote about a sexually rejecting/accepting experience.

[3] The original 34-item scale (Goetz & Shackelford, 2010; Shackelford & Goetz, 2004) asks people to indicate how often different coercive behaviors have occurred in their relationship within the past month (0=did not occur; 5=occurred 11 or more times). In order to assess endorsement of sexual coercion, we modified the questions to reflect permissibility of the different behaviors instead (i.e., "It is OK to threaten violence against a partner if they will not have sex with you" vs. "My partner threatened violence against me if I did not have sex with him"). We also collapsed across the items which differentiated between "threatening" and "hinting" to consolidate the scale into 16 items.

[4] None of the 2-way interactions were significant (*ps*>.07) when the higher-order interactions were included in the model (continuous variables centered at their mean). Furthermore, the 2-way interactions were not significant when the higher-order interactions were omitted from the model. We did not have a priori predictions regarding the 2-way interactions. The absence of

lower-order interactions is consistent with our hypothesis that endorsement of sexual coercion is fluidly responsive to the person's greater social context and personality profile.

[5] There was a significant main effect of narcissism, b=.67, t(312)=6.92, p<.001, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.13, and self-esteem, b=-.14, t(312)=-2.50, p=.01, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.02, predicting endorsement of non-sexual coercion, but no significant main effect of social rejection condition, b=-.03, t(312)=-.52, p=.60, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.001. Thus, as with sexual coercion, people high in narcissism were more likely to endorse coercion in a non-sexual context, while people high in self-esteem were less likely to endorse it. There were also no significant 2-way interactions (ps>.13). Furthermore, unlike sexual coercion, the 3-way Social Rejection Condition by Self-Esteem by Overall Narcissism interaction did not significantly predict endorsement of coercion in a non-sexual context, b=.03, t(308)=.38, p=.71, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.0005. This is consistent with the idea that sex provides people with a unique opportunity to regain social connection through intimacy, but that only some people are inclined to use coercive strategies to achieve it.

[6] This model no longer reached significance when non-sexual coercion was removed as a covariate, b=-.10, t(308)=-1.69, p=.09, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.01. However, the lower-order effects remained significant, and generally in the same direction as the effects in Study 1 (ps<0.05).

[7] Unlike in Study 1, the admiration dimension of narcissism was on the threshold of conventional significance. This effect was driven by the charmingness subscale of admiration, b=-.10, t(307)=-2.58, p=.01, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.02, and not by uniqueness or grandiosity (ps>.16). The social rejection condition by self-esteem interaction was further significant for people high in charm, b=-.14, t(307)=-2.99, p=.003, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.03, but not for people low in charm, b=.02, t(307)=.51, p=.61,

$\eta^2_{partial}$=.001. Finally, the simple effect of social rejection condition was significant for people high in charm and low in self-esteem, *b*=.34, *t*(307)=3.84, *p*<.001, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.05, but not high in self-esteem, *b*=.02, *t*(307)=.36, *p*=.72, $\eta^2_{partial}$=.0004. Thus, unlike in Study 1, narcissistic charmingness was more likely to be associated with endorsement of sexual coercion following reminders of social rejection. However, caution should be used in drawing inferences as these findings were not replicated in Study 1 and did not emerge in the internal meta-analysis. Nonetheless, future consideration should be given to the role of perceived charm in influencing the endorsement of sexual coercion.

[8] A total of 4 participants were excluded from the analyses involving gender because they either did not identify with a binary classification of gender (*n*=3, "Gender identity not listed) or did not respond to the question (*n*=1).

[9] Because participants in Study 2 were all single (i.e., romantically unattached), we meta-analyzed the lower order interactions from Study 1 when participants were also single.

[10] These effects remained significant when removing non-sexual coercion as a covariate from Study 2 (*p*s<=.01).

[11] Since 2014, there have been multiple violent attacks committed by individuals supporting this ideology, including a mass shooting that killed six people at the University of California, Santa Barbara in 2014 and a van attack that killed 10 people in Toronto, Canada in 2018.