Examining the relationship between sexual offenders 1

Examining the relationship between sexual offenders and their victims: interpersonal differences

between stranger and non-stranger sexual offences

Abstract

The present study examined the behavioural differences in sexual assault offences in

relation to the offender-victim relationship (stranger vs non-stranger). These differences were

specifically examined in the context of four interpersonal themes of interaction; dominance,

submission, hostility and co-operation (Alison & Stein, 2001; Porter & Alison, 2004). The details

of 100 sexual offence cases (50 stranger and 50 non-stranger) were content analysed, generating

58 dichotomous variables, covering offender and victim behaviour during the offence. Chi-square

tests comparing the two samples found that offenders who were strangers to their victims were

more likely than non-stranger offenders to display behaviours that indicate a hostile, violent,

offence style. In contrast, those offenders who knew their victims were more likely than strangers

to display a less violent and more personal, compliance gaining offence style. These findings are

discussed in terms of their implications for offender rehabilitation and victim support.

Keywords: rape, sexual assault, offender-victim relationship, circumplex, interpersonal

Sexual assaults have been portrayed historically as an offence committed by an unknown assailant, reflecting the common misconception that "real rapes" are caused by a crazed stranger, not by someone you may know and trust (Cowan, 2000). However, statistics overwhelmingly challenge this belief, as a large proportion of sexual assaults are committed by someone known to the victim (Feldhaus, Houry & Kaminsky, 2000), with over 70% of the victims of rape previously known to their assailant (Kelly, Lovett & Regan, 2005). Furthermore, these figures underestimate the true commonality of this type of offence. Feldhaus and colleagues examined reporting rates and found that 79% of women who had been raped by a 'stranger', compared with only 18% of women who were assaulted by a partner, reported the attack (Feldhaus et al., 2000).

Victims of acquaintance rape often do not report their ordeal to the authorities, perhaps due to beliefs surrounding sexual assaults of this nature that portray 'acquaintance' rape as less "real" than 'stranger' rape (La Free, 1988) and, therefore, less likely to go to trial and receive a conviction. Such beliefs further suggest that the victims of acquaintance assaults receive enjoyment from their ordeal and are more responsible for the offence itself (Johnson & Russ, 1989). A large number of studies have challenged these beliefs and shown that those who are raped by an acquaintance can suffer equal humiliation, physical harm and post-rape consequences as victims raped by a stranger (for example, Koss, Dinero, Seibel & Cox, 1988; Jones Wynn, Kroeze, Dunnuck, & Rossman, 2004). However, several behavioural differences between the two types of offences have been identified (Bownes, O'Gorman & Sayers, 1991; Jones, et al., 2004; Koss, et al., 1988; Stermac, Du Mont, & Kalemba, 1995).

Research has found significant differences between how a victim of sexual assault is approached. A vast body of evidence shows that sexual offences that occur indoors are more likely to involve an offender who has shared an intimate relationship with the victim (Jones et al., 2004; Porter & Alison, 2006), with the majority of these occurring within the victim's or

assailant's home (Stermac et al., 1995). In contrast, stranger attacks have been predominantly connected with outdoor offences (Stermac et al., 1995). Initial contact in acquaintance assaults has been found to be most commonly established by opportunistic approaches, for instance, where the victim is sleeping or otherwise incapacitated (Stermac et al., 1995). Additionally, group rape offenders have been found more likely to adopt a confidence style of approach with known compared to unknown victims (Porter & Alison, 2006).

The victim-offender relationship has also been linked to the attack itself, with stranger offences being more frequently linked to a greater degree of physical coercion, force (Stermac, et al., 1995) and verbal aggression being directed at the victim throughout the attack (Bownes, et al., 1991). Relationship is also a significant predictor of greater trauma sites among the victims of stranger sexual assaults (Stermac, et al., 1995) and more non-genital injuries (Jones, et al., 2004). Stranger offences have demonstrated a more frequent association with the threat, and direct involvement, of a weapon during the attack (Bownes, et al., 1991). However, frequency of anogenital trauma and type of genital trauma were just as extensive irrespective of relationship (Jones et al., 2004).

Offenders previously known to their victim have been shown to significantly more likely seek interaction with the victim after the overtly sexual part of the attack. Bownes, et al. (1991) reported that this occurred in 95% of 'known' assailant cases as opposed to 17% of 'stranger' sexual assault cases. Further, Bownes and colleagues found that coercive reciprocation of sexual activity occurred in proportionately more 'stranger' rapes. This suggests that 'known' offenders show a greater personal interest in their victims and that the sexual assault may be less based on sexual motivation. Indeed, several authors have proposed that sex offenders may be differentiated on their underlying motivations. For example, Groth (1979) developed a classification of rape around themes of anger, power and sadism. Later, Prentky and Knight's (1991) 'Massachusetts

Treatment Center: Rape' classification system (MTC:R3) developed nine types: opportunistic (high/low social competency), pervasively angry, sadistic (overt/muted), sexual non-sadistic (high/low social competency), and vindictive (moderate/low social competency). However, McCabe and Wauchope (2005) point out that the types combine behaviours, motives, and cognitions without differentiating among them. Further, McCabe and Wauchope (2005) assert that the distinctions among the MTC: R3 types have not been empirically determined, offering that 'it is unclear whether the Sadistic Rapist is predominantly motivated by anger, power, or sexual factors, as elements of all of these can be found in the suggested characteristics of this type' (p.242).

Victim resistance has been found to be similar irrespective of the offender-victim relationship (Koss, et al., 1988). Relationship has also been shown to be irrelevant in terms of the post-rape consequences of the assault and longitudinal studies have shown that victims of both 'stranger' and 'acquaintance' offences exhibit similar levels of post-rape depression, fear and social maladjustment (Ellis, Atkeson, & Calhoun, 1991). Therefore, although there may be behavioural differences during an offence, victims of all assaults suffer similar effects.

A review of the literature in this field gives a clear overview of the behavioural differences previously related to the offender-victim relationship, however these previous studies focus on individual variables rather than themes of behaviour as a whole. To access the overall behavioural differences related to offender-victim relationship within sexual offences, the present study seeks to explore differences across both chronological and behavioural themes.

An analytical approach to examine these behavioural differences collectively is the interpersonal circle, or circumplex, model, which was introduced by Leary (1957). Leary found empirical evidence that interpersonal behaviour could be represented geometrically by a circular ordering ('the interpersonal circle') built around four themes; dominance, hostility, co-operation

and submission. Later research by Alison and Stein (2001) applied this model to single offender sexual assaults and found that the pattern of behavioural variables supported three of the themes earlier hypothesised by Leary (1957). These themes reflected dominant, hostile and co-operative styles of offender behaviour. The submission theme was absent in the study.

A later study by Porter and Alison (2004) explored the interpersonal model in group rape and found all four interpersonal themes present. Further, the authors identified that the offendervictim behaviour conformed, at least to some extent, to the principles of complementarity (Kiesler, 1983) that are hypothesised to govern the circumplex. These principles predict that Dominant interpersonal behaviour is likely to elicit Submission in others (and vice versa), while co-operative behaviour is likely to invoke co-operation in others and Hostility likely to produce Hostile reactions. The interpersonal themes and how they relate to the offender-victim interactions are outlined below.

#### Dominance

A Dominant style of offender behaviour is focused on maintaining control of the victim, often involving the immediate use of force or a weapon. Physical control is maintained throughout the offence, often through the use of a gag, blindfold or the offender's own weapon (Alison & Stein, 2001). These high levels of dominance tend to suppress any form of victim resistance. Therefore, while the offender engages in a dominant style of approach, the victim is forced into a state of submission (Porter & Alison, 2004).

#### Submission

A Submissive style of offending is likely to be rare, but may involve the offender giving some form of (pseudo-) control to the victim. Offenders' who exhibit submissive behaviour may rely on a trust, or confidence, approach where they not only deceive the victim but actually place them in a position of 'control' by allowing them to choose to interact with the offender (Porter &

Alison, 2004). According to the principles of complementarity, submissive offender behaviour is likely to elicit dominant victim behaviour. Therefore, victim variables within this theme are likely to be oriented around victim resistance.

## Co-operation

Co-operative interactions involve attempts by the offender to force the victim to participate in the attack. For example, forcing victims to remove their own clothes or kiss the offender are often present, as well as the offender spending extended time with the victim. Offenders who commit offences with a co-operative, or compliance gaining style often engage in verbal rather than physical interactions, and maintain compliance through threatening their victim (Porter & Alison, 2004). Further, in line with the principles of complementarity, victims tend to respond with compliance or attempt their own co-operative strategies such as pleading with the offender (Porter and Alison, 2004).

### Hostility

Hostile interactions involve overtly aggressive interaction between offender and victim, involving violent and aggressive behaviour beyond that necessary to commit the offence. Porter and Alison (2004) found that violence is generally physical but can be manual or involve the assistance of a weapon, which will be used to actively harm the victim. Further, the victim can act in a reciprocal aggressive manner, screaming and displaying fierce resistant behaviours by kicking, scratching or biting the offender (Porter & Alison, 2004).

Although literature has formerly focused on behavioural differences in sexual offences with different offender-victim relationships, no previous study has examined these behaviours in relation to the interpersonal model or the themes that compose it. The literature explored portrays that sexual assaults are generally more violent when the offender is unknown to the victim (Jones et al., 2004; Stermac et al., 1995), while offenders who are previously known to the victim tend

to interact and show higher levels of personal interest towards their victims (Bownes et al., 1991). This study will investigate the hypothesis that the offender-victim relationship within a sexual offence will have a significant impact on the interpersonal theme of behaviour during and after the offence, in terms of both the offender and their victim. For example, unknown offenders may elicit more hostile styles of offence behaviour, while known offenders may elicit more cooperative styles of offence behaviour. The study will focus on the behavioural differences across the four interpersonal themes (dominance-submission-co-operation-hostility), as well as observing any differences in the chronology of the offence (approach - attack - outcome).

### Method

# Sample

The sample consisted of 100 cases of sexual offences from the content analysis of law reports. Half of the cases involved offenders who were strangers to their victim (n=50) and half of the cases involved offenders who were previously acquainted with their victim (n=50). The current analysis classed 'known' offenders as people who were known to their victim before the night/day of the incident, as identified in the law report. All cases in the present sample occurred in Britain between 1979 and 2005.

The sample cases consisted of 100 separate offences, all 100 offenders were male. The offenders' age was known in 66 cases, for which the ages ranged from 15-50 years with a mean age of 26 (SD± 10.84). The sample cases consisted of 100 separate victims, in the majority of cases the victim was female (n = 97), with the remaining three victims male. The victims' age was known in 72 cases ranging from 13-71 years, giving a mean age of 21 (SD± 9.41). Figures within this study reflect that generally the dynamics of these offences include a young female being assaulted by a young male, reinforcing recent Home Office statistics that suggest similar

patterns (Walker, Kershaw & Nicholas, 2006).

# Design

In order to test for significant behavioural differences within stranger compared to nonstranger offences, chi-square was employed to compare the frequencies of different variables found in each theme, where the relationship of the offender to the victim was the independent variable (IV) while the behaviours displayed throughout the offence were the dependent variables (DVs). Where expected frequencies were less than 5, Fisher's exact test was employed to test for significance.

#### Data

The sample cases were obtained by searching databases of UK Law reports. These law reports provided summaries of all the relevant case details, including the offenders' and victims' details, facts of the crime and also the court decision. The criteria for inclusion of a case was on the basis that the offence involved a sexual assault or attempted sexual assault and that the offender had been convicted and found guilty of the offence, accordingly the facts reported had been deemed to be true by a judge and jury. Further, cases were retained for analysis only if detail was provided on the behavioural details of the offender and victim during the assault. As such, the sample comprises a random sample of cases, but within certain set research parameters to allow the testing of the hypotheses within the current design framework.

Using law reports for research can be limited as the information has not been originally collected for the aim of scientific analysis. For example, some features of interest to our study, such as demographic data or victim impact, may not have been recorded for the purpose of the court case summary. Therefore, we cannot be sure that a particular variable *did not* occur within each offence just because it was not recorded. In response to this critique, however, law reports likely reflect a more accurate nature of offences than offender statements or victim statements alone as they generally compile evidence from a combination of multiple sources (including all relevant witness statements). Further, such reports are likely to have a greater degree of objectivity than individual statements, which may be tainted by subjective bias. It is noted that law reports are generally considered more accurate than other forms of archival data as they will have undergone harsh legal examination in order to be presented in the courtroom and, unlike some archival sources such as victim impact statements, law reports are easily accessible for research purposes. For further discussion of law reports as a data source and the advantages of archival sources in general see Porter and Alison (2004) and Alison, Snook and Stein (2001), respectively.

## **Data Coding**

The 100 cases were content analysed for the presence of sexual offence variables. Fifty-eight dichotomous (occurred / did not occur) offender and victim behaviour variables were generated from the data. The full list of variables and descriptions can be found in appendix A. To test the inter-rater reliability of the variables, two independent raters coded six randomly selected cases for the presence and absence of the 58 variables. The two raters were in agreement in 92% of their judgments (Cohen's Kappa = .79, p<.001).

Fifty of the behaviours (35 offender behaviours and 15 victim behaviours) were found to relate to one of the four interpersonal themes of *dominance*, *hostility*, *submission* and *cooperation*. These categorisations were made firstly on the basis of the previous research by Alison and Stein, (2001) and Porter and Alison, (2004). Variables that had not been analysed within previous research were categorised using inter-rater agreement, whereby ten independent

raters coded the variables and the most agreed upon theme for each variable was selected.

Appendix B shows how the 50 variables fit within the four interpersonal themes. The remaining eight behaviours were associated with sexual acts during the offence and inconsistent with the interpersonal model, both in terms of having no previous research relating them to the model and no reasonable assumptions to be made regarding an appropriate theme.

### Results

In order to test the hypothesis that the offender-victim relationship has a significant impact on the behaviour displayed within an offence, chi-square analysis was employed to analyse the frequencies of variables within each condition and compare them for any significant differences. Individual variables were analysed as well as any patterns of significance across the chronology and themes of the offence.

### Dominance

The Dominance theme involves dominant offender behaviour and submissive victim behaviour, in accordance with the principle of complementarity. Table 1 shows that in the Dominance theme, strangers were found to be significantly more likely than non-strangers to use a 'blitz attack',  $\chi^2(1, n=100)=7.29$ , p<.01, 'kidnap' the victim,  $\chi^2(1, n=100)=9.65$ , p<.01, use a 'weapon (own) to control',  $\chi^2(1, n=100)=9.54$ , p<.01, and 'steal object' from the victim  $\chi^2(1, n=100)=5.98$ , p<.05. These variables occur across all stages of the offence and suggest that unknown offenders may be more likely to adopt dominant styles of behaviour during a sexual offence than those offenders known to the victim.

## [Insert Table 1 about here]

## Hostility

The circumplex theme of Hostility involves both hostile offender behaviour and also

hostile victim reactions. Table 2 shows that, in the Hostility theme, stranger offenders were significantly more likely than non-strangers to 'remove victim's clothing',  $\chi^2(1, n=100)=4.96$ , p < .05, be 'violent' during the attack,  $\chi^2(1, n=100) = 8.73$ , p < .01, and 'beat victim',  $\chi^2(1, n=100) =$ 4.89, p<.05. This suggests that unknown offenders may be more likely than known offenders to adopt hostile offence styles, particularly during the attack stage of the offence.

# [Insert Table 2 about here]

# Co-operation

The Co-operation theme involves offender behaviour that attempts to force compliance from the victim. Table 3 shows that, within the Co-operation theme, known offenders (nonstrangers) were significantly more likely than strangers to 'prolong offence',  $\chi^2(1, n=100)=6.83$ , p<.01, 'force victim to participate',  $\chi^2(1, n=100)=4.24$ , p<.05, display 'romantic gestures',  $\chi^2(1, n=100)=4.24$ , q<.05, display 'romantic gestures',  $\chi^2(1, n=100)=4.24$ , q<.05, display 'romantic gestures',  $\chi^2(1, n=100)=4.24$ , q<.05, n=100)= 5.91p<.05 and 'threaten victim not to report',  $\chi^2(1, n=100)$ =4.76, p<.05. This suggests that known offenders may be more likely than strangers to adopt co-operative styles of behaviour during all stages of an offence.

## [Insert Table 3 about here]

### Submission

The submission theme involves submissive (or pseudo-submissive) behaviour from the offender and, according to the principle of complementarity, victim dominance. Table 4 shows that, within the Submission theme, known offenders were significantly more likely than stranger offenders to use a 'trust approach',  $\chi^2(1, n=100)=4.01$ , p<.05, and 'non-violent attack',  $\chi^2(1, n=100)=4.01$ , q<.05, n=100)= 9.01, p<.01. This suggests that known offenders may be more likely than strangers to adopt Submissive styles of behaviour, particularly in their approach of the victim. However, evidence within this theme is not as pronounced as that found within the Co-operative theme.

### [Insert Table 4 about here]

There were no significant differences found between the victims' behaviours during any of the four themes. All of the significant variables were related to the offenders' behaviour during the offence, as illustrated in tables 1-4, suggesting no significant differences in the ways victims resisted the offences. In addition, table 5 shows that there were no differences found between the stranger and non-stranger assault with respect to the sexual acts that were performed during the offence. Vaginal penetration, digital penetration and fellatio were the most common sexual acts for both offence groups.

### [Insert Table 5 about here]

#### Discussion

The current study was designed to examine behavioural differences in two types of sexual offence; 'stranger' and 'non-stranger' assaults. The research looked at the offenders' behaviour towards the victim and the victims' response. The original hypothesis was partially supported. The offender-victim relationship did have some impact on the behaviour of the offender, however, no significant differences in the victims' behaviour during the offence were found.

'Stranger' offences were significantly more likely to be associated with dominant and hostile offence styles such as; approaching the victim with a blitz attack, or the offender beating or using a weapon to threaten or control the victim. In comparison, 'known' offences were found to be significantly associated with less violent and more personal offence styles, reflecting pseudo-submission and compliance gaining, such as; approaching the victim with a trust approach, making the victim participate in the attack and showing romantic gestures to the victim. Therefore, although not all variables were significant an interesting trend was still

observed within the direction of significance. Interestingly, there were no significant differences observed within the chronological stages of the attack, with all stages having a comparatively similar number of significant variables within each, suggesting that no offence stage has more pronounced differences than any other. This suggests that the differences found in the present study are likely to be a function of the offenders and the offender-victim relationship, rather than the context of the offence. That is, offenders do not change their behaviour according to the offence stages, but are likely to show consistency within the crime. This has implications for classifying offenders. However, while the present paper has used a thematic approach, it has statistically examined behaviours in specific offences from a bivariate perspective, allowing a platform for future work to explore issues of offender classification. Indeed, classification is a complex issue, involving a number of methodological and theoretical concerns. Future research would need to explore a variety of both selectivity and sensitivity criteria, within and between both offenders and offences, in order to test the reliability of the present model for classifying individuals for either investigative or therapeutic purposes.

The present study's finding that 'stranger' assaults were more violent is supported extensively by previous research that shows that 'stranger' offences are likely to display more physical force (Stermac et al., 1995) verbal aggression and involvement of a weapon (Bownes et al., 1991) compared to known offences. This previous literature also supports the notion that assaults by strangers may be associated with dominant and hostile offence styles as both styles are connected with high levels of violence (Alison & Stein, 2001). In contrast, the present study directly contradicts research by Koss, et al. (1988) that concluded that the closer the relationship the greater the physical force. Historical research also supports findings that 'known' assaults are less violent and more personal in nature. Stermac et al. (1995) showed that assaults by acquaintances were associated with less violence than assaults by strangers while, Bownes et al.

(1991) found that known offenders were more likely to interact with their victim beyond the sexual stage of the attack. This supports the present researchers' conclusion that 'known' offences are likely to be more prolonged and could suggest a difference behind the motivations of sexual offenders, signifying that acquaintance offences may be less motivated by purely sexual motives.

Furthermore, research has shown that 'known' offenders are more likely to engage in affectionate behaviour towards their victims (Orlando & Koss, 1983), supporting the current findings that romantic gesturers were more likely to occur in 'known' offences. These findings could be attributed to the fact that a 'known' assailant may wish to create an illusion that the victim is experiencing mutual enjoyment and even creating a kind of 'pseudo-relationship' between themselves and the victim (Canter & Heritage, 1990). This conclusion is supported by the idea that these behaviours are frequently present within normal consensual relationships (McCabe & Wauchope, 2005). Literature also supports the theory within the current study that 'known' assaults may be more associated with a *co-operative* (compliance gaining) offence style as this style is connected with involvement of the victim and prolonged offences (Porter & Alison, 2004).

Drawing on the work of Groth (1979), Hazelwood and Burgess (1987) developed four types of rapists: the Power Reassurance rapist, the Power Assertive rapist, the Anger Retaliatory rapist, and the Anger Excitation rapist. The compliance-gaining (co-operative) behaviour associated with non-stranger sexual assaults in the present study could reflect the Power Reassurance rapist; offender behaviours said to suggest an underlying lack of confidence and inadequacy, or belief that the offence is consensual, expressed through minimal force. In contrast, the more dominant stranger offence behaviour seen in the present study may reflect Hazelwood and Burgess' (1987) Power Assertive type, where the offender is seeking to dominate the victim

and, thus, does not want the victim to be a participant. Further, the hostile stranger offence behaviour found in the present study could be likened to the Anger Excitation category, which involves a high degree of violence and is said to be at the opposite end of a continuum to the Power Reassurance category (similarly hostility is predicted as opposite to Co-operation in the interpersonal circle model).

A possible reason for the variations in violence levels between offences could be explained by the idea that offenders who are unknown to their victims may be more readily able to dehumanise them. A study by Bandura, Underwood and Fromson (1975) demonstrated that escalations of aggression occurred under conditions where participants were able to dehumanise their victims. This may provide an explanation for why 'unknown' offenders act more violently towards their victims, while 'known' offenders find it harder to dehumanise a victim who has been known to them.

In contrast, the current study shows that 'known' offenders are more likely to engage in certain pseudo-submissive behaviours such as a 'trust approach'. According to research into submission offence styles by Porter and Alison (2004), the offender within this style of offence often gives some form of control to the victim. Research has shown that victims often lose trust in others (DeSantis, 2000) as well as in themselves and their own judgments (National Centre for Victim of Crime, 1992). This may reflect feelings of self-blame because they were given this 'control', despite the reality being that these are manipulative strategies by offenders designed to place victims in vulnerable situations. Warsaw (1988) confirmed that victims of assaults by acquaintances are more likely to blame themselves for the attack than those assaulted by strangers. Victim support for 'known' assault victims should focus on rebuilding trust levels and eradicating these beliefs of self-blame, the use of cognitive behavioural therapy may be of some value in correcting these cognitive distortions.

An interesting area for future research, may be to investigate whether offenders' behaviour is limited to a particular offence style i.e. choosing 'known' or 'unknown' victims, as this could imply that differentially aimed treatment for stranger and acquaintance assailants could be beneficial in terms of rehabilitation. For example, those that target strangers, using a more hostile or dominant approach may have different cognitions or different interpersonal behaviour in general situations from those who target acquaintances with compliance-gaining strategies.

The current study has drawn conclusions that are offered support from previously published research, which would suggest that the research has a high level of reliability and validity. However, there are critiques of the data source that should be addressed. Law reports often fail to report all of the available facts. This could have affected results in comparison to if the data set had been complete. It may, therefore, be advantageous in future studies to draw from a variety of archival sources, including witness, police and victim impact statements as well as law reports to gain a fuller picture of the available data for each case. Even though the law reports are based upon all these other sources, reporting is often limited to those facts that are relevant to the outcome of the court case.

A further critique for the current study is that it reflected a rather select sample of sexual offences, as it only analysed reported and convicted cases. Kelly, et al. (2005) showed that 80% of sexual offences go unreported and for those that are, only 10% are convicted (Lloyd & Walmsley, 1989). Findings may therefore not be representative of all sexual offence cases.

A further aspect of the study that could be explored in more detail is the categorisation of known and unknown offenders. Studies that have further refined the research categories to compare strangers, acquaintances and intimates have reported some conflicting results. For example, as previously noted, Koss, et al. (1988) concluded that the closer the relationship between the offender and victim, the greater the physical force present in the offence. Further,

Ruparel, C. (2004) reported that, while stranger rapes were more likely to involve additional violence than acquaintance rapes (a result supported by the present findings), intimate rapes were actually the most likely to involve additional violence. Similarly, Du Mont, (1998) found that, when examining variables relating to coercion, violence, and physical trauma, assaults by husbands or boyfriends were more violent and resulted in more physical trauma to victims than assaults by other known assailants. Overall, the results indicated that husband/boyfriend assaults were most similar to those committed by strangers. The current analysis classed 'known' offenders as people who were known to their assailant before the night of the incident. However, a possible future improvement could be to focus on degree of trust and emotional intimacy rather than relationship.

In conclusion, the relationship victims share with their assailants can have a significant impact on certain behavioural characteristics displayed within a sexual offence. This is reinforced by research showing that 'rape behaviours' result from an interaction between the offender, the victim and the environment in which the crime occurs (Santtila, Junkkila, & Sandnabba 2005). According to the current study, the relationship between an offender and their victim will have an impact on their interaction, however other factors are equally important, such as the existing context within which the offence occurs. While there may be difficulty in directly categorising the type of offence based solely on the relationship between the victim and their attacker, certain differences were apparent in the current study and should be addressed. Most importantly, therapists and all professionals involved in victim support should be aware not only of the shared distressing features but also of the differences that exist between 'stranger' and 'acquaintance' rape so that they are better able to relate to the victims' experience and aid in their recovery appropriately.

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# Appendix A: Full coding dictionary

### **DOMINANCE:**

Approach:

Blitz Immediate use of violence Surprise Sudden attack from behind Gag victim Offender covers victim's mouth

Blindfold victim Offender covers victim's eyes with blindfold, including

items of clothing

Offender ties either victim's hands or legs Restrain victim

Offender takes victim somewhere and keeps him/her there Kidnap

Intoxicates victim Offender uses alcohol / drugs to intoxicate victim

Attack:

Weapon (own) to control Offender uses a weapon he has brought to the scene to

control the victim through threats

Offender grabs the victim by the hair Grabs hair

Sexual humiliation Offender humiliates victim more than in normal assault,

e.g. Ejaculates over her/him

Victim did not do anything, motionless Victim passive Too scared to scream Victim too scared to call out for help Victim incapacitated Victim asleep / intoxicated/ unconscious

Outcome:

Steals object Offender steals something from the victim, for example

money, jewellery, clothing etc.

### **Submission:**

Approach:

Trust approach Offender gains trust of victim, talks to first or entices

deception

Opportunistic approach Offender takes advantage of situation, for example the

victim drunk / asleep

Non-violent attack Minimal force used and victim sustains little physical harm

Attack:

Victim struggles Victim struggles with offender to escape

Victim refuses to co-operate Victim will not comply with offender verbally, physically

or both

Outcome:

Victim escapes Victim escapes from offender Someone comes to victim's aid Victim rescued

### **HOSTILITY:**

Approach:

Extensively violent More violence used than necessary to control victim

Attack:

Uses weapon (own) to harm Offender uses a weapon he has brought to scene to harm

the victim

Pinioned victim Offender restrains victim manually - using own hands /

legs

Removes victim's clothing Offender removes victim's clothing himself either

manually or with the use of a weapon

Weapon (improvised) to harm Offender uses a weapon he finds at scene to harm the

victim

Sexual comments Offender engages in overtly sexual conversation with

victim

Multiple sexual acts

More than one sexual act committed by same offender

Offender beats victim Offender punches / kicks victim

Violent Maximum force used and victim sustains physical injuries

Victim fierce fight Victim physically attacks offender -kick / punch / scratch /

bite etc.

Victim screams for help

Victim physical resistance Victim physically resists attack - struggling/kicking

Outcome:

Kills victim Attack ends by offender killing his victim

# **CO-OPERATIVE:**

Approach:

Prolonged offence Time spent with victim is longer than necessary to rape
Threatens victim Offender threatens victim to comply / not scream

Attack:

Makes victim participate Offender makes victim participate in attack, e.g. taking

clothes off, saying chosen phrases or moving in particular

ways

Makes victim undress self Victim forced to take her/his own clothes off

Romantic gestures Offender displays romantic gesturers - arm around etc,

including romantic language

Interest in victim's personal life Offender shows an interest in the victim's personal life

Kisses victim Offender kisses or tries to kiss the victim during the attack

Victim pleads With offender to stop

Victim verbally resists - pleading / screaming

Victim compliant Victim does as told during attack, puts up little fight

Victim cries Victim cries during the offence taking place

Victim dissuades offender with story Victim tells offender a story to try to dissuade him from

completing the act e.g. menstruating / pregnant

**Outcome:** 

Threatens victim not to report Offender threatens victim not to tell anyone about the

incident

Leaves victim Offender leaves victim where offence took place Lets victim go Offender tells the victim s/he can go/leave Cry / apologize Offender cries or apologizes after the attack

### **SEXUAL BEHAVIORS:**

Offender penetrates victim's vagina with his penis Vaginal Penetration **Digital Penetration** Offender penetrates victim's vagina with his finger (or

fingers)

Offender forces victim to perform oral sex on him Fellatio Offender penetrates victim's anus with his penis **Anal Penetration** 

Offender attempts to penetrate victim's vagina with his Attempted Vaginal penetration

penis but fails to do so

Offender sucks or bites the victim's breasts Sucks / bites breasts

Penetration with an object Offender penetrates the victim's vagina or anus with an

object

Cunnilingus Offender performs oral sex on the victim interpersonal themes.

	DOMINANCE		SUBMISSION
Approach:	blitz	Approach:	trust approach
	surprise		opportunistic approach
	gag victim		non-violent attack
	blindfold victim		
	restrain victim		
	kidnap		
	intoxicates victim		
Attack:	weapon (own) to control victim	Attack:	victim struggles
	grabs hair		victim refuses to co-operate
	sexual humiliation		
	victim passive		
	too scared to scream		
	victim intoxicated / asleep		
Outcome:	steals object	Outcome:	victim escapes
			victim rescued
	HOSTILITY		CO-OPERATION
Approach:	extensively violent	Approach:	
			threatens victim to comply/not
A 1		A 1	scream
Attack:	weapon (own) to harm	Attack:	makes victim participate
	pinioned victim		makes victim undress herself
	removes victim's clothing		romantic gestures
	weapon (improvised) to harm		interest in victims personal life
	sexual comments		kisses victim
	multiple sexual acts		victim pleads
	beats victim		victim verbal resistance
	violent		victim compliant
	victim fierce fight		victim cries
	victim screams		victim dissuades offender with story
	victim physical resistance		
Outcome:	kills victim	Outcome:	threatens victim not to report
			leaves victim
			lets victim go
			cries / apologizes

Table 1: frequency and chi-squared values (df = 1) of dominance behaviours across 100 rape offences, half stranger and half acquaintances of the victim.

DOMINANCE  $\chi^2$ Variable Stranger Non-stranger p (n=50)(n=50)Surprise Attack 8 10 .27 Approach: .603 **Blitz Attack** 5 7.29 **16** <.01 Gagged Victim 10 .806 11 .06 2 2 Blindfold victim\* 0 1.00 Restrain victim\* 3 .49 6 .295 **Kidnap** 26 11 9.65 <.01 Intoxicate victim 6 4 .44 .505 5 Attack: Weapon (own) to control victim 18 9.54 <.01 Grabs hair 5 8 .80 .372 24 Sexual humiliation 18 1.48 .224 7 Victim passive 6 .09 .766 Victim too scared to scream 9 11 .25 .617 7 Victim intoxicated/ asleep 5 .38 .538 8 Outcome: Steal object 1 5.98 <.05

Bold- significant.

<sup>\*</sup> used fishers exact.

Table 2: frequency and chi-squared values (df = 1) of hostility behaviours across 100 rape offences, half stranger and half acquaintances of the victim.

offences, that stranger and that acquaintances of the victim.							
HOSTILITY							
	Variable	Stranger	Non-stranger	$\chi^2$	p		
		(n=50)	(n=50)	λ.	Γ		
Approach:	Extensively Violent	16	16	.00	1.00		
	•	10					
Attack:	Uses own weapon to harm*	0	3	3.09	.121		
	Pinion victim	21	16	1.53	.216		
	Remove victim's clothing	41	31	4.96	<.05		
	Weapon (improvised) to harm	5	8	.80	.372		
	Sexual comments*	2	5	1.38	.218		
	Multiple sexual acts	27	23	.64	.424		
	Beat victim	28	17	4.89	<.05		
	Violent	24	10	<b>8.73</b>	<.01		
	Victim physical resistance	23	18	1.03	.309		
	Victim fierce fight	12	9	.54	.461		
	Victim screams	24	17	2.03	.155		
Outcome:	Kills victim*	0	3	3.09	.121		

<sup>\*</sup> used fishers exact. Bold- significant.

Table 3: frequency and chi-squared values (df = 1) of co-operative behaviours across 100 rape offences, half stranger and half acquaintances of the victim.

CO-OPERATION					
	Variable	Stranger (n=50)	Non-stranger $(n=50)$	$\chi^2$	p
Approach:	Prolong offence	6	17	6.83	<.01
	Threatens victim to comply/not scream	25	19	1.98	.159
Attack:	Makes victim participate	26	36	4.24	<.05
	Makes victim undress	7	6	.09	.766
	Interest in victim's personal life*	4	1	1.90	.181
	Kisses victim	11	18	2.38	.123
	Romantic gestures	15	27	5.91	<.05
	Victim verbal resistance	25	25	.00	1.00
	Victim compliant	10	12	.23	.629
	Victim dissuades offender with story	6	4	.44	.505
	Victim pleads	15	19	.71	.398
	Victim cries	19	20	.04	.838
Outcome:	Threatens victim not to report	4	12	4.76	<.05
	Leaves victim	19	15	.71	.398
	Lets victim go	14	18	.74	.391
	Cry / apologize	3	9	3.41	.065

<sup>\*</sup> used fishers exact.

Bold- significant.

Table 4: frequency and chi-squared values (df = 1) of submission behaviours across 100 rape offences, half stranger and half acquaintances of the victim.

SUBMISSION						
	Variable	Stranger	Non-stranger	$\chi^2$	p	
		(n=50)	(n=50)			
Approach:	Trust approach	21	31	4.01	<.05	
	Opportunistic approach*	5	4	.122	.500	
	Non-violent attack	9	23	9.01	<.01	
Attack:	Victim struggles	25	22	.36	.548	
	Victim refuses to co-operate	27	27	.00	1.00	
Outcome:	Victim escapes	8	10	.27	.603	
	Victim rescued	9	4	2.21	.137	

<sup>\*</sup> used fishers exact.

Bold- significant.

Table 5: frequencies and chi-squared analysis (df = 1) of sexual acts within stranger and acquaintance offences.

Variable	Stranger (n=50)	Non-stranger $(n=50)$	$\chi^2$	p
Vaginal Penetration	35	38	.46	.499
Digital Penetration	14	9	1.41	.235
Fellatio	13	11	.22	.640
Anal Penetration	7	9	.30	.585
Attempted Vaginal penetration	8	5	.80	.372
Sucks / bites breasts	7	4	.92	.338
Penetration with an object*	2	2	0	.691
Cunnilingus*	1	2	.34	.500

<sup>\*</sup> used fishers exact. Bold- significant.