

# An acquaintance rape education program for students transitioning to high school

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Based on Parrot's work with college students, a six-activity acquaintance rape prevention program for first-year high school students living in a rural South Carolina community was implemented and evaluated. The program decreased students' acceptance of rape myths compared with non-participating students both on a scale developed by Burt and on additional items measuring acquaintance rape. Attitudes toward dating violence did not change. Research limitations are discussed, and practical suggestions for sex education are presented.

## Introduction

Acquaintance rape, stranger rape and marital rape represent three broad types of rape described by social scientists (Koss *et al.*, 1994). *Acquaintance rape* is defined as sexual penetration, vaginal, anal or oral, forced on a victim by someone he or she knows (Parrot, 1991). Sexual violence and rape are serious and widespread public health problems. Estimates indicate that approximately 3–15% of all adult women have experienced a completed rape (Acierno *et al.*, 1997). Law enforcement figures indicate that 40% of reported rapes involve females under age 18, and 15% of reported rapes involve females under age 12 (Greenfield, 1997). Rape victimization rates are particularly high among women in college (Brenner *et al.*, 1999). Sexual violence and coercion affects 50–95% of women, primarily those in the 16–24 year age range. These actions include physical aggression (hitting, pushing, grabbing and shoving), threats and verbal intimidation, and other persistent behaviors intended to force unwanted sexual activity (Felty *et al.*, 1991; Schwartz *et al.*, 1997).

As a result of these alarming statistics, numerous community, social service, public health and educational groups have called for prevention programs aimed at reducing acquaintance rape and the beliefs that underlie the phenomenon (Koss *et al.*, 1988; Parrot & Bechhofer, 1991; Rickert & Weimann, 1998; Follingstad *et al.*,

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1999; Wekerle & Wolfe, 1999). Acquaintance rape and sexual coercion, long a problem on college campuses, now frequently involve high school and middle school students (Jackson *et al.*, 2000; Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2002), and occurs in recreational settings and even on school grounds (Molidor & Tolman, 1998). Foshee *et al.* (1998) found that 25% of eighth-grade and ninth-grade students reported being victims of non-sexual dating aggression, and 8% of these students reported being victims of sexual dating violence. Ackard and Neumark-Sztainer (2001) found that date abuse was reported by nearly 9% of Minnesota high school girls and 6% of boys. In South Carolina, the site of this project, the rates of domestic violence are extraordinarily high. According to the Violence Policy Center (2003), South Carolina had the highest number of women murdered by men in 2001 in the United States relative to its population. Approximately 2% of South Carolina teenagers have reported being victims of intentional dating violence (Governor's Task Force on Domestic Violence, 2000).

The many factors that both singly and in combination contribute to adolescent acquaintance rape are well documented in the literature (for example, Sanders *et al.*, 2003). These contributing factors include various rape myths (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994), acceptance of or ignorance surrounding dating violence (Fisher *et al.*, 2000; Foshee *et al.*, 2001), alcohol and drug usage (Koss & Dinero, 1989; Silverman *et al.*, 2001) and male-female communication problems (Mills & Granoff, 1992).

Researchers acknowledge that school-based sex education programs should address sexual violence and related issues before children's expectations about dating, and their dating behaviors and preferences, are well developed (Mandelblatt, 1999; Ackard & Neumark-Sztainer, 2001). Nevertheless, throughout much of the last decade, acquaintance rape prevention has focused on college rather than secondary school students (for example, Holcomb *et al.*, 1993a; Heppner *et al.*, 1995); only within recent years have there been acquaintance rape programs for high school students (for example, Felty *et al.*, 1991; Avery-Leaf *et al.*, 1997; Hilton *et al.*, 1998; Mandelblatt, 1999; Smith & Welchans, 2000). These programs, however, have limitations that include: a narrow focus on dating communication, outcome assessment limited to measures of factual knowledge, minimal integration into the existing school curriculum, and limited involvement of school-based professionals (Weiss, 2002).

Although there is a clear need for school-based programs that address acquaintance rape there may be concerns about the sensitive nature of this topic and the time required to implement such programs. These prevention efforts must balance brevity with impact; they should be seen as educationally relevant; and they should be integrated into existing curriculum. This paper describes the development and implementation of a school-based acquaintance rape prevention program that was developed following a state-wide needs assessment, addressed multiple topics, including several topics suggested by educators themselves, and was a downward extension of a collegiate program with proven effectiveness (Parrot, 1991; Parrot & Bechhofer, 1991). The present educational program was evaluated by comparing first-year high school students receiving the program with first-year students

receiving regular class instruction on two attitudinal measures: rape myth acceptance and acceptance of dating violence. A primary project goal was to reduce students' acceptance of rape myths and dating violence.

## **Method**

### *Needs assessment*

Prior to initiating the intervention, 119 high school administrators and school psychologists in South Carolina (65% female) completed a questionnaire assessing attitudes toward acquaintance rape prevention programs. The administrators worked in schools averaging 970 students (standard deviation (SD)=502), of whom 49% were minority students (SD=27). The schools were equally divided among urban and rural areas, and represented all geographic regions of the state. School psychologists were drawn from state association membership lists. This survey was used to help design a program sensitive to educators' views. A 34-item Likert survey (1=strongly disagree, 4=strongly agree) found that while respondents tended to slightly disagree that date rape was a state problem (mean=2.33), they were supportive of rape prevention programs (mean=3.15). Respondents agreed that such programs should address rape prevention, false rape beliefs, cultural norms, interpersonal communication and the role of substance use; and agreed that freshman students were an appropriate target group (all means=3.36–3.75). Outside of finding a person to present such a program and finding the time to do so (mean=3.19, mean=3.06), there appeared to be no serious perceived barriers to such a program, and resistances were significantly lower ( $p<0.05$ ) among those in rural than urban/suburban school districts. Psychologists were more likely to acknowledge that dating violence was a problem compared with school administrators ( $p<0.01$ ).

### *Participants and setting*

Given that the needs assessment suggested that there would not be major barriers to an acquaintance rape education effort, a program for high school students was developed that was, to our knowledge, the first of its kind in the state. All activities were field tested for two years before being incorporated into this project. The educational setting of this project was the only high school located in a rural, primarily agricultural, town of 6600 residents within South Carolina. The town was selected because of high-risk factors of residents: 21% of the population had family incomes below the poverty rate and the town's incidence of reported rape was 62% higher than national averages.

### *Project development and description*

Several steps were taken to secure project approval, and compromises were made that limited project scope. Initially, a written research proposal was reviewed by

school district officials. The positive acceptance of the program in the pilot testing schools helped facilitate a positive response in the targeted community. Nevertheless, the district would not allow assessment of actual behavior (past or present) and would not allow the project to last more than two days. By agreeing to these conditions the district offered the program with just a requirement of student assent and provided opportunities for students to withdraw if they so choose. Counselors also were available if needed and consultants were on standby from the local sexual trauma center.

Following approval by the school board, this program was included as part of the high school's 'Freshman 101' curriculum, a three-week experience focusing on high school transitions, conflict resolution, careers and sexuality. This program described in this paper was incorporated within the sexual education component. To accommodate all the first-year students who wanted to take Freshman 101, different classes rotated into the curriculum every three weeks. There were three classes that were randomly chosen to receive the program and three classes that did not (control students). Control classes received regular academic instruction at this time. Each class had between 25 and 30 students (aged 15–16 years). These six classes comprised the entire freshman class at the high school. Identification numbers were used to match questionnaires at pretest with those at immediate and delayed post-tests. Pretesting of all students (treatment and control) occurred in late August on the second day of school. Initial post-testing occurred one week following the program for both one treatment group and one control group. During the next three weeks another class rotated into Freshman 101, ultimately received the program, and a week later, along with another control group, received the post-test. The third class received the program during the third three-week cycle and was given the post-test one week later along with the third control class. The delayed post-test was given to all treatment and control participants five months after the third group's presentation (approximately seven months after program presentation to the first group). This was done as a group testing by school personnel.

### *Project objectives*

The project intervention adapted Parrot's (1991) program for college students at Cornell University. Activities and content were virtually identical to the original program except that language and role-playing situations were modified to make them relevant for high school students. The Parrot program is designed for young adults in mixed-gender groups, and deals broadly with sexual assault. The program includes rape within homosexual as well as heterosexual relationships, and, in the latter, includes recognition that males (not only females) may be rape victims by opposite-sex perpetrators. The instructional format involves activities to encourage critical thinking, reflection and discussion rather than didactic lecture (Hilton *et al.*, 1998). The program's objectives were to have participants:

1. Understand acquaintance rape and its frequency, rape laws and the relation of rape to violence and coercion.

2. Explore feelings about acquaintance rape, and discuss teasing, honesty in dating, decision-making, aggression, submission and assertion.
3. Learn about the cultural forces contributing to the frequency and social acceptance of acquaintance rape, such as traditional gender stereotypes, media violence and cultural norms and myths.
4. Learn about the role of inconsistent verbal and non-verbal communication (i.e. mixed messages), and learn how to communicate wants and desires clearly.
5. Identify rape prevention strategies and learn about local sources of victim support.

These objectives were addressed through a combination of activities, including role-playing, discussion groups, questionnaires and videotapes created for acquaintance rape education. The activities were designed to encourage self-exploration, increase communication, increase awareness of dating violence and provide practical strategies for prevention.

Throughout this program, the following points were emphasized: open and clear communication; acting assertively; understanding that people have varying expectations and perceptions; taking responsibility for one's own actions; and the role of alcohol and drug use in acquaintance rape.

### *Project activities*

To address project objectives, the original Parrot (1991) activities were modified based on suggestions from the professional staff at the regional sexual assault center so that language was age-appropriate and understandable, and so that program content was sensitive to community values. As requested by the school district, this program did not discuss specific sexual acts and the researchers could not ask students about their actual sexual behavior. Parrot's program has been credited with heightening awareness of sexual assault and the numbers of college students who voluntarily seek acquaintance rape counseling (Parrot, 1991). The activities were subsequently pilot-tested over a two-year period in seven religious school youth groups from a nearby community. Given time constraints, it was important to select activities that elicited student participation and lent themselves to a regular class block of time. This resulted in six final activities with these topics: (1) assertive behavior; (2) sexual pressure and mixed messages; (3) communication, gender expectations and dating and drinking; (4) rape myths, victim blaming and sexual violence in the media; and (5, 6) date rape definition and problem-solving, rape prevention and what to do if rape occurs. A complete description of activities is available from the authors.

The entire program of activities was conducted over two consecutive days and lasted two hours. Activities (1)–(4) were part of session one (the first 60 minutes of a 90-minute block). A homework assignment review from Activities (4), (5) and (6) were part of session two (60 minutes of a 90-minute block).

### Facilitators

Each session was co-taught by a female (the first author) and a male facilitator. The first author had been trained on the original Parrot program, developed this modified intervention and had used several activities previously with junior and senior high school students. She was assisted by a trained male undergraduate psychology student.

### Measures

Dependent measures assessed rape myth acceptance and attitudes toward dating violence. The researchers collected pretest and post-test measures. Delayed post-test measures were collected by school personnel.

*Rape Myths Acceptance Scale.* The Rape Myths Acceptance Scale (RMAS) (Burt, 1980) measures students' acceptance of rape myths and has been used in prior evaluations of rape prevention programs (for example, Schewe & O'Donohue, 1993; Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994). Acceptance of rape myths is positively related to self-report of intent to commit rape and use sexual force (Check & Malamuth, 1985). The original RMAS consists of 19 items. For each of the first 11 declarative statements presented, the respondent selects one of seven levels of agreement ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree.' The next two items ask respondents to indicate the percentage of rape reports they feel are false due to vengeance or pregnancy on a scale with the following choices: 'almost none,' 'about one-fourth,' 'about one-half' and 'almost all.' The final six items focus on how likely students would be to believe reports of rape, depending on the status of the victim (best friend, Native American woman, neighborhood woman, young boy, African American woman, and Caucasian woman). These items are rated 'never,' 'rarely,' 'sometimes,' 'frequently' and 'always.'

RMAS items are summed to provide an overall score. Internal consistency, using Cronbach's alpha, is reported at 0.88 (Burt, 1980). The RMAS discriminates between sexually aggressive and non-aggressive men, and between participants in rape prevention programs and controls (Heppner *et al.*, 1995; Schewe & O'Donahue, 1993; Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994). Because the RMAS did not include items specific to acquaintance rape, six additional items were added to address this type of rape. These additional questions followed the same response format as the RMAS. These questions were analyzed separately from the RMAS. The first two questions used a five-point Likert Scale response option with the end points (low to high scores) of 'always' and 'never.' The questions were:

1. A person comes to you and claims they were raped. How likely would you be to believe their statement if the person were a man?
2. A person comes to you and claims they were raped. How likely would you be to believe their statement if the person they say raped them was a stranger?  
Was one of their casual friends?

Was someone they just started dating?

Was someone they have been dating for a long time?

The last four questions were answered on a seven-point Likert scale with responses ranging (low to high scores) from strongly agree to strongly disagree:

3. It is all right if a man holds his date down and forces her to have sex if he is so turned on that he cannot stop himself.
4. If a woman says she is going to have sex with a man and then changes her mind, it is understandable if he forces her to have sex.
5. If a woman has sex with a man she is dating, she should know that he will expect sex with her again.
6. If a man and a woman are dating and have an ongoing sexual relationship, it is fair for him to expect sex even if she does not want it.

*Attitudes towards dating violence.* Fifteen items were chosen from a scale being developed by Follingstad (cf. Follingstad *et al.*, 1999) to measure acceptance of abuse in intimate relationships. The items selected were ones that dealt with dating and participants used a six-point Likert Scale to rate the statement from strongly agree to strongly disagree. There was no existing reliability or validity of this measure with high school students. The items are listed in the Appendix.

## Results

### *Preliminary analyses*

Useable pretest and initial post-test data were available for 154 students (67 males, 85 females; 78 control group, 76 treatment group). Groups did not differ significantly by gender but did differ by race ( $p < 0.05$ ), with more African-American students in the intervention than control group (57% versus 40%). However, relying on school personnel to administer the delayed post-test measures resulted in complete questionnaires for only 42 intervention and 33 control students.

A principle components analysis conducted on all RMAS pretest scores showed that a one-component solution fit the data (eigenvalue=4.18), with all items except the second item ('all females can get raped') loading at 0.15–0.70. Removing this item produced a Cronbach alpha of 0.74.

A two-way analysis of variance (race and gender) was performed on the RMAS pretest scores. There was a significant main effect for gender demonstrating that, before the program, males endorsed more rape myths than females ( $F(1,142) = 6.79$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). The main effect of race and race  $\times$  gender interaction were not significant. All subsequent analyses were performed collapsing over race. Similarly, males, compared with females, endorsed significantly more acquaintance rape myths on the supplementary questions ( $F(9,145) = 3.85$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ).

The 15 attitudes towards dating violence (ATDV) items were subjected to a principle components analysis, and this revealed a one-component solution best fit the data (eigenvalue=5.41), with all items loading at 0.28–0.76. These items were

then summed to create total scores for pretest and post-test (maximum score=90). The Cronbach alpha was 0.85.

Males were expected to endorse more attitudes accepting dating violence than females (lower scores indicating greater acceptance). A one-way analysis of variance performed on the pretest ATDV summary scores showed that the groups differed significantly in the predicted direction ( $F(1,143)=14.55, p<0.01$ ). The mean male ATDV score was 67.09 (SD=12.48), and the mean female score was 77.06 (SD=8.64). Furthermore, as anticipated, prior to the program, students with greater acceptance of rape myths also showed greater acceptance of dating violence ( $r=0.63$ ).

### *Program impact*

Exposure to the educational program (treatment versus control) and gender were hypothesized to emerge as predictors of RMAS scores at immediate post-test controlling for the effects of pretest RMAS scores. Intervention but not gender accounted for significant variation ( $R^2=0.13$ ) in immediate post-test RMAS scores. Program participants endorsed fewer rape myths than controls (see Table 1) one week after the program ( $F(1,126)=18.64, p<0.01$ ).

### *Immediate post-test acquaintance rape items*

The means for the acquaintance rape items at the three testing intervals are presented in Table 2. Controlling for the effects of pretest responses on the acquaintance rape items, several items revealed a significant difference according to whether students were in program or control conditions. Students in the program were more likely than controls to believe that men could be raped, and to believe that rape can be perpetrated by a causal friend, by a new dating partner and by a long-time dating partner (all  $p<0.05$  or lower), and less likely to believe that if a woman has sex with a man she is dating, then she should know that he will expect sex with her again ( $p<0.05$ ).

Table 1. Means and standard deviations in pretest and immediate post-test rape myths acceptance scale total scores by group

	Control	Treatment
Pretest		
Mean	48.75	49.97
SD	10.65	12.03
Immediate post-test		
Mean	49.41	44.49
SD	11.39	9.43

Note: Higher scores indicate greater acceptance of rape myths.



Table 2. Means of acquaintance rape items across pretest, immediate post-test and delayed post-test

Item	Pretest	Immediate post-test	Delayed post-test
A person comes to you and claims they were raped. How likely would you be to believe their statement if the person were: a man?	3.60	2.93	2.86
A person comes to you and claims they were raped. How likely would you be to believe their statement if the person they say raped them was:			
A stranger?	2.01	2.14	2.02
One of their casual friends?	2.69	2.16	2.07
Someone they just started dating?	2.32	1.84	1.83
Someone they have been dating for a long time?	2.99	2.14	2.45
It is all right if a man holds his date down and forces her to have sex if he is so turned on that he cannot stop himself	1.43	1.58	1.38
If a woman says she is going to have sex with a man and then changes her mind, it is understandable if he forces her to have sex	2.47	2.12	1.93
If a woman has sex with a man she is dating, she should know that he will expect sex with her again	4.39	3.43	3.60
If a man and a woman are dating and have an ongoing sexual relationship, it is fair for him to expect sex even if she does not want it	3.28	2.39	2.36

Note:  $n=42$ . Higher scores indicate a greater acceptance of the statement.

#### *Immediate post-test ATDV scores*

Gender, program assignment and pretest scores on the RMAS were used as predictors of post-test ATDV scores adjusted for pretest ATDV scores. Treatment and gender did not significantly predict post-test ATDV scores. The only significant predictor was pretest RMAS scores, but this only accounted for 4% of the score variation. Initial acceptance of rape myths was the only variable related to dating violence attitudes at immediate posttest.

#### *Delayed post-test RMAS scores*

A split-plot analysis of variance revealed that RMAS scores significantly decreased from pretest to immediate post-test to delayed post-test ( $F(2,66)=10.50, p<0.01$ ). This change did not differ by gender. Planned comparisons indicated that the two post-test administrations did not differ. No change was seen in control groups from pretest to post-test. For the subsample of students for whom data were available, the program had the intended effect of reducing rape myth acceptance and these changes were maintained anywhere from five to seven months after the program.

*Acquaintance rape items: delayed post-test*

The intervention evaluation compared treatment and control groups, and a delayed post-test (Table 2) assessed the stability of the findings several months later. A split-plot analysis of variance revealed that only one item reverted to pretest levels. This was the item asking students if they believed that a long-term dating partner could rape someone. Thus, for the most part, the changes in the acquaintance rape items were maintained at delayed post-test.

**Discussion**

This program was novel in several ways. It was the first attempt to extend Parrot's effective collegiate rape acquaintance program to high school freshmen while still maintaining the program's objectives and format. The intervention, six activities (and a homework assignment) over two days, was relatively intensive (compared with prior sex education programs of this type, which typically last an hour or less), was fully integrated into the school curriculum and was sensitive to educators' survey responses regarding barriers to program implementation. This effort examined a mixed-gender sample that included nearly all the first-year students in the high school. Thus, there were no biases associated with volunteering for the program. The program objectively gave statistics to help students assess their own risk of acquaintance rape; it emphasized the shared responsibility of both genders to prevent dating violence; it taught specific prevention strategies; and it provided information about available community counseling and support services. Furthermore, based on both needs assessment and extensive pretesting, the program was designed to be practical, engaging and appropriate for rural students in an economically disadvantaged area in a state (South Carolina) with marked domestic violence and no school-based programs of this type. Male and female co-facilitators whose age was within 10 years of the targeted students led the sessions, modeled appropriate communication and used active teaching techniques to promote discussion. The intervention evaluation compared treatment and control groups and assessed the stability of the findings several months later.

That male students entered the program with greater acceptance of rape myths and dating violence (and that these variables were correlated) provides support for the argument that such programs are necessary, and need to reach both genders. As intended, students receiving the program showed a reduction in the acceptance of rape myths compared with controls, both immediately after the classes and at delayed post-test controlling for initial rape myth acceptance. Rape myth changes are particularly significant in as much as myth acceptance has been strongly linked to behavioral intentions to commit rape. While the program can be criticized for not having a behavioral outcome measure (Wekerle & Wolfe, 1999), this was a limitation imposed by the district that the researchers had to respect. Once such programs demonstrate their impact it may be easier to get school administrators to agree to collect behavioral measures. Several additional acquaintance rape items showed similar changes that were maintained at delayed post-test. However, the loss of

much of the usable delayed post-test data renders any conclusions about long-term program effects suspect.

It was, however, disappointing to find that students' acceptance of dating violence did not change at immediate post-test controlling for pretest attitudes. Several reasons may partially account for this. For one, the dependent measure used assessed primarily physical violence in relationships but education about physical violence was just one component of the program. Also, physical violence (e.g. hitting) is generally not as common in teen dating situations as is pressure to engage in unwanted sex (Jackson *et al.*, 2000). Change may also have not occurred because students, particularly females, were considerably against dating violence before the program.

Furthermore, although increasingly, in the past five years, there have been a number of efforts to systematically address teen dating violence, most efforts have been more successful at demonstrating changes in rape myths, knowledge and attitudes justifying aggression rather than behavioral changes or attitudes toward dating violence (Wekerle & Wolfe, 1999). A clear limitation of this program was its length, as dictated by the school board, in that a two-hour intervention may not be sufficient to bring about behavioral changes. Educators are advised to consider more extensive educational approaches whenever feasible; however, conservative communities such as this one are likely to be somewhat resistant to educational efforts that require a great deal of time and personnel, and limit the time devoted to academic instruction.

Nevertheless, while increasingly schools have been willing to have a representative from a local rape crisis, university or other community group discuss rape prevention, effecting significant changes in violent adolescent dating behavior will require comprehensive programs with multiple components that include systematic training of school-based personnel to support these efforts (Avery-Leaf *et al.*, 1997) and community activities that support school instruction (cf. Foshee *et al.*, 1998). The most successful interventions will probably last several weeks, and incorporate a variety of educational efforts spanning several years, hopefully initiated in the middle school years or earlier. Indeed, each occurrence of dating violence has been shown to contribute to couples' beliefs that this is 'normal' dating behavior (Laner, 1990).

Research is beginning to show the importance of programs to prevent teen dating violence even in the absence of behavioral changes. This is particularly critical in communities with a high prevalence of domestic violence and associated conditions such as substance abuse. Based on experiences in this project, it is argued that sex education programs of this type need to be institutionalized and ongoing, school-based and carried out by trained staff. Students need more than informational sessions in assemblies (Hilton *et al.*, 1998), staff require professional development to monitor and engage students, and parent and other community groups must be mobilized for support (Weiss, 2002). Some schools may even decide to offer more intensive services (e.g. ongoing counseling) to certain students who may be more prone than others to dating violence. For example, this may include students with a history of substance abuse, exposure to domestic violence at home, acting out

behavior, or socializing with older and more mature students. In these cases, counselors and teachers will need to know how to identify these students early and convince them of the value of prevention intervention well before a rape or aggressive act occurs. That, in itself, is a major challenge for sex education.

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### **Appendix. Items from the attitude toward dating violence scale**

1. It is better to stay with a boyfriend and experience some hitting than to break up with him.
2. Women who are hit by their boyfriends are sometimes partly responsible.

3. It seems that some women periodically need to be put in their place by their boyfriends through physical force.
4. It is sometimes understandable for a man to hit his girlfriend if he finds out she has had a sexual affair with another man.
5. Even if a woman makes a fool out of her boyfriend in public, he still has no right to hit her.
6. Women should understand that men are naturally aggressive.
7. A woman who does not do as her boyfriend asks should not be surprised when he hits her.
8. Society has no right to intervene in whether or not a man hits his girlfriend.
9. Even when a woman's behavior challenges her boyfriend's manhood, he's not justified in hitting her.
10. Because of their behavior, I can understand why certain women get hit by their boyfriends at times.
11. I can occasionally understand why some men hit their girlfriends when their girlfriends were very insulting towards them.
12. Women who are hit by their boyfriends are to blame for the abuse because they should have foreseen it would happen.
13. If friends knew of a man who hit his girlfriend it would be important for them to stand up against the man.
14. When a woman does not take her boyfriend seriously, it is sometimes understandable if he hits her to make his point.
15. Men would not hit their girlfriends unless they did something to deserve it.

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