

Attachment H (Part 1)

Results from a Cognitive Interview Evaluation of Select Topics and Questions for the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey

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Introduction

The staff of the National Center for Health Statistics' (NCHS) Collaborating Center for Questionnaire Design and Evaluation Research (CCQDER) conducted a cognitive interview study in preparation for a re-design of the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS)¹. NISVS is a periodic survey conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) National Center for Injury Prevention and Control (NCIPC) that collects national and sub-national information on intimate partner violence, sexual violence, and stalking victimization.

Following the 2015 iteration of the NISVS, NCIPC modified the 2016-2018 questionnaire in an effort to reduce respondent burden. Internal review of the changes revealed disparate estimates for variables of interest as compared to the 2015 iteration of the survey. NCIPC staff determined that one potential cause of the differences in estimates was measurement error due to questionnaire framing and a change in the number of perpetrators captured on the questionnaire. In order to investigate these potential sources of error, NCIPC collaborated with NCHS to conduct a systematic questionnaire evaluation focused on these two areas.

The evaluation took a two-pronged approach. The first part was a quantitative evaluation which involved the administration of a short, methodological survey on a commercial survey panel as part of NCHS' Research and Development Survey (RANDS) series. The second part of the evaluation was qualitative. CCQDER conducted cognitive interviews to evaluate the modified 2016-2018 questionnaire. Part of the cognitive testing component also included demographic questions on gender identity that are being considered for NISVS and federal surveys in general. This report focuses on the cognitive interview evaluation of question topics that relate specifically to intimate partner violence, sexual violence, and stalking victimization.

The methodological design of the cognitive interviews is discussed next, followed by the research findings. The full test instrument is found in the Appendix.

Methodology

Sampling and Respondent Demographics: As a qualitative evaluation, cognitive interviewing employs a purposive non-random sample whereby individuals are chosen on the basis of characteristics relevant to the questions under investigation. As such, respondents who had experienced stalking behavior or any type of violence in past or present intimate relationships were recruited for the study.

A total of 20 English-speaking respondents were interviewed. Most respondents self-identified as either male or female. One respondent self-identified as a transgender woman. Half the sample was 30 years or younger and a majority (70%) were non-Hispanic Black. Finally, about half of the respondents (55%)

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/datasources/nisvs/index.html>

had a high school diploma or less. The other 45% had a college or graduate degree. Table 1 summarizes the sample composition.

Table 1: Demographic Sample Composition (n = 20)		
	Number	Percent
Gender Identity		
Male	5	25%
Female	14	70%
Other Gender Identity	1	5%
Age in Years		
30 and Under	10	50%
40 - 49	3	15%
50 - 59	3	15%
60 and Over	4	20%
Race/Ethnicity		
Non-Hispanic Black	14	70%
Non-Hispanic White	4	20%
Non-Hispanic Asian	2	10%
Educational Attainment		
High School Diploma or Less	11	55%
Associate or Bachelor's Degree	7	35%
Graduate Degree	2	10%

Data collection: The cognitive interviews were conducted in two parts. First, interviewers read the questions to respondents and recorded their answers. In the second portion, interviewers followed-up with retrospective probes to ascertain respondent understandings of the questions and instructions, rationales for their answers, and whether any response error occurred. Interviews were a maximum of 60 minutes in length and took place virtually using the Zoom internet meeting platform. The standard CCQDER remuneration of \$40 was mailed to respondents once the interview ended.

Due to the sensitive nature of the questions, the interview protocol included augmented safety measures for the respondent. At the start of the interview, respondents were reminded first by the recruiter and again by the interviewer that they could refuse to answer any question or end the interview at any time.² Respondents were also offered a safe and discrete way to end the interview should their privacy be compromised at any point during the discussion. Additionally, a list of toll-free help lines was made available to respondents who exhibited any distress or discomfort during the interview. Distress levels were categorized as mild, moderate, or severe. Interviewers were responsible for identifying and reporting moderate or severe distress to the Ethics Review Board (ERB), however, no respondents demonstrated that level of distress during the interviews. In part this was due to interviewer skill in recognizing discomfort in a respondent and refraining from further probing. Despite these precautions, nine respondents – almost half – did exhibit mild distress and were given a copy of the helpline telephone numbers and web resources at the end of the interview. The highly sensitive nature of the topics and questions had implications for data quality and is discussed further in the findings section.

² This procedure is associated with all CCQDER projects but was reiterated to respondents a second time in this project.

Analysis: Analysis of interview data included a process similar to the constant comparative method first developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967)³ and adapted to cognitive interviews by Miller et al. (2014).⁴ Data analysis was assisted by the use of Q-Notes⁵, a software application specifically designed for cognitive interview studies. The first stage of analysis occurred within each interview. This involved analyzing a respondent's narrative during probing and comparing it to their survey answers to assess internal consistency, identify response error, and document the respondent's understanding of the questions and instructions. The second stage of analysis was a comparison of interpretations by question across interviews to identify larger patterns in the question-response process and forms of response error. Lastly, patterns and themes were compared for any subgroup differentiation, for example, by gender identity and marital status.

Findings by Section

Not all questions were evaluated individually. Instead, respondents' understandings of the questions were explored in the context of four sections of the survey: 1. stalking, 2. rape (including alcohol/drug-facilitated rape, rape due to threats of harm/physical force, and attempted rape), 3. physical violence, and 4. technology-facilitated violence. The questions tested can be found in the Appendix. Interviewers explored respondents' understandings of the introductions to the sections, the experiences respondents included in (and excluded from) their answers, and the extent to which respondents could provide specific details for each perpetrator they reported.

1. Stalking

The introduction to the stalking section is meant to frame the types of experiences respondents should think about when answering the questions. The first series of seven questions asks if respondents ever experienced specific stalking behaviors (such as being followed or repeatedly contacted). Those who answer 'yes' to any of the seven stalking criteria questions are then asked how many perpetrators engaged in those behaviors toward them on more than one occasion and whether any of those people made them feel unsafe or physically threatened them. Respondents are lastly asked detailed questions about any person who stalked them on more than one occasion and threatened them with violence or otherwise made them feel unsafe. For various reasons, discussed next, respondents did not always follow the logic of the section and response errors occurred as a result.

Concepts of harassment and unwanted attention cause confusion

Harassment: In some cases, the introduction to the stalking section did not lend itself to an accurate interpretation of the questions that followed. In particular, the concept of harassment included in the introduction may have broadened the type of experiences respondents considered, perhaps beyond what was intended. The first sentence of the stalking introduction reads: 'First are some detailed

³ Glaser, B. and Strauss, A. (1967) *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*. Hawthorne, NY: Aldine de Gruyter.

⁴ Miller, K., Willson, S., Chepp, V., & Padilla, J.-L. (2014) *Cognitive Interviewing Methodology: A Sociological Approach for Survey Question Evaluation*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

⁵ [Q-Notes: Analysis Software for Question Evaluation \(cdc.gov\)](https://www.cdc.gov/qnotes/)

questions about times in your life when someone may have ever given you unwanted attention by repeatedly contacting you, following you, or harassing you.'

The word 'harass' often caused respondents to think of verbally or physically abusive behavior, rather than stalking behavior, particularly when answering ST08 (How many people did any of these things to you on more than one occasion?). Respondents did not limit their reply to ST08 to the people they included in the first seven questions on stalking criteria. Some included additional people who had verbally or physically harassed them in other ways. For example, one respondent originally included two people in her answers to the stalking criteria questions. However, when asked if the first person she reported in ST08 ever did any of the behaviors in the first seven stalking criteria questions she said, "No -- because we lived together. So, he didn't have to come and show up. He was more of a vocal, ran his mouth to me all the time. He was more a harassing, verbal abuse person." As she reflected on her answer, she was able to diagnose the disconnect and said, "I think I might have gotten confused because you asked the question 'did the person harass you'." Although that was not an actual question, she was remembering the introduction which said the questions are about 'unwanted attention' such as someone 'repeatedly contacting you, following you, or harassing you.'

Another respondent also thought of verbal threats of violence from an ex-boyfriend and included him in her answer to ST08 (How many people did any of these things to you on more than one occasion?) even though she was not thinking of him when answering the first seven questions. She said, "I had a boyfriend physically threaten me one time. An ex. He said on the phone if I didn't give him a certain amount of money, he was going to come down and beat my ass. And then I'm thinking of the other three that threatened that we just discussed. And then I had a boyfriend at the time where he said he wanted to kill me. He was choking me." When asked if the boyfriend who choked her also did things like follow her, she said, "No." Other respondents also focused on the word 'harassed' in the introduction and thought of verbal harassment they experienced. One respondent included a family member who belittled him at family functions. He said, "So the other family member -- so it's crazy when I say it, but I took it as a threat -- my aunt. She always crapped on me and my brother...because she owned a house. And me and my brother never owned a house." However, she never engaged in any stalking behavior.

Unwanted attention: In addition to the word 'harassment,' the phrase 'unwanted attention' also prompted some respondents to think of experiences beyond stalking. For example, one respondent also thought of the harassment and unwanted attention he received from an ex-girlfriend that blurred the line between stalking behavior and physically threatening behavior. When answering ST06 (Has anyone ever sent you unwanted messages through social media?) he asked, "What do you mean 'unwanted messages'? Like threats? If they're talking about threats, I've had exes send me threatening messages like, 'I'll smash your windshield if I find out you're cheating on me.' I mean, I had that. I'm not sure it that classifies as an answer." Another respondent thought of a prospective employer's unwanted attention as harassment for ST06 (Has anyone ever sent you unwanted messages through social media, such as Facebook, Instagram, and chat rooms?) saying, "I just told you one. He just sent me—when he texted and asked me would I have sex while I'm performing my job. That was an unwanted message."

Different experiences blend together

Not all response error can be attributed to the wording of the introduction. Some amount of confusion was due to the complex nature of human relationships and overlapping experiences of stalking, verbal abuse, physical abuse, and even rape with the same perpetrator. Respondents had no difficulty understanding the initial seven questions individually as intended; however, as mentioned above, when

answering the follow-up questions regarding specific perpetrators who made them feel unsafe, many respondents shifted their thinking. In the follow-up questions respondents thought of experiences different from and in addition to what they reported in the first seven questions. This was true because instead of limiting their thoughts to only stalking behavior, their thought processes often grouped together *all* unwanted and harassing experiences. As a result, topics in the survey blended together across the different sections.

Several respondents demonstrated how stalking and various forms of sexual assault were often lumped together as unwanted, predatory behavior – especially for respondents with multiple experiences and/or multiple perpetrators. In these cases, answering questions that attempt to disentangle these experiences can be difficult or impossible. For example, one respondent had been a model. She said, “See the reason why I have a hard time with this is because it's such a slippery slope because I used to be a model. And the industry is ripe for people giving you all kinds of unwanted attention. Employers, prospective employers, I mean they do this all the time. You'll clearly say, look, I have a boyfriend and I'm very happy and they won't listen. They'll still keep coming on to you. So, it's hard to just say, oh, three or four people because so many people do this, and they've done this all the time.” She decided to answer ‘yes’ to most of the stalking criteria questions. When asked what her hesitation was, she said, “Um...I mean because I've received quite a few unwanted things. But I don't know if it was necessarily consistently following or stalking, if that makes any sense. But it was definitely unwanted.”

Another respondent had been an exotic dancer. She also found it difficult to answer for every offender because there were so many and because they had engaged in a variety of unwanted behaviors that were all sexual in some way. This included but was not limited to stalking. In answering the questions, she took quite a bit of time and explained, “I'm trying to remember the chronological order of things.” When asked to explain further she said:

“Yeah. So I worked as a dancer. A lot of the fingering questions, that tends to be an issue that we deal with regularly. I wasn't sure how much contact -- I would say that's a lot of extreme contact. I was occasionally assaulted digitally. I would say two times. Of course, I can barely remember it because you kind of get desensitized to that kind of thing when it occurs so frequently. And it wasn't really regarded as sexual assault until recently. It was just considered part of the job. And there's not really any kind of compassion for exotic dancers or anybody who's considered sex workers, I guess. So that's why it's difficult to say exactly...These things happen every day. It's hard to track.”

When asked if stalking occurred as well, she said, “That [stalking] was all [related to] the dancing. It's hard to track.” Her experiences in that job blurred the lines between stalking and various types of sexual violence, as they were all seen as unwanted behaviors toward her.

Survey context

The context of the survey also informed respondents’ interpretations of some of the questions on stalking. The topic of the survey in general caused some respondents to initially think only of romantic or sexual relationships – despite the introduction emphasizing the need to include anyone who engaged in stalking behavior (for example, family, friends, teachers, coworkers, strangers, etc.). For example, when one respondent got to the questions that roster individual stalkers, she grew confused when she saw the question asking how she knew the stalker because the categories included relationships that were not romantic or sexual. She said, “Oh, wow. Um, my apologies. This is on me. I have been a bit

limited in my answers because I was speaking from a male-only perspective. It didn't even occur to me that you were including women as well. Because usually when we describe domestic abuse, it's usually like a romantic relationship. So my mind went to romantic relationships and not even like in general. So in general I need to increase that number from three to about...I would say...so the initial number of ten goes up to 14 or 15. And same for the number of people who actually threatened me. It's now six." Another respondent made the same mistake. When he heard ST11_01B (How did you know this person?) and saw the categories, he said, "Oh geez. I thought this was a relationship thing. We shouldn't backtrack. It's gonna take too much time. But if we're including family members, we can probably up that two to four to five or six. [Laughs.] I mean I just thought the whole premise of the study was for, like, relationships. I didn't know that it involved family members too." Because respondents were told the name of the survey for which the questions were being tested (the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey), this may have helped frame the perceived intent of the questions as focusing exclusively on romantic and sexual relationships.

2. Rape

Questions on rape were divided into three sections, alcohol- and drug-facilitated rape, rape due to threats of harm or physical violence, and attempted (but unsuccessful) physically forced rape. Many questions contained explicit language and were difficult to discuss with respondents who had experienced these types of events in their life. As such, individual questions were not cognitively tested. Rather, the concepts embedded in the questions and in the instructions to each section were explored.

Definitions of consent

Notions of consent were explored, especially since sexual assault that occurs when a person is impaired may be thought of differently from physically forced sexual assault. Each section had its own introduction that was meant to guide respondents in terms of what experiences should be included in their answers. The introduction to the section on alcohol- and drug-facilitated rape was as follows:

This next section is about unwanted sex or sexual contact, that is, sexual contact that you did not consent to and that you did not want to happen. Sometimes unwanted sex or sexual contact happens when a person is unable to consent to it or stop it from happening because they are too drunk, high, drugged, or passed out from alcohol, drugs, or medications. This can include times when they voluntarily consumed alcohol or drugs or times when they were given alcohol or drugs without their knowledge or consent. You might or might not have ever been in this type of situation. Please remember that even if someone uses alcohol or drugs, what happens to them is not their fault. These questions use detailed and explicit language so that everyone is clear about what the questions are asking.

The introduction to the section on rape due to threats of harm or physical violence was somewhat shorter, but still emphasized the concept of consent. It read:

Some people are threatened with harm or physically forced to have sex or sexual contact when they don't want to. Examples of physical force are being pinned or held down, using violence or threats of violence, or not physically stopping after you said no. To be clear, the next questions are asking only about times in your life when sex was unwanted and you did not give consent.

Respondents were asked about their experiences and how they viewed the idea of consent in relation to those experiences. Some respondents had very clear notions of consent but for others consent was more nuanced.

Consent is straightforward: For some respondents consent is verbal and direct – no means no. There was no gray area. Examples of respondents with this definition include:

"Oh, no. See, me? I have a strong, firm no. When no means no."

"I said no -- I'm not trying to do that. No means no."

"No. No means no. This right here explains how I was brought up. No means no. This is your temple; this is your body. You control what comes in, who you invite to see it."

"It means all the way yes. Or no. Like you are giving permission for something, and it means the whole time something's going on."

"Like my boyfriend now. He can sometimes be so annoying and just begging you and begging you. Like what the hell? And you go ahead and do it. That's still consent. But when you tell a person no means no and if they forcefully do whatever, that's not consent because I said no. If you do something to me once I say no, now you have gone over to the rape side."

Forced 'consent': The respondent in the last example demonstrates how the concept of consent can sometimes be less than straightforward. In theory consent can mean 'no is no,' but in practice lines may become blurred. For example, some respondents reported finding themselves in situations that made acquiescing to unwanted sex safer than continuing to resist. This came up in the section on unwanted sex due to threats of harm or physical force. In considering what experiences to include, some respondents asked for clarification because of the nebulous nature of consent in practice. For example, one respondent asked, "Can it be non-verbal? If they pin you down and you don't want it? I was trying to push him off...but he was too strong..." The interviewer repeated the question. She decided to include the experience because the sex was unwanted and because she did physically convey her lack of permission even though she did not recall verbally saying 'no.' She said, "Yeah -- one. Because I clearly [didn't want it] and he just kept [on]. Yes." Another respondent answered 'yes' thinking about her husband's insistence. She said, "So definitely he'll kind of force me to have it." When asked if she continues to resist, she said, "I tried it [resisting], but definitely he overwhelms me and at the end of it all I just give in." This respondent ultimately 'consented' instead of continuing to fight, but she did not include this as giving consent and, therefore, reported it as rape.

However, other respondents did not report as rape incidents where they ultimately gave in and 'consented' to unwanted sex. Sometimes this was because situations and the giving of consent are complicated. One respondent explained:

"In a separate incident [that she did not count in her answer] I was assaulted by an employee at my high school, and I was a student at the time. I was drinking and smoking weed, and I didn't smoke or drink so it affected me a little bit more. I initially agreed to have sex with one person. This person did a switch-a-roo while I was not aware. So I kind of turned around and was like who the hell is this? [A different person had entered the room and was having sex with her.]

But at that point I was like, now I'm trapped in this basement with two adult males and nobody knew where I was [so she went along with it rather than risk additional physical harm]."

Physical violence and consent: Some respondents had fairly literal interpretations of the questions in the section on rape due to threats of harm or physical violence. In other words, if physical violence did not occur, some respondents failed to report the experience as rape. For example, one respondent did not report an incident of unwanted sex because the perpetrator did not make her acquiesce through physical violence. However, at the same time it seems clear she did not freely give consent either. She said, "This is difficult because people have done these things, but I don't know if they always threatened [violence]...so, yeah. Let me think for a minute. I mean, I'm gonna say no because some of these people, they just did it without me wanting it, without threatening or doing anything [violent]." Another respondent also answered 'none' to FC01 (How many PEOPLE have ever used physical force or threats of physical harm to put their mouth on your vagina?) for the same reason – there was no actual violence that occurred. She said, "Mine was when I said 'no' they didn't stop. No, that's what happened to me. They didn't stop when I told them no. They kept doing it." These were examples where 'forced consent' was not reported as rape because additional physical violence did not occur.

Consent, married people, and men: The notion of consent can be contextually different for different groups of people. For example, several married (or formally married) respondents expressed how the rules of consent seem to be different in the context of marriage. Even if they defined their experience as unwanted sex, they were not sure it constituted rape – their husbands certainly did not define it as rape and respondents were not convinced that others would see these experiences as rape either. The following are examples of respondents who felt that their experiences would be interpreted through the lens of marriage:

"Being a wife and a husband there's some things that you don't have much control over. But what I'm saying is, he doesn't care even if I'm drunk and he wants it."

"I don't know if it's rape, because I'm married, so I don't consider it as rape. I don't know what they would say back in those days, if it was considered rape or no. But he would just, you know, insist because we was married he had a right to do this."

"Um, it's very traumatic. I'll say you feel, you know, powerless. You feel like you don't have anyone to tell, it's embarrassing. No one will look at it as rape or forced sex because you've been intimate with this person [her husband] before."

Two of those respondents included their experiences as rape, but one did not, suggesting that married people may underreport these experiences.

A couple of male respondents also experienced unwanted sex but, when the perpetrator was a female, their understandings of the experience were not necessarily identical to their female counterparts. Much like the married women above, defining unwanted sex as rape may not be intuitive to men and these types of experiences may go unreported. For example, in the made-to-penetrate questions, one respondent was unsure about and uncomfortable with reporting that someone had put their mouth on his penis without his consent. He said, "Uh...I guess put zero for that, too." Because of his hesitation, the interviewer asked if there was ever a situation where he could possibly answer yes. He said, "Yeah, yeah, yeah. I mean pretty much [inaudible]." When asked more explicitly if there was ever a time when he did not want sex but someone forced him into it, he said, "I mean, a couple of times. But like the way

they're [the survey] describing it, it's just like, gosh, I'm trying to figure out how to describe [his experience] off what they're describing off of and all. Gosh. That's extreme." [Laughs uncomfortably.] It was clear that he never thought of himself as being sexually assaulted and it made him very uncomfortable to talk about it in those terms.

Another male respondent answered 'zero' to all the questions in the rape sections because he had never thought of himself as being sexually assaulted. He said, "Yeah, I've never had anyone harm me or threaten me for sex, to give them sex. Um, so that's never been the case. Yeah, that's never been the case – where I felt threatened or harmed by the interaction or a call for action. That has never taken place." His answer seems unequivocal. However, when he gets to the questions in the physical violence section – toward the end of the interview – his story changes dramatically, perhaps because the question was disassociated from sexual violence. The question, PV07, was: 'How many of your current or ex-partners have ever slammed you against something?' In answering this question, he explained:

"When I was in college, this young lady that I was just—we were just kind of a hook-up thing. She did slam me against the wall one day and threatened sex. She threatened me that I better have sex with her. And then, my ex-girlfriend, she also would slam me against stuff, uh, when she wanted sex. So, you know. But I didn't see it as—it wasn't—it was all—you know—it—it—in my mind I could have seen it as a—as being minute, a minute detail, 'cause—but they used physical aggression towards me [expels air in a sort of half-laugh] in-in-in a—in an attempt to get what they wanted so that was [raises eyebrows]. Yeah, wow. I was assaulted. [Looks surprised, then incredulous.] No, I'm not going to say I was assaulted. But that was—that was—that was forced to—that was physical force to—that was physical force, yeah. That was physical force. Those two times that I know of in my life."

If men are less likely to process what happens to them as rape or sexual assault, they may be unlikely to report these experiences in a survey.

Alcohol- and drug-facilitated rape

Questions on alcohol- and drug-facilitated rape were asked before the section on rape due to threats or use of physical force. These questions are long and contain many concepts. For example, the first question in the series, AD01, reads: 'When you were unable to consent to sex or stop it from happening because you were too drunk, high, drugged, or passed out from alcohol or drugs, how many PEOPLE ever did the following when you did not want them to...? Put their mouth on your vagina? If this has never happened or you have never been drunk or drugged, choose None or Not Applicable.' This is quite a bit of information to cognitively process, and respondents were not always successful in doing so. The reasons why are discussed next.

Double-barreled: The questions on alcohol- and drug-facilitated rape function as double-barreled questions when it has not been established that a respondent has ever been sexually assaulted in the first place. Despite the last sentence which aims to correct that problem ('If this has never happened or you have never been drunk or drugged, choose None or Not Applicable. '), some respondents were still confused. As a result, answers had inconsistent meanings.

Table 2 breaks down the logic of different interpretations and answers, and visually represents the cognitive complexity of the questions. For example, an answer of 'no' can mean: 1) they were never

raped and never drunk/drugged, or 2) they were never raped but were drunk/drugged, or 3) they were raped but were not drunk/drugged.

Answers of ‘yes’ are also potentially problematic. Some answers of ‘yes’ mean what they are intended to mean – that a respondent was raped while they were drunk or drugged. However, other answers of ‘yes’ mean that a rape occurred but not with the involvement of alcohol or drugs. Not knowing that the next section asks about rape due to threats of harm or physical violence, some respondents who were raped under *any* circumstances answered this question affirmatively in order to register their experience. As a result, the next section of the survey (on rape due to threats or use of physical force) is repetitive because in their mind they just answered those questions.

From a practical perspective, the most problematic cell in Table 2 is the one where answers of ‘yes’ and ‘no’ share the same cell. The confusion stems from the manner in which respondents interpret the primary intent of the questions in this section. This pattern is discussed next.

	Raped	Not raped
Have been drunk/drugged	Yes	No
Never been drunk/drugged	No/Yes	No

Question intent = any type of sexual assault: The section ordering combined with the length of the alcohol- and drug-facilitated rape questions caused several problems. First, some respondents were thinking of any type of sexual assault when answering this question and did not focus on the impairment aspect. For example, one respondent answered ‘yes’ to AD05 (When you were unable to consent to sex or stop it from happening because you were too drunk, high, drugged, or passed out from alcohol or drugs, how many PEOPLE ever did the following when you did not want them to...? Put their fingers or an object in your anus?). But during probing when asked if there was ever a time when someone sexually assaulted him when he was under the influence, he said no. Initially he was thinking of an assault that occurred by his uncle – without the use of any alcohol or drugs. The intent of the question in his mind was whether someone had assaulted him in this particular manner, not whether he was impaired when it happened. Similarly, another person also answered ‘yes’ at first, but when she heard additional questions in the section she answered ‘no’ and said, “I wasn’t high, it was just against my will.” Initially she was focused only on the fact that she had been sexually assaulted.

Other respondents heard the inclusion of drunk/drugged in the question, but – not realizing the next section was coming – wanted to clarify their answer if they had been raped without being impaired. For example, one respondent said, "It's none. But I need to add there that I wasn't intoxicated or inebriated. But it did happen. I was not inebriated. I was conscious, but it did happen to me." When asked what happened, she said, "Sexually. They had intercourse but it was not consented. They were inebriated but I was not. And I kept saying no and they did it anyway."

Like the previous respondent, several other respondents did not demonstrate response error but did need to clarify that the question was asking about times they were under the influence of alcohol or drugs during a sexual assault and not the perpetrator. One respondent asked, "You're saying while I was drunk something that I didn't want to happen?" The interviewer repeated the question. "None that I'm aware of." Another respondent also asked, "So we're talking about me having these situations? So this is a situation where I was taken advantage of -- I was not the user. Somebody else I encountered, who I trusted, had had one too many drinks."

Based on these responses, it's possible that if these two sections were reversed, that is questions on rape due to threats or use of physical force are asked *before* alcohol- and drug-facilitated rape, many of these problems might be alleviated.

3. Physical Violence

Two questions in particular were the focus of this section, PV09 (How many of your current or ex-partners have ever used a knife on you?) and PV10 (How many of your current or ex-partners have ever used a gun on you?). There were two types of interpretations of these questions: actual use of a weapon and threats of use.

Actual use: Some respondents understood these questions as asking about the actual use of a weapon on them – that is, being literally stabbed or shot by a partner. For example, when asked what he was thinking, one respondent said, "Using it to cause harm. Like physical harm to your physical person. Whether someone physically stabbed you or pulled the trigger, released a bullet into your body or at your body. Or used the weapon, used the gun itself as a weapon to physically assault my person." Another respondent answered 'no' and explained, "The most he might have said was 'I'm going to shoot you.' But there was never a weapon pulled on me. But he wrote on a piece of paper or text that he was going to shoot me...And there had been conversations where he said I'm going to do this to you and I'm going to do that to you." Another respondent who answered 'no' conveyed a similar interpretation. He said, "Plenty of times but it [getting shot] never happened." He was thinking of an ex-girlfriend. When asked why he did not include this experience he said, "Because I didn't really receive that blunt force of that bullet. It was just threats, saying she'll utilize it, but she never did."

Threats of use: Other respondents invoked broader notions of 'use,' to include threats. The following are examples of the rationale respondents gave for their answers.

"Whether they threaten you with it from a distance or try to stab you. If you brought a knife out -- nobody has done that to me." [The same rationale was used for a gun.] "They can just pull it out. They don't have to physically shoot you. And they don't even have to pull it out. They can pull up their shirt and just show me that they have a gun."

"I was thinking literal -- they had a physical gun or knife on them."

"I think more they have a knife on them and they're like, I'll flick it out and if you don't -- same thing with a weapon [gun]. Brandishing it."

"They threatened to stab me."

"I interpreted the question as how many people have attempted or threatened to use a knife on me. Probably either by showing it or even trying to do it, even if they didn't do it."

"They aimed it -- that's why I said I was completely nervous."

"Yeah, so um, I had told him that I wanted a divorce and he had pulled a gun on me. Um, so yeah that's pretty much how it went."

One case illustrates that some experiences may not be easy to classify because both parties can engage in violent behavior. This respondent answered 'yes' to the question but clarified that it was her knife that she retrieved in order to defend herself against domestic violence. Even though she was the one who introduced the knife into the situation, she answered 'yes' because her boyfriend ended up using it against her. She said:

"But I had a knife that a friend of mine had given me. And I grabbed the knife as I ran and I got to the door. And I realized I can't go out the door. I have no clothes on. So I stood there. And he came to me and I kept telling him don't come any closer. I don't know what was wrong with him that day...I'm standing there with my back to the door and he grabbed the knife and we started tussling over that knife. And the knife cut the tendon in my ring finger on my left hand."

4. Technology-Facilitated Violence

Two questions related to technology-facilitated violence were tested. The first question (TF_01) is: 'In your lifetime, has anyone ever sent you an unwanted sexually explicit message or image through the internet, social media (e.g., Facebook, Instagram), email, or text message without your consent? Please do not include spam messages.'

The intent of this question was unclear. The last sentence asks respondents to exclude 'spam messages.' However, certain experiences with social media made the definition of spam rather vague. Respondents tended to include sexually explicit messages received from people known, barely known, *and* unknown. In social media the line between known and unknown has become somewhat blurred due to, for example, the phenomenon of 'friending.' One respondent heard the question and asked, "Okay, let me ask you. That's a tricky question. So say someone sends you a friend request on Facebook. You don't know him, he don't know you, and when he sends you a friend request you accept it. You don't have no type of conversation with this guy or anything, but he's constantly sending naked pictures through the Internet." The interviewer said it was her judgment call and repeated the question. The respondent chose to answer 'yes.' Another respondent heard the question and laughed. She said, "That happens in my everyday life! It happened yesterday." Are these people you know? "No. It can be social media. People can send you -- they don't even have to know you. You don't even have to be friends with them. I think it's because people can look at your social media and see what you got going on." A second respondent gave a similar reply. She said, "I mean, you're counting social media and that is out of control. I get solicited every day from men and women."

The above respondents were talking about Facebook; however, Facebook is not the only source of social media that can cause confusion. WhatsApp was also mentioned, and several respondents referred to dating apps as well. One respondent said, "Someone sent me a text message and it was just one of those dating apps where people are trying to meet people. And this man kept texting me and I said I don't have an interest in meeting you. And he was sending me explicit questions about my personal life." Another respondent laughed when she heard the question. She said, "I'm laughing because isn't that like 3/4 of online dating? I mean these aren't people that I engaged in any communication with past them being like, 'looking for a good time?' No. I'm looking for a free dinner!" [Laughs.]

In addition to including unwanted sexually explicit messages from people respondents do not know (or barely know), some respondents also included these types of messages that were sent by the stalkers they reported in the stalking section. For this subgroup of respondents, this question (TF_01) captured the same information as questions ST05 (Has anyone ever made unwanted phone calls to you, sent you

emails, voice, or text messages?) and ST06 (Has anyone ever sent you unwanted messages through social media, such as Facebook, Instagram, and chat rooms?). This further illustrates the interconnectedness of the survey topics and the difficulty in asking about them as discrete and separate events, particularly when they are done by the same individual.

The second question tested in this section, TF_02, was: 'In your lifetime, has anyone ever emailed, texted, or electronically posted a revealing or sexual photo or video of you without your consent?' Most respondents admitted that this was not something they would be able to know with certainty. This made the question more difficult by introducing an extra judgment step – respondents must decide whether to include or exclude answers about which they are unsure. Some who were uncertain decided to answer 'yes.' For example, even though one respondent had no proof that anyone had done this, she was reasonably sure that it has happened. Her first response was, "Probably. But I don't know about it specifically." The interviewer repeated the question and asked if she could answer yes or no. "I would choose -- I mean more than likely. That could be anything from me in a bikini thong. So you know. Most definitely. Then there's the whole revenge porn thing. I'm sure I have an ex [who's done that to her]. I'm not someone who avoids the camera. I have taken explicit photos willingly." However, other respondents chose to answer 'no' if they had no proof. One respondent answered 'no' and explained, "Not with me knowing it...I don't know if they did post it, because I've never seen it." Another respondent also answered 'no' and said, "Actually the one that did bother me on social media, he did threaten to release a video. But not that I'm aware of that he did."

Sensitive and Difficult Questions

Finally, this report would be remiss in not addressing the impact of the subject matter on the scientific process. Due to the question topics, these were inordinately difficult interviews to conduct. Many respondents who never experienced sexual assault displayed a degree of shock or embarrassment at the bluntness of some of the questions, mostly those in the rape sections. Examples of outward reactions include:

"Whoa! That's a hell of a question!"

"Whoa! That's a hell—um I've never been sexually molested."

"How many people put their mouth on me??" [Expressing disbelief.]

Some respondents expressed their discomfort by commiserating with the interviewer. One said with sarcastic humor, "I hope you're going to a really fun happy hour later. They're like, what did you do today? Oh, nothing much..." [Laughs.] Similarly, another respondent said, "Wait. The question was, did they put their fingers in the anus?? Is that what you just said??" The interviewer confirmed. "Oh, Jesus." [Laughs nervously.] "I was like, wait a minute, did she REALLY just say that? Okay. I've never had that done before...You must be having a fun day today, asking that question."

The respondents above expressed surprise, discomfort, or embarrassment by the questions. However, others demonstrated more concerning reactions to the questions. As mentioned earlier, nine respondents displayed mild levels of distress during the interview and were subsequently emailed toll-free hotline numbers and web resources. The following are examples of the types of experiences respondents related during the interview and illustrate the types of memories and narratives respondents were required to recall and discuss:

"Well, it's opening me up. And as I speak to you, I'm trying to connect the dots here because it's been a long time ago. And it's something I thought I had rid myself of. And I've been seeing a psychiatrist and a therapist. But I still have these flare-ups and flashbacks I'll call them. Sometimes it's something on TV that will bring back a memory. So these wounds can be opened back up quite easily."

"Well, when I was a child I can remember my mother's brother, who is my uncle, used to fondle me when I was coming of age. When I didn't want any sexual contact he would force himself upon me in such a way that I was very fearful of him. And also hated him for it but at the same time too afraid to even let my mother know that her brother was doing this to me. So I was in that web."

"Oh! [Nervous laugh.] It's not funny, it's just surreal. Thinking about it as an older person. You ever look back on your life and all the times that you brushed with death? This gives very much those vibes. Wow."

"But when I wasn't interested in having sex he would say 'we're going to because we're married' and all this kind of stuff, you know? Then he would get crazy, want to hit me, you know [shaking head] and it was just out of control, it really was. Out of control. And like I said, if I had not left him, I really believe I wouldn't be here talking to you now."

Without skilled interviewers, the number of respondents experiencing emotional distress could have been larger than nine, and mild levels of distress could easily have escalated to moderate or extreme levels. Managing respondent emotions became a critical and central task of the interviewer and, as a result, many individual questions could not in good conscience be evaluated. This compromises scientific goals – a full cognitive assessment was not possible given ethical constraints. Moreover, this phenomenon draws into question the veracity of survey results as well. These respondent reactions and experiences suggest that serious thought should be given to the level of detail and amount of information truly necessary for research purposes when weighed against the level of distress that answering such questions imposes upon respondents.

APPENDIX: NISVIS Cognitive Interview Test Instrument

SECTION 1: DEMOGRAPHICS

First, how old are you? [NOT PROBESD]

Age _____

[CF14] What sex were you assigned at birth, on your original birth certificate?

- Male 1
- Female..... 2

[CF15] How do you describe your gender identity?

- Male 1
- Female..... 2
- Male-to-female transgender..... 3
- Female-to-male transgender 4
- Other gender identity, specify 5

[CF18] Are you Spanish, Hispanic or Latino? [NOT PROBESD]

- Yes 1
- No..... 2

[CF19] What is your race? You may identify more than one category. [NOT PROBESD]

- White..... 1
- Black or African American..... 2
- Asian..... 3
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander 4
- American Indian or Alaska Native 5
- Other (Please specify _____) 6

[CF20] Are you now...? [NOT PROBESD]

- Married 1
- Divorced 2
- Separated..... 3
- Widowed..... 4
- Not married but living with a partner..... 5
- Never married..... 6

SECTION 2: STALKING

The next set of questions asks about experiences that can directly impact your health or may have resulted in injury. The questions ask about physical injuries, harassing behaviors, and unwanted sexual activity.

First are some detailed questions about times in your life when someone may have ever given you unwanted attention by repeatedly contacting you, following you, or harassing you. When answering, please think about anyone who may have done these things to you; for example, a romantic or sexual partner, a family member, a friend, a teacher, a supervisor or a co-worker, a neighbor, someone you just met, or a stranger. Please DO NOT include someone following or contacting you as part of their job, such as bill collectors or sales people.

[ST01] Has anyone ever ...
... followed you around, watched, or spied on you when you did not want them to?

Yes..... 1
No..... 2

[ST02] ... approached you or showed up in places, such as your home, work, or school when you did not want them to?

Yes..... 1
No..... 2

[ST03] Has anyone ever ...
... used technology, such as hidden cameras, computer software, apps, or GPS (Global Positioning System) to monitor or track your location without your permission? This includes GPS used in a phone or on social media, such as Facebook. (We are talking about times when you knew or you thought someone was using GPS technology to monitor you.)

Yes..... 1
No..... 2

[ST04]... sneaked onto your property, such as your home or car, and did things to scare you by letting you know they had been there?

Yes..... 1
No..... 2

[ST05] Has anyone ever ...
... made unwanted phone calls to you, sent you emails, voice, or text messages? Please do not include bill collectors or telephone solicitors.

Yes..... 1
No..... 2

[ST06] ... sent you unwanted messages through social media, such as Facebook, Instagram, and chat rooms?

Yes..... 1
No..... 2

[ST07] ... sent you cards, letters, flowers, or presents when they knew you didn't want them to?

Yes..... 1
No..... 2

[IF 'NO' TO ALL, GO TO SECTION 3. OTHERWISE, CONTINUE.]

[ST08_01] You answered earlier that someone had...[FILL PREVIOUS ANSWERS] Has the same person done any of these things to you on more than one occasion?

Yes..... 1
No..... 2

[IF NO, GO TO SECTION 3.]

[ST08] How many people did any of these things to you on more than one occasion?

NUMBER OF PEOPLE _____

[ASK ST09A IF ONLY 1 PERSON IS REPORTED IN PREVIOUS QUESITON; IF MORE THAN 1, GO TO ST09]

[ST09A] Now, thinking ONLY about that person who followed, contacted or harassed you on more than one occasion, did he/she ever make you feel fearful, threatened, or concerned for your safety or the safety of others?

Yes..... 1
No..... 2

[ST10A] Still thinking about that person who followed, contacted or harassed you on more than one occasion, did he/she ever make threats to physically harm you? Please include ALL people who made threats to physically harm you EVEN IF you did not take the threat seriously or did not feel fearful, threatened, or concerned for your safety or the safety of others.

Yes..... 1
No..... 2

[IF ZERO TO BOTH, GO TO SECTION 3.]

[ST09] Now, thinking ONLY about the {FILL #} people who followed, contacted or harassed you on more than one occasion, how many of those people ever made you fearful, threatened, or concerned for your safety or the safety of others?

NUMBER OF PEOPLE _____

[ST10] Now, thinking ONLY about the {fill #} people who followed contacted or harassed you on more than one occasion, how many of those people ever made threats to physically harm you? Please include

ALL people who made threats to physically harm you EVEN IF you did not take the threat seriously or did not feel fearful, threatened, or concerned for your safety or the safety of others.

NUMBER OF PEOPLE _____

[IF ZERO TO BOTH, GO TO SECTION 3.]

[ST10_REVIEW] You said that...[READ THE NEXT 2 INTROS AS APPLICABLE]

[# OF PEOPLE] made you feel fearful, threatened, or concerned for your safety or the safety of others.

[AND]

[# OF PEOPLE] made threats to physically harm you.

In total, how many DIFFERENT people did these things to you?

NUMBER OF PEOPLE _____

PERSON 1: [REPEAT NEXT QUESTIONS FOR EACH PERSON REPORTED FOR STALKING]

[ST11_01] Only thinking about the (person/people) who...

- Followed, contacted, or harassed you on more than one occasion [AND]
- [FILL AS APPROPRIATE FROM ST09 AND ST10:] made you feel fearful, threatened, or concerned for your safety or the safety of others / made threats to physically harm you.

The [FIRST/SECOND/ETC.] time anyone did any of these things to you, was that person male or female?

Male 1
 Female..... 2

[ST11_01B] [SHOW CARD] The [first/second/etc.] time this happened, how did you know this person?

Please choose a category that best describes how you knew the person.

1. Someone I was involved with romantically or sexually at the time
2. Someone I previously had been involved with romantically or sexually
3. A family member
4. A friend or acquaintance (e.g., neighbor, roommate, classmate, etc.)
5. Someone I knew through work (e.g., co-worker, boss/supervisor, client/customer/patient, etc.)
6. A person of authority (e.g., teacher, doctor, police officer, etc.)
7. Someone I knew less than 24 hours (e.g., taxi driver, someone met at party/bar)
8. A complete stranger
9. Someone else (Please specify:) _____

[ST11_01E] How old were you the [first/second/etc.] time this person did any of these things to you?

AGE _____

[ST11_01F] Still thinking about this person. Did {he/she} do {this/any of these things} within the past 12 months, that is since [FILL: DATE 12 MONTHS AGO]?

- Followed, contacted, or harassed you on more than one occasion [AND]

- [FILL AS APPROPRIATE: made you feel fearful, threatened, or concerned for your safety or the safety of others / made threats to physically harm you].

Yes..... 1
 No..... 2

[IF 'YES' **AND** PERSON IS NOT A FAMILY MEMBER, ASK NEXT QUESTION.
 ELSE IF 'NO' TO THE PREVIOUS QUESTION **OR** PERSON WAS A FAMILY MEMBER GO TO SECTION 3.]

[ST11_01G] Just to confirm, this person was still [FILL RELATIONSHIP] when [he/she did {this/any of these things}] to you in the past 12 months. Is that correct?

Yes..... 1
 No..... 2

[IF NO, ASK ST11_01H]

[ST11_01H] [SHOW CARD] How did you know {him/her} when {he/she} did these things to you in the past 12 months?

1. Someone I was involved with romantically or sexually at the time
2. Someone I previously had been involved with romantically or sexually
3. A family member
4. A friend or acquaintance (e.g., neighbor, roommate, classmate, etc.)
5. Someone I knew through work (e.g., co-worker, boss/supervisor, client/customer/patient, etc.)
6. A person of authority (e.g., teacher, doctor, police officer, etc.)
7. Someone I knew less than 24 hours (e.g., taxi driver, someone met at party/bar)
8. A complete stranger
9. Someone else (Please specify:)

SECTION 3: COMPLETED ALCOHOL/DRUG-FACILITATED RAPE AND MADE TO PENETRATE

[AD_INTRO1] This next section is about unwanted sex or sexual contact, that is, sexual contact that you did not consent to and that you did not want to happen.

Sometimes unwanted sex or sexual contact happens when a person is unable to consent to it or stop it from happening because they are too drunk, high, drugged, or passed out from alcohol, drugs, or medications. This can include times when they voluntarily consumed alcohol or drugs or times when they were given alcohol or drugs without their knowledge or consent. You might or might not have ever been in this type of situation. Please remember that even if someone uses alcohol or drugs, what happens to them is not their fault. These questions use detailed and explicit language so that everyone is clear about what the questions are asking.

[ASK IF **FEMALE**; IF R IS **MALE**, SKIP TO AD05.]

[AD01] When you were unable to consent to sex or stop it from happening because you were too drunk, high, drugged, or passed out from alcohol or drugs, how many PEOPLE ever did the following when you did not want them to...?

Put their mouth on your vagina? If this has never happened or you have never been drunk or drugged, choose None or Not Applicable.

NUMBER OF PEOPLE _____

[AD02] Put their fingers or an object in your vagina or anus?

NUMBER OF PEOPLE _____

[AD03] When you were unable to consent to sex or stop it from happening because you were too drunk, high, drugged, or passed out from alcohol or drugs, how many MALES ever did the following when you did not want them to...?

Put their penis in your vagina?

NUMBER OF MALES _____

[AD04] Put their penis in your mouth or anus?

NUMBER OF MALES _____

[IF R IS MALE, ASK AD05 THROUGH AD08. FEMALES GO TO AD09.]

[AD05] When you were unable to consent to sex or stop it from happening because you were too drunk, high, drugged, or passed out from alcohol or drugs, how many PEOPLE ever did the following when you did not want them to...

Put their fingers or an object in your anus? (If this has never happened or you have never been drunk or drugged, choose None/Not Applicable.)

NUMBER OF PEOPLE _____

[AD06] Put their mouth on your penis or make you put your penis in their mouth? (If this has never happened or you have never been drunk or drugged, choose None/Not Applicable.)

NUMBER OF PEOPLE _____

[AD07] When you were unable to consent to sex or stop it from happening because you were too drunk, high, drugged, or passed out from alcohol or drugs, how many FEMALES ever did the following when you did not want them to...

...made you put your penis in their vagina? (READ IF NECESSARY: If this has never happened or you have never been drunk or drugged, choose None/Not Applicable.)

NUMBER OF FEMALES _____

[AD08] When you were unable to consent to sex or stop it from happening because you were too drunk, high, drugged, or passed out from alcohol or drugs, how many MALES ever did the following when you did not want them to ...

...put their penis in your mouth or anus?

NUMBER OF MALES _____

[AD09] The next two questions are about your exposure to alcohol or drugs. Thinking about the times when {this one behavior / any of these things} happened to you when you were unable to consent to sex or stop it from happening ...

... do you think you were ever given alcohol without your knowledge?

Yes..... 1
No..... 2

[AD10] ... do you think you were ever given other drugs without your knowledge?

Yes..... 1
No..... 2

[AD11_REVIEW] You answered earlier that, when you were unable to consent to sex or stop it from happening because you were too drunk, high, drugged, or passed out from alcohol or drugs...

In total, how many DIFFERENT people did any of these things to you?

NUMBER OF DIFFERENT PEOPLE _____

PERSON 1: [ASK NEXT QUESTIONS FOR EACH PERSON.]

[AD11_01] Think about the [FIRST / SECOND / ETC.] time anyone EVER did any of the following to you when you were unable to consent to sex or stop it from happening, because you were too drunk, high, drugged, or passed out from alcohol or drugs...

[FOR **FEMALE** RESPONDENTS, FILL AS RELEVANT: Put their mouth on your vagina / Put their fingers or an object in your vagina or anus

[IF **MALE** RESPONDENTS, FILL AS RELEVANT: Put their fingers or an object in your anus

...Was this person male or female?

Male..... 1
Female..... 2

[AD11_01B] Think about the [FIRST / SECOND/ ETC.] time anyone EVER did any of the following to you when you were unable to consent to sex or stop it from happening, because you were too drunk, high, drugged, or passed out from alcohol or drugs...

[**SHOW CARD**] The {first/second/etc.} time this happened, how did you know this person? Please choose a category that best describes how you knew the person.

1. Someone I was involved with romantically or sexually at the time
2. Someone I previously had been involved with romantically or sexually
3. A family member
4. A friend or acquaintance (e.g., neighbor, roommate, classmate, etc.)

5. Someone I knew through work (e.g., co-worker, boss/supervisor, client/customer/patient, etc.)
6. A person of authority (e.g., teacher, doctor, police officer, etc.)
7. Someone I knew less than 24 hours (e.g., taxi driver, someone met at party/bar)
8. A complete stranger
9. Someone else (Please specify:)

[AD11_01E] How old were you the {first/second/etc.} time this person did any of these things to you?

AGE _____

[AD11_01F] Still thinking about this person. Did {he/she} do {this/any of these things} within the past 12 months, that is since [DATE 12 MONTHS AGO]?

[FOR **FEMALE** RESPONDENTS, FILL AS RELEVANT: Put {his/her} mouth on your vagina / Put {his/her} their fingers or an object in your vagina or anus / Put his penis in your vagina / Put his penis in your mouth or anus

[FOR **MALE** RESPONDENTS, FILL AS RELEVANT: Put {his/her} fingers or an object in your anus / Put his penis in your mouth or anus

...when you were unable to consent to sex or stop it from happening, because you were too drunk, high, drugged, or passed out from alcohol or drugs?

- Yes 1
 No 2

[IF 'YES' **AND** PERSON IS NOT A FAMILY MEMBER, ASK NEXT QUESTION.
 ELSE IF 'NO' TO THE PREVIOUS QUESTION **OR** PERSON WAS A FAMILY MEMBER GO TO SECTION 4.]

[AD11_01G] Just to confirm, this person was still [FILL RELATIONSHIP] when {he/she} did {this/any of these things} to you in the past 12 months. Is that correct?

- Yes 1
 No 2

[IF NO ASK AD11_01H. IF YES, GO TO SECTION 4.]

[AD11_01H] How did you know {him/her} when {he/she} did these things to you in the past 12 months?

1. Someone I was involved with romantically or sexually at the time
2. Someone I previously had been involved with romantically or sexually
3. A family member
4. A friend or acquaintance (e.g., neighbor, roommate, classmate, etc.)
5. Someone I knew through work (e.g., co-worker, boss/supervisor, client/customer/patient, etc.)
6. A person of authority (e.g., teacher, doctor, police officer, etc.)
7. Someone I knew less than 24 hours (e.g., taxi driver, someone met at party/bar)
8. A complete stranger
9. Someone else (Please specify:)

SECTION 4: UNWANTED SEX DUE TO THREATS OF HARM/PHYSICAL FORCE

[FC_INTRO1] Some people are threatened with harm or physically forced to have sex or sexual contact when they don't want to. Examples of physical force are being pinned or held down, using violence or threats of violence, or not physically stopping after you said no. To be clear, the next questions are asking only about times in your life when sex was unwanted and you did not give consent.

[IF R IS **FEMALE**, ASK FC01. IF R IS **MALE** GO TO FC05.]

[FC01] How many PEOPLE have ever used physical force or threats of physical harm to ...

...put their mouth on your vagina? Examples of physical force are being pinned or held down, using violence or threats of violence, or not physically stopping after you said no.

NUMBER OF PEOPLE _____

[FC02] ... put their fingers or an object in your vagina or anus?

NUMBER OF PEOPLE _____

[FC03] How many MALES have ever used physical force or threats of physical harm to ...
... put their penis in your vagina? Examples of physical force are being pinned or held down, using violence or threats of violence, or not physically stopping after you said no.

NUMBER OF MALES _____

[FC04] ... put their penis in your mouth or anus?

NUMBER OF MALES _____

[IF R IS **MALE**, ASK FC05.]

[FC05] How many PEOPLE have ever used physical force or threats of physical harm to ...
... put their fingers or an object in your anus? (Examples of physical force are being pinned or held down, using violence or threats of violence, or not physically stopping after you said no.)

NUMBER OF PEOPLE _____

[FC06] ... put their mouth on your penis, or make you put your penis in their mouth?

NUMBER OF PEOPLE _____

[FC07] How many FEMALES have ever used physical force or threats of physical harm to make you put your penis in their vagina? (Examples of physical force are being pinned or held down, using violence or threats of violence, or not physically stopping after you said no.)

NUMBER OF FEMALES _____

[FC08] How many MALES have ever used physical force or threats of physical harm to put their penis in your mouth or anus?

NUMBER OF MALES _____

[FC09_REVIEW]

[FOR **FEMALE** RESPONDENTS: You answered earlier that, using physical force or threats of harm...
[a person / # people] put {his/her} / their mouth on your vagina / put {their/his or her} fingers or an object in your vagina or anus / put {their/his} penis in your vagina / {their/his} penis in your mouth or anus

[FOR **MALE** RESPONDENTS: You answered earlier that, using physical force or threats of harm...
[a person / # people] put {their/his or her} fingers or an object in your anus / put {their/his} penis in your mouth or anus

In total, how many DIFFERENT people did any of these things to you?

NUMBER OF PEOPLE _____

PERSON 1: [REPEAT THE NEXT QUESTIONS FOR EACH PERSON MENTIONED]

[ASK THE NEXT QUESTIONS IF: R IS **MALE** AND ANSWERED YES FOR OBJECTS IN ANUS;
IF R IS **FEMALE** AND ANSWERED YES FOR MOUTH ON VAGINA OR OBJECT IN VAGINA/ANUS;
ELSE GO TO FC09_02 INTRO]

[FC09_01] Think about the [FIRST / SECOND / ETC.] time anyone EVER did any of the following to you using physical force or threats of harm...

(**FEMALE** RESPONDENTS, READ AS RELEVANT: put his or her mouth on your vagina / put his or her fingers or an object in your vagina or anus

(**MALE** RESPONDENTS, READ AS RELEVANT: put his/her fingers or an object in your anus

Was this person male or female?

Male 1
Female..... 2

[FC09_02 INTRO] Think about the [first/second/etc.] time anyone EVER did any of the following to you using physical force or threats of harm...

[FC09_02] [**SHOW CARD**] The {first/second/etc.} time this happened, how did you know this person?

Please choose a category that best describes how you knew the person.

1. Someone I was involved with romantically or sexually at the time
2. Someone I previously had been involved with romantically or sexually
3. A family member
4. A friend or acquaintance (e.g., neighbor, roommate, classmate, etc.)
5. Someone I knew through work (e.g., co-worker, boss/supervisor, client/customer/patient, etc.)
6. A person of authority (e.g., teacher, doctor, police officer, etc.)
7. Someone I knew less than 24 hours (e.g., taxi driver, someone met at party/bar)
8. A complete stranger
9. Someone else (Please specify:) _____

[FC09_01E] How old were you the {first/second/etc.} time this person did any of these things to you?

AGE _____

[FC09_01F] Still thinking about this person. Did {he/she} do {this/any of these things} within the past 12 months, that is since [FILL: DATE 12 MONTHS AGO]?

Yes..... 1
No..... 2

[IF 'YES' **AND** PERSON IS NOT A FAMILY MEMBER, ASK NEXT QUESTION.
ELSE **FEMALES** GO TO NEXT SECTION; **MALES** GO TO SKIP BEFORE FC_INTRO2.]

[FC09_01G] Just to confirm, this person was still [FILL RELATIONSHIP] when {he/she} did {this/any of these things} to you in the past 12 months. Is that correct?

Yes..... 1
No..... 2

[IF NO ASK FC09_01H. ELSE GO TO FC09_02.]

[FC09_01H] How did you know {him/her} when {he/she} did these things to you in the past 12 months?

1. Someone I was involved with romantically or sexually at the time
2. Someone I previously had been involved with romantically or sexually
3. A family member
4. A friend or acquaintance (e.g., neighbor, roommate, classmate, etc.)
5. Someone I knew through work (e.g., co-worker, boss/supervisor, client/customer/patient, etc.)
6. A person of authority (e.g., teacher, doctor, police officer, etc.)
7. Someone I knew less than 24 hours (e.g., taxi driver, someone met at party/bar)
8. A complete stranger
9. Someone else (Please specify:) _____

[FC09_02] Think about the {person / people} who...

[FOR **FEMALE** RESPONDENTS, FILL AS RELEVANT: Put {his or her/their} mouth on your vagina / Put {his or her/their} fingers or an object in your vagina or anus / Put {his/their} penis in your vagina / Put {his/their} penis in your mouth or anus]

[IF **MALE** RESPONDENTS, FILL AS RELEVANT: put {his or her/their} fingers or an object in your anus / put {his/their} penis in your mouth or anus.]

...using physical force or threats of harm in the past 12 mos, that is since [DATE 12 MOS AGO].
How many times in total did {this / these things} happen to you in the past 12 months? [READ IF NECESSARY: "In total" refers to your combined experiences across all of the people who did {this / these things} to you in the past 12 months.]

NUMBER OF TIMES IN PAST 12 MOS. _____

[ASK NEXT Q'S **ONLY** TO MALES WHO WERE **MADE TO PENETRATE BY FORCE**.
OTHERS GO TO SECTION 5]

[FC17_REVIEW] You answered earlier that...

[{People/ A person} put {their/his or her} mouth on your penis, or made you put your penis in {their/his or her} mouth / {females/a female} made you put your penis in her vagina]

...using physical force or threats of harm.

In total, how many DIFFERENT people did any of these things to you?

NUMBER OF DIFFERENT PEOPLE _____

SECTION 5: ATTEMPTED PHYSICALLY FORCED SEX

[FA_INTRO1] The next set of questions are about times in your life when someone ever ATTEMPTED to have sex or sexual contact with you by using physical force or threats of harm but sex did NOT happen. Examples of physical force are being pinned or held down, using violence or threats of violence, or not physically stopping after you said no. To be clear, we are now asking only about times when sex was unwanted and you did not give consent, and sex did not happen.

[ASK IF FEMALE. IF MALE, GO TO FA02.]

[FA01] How many MALES have ever used physical force or threats of physical harm to TRY to put their penis in your vagina, mouth, or anus, but it DID NOT happen?

NUMBER OF MALES _____

[ASK IF MALE]

[FA02] How many PEOPLE have ever used physical force or threats of physical harm to TRY to put their mouth on your penis, or TRY to make you put your penis in their mouth, but it did not happen?

NUMBER OF PEOPLE _____

[FA03] How many FEMALES have ever used physical force or threats of physical harm to TRY to make you put your penis in their vagina, but it DID NOT happen?

NUMBER OF FEMALES _____

SECTION 6: PHYSICAL VIOLENCE

[PV_INTRO1] The next questions are related to physical acts you may have experienced with your current or ex-romantic or sexual partners.

[PV07] How many of your current or ex-partners have ever ...
... slammed you against something?

NUMBER OF PARTNERS _____

[PV08] ... tried to hurt you by choking or suffocating you?

NUMBER OF PARTNERS _____

[PV09] How many of your current or ex-partners have ever ...

... used a knife on you?

NUMBER OF PARTNERS _____

[PV10] ... used a gun on you?

NUMBER OF PARTNERS _____

SECTION 7: TECHNOLOGY-FACILITATED SEXUAL VIOLENCE

[TF_01] In your lifetime, has anyone ever sent you an unwanted sexually explicit message or image through the internet, social media (e.g., Facebook, Instagram), email, or text message without your consent? Please do not include spam messages.

Yes..... 1
No..... 2

[TF_02] In your lifetime, has anyone ever emailed, texted, or electronically posted a revealing or sexual photo or video of you without your consent?

Yes..... 1
No..... 2

Attachment H (Part 2)

Results from a Cognitive Interview Evaluation of a Subset of Questions for the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: Round 2

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Introduction

The staff of the National Center for Health Statistics' Collaborating Center for Questionnaire Design and Evaluation Research (CCQDER) conducted a cognitive interview evaluation in support of a redesign of the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS)¹. NISVS is a periodic survey conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Injury Prevention and Control that collects national and sub-national information on intimate partner violence, sexual violence, and stalking victimization.

The cognitive interview evaluation is an iterative design with two rounds of testing. Results from the first round are documented in a separate report.² After the first round of cognitive interviews, modifications were made to both question wording and section ordering. The modifications were then evaluated in a second round of testing. This report documents findings from the second round of cognitive interviews, which includes select questions from three sections of the NISVS survey: stalking, sexual assault, and attempted sexual assault. Emphasis is given to sections or questions that continued to be problematic in terms of response error and silent misunderstandings.

The methodological design of the study is discussed next, followed by the research findings. The cognitive interview test instrument is found in the Appendix.

Methodology

Sampling and Respondent Demographics: As a qualitative evaluation, cognitive interviewing employs a purposive non-random sample whereby individuals are chosen on the basis of characteristics relevant to the questions under investigation. As such, people who have experienced stalking behavior or any type of sexual violence were recruited for the study. In addition, participants were recruited with a goal achieving a demographically diverse and inclusive sample, particularly in terms of race, gender, and educational attainment.

The CCQDER operations staff recruited and screened respondents for interviews. Respondents were recruited from the CCQDER database, and a small number through word-of-mouth. Utilizing the recruitment database seemed to facilitate the interview process and ultimately improve data quality by tapping into preexisting rapport between recruiter and respondent. Because respondents were already familiar with the cognitive interview process and with the recruitment staff, there was an established level of comfort with and trust of the interviewer that proved essential in discussing the sensitive topics of stalking, sexual assault, and attempted sexual assault.

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/datasources/nisvs/index.html>

² The final report from that study may be found at <https://wwwn.cdc.gov/qbank/report.aspx?1227>.

A total of 20 English-speaking, adult respondents were interviewed. Most respondents self-identified as either male or female, though females constituted a greater percentage of the sample (75%). One respondent identified as non-binary. Sixty percent of the respondents identified as non-Hispanic Black or African American; the remaining 40% identified as non-Hispanic White. In addition, there were a variety of ages, with most respondents aged 30-59. Finally, 45% of the respondents had a high school diploma or less, while the same percentage had either a two- or four-year college degree. Only two respondents had a graduate degree. Table 1 summarizes the sample composition.

Table 1: Demographic Sample Composition (n = 20)		
	Number	Percent
Gender Identity		
Male	4	20%
Female	15	75%
Another Gender Identity	1	5%
Age in Years		
Under 30	1	5%
30 - 39	5	25%
40 - 49	6	30%
50 - 59	5	25%
60 - 69	1	5%
70 and Over	2	10%
Race/Ethnicity		
Non-Hispanic Black	12	60%
Non-Hispanic White	8	40%
Educational Attainment		
High School Diploma or Less	9	45%
2- or 4-Year College Degree	9	45%
Graduate Degree	2	10%

Data collection: The survey questions are intended to be self-administered online. However, because the questionnaire had not yet been programmed, interviewers read the questions aloud to respondents, as navigation through skip patterns would be too difficult for respondents to follow without computer assistance. However, for certain segments of the test instrument, interviewers shared their screen so that respondents could see portions of the questionnaire. This was done consistently for the introductory text to each section – stalking, sexual assault, and attempted sexual assault – because the instructions were lengthy.

The cognitive interviews were conducted in two parts. First, interviewers read the questions to respondents and recorded their answers. In the second portion, interviewers followed up with retrospective probes to ascertain respondent understandings of the questions and instructions, rationales for their answers, and whether any response error occurred. Interviews were a maximum of 60 minutes in length and took place virtually using the Zoom Internet meeting platform. A \$50 remuneration was mailed to respondents once the interview ended.

Because of the sensitive topics, the interview protocol included augmented safety measures for respondents. At the start of the interview, respondents were reminded first by the recruiter and again

by the interviewer that they could refuse to answer any question or end the interview at any time.³ Respondents were also offered a safe and discrete way to end the interview should their privacy be compromised at any point during the discussion. Additionally, a list of toll-free help lines was made available to respondents who exhibited any distress or discomfort during the interview. Distress levels were categorized as mild, moderate, or severe according to the Distress Guidance form approved by the Ethics Review Board (ERB). Interviewers were responsible for identifying and reporting moderate or severe distress to the ERB; however, no respondents demonstrated that level of distress during the interviews. In part this was due to interviewer skill in quickly recognizing discomfort in a respondent and refraining from further probing. Additionally, no probing was initiated on any respondent (regardless of their experiences) for questions that ask about sexually explicit acts (i.e., those that ask about oral, vaginal, or anal sex). Discussion of those topics occurred only if introduced by the respondents. Of the 20 respondents, only four exhibited mild distress and were given a copy of helpline telephone numbers and web resources at the end of the interview. Upon showing distress, all four respondents were asked whether they wanted to stop or continue with the interview. All chose to finish the interview, citing the importance of the topic and the need for national data.

Analysis: Analysis of interview data included a process similar to the constant comparative method first developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967)⁴ and adapted to cognitive interviews by Miller et al. (2014).⁵ Data analysis was conducted with the use of Q-Notes,⁶ a software application specifically designed for cognitive interview studies. The first stage of analysis occurred within each interview. This involved analyzing a respondent's narrative during probing and comparing it to their survey answers to assess internal consistency, identify response error, and document respondent understanding of the questions and instructions. The second stage of analysis was a comparison of interpretations by question across interviews to identify larger patterns in the question-response process and forms of response error. Lastly, patterns and themes were compared for any subgroup variation, for example, by gender identity.

Findings

Overall, the questions in this round were an improvement over Round 1. The most significant improvement was the ordering and composition of the sexual assault sections. In Round 1 the topic of sexual assault was divided into different sections. Respondents were confused over the distinction between the section on drug/alcohol-impaired sexual assault (which appeared first) and the section on sexual assault more broadly (which appeared second)⁷. Because the distinction between the two sections was indeterminable to many respondents, they saw the questions as repetitive and confusing.

The flow and logic were less confusing in Round 2 because questions on drug/alcohol-impaired sexual assault were incorporated into the sexual assault section in general, instead of constituting a separate section. When drug/alcohol-impaired assault became a subsection of sexual assault, respondents

³ This procedure is standard for all CCQDER projects but was reiterated to respondents a second time in this project.

⁴ Glaser, B. and Strauss, A. (1967) *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*. Hawthorne, NY: Aldine de Gruyter.

⁵ Miller, K., Willson, S., Chepp, V., & Padilla, J.-L. (2014) *Cognitive Interviewing Methodology: A Sociological Approach for Survey Question Evaluation*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

⁶ <https://wwwn.cdc.gov/qnotes/>

⁷ Findings from Round 1 may be reviewed at <https://wwwn.cdc.gov/qbank/report.aspx?1227>

understood the difference between the concepts, were less likely to see the questions as repetitive, and provided answers that were more aligned with question intent.

It is important again to note that not all individual questions were systematically probed due to the sensitive nature of the topics. Instead, questions were explored on a case-by-case basis depending on a respondent's personal experiences and proclivity to discuss the details of those experiences. Findings are reported within this context.

Several items are asked in similar ways across different sections of the survey, such as respondent age at the time of an event and the relationship of the respondent to the perpetrator. Findings from these questions are documented below. Additionally, certain concepts such as stalking and attempted sexual assault still posed some question-response challenges that are documented next.

1. *Opportunities for False Negative Responses*

Respondents did not always report all perpetrators in either the stalking questions or the sexual assault or attempted sexual assault sections. This occurred for the following reasons.

Recall: The questions on stalking and unwanted sexual experiences ask respondents how many of these events occurred in their entire life. Hence, one reason respondents may not include all perpetrators is simply recall failure. For example, one respondent reported three stalkers but admitted that recall was challenging. She said, "But it was a long time ago, some of it, too. So, I think that's the only reason it got a little muddled maybe. Because I had to think back." Another respondent paused and thought for a while, then asked, "Like over my lifetime? That is hard to quantify." She finally gave a less-than-confident answer of, "Probably three maybe." This can become more difficult the older a respondent is. For example, one respondent had difficulty and explained, "I was 19. I'm 35 so that was a long time ago." Another respondent who was even older had difficulty providing a number of stalkers. She said, "Remember, I'm 76 this is uh [thinks]...at least 3 through the years."

Experiences Deemed Too Trivial (or Numerous) to Mention: Another opportunity for false negative reports occurs when respondents omit certain experiences from their answers because they are deemed too trivial to report. This occurred, for example, in the stalking section. When asked by the interviewer during probing to confirm her answer of two, one respondent said, "I mean, I think that there were a few times that I had a little stalking going on with a boyfriend that I had. But it was very brief... but I thought maybe we would be here all day if I discussed all of these things." However, when the interviewer asked the respondent about this omitted experience, it seemed worthy of inclusion. In explaining what happened when she tried to break up with her boyfriend, the respondent said, "He was calling me at my job and actually got me fired because he called so much." One time he followed her and tried to run her off the road. "I think that it was for about a month it lasted." *Did he make you feel afraid?*⁸ "Yeah. A little bit." *And did he make threats?* "Yeah, and he was drinking real heavily and then I was even more scared because I said, oh great, now he's drinking, and he's vulgar, and just threatening me and following me, and he got me fired from my job..."

Another respondent failed to report an experience with receiving sexually explicit pictures through email. The interviewer attempted to rule out a false negative error and confirm his answer during

⁸ Text in italics denotes interviewer questions to the respondent during the probing portion of the cognitive interview.

probing. *So, no one ever did anything like this?* "No." *Any that almost crossed the line?* "Yes. A friend had done that. And I talked to her about it, and she apologized. And that was the first and last time." *What was she sending you?* "It was a picture of herself because she had got pierced [in a provocative place]. She wanted my opinion about it, and I told her that's kind of crossing the line with us as friends. I'm dating someone." *But you didn't include that here. Why?* "To be honest with you, I literally just remembered when you asked it again [during probing]." For the respondent this incident was not especially significant. As a result, he neglected to report it because he did not even remember it at first.

Unpleasant Memories: Finally, the topics of these questions are unavoidably sensitive. This can contribute to false negative reporting. In both rounds of testing, some respondents failed to report certain experiences because thinking about them is too unpleasant. For example, in thinking about her experiences with stalking, one respondent said, "To be honest, I've probably blocked some of it out. But once I tap back into it, it's very easy to remember how everything played out." Another respondent did not initially report sexual assault that occurred by her father when she was a teenager but did bring it up with the interviewer during probing. When asked why she did not include this experience in her survey answers she explained, "Because it's so painful, if they [the questions] don't mention it, I don't want to discuss it. That's my personal opinion. If they don't mention it, I'd rather bury that one and let's pass on to what happened after I left home." Another respondent initially reported only one incident of sexual assault but during probing said, "Well, there was one other person. I was traveling by myself, and this happened in Italy." The interviewer reminded the respondent that this survey was intended to be completed online and asked if she thought it would be more comfortable to report such experiences in that context. She said, "No. It doesn't make any difference [how the questions are administered]." In other words, thinking about the experience is the source of unpleasantness, not necessarily the discussion of it with an interviewer or the reporting of it in a survey. Therefore, it is the decision to not to invoke such memories in the first place that is the cause of some underreporting.

Men: Men may experience the behaviors asked about in the survey questions somewhat differently than women. For example, some experiences that men have were not defined by them as being sexually victimized, *per se*. This occurred in the above example of the respondent who failed to report receiving sexually explicit pictures through email. He did not interpret this experience as being victimized; indeed, it was so trivial to him that he almost forgot about it altogether – which led to his failure to report the incident in his survey answer.

Additionally, these results demonstrated that sometimes men were so accustomed to being defined not as the *victim* but as the *perpetrator* of stalking, sexual assault, and attempted sexual assault that they had difficulty staying focused on the idea that these questions are about their experiences as a victim. One male respondent demonstrated this pattern. He had himself been accused of stalking and focused on this experience during the follow-up discussion. A friend took him to court claiming that he was harassing her. The judge threw out the case because the respondent was able to convince the court that he did not know she no longer wanted to hear from him because she never directly communicated this. He said, "I didn't even know that I was harassing her! I didn't even know about anything. One day she just stopped talking to me and I thought that she was just mad at me. Because in our last conversation, she had said I will talk to you later." The respondent did not demonstrate response error, but during probing he was not thinking as much about himself as a victim of stalking (which he did report in his survey answer) as he was as an (alleged) perpetrator. It was clear that his experience as an alleged perpetrator was more salient in his mind than his experience as a victim.

A similar pattern was observed with another respondent who reported no experiences with sexual assault. Response error was not detected; however, probing revealed that he saw men as the primary perpetrators of sexual assault and had a difficult time imagining either women as perpetrators or himself as a victim. Thinking that only men commit this type of violence he said, "Again, I'm straight. So, I've never been in that situation." When answering whether anyone ever attempted unwanted oral sex with him, he further explained, "It's never something that I would think of forcing on somebody. Consequently, I can't think of any woman ever forcing themselves on me to do that...but if a woman enjoys herself and wants to do that, then fine [laughs]." Note that his response includes answering for himself as a perpetrator even though that question was never actually asked of him in either the survey or during probing.

These interpretive trends may lead to systematic underreporting of stalking, sexual assault, and attempted sexual assault among men and, in fact, one respondent confirms the potential for this type of error. One respondent failed to report an attempted sexual assault because he was too focused on being defined as a perpetrator. During probing the interviewer followed up on his answer of 'no' to the attempted sexual assault question in order to assess response error. *Did anyone ever try to push it [sex] further than you wanted?* "I always make sure that we're on the same page." *How so?* "During [sex]. Like I have to literally make sure I get consent. Because I don't want anything to escalate in the wrong manner. So I have to make sure in the way things are nowadays. It has to be a conversation. I have to hear it [consent]. I have to hear it because if that person is really not into it and doesn't want it, I'm stopping right there because for a man nowadays, there is...it's not good." The interviewer noticed that the respondent was not answering for himself as the possible victim of sexual assault and asked the question again, more directly. *So, no one has ever done that to YOU? Taken things further than you wanted?* "Um...let me think. [Pause.] Actually, yes. There was actually one time I was chilling in the car [with] a friend of mine. And she wanted to [have sex] and I didn't. I told her let's just stay friends. I wasn't feeling her to the point where we could get physical. At the time she wasn't taking no for an answer. So that was the first time. Then there was a second time [with the same woman] and I was like, okay, I have to distance myself from her." He initially answered 'no' to all the questions on attempted sexual assault because he was thinking of himself in the possible role of perpetrator and that he always obtains consent and has never sexually assaulted anyone. It somehow did not occur to him that the questions were asking about his experience as a victim of attempted sexual assault.

2. Ambiguity in the Concept of Attempted Sexual Assault

One section of the questionnaire (for both men and women) covers attempted sexual assault. For women the question asks: "How many people have ever used physical force or threats of physical harm to TRY to put their penis in your vagina, mouth, or anus, but it DID NOT happen?"

An attempted sexual assault by definition means that the event did not occur. As a result, respondents must make judgment calls about what specific acts they think the perpetrator was intending to do. Because of this ambiguity, response error can be difficult to assess, but evidence suggests that respondents may include unintended events. For example, one respondent included an experience that might be classified as a false positive error. The interviewer explored this topic during probing. *You said one person [attempted sexual assault]. Tell me about this.* "I had in-school suspension...And you know how you sit at your desk, do your work, and you need help. Teacher came over. And he started rubbing my back, pulling at my pants. And I took a book and I hit him across the head with it." *What happened after that?* "He fell out. I'm 5'10". At that time in high school, I was weighing like 325 pounds and all of it was muscle. So, he laid out. He didn't get up. They had to bring the ambulance." This may not be a false

positive, but it does illustrate the complex nature of sexual aggression and how people internalize such experiences. While in a school detention setting it seems unlikely that the teacher would have actually performed an act of sex as indicated in the question (i.e., vaginal, oral, or anal), the respondent thought this man's behavior to be serious enough to report here. She did not (could not) know his intentions in terms of specific sexual acts, but she did know he was behaving in a sexually unwanted and aggressive way that suggested he wanted – and may have done – something more had she not stopped him.

Instead of a single question similar to the female section, the male section separated each attempted sexual act into three distinct questions as follows:

“In your lifetime, how many people have ever...

...used physical force or threats of physical harm to TRY to put their mouth on your penis, or TRY to make you put your penis in their mouth, but it DID NOT happen?

...used physical force or threats of physical harm to TRY to make you put your penis in their vagina, but it DID NOT happen?

...used physical force or threats of physical harm to TRY to put their penis in your mouth or anus, but it DID NOT happen?”

Breaking the single question into three different ones adds to the judgement burden for men because it essentially forces them to identify specific behaviors they think the perpetrator would have done, instead of simply acknowledging that any one of three possible acts may have occurred (oral, anal, or vaginally made-to-penetrate). For example, one male respondent answered 'yes' to attempted oral sex but 'no' to attempted vaginal sex (forced penetration). Because nothing actually happened, it was impossible for him to know what specific sexual acts his aggressor would have performed had the situation escalated further. He explained, "It was a female friend of mine had another female that she wanted me to talk to. That was my first time meeting her. And she was a big girl. She was a lot bigger than me. And she just got aggressive. Kept telling me how much she like me, how good I looked. And she just kept saying 'you will have sex with me' in a real aggressive way. And I said, 'You gotta go.' Because I wasn't even attracted to her to be honest. And that's what really irritated me. She stood up and said, 'No, you're gonna give me some dick before I leave.' I said if you don't get out, something bad is going to happen. She ended up leaving but she was real forceful. If I wasn't aggressive, I don't know what would've happened." *Did she do anything physical to you?* "She pushed me on the bed. [Laughs.] Like I said, she was bigger than me. She wasn't taller than me, but she was fat." *Why did you choose 'mouth on penis'?* *Did she say she wanted to do that?* "No, she just said she wanted to have sex." *So why not also the 'vaginal' question too?* "My fault. I probably didn't really hear the whole thing. But I should've said 'yes' to that one." In reality the respondent could not have known what specific acts the respondent intended, so he provided one answer (oral sex) that seemed reasonable. But in talking about the experience, he also believed that vaginal sex was also likely and in retrospect should have been included. Had this been one question (similar to the female section), he would not have had to make such specific judgements about someone else's potential behavior.

3. Categories in the Relationship Questions

In each topic area – stalking, sexual assault, and attempted assault – respondents are asked the nature of their relationship to the perpetrator at the time of the occurrence. The categories tested were:

Someone I was involved with romantically or sexually <i>at the time</i>	1
Someone I <i>previously</i> had been involved with romantically or sexually	2
A family member.....	3
A friend or acquaintance (e.g., neighbor, roommate, classmate, etc.).....	4
Someone I knew through work (e.g., co-worker, boss/supervisor, client/customer/patient, etc.)	5
A person of authority (e.g., teacher, doctor, police officer, etc.).....	6
Someone I knew less than 24 hours (e.g., taxi driver, someone met at party/bar)	7
A complete stranger	8
Someone else (Please specify: _____)	9

In many instances, the categories offered were insufficient and difficult to choose from. This is due in part to timeframe confusion and to the complicated nature of relationships and experiences.

Timeframe Confusion: Some respondents could not keep the timeframe in mind of how they knew the person *at the time of the experience*. One respondent looked at the categories and said, “She was someone I dated.” So, would that be #1, someone you were involved with romantically or sexually at the time? “Um-hm.” However, it later emerged that she did these things to him after they had become romantically involved, so the better choice was category 2. Another respondent also got confused about the categories and timeframe. She said, “That was my husband. I met him in college.” The interviewer asked her to choose from the list on the showcard and she said, “Number 4 would apply to him, I met him through a friend.” The correct answer was option 1. A third respondent also got confused between how she met the person versus what her relationship was to the person. She answered category 6 because she met this person while he was on duty as a police officer, but she described him as “Someone that wanted to date me and we was just friends at first.” In this case, categories 1 or 4 might have been more appropriate than 6.

As the previous examples show, when respondents don’t keep the timeframe in mind, the categories are not mutually exclusive because relationships shift over time. One respondent said, “It was someone I met online, a dating website.” *Is there a category here (showed showcard) that you think best fits how you knew the person?* “[Category 8] because I didn’t know them at the time...But the intent was to date...so kind of like 8 and 1.”

The Complex Nature of Relationships: The interaction with another respondent illustrates the difficulty in mapping personal experiences onto the response options because some relationships are not easily categorized. One respondent studied the card and, not finding an obvious answer, tells the interviewer in her own words. She said, “It was a 16-year-old I hired to cut my grass for the summer...I didn't know it was him...so I guess it would fall under 'someone else.'” But then during probing she said it was a neighbor. Because she was having difficulty choosing among the options, the interviewer asked what category the respondent might add here to capture her experience. “It was a worker. Someone I hired to work around my house.” *Right. That's really not category 5, is it?* “It was a neighbor.” *Ok, so a neighbor. That's under 'friend or acquaintance.'* *Was he doing this before you hired him do you think?* “Yes. I didn't know who it was at the time. I had the police involved but they couldn't catch the person.” The respondent ended up going with category 4 because of the word ‘neighbor,’ but it was not easy for her to arrive at this answer because the of the word ‘friend’ in that category. “I guess ‘acquaintance.’ He was a neighbor. I knew him.” She had trouble choosing a category because ‘friend or acquaintance’ was not the way she wanted to convey how she knew this person.

Marriage is another relationship that confused some respondents. One respondent paused when answering. She said, "Let's see. Well...[thinks]." *Do none of those categories quite fit right?* "Yeah." *In your own words, what was your relationship to them?* "My husband." The first category would be the best choice but did not seem adequate. The respondent said, "You might want to put in a question about forced sex during marriage. Because I would think that's probably not too uncommon. I think if you ask specifically about it [marriage] you would get more accurate answers." To this respondent, the first category came across as something outside of marriage, such as dating.

Finally, the category of 'family member' might do better with some examples (such as 'parents or stepparents'). One respondent failed to report sexual assault on the part of her father because she did not specifically see the category and admitted it is not a memory she normally invokes without prompting. Additionally, a category for people who are close to being (but are not quite) family members could be helpful. Several respondents mentioned perpetrators such as a mother's (or aunt's) boyfriend. Both examples were captured in the 'something else' category but including a specific category (such as 'friend of the family') could minimize error or confusion in reporting.

4. Asking About Age

For each topic – stalking, sexual assault, and attempted assault – respondents are asked how old they were when these events happened. Some respondents remembered specifically but others could give only ranges, usually in decades (e.g., 20's or 30's). Respondents who could not remember specific ages often said something like, "Um...I was in my twenties...I wasn't even in my thirties. Yeah. I was in my twenties." Or "Probably early twenties...So maybe 23 or 24...22, 21...somewhere in there." In an online context, it may be helpful to offer ranges for those who cannot report a specific age.

5. Gender Identity Considerations

Gender Minorities may have difficulty with some of the questions. Only one respondent in this sample was a gender minority but their experience demonstrates the complex nature of asking about sexual assault in a way that essentially assumes a binary reality. Their experience is worth discussing at length.

It emerged in the context of the interview that the respondent did not identify as either male or female but rather as non-binary. The interviewer explained how the questionnaire currently contained a women's version (geared toward those with a vagina) and a men's version (geared toward those with a penis) and suggested that the respondent choose one and then see how it worked out. The respondent has had their breasts removed but still has a vagina, so they chose the women's version. This did not feel like exactly the right choice, but they explained, "It would not be correct but probably more relevant based on kind of where I'm at." The women's version did work better than the men's version because the questions only covered "below the belt." However, sexual violence can be missed when questions focus only on genitalia. The respondent said, "I have had situations that were non-consensual, but they are not related to the lower half of my body." This involved unwanted touching of their chest. In addition, even though it did not reflect their personal situation, the respondent pointed out that there are transwomen with a penis. There are also transmen who do not have a vagina but did at one time. And because this questionnaire asks about a lifetime, it would not work for some people to simply try to route them one way or the other based on whether they currently have a vagina or penis. Careful thought will have to be given to determine how respondents who are gender minorities are routed through the NISVS online questionnaire.

APPENDIX: NISVS Test Instrument Used by Cognitive Interviewers

SECTION 1

[SHOW CARD 1] First are some detailed questions about times in your life when someone may have repeatedly contacted, followed, or spied on you in a way that made you afraid, concerned for your safety, threatened, or caused emotional suffering. When answering, please think about anyone who may have done these things to you at any time in your life including strangers, a romantic or sexual partner, a family member, a friend, teacher, co-worker or supervisor, or someone you have known briefly. Please DO NOT include bill collectors, telephone solicitors, other sales people, or others following or contacting you as part of their job.

ST01. In your lifetime has anyone ever followed, contacted, tracked, or spied on you in a way that was intentional, unwanted, and made you feel afraid, concerned for your safety, threatened, or caused emotional suffering? Examples of these behaviors might include:

- Physically followed or spied on you
- Approached you or showed up in places
- Used hidden cameras, software, or GPS to track or spy on you
- Sneaked onto your property
- Repeatedly called, emailed, texted you when it was unwanted (do not include spam, robocalls, or telephone solicitors)
- Sent unwanted messages through social media
- Sent unwanted gifts, cards, letters

- Yes
- No **[GO TO NEXT SECTION]**

ST02. In total, how many DIFFERENT people did any of these things to you **on more than one** occasion?

of people _____

ST03. We would like to learn more about your experience. You said [#] people followed, contacted, or spied on you on more than one occasion. Think about the [first /second/third/etc.] person who ever did those things to you. Was that person male or female?

- Male

Female

ST04_01. How did you know this person? Please choose a category that best describes how you knew them. **[SHOW CARD 2]**

- Someone I was involved with romantically or sexually *at the time* 1
- Someone I *previously* had been involved with romantically or sexually 2
- A family member..... 3
- A friend or acquaintance (e.g., neighbor, roommate, classmate, etc.)..... 4
- Someone I knew through work (e.g., co-worker, boss/supervisor, client/customer/patient, etc.) 5
- A person of authority (e.g., teacher, doctor, police officer, etc.)..... 6
- Someone I knew less than 24 hours (e.g., taxi driver, someone met at party/bar) 7
- A complete stranger 8
- Someone else (Please specify: _____) 9

ST05_. Still thinking about the [relationship category named in ST04_01], please answer the following questions. Did this [relationship category named in ST04_01]....

1. follow you around, watch, or spy on you when you did not want them to?	Yes	No
2. approach you or show up in places, such as your home, work, or school when you did not want them to?	Yes	No
3. use technology, such as hidden cameras, computer software, apps, or GPS (Global Positioning System) to monitor or track your location without your permission? This includes GPS used in a phone or on social media, such as Facebook. (We are talking about times when you knew or you thought someone was using GPS technology to monitor you.)	Yes	No
4. sneak onto your property, such as your home or car, and do things to scare you by letting you know they had been there?	Yes	No
5. make unwanted phone calls to you or send you unwanted emails, voice, or text messages? Please do not include bill collectors or telephone solicitors.	Yes	No
6. send you unwanted messages through social media, such as Facebook, Instagram, and chat rooms?	Yes	No
7. send you cards, letters, flowers, or presents when they knew you didn't want them to?	Yes	No

[If YES to any of 1-7, ask ST05_8-9; If NO to all, GO TO next perp OR next section.]

ST05_. Did this [relationship category from ST04_01]

8. make you feel afraid or concerned for your safety or the safety of others?	Yes No
9. make threats to physically harm you (even if you did not take the threat seriously)?	Yes No

[If the respondent answered 1 or more people in ST02, AND YES to any of ST05_1-7 AND YES to either ST05_8 or 9, ask the next questions. Otherwise, go to next perp OR next section.]

ST06: How old were you the first time [perp 1: fill relationship category named in ST04_01] did any of these things to you?

Age in years _____

ST07: Did this [perp 1: fill relationship category named in ST04_01] do [this/any of these things] within the past 12 months, that is since [FILL: DATE 12 MONTHS AGO]?

- Yes
- No

[IF R reported more than one perp, repeat starting with ST03_02.]

SECTION 2: UNWANTED SEXUAL EXPERIENCES INVOLVING TECHNOLOGY

This next question is about unwanted sexual situations that occurred online, through the internet, social media, text message, or email.

TSV01. In your lifetime, has anyone ever sent you an unwanted sexually explicit message or image through the internet, social media (e.g., Facebook, Instagram), email, or text message without your consent? Please do not include spam messages, phishing attempts, or messages that you think are from a Bot (that is, a computer program that imitates a human).

- Yes
- No

SECTION 3: PHYSICAL FORCE AND DRUGGED/DRUNK ASSAULT

[FOR MEN, SKIP TO MEN'S VERSION]

WOMEN'S VERSION

INTRO-W: SHOW CARD 3

This next section is about in-person sexual contact that you did not consent to and that you did not want to happen.

Some people are threatened with harm or physically forced to have sex or sexual contact when they don't want to. Examples of physical force are being pinned or held down, using violence or threats of violence, or not physically stopping after you said no. To be clear, the next questions are asking only about times in your life when sex was unwanted and you did not give consent.

Sometimes unwanted sex or sexual contact happens when a person is unable to consent to it or stop it from happening because they are too drunk, high, drugged, or passed out from alcohol, drugs, or medications. This can include times when they voluntarily consumed alcohol or drugs or times when they were given alcohol or drugs without their knowledge or consent.

These questions ask about unwanted sexual contact that might have occurred through physical force or during the use of alcohol or drugs. You might or might not have ever been in this type of situation. Please remember that even if someone uses alcohol or drugs, what happens to them is not their fault. These questions use detailed and explicit language so that everyone is clear about what the questions are asking.

SV01_W

In your LIFETIME, how many people have EVER...

a. performed oral sex on you when you did NOT consent to it, and it was not wanted? By oral sex, we mean that someone put their mouth on your vagina.

- 0, this never happened to me
- Number of people: _____

b. penetrated you by putting their fingers or an object in your vagina or anus when you did NOT consent to it, and it was not wanted?

- 0, this never happened to me
- Number of people: _____

c. had vaginal sex with you when you did NOT consent to it, and it was not wanted? By vaginal sex, we mean that a male put his penis in your vagina.

- 0, this never happened to me
- Number of people: _____

d. penetrated you by putting their penis in your mouth or anus when you did NOT consent to it, and it was not wanted?

- 0, this never happened to me
- Number of people: _____

[IF '0' TO ALL PREVIOUS QUESTIONS (SV01_a-d), GO TO NEXT SECTION. OTHERWISE, ASK SV02_W]

SV02_W

We would like to learn more about your experience. You said that [# people given in each of SV01_a-d] had [SV behavior named in SV01_a-d]. Think about the [person / 1st person/2nd person] who did this to you. When this happened, did this person...

- a. use physical harm to make you, such as pinning or holding you down, using violence or threats of violence or not stopping after you said no?

- Yes
- No

- b. make you engage in sexual activity when were you unable to consent to sex or stop it from happening because you were too drunk, high, drugged, or passed out from alcohol or drugs?

- Yes
- No **[GO TO SV03.W]**

- c. Do you think you were ever given alcohol without your knowledge?

- Yes
- No

- d. Do you think you were ever given other drugs without your knowledge?

- Yes
- No

SV03.W

Was this person...

- Male
- Female

SV04.W

Still thinking about the [person / 1st person/2nd person] who [Individual SV behavior from SV01_a-d] and [Context(s) given in SV02_a-b]. Please choose a category that best describes how you knew this person. **[SHOW CARD 2]**

- Someone I was involved with romantically or sexually *at the time* 1
- Someone I *previously* had been involved with romantically or sexually 2
- A family member..... 3
- A friend or acquaintance (e.g., neighbor, roommate, classmate, etc.)..... 4
- Someone I knew through work (e.g., co-worker, boss/supervisor, client/customer/patient, etc.) 5
- A person of authority (e.g., teacher, doctor, police officer, etc.)..... 6
- Someone I knew less than 24 hours (e.g., taxi driver, someone met at party/bar) 7
- A complete stranger 8
- Someone else (Please specify: _____) 9

SV05.W How old were you the FIRST TIME this [Relationship type from SV04] did this to you?

Age in years _____

SV06.W

Did this [Relationship type from SV04] do this to you in the past 12 months, that is, since [fill date]?

- Yes
- No

[AFTER ALL PERPS HAVE BEEN ASKED ABOUT, ASK SV07.W]

SV07.W

To review, you said that [say all relationship type(s) given in SV04.W] made you engage in sexual activity when [saw what was endorsed in SV02a—b]. In total, how many different people did this/these things to you?

Number of people: _____

ATTEMPTED BUT UNSUCCESSFUL ASSAULT – WOMEN: SHOW CARD 4

The next set of questions are about times in your life when someone ever ATTEMPTED to have sex or sexual contact with you by using physical force or threats of harm but sex did NOT happen. Examples of physical force are being pinned or held down, using violence or threats of violence, or not physically stopping after you said no. To be clear, we are now asking only about times when sex was unwanted and you did not give consent, and sex was attempted but did not happen.

FA01.W

How many people have ever used physical force or threats of physical harm to TRY to put their penis in your vagina, mouth, or anus, but it DID NOT happen?

- 0, this never happened to me [END SURVEY]
- Number of people: _____

[ASK FA05 – FA08 FOR EACH PERPETRATOR]

FA05.W

Was this person / the 1ST person...

- Male
- Female

FA06.W

Still thinking about the [person / 1st person] who [Individual SV behavior from FA01]. Please choose a category that best describes how you knew this person. **[SHOW CARD 2]**

- Someone I was involved with romantically or sexually *at the time* 1
- Someone I *previously* had been involved with romantically or sexually 2
- A family member..... 3
- A friend or acquaintance (e.g., neighbor, roommate, classmate, etc.)..... 4
- Someone I knew through work (e.g., co-worker, boss/supervisor, client/customer/patient, etc.) 5
- A person of authority (e.g., teacher, doctor, police officer, etc.)..... 6
- Someone I knew less than 24 hours (e.g., taxi driver, someone met at party/bar) 7
- A complete stranger 8
- Someone else (Please specify: _____) 9

FA07.W

How old were you the FIRST TIME this [Relationship type from FA06] did this to you?

Age in years _____

FA08.W

Did this [Relationship type from FA06] do this to you in the past 12 months, that is, since [fill date]?

- Yes
- No

FA09.W

To review, you said that [Show relationship type(s) given in FA06] ATTEMPTED to have sex or sexual contact with you by using physical force or threats of harm but sex did NOT happen.

In total, how many different people did this to you?

Number of people: _____

MEN'S VERSION

INTRO-M: SHOW CARD 3

This next section is about in-person sexual contact that you did not consent to and that you did not want to happen.

Some people are threatened with harm or physically forced to have sex or sexual contact when they don't want to. Examples of physical force are being pinned or held down, using violence or threats of violence, or not physically stopping after you said no. To be clear, the next questions are asking only about times in your life when sex was unwanted and you did not give consent.

Sometimes unwanted sex or sexual contact happens when a person is unable to consent to it or stop it from happening because they are too drunk, high, drugged, or passed out from alcohol, drugs, or medications. This can include times when they voluntarily consumed alcohol or drugs or times when they were given alcohol or drugs without their knowledge or consent.

These questions ask about unwanted sexual contact that might have occurred through physical force or during the use of alcohol or drugs. You might or might not have ever been in this type of situation. Please remember that even if someone uses alcohol or drugs, what happens to them is not their fault. These questions use detailed and explicit language so that everyone is clear about what the questions are asking.

SV01_M_ In your LIFETIME, how many people have EVER...

e. penetrated you by putting their fingers or an object in your anus when you did NOT consent to it, and it was not wanted?

- 0, this never happened to me
- Number of people: _____

f. put their mouth on your penis or make you put your penis in their mouth?

- 0, this never happened to me
- Number of people: _____

g. made you put your penis in their vagina?

- 0, this never happened to me
- Number of people: _____

h. put their penis in your mouth or anus?

- 0, this never happened to me
- Number of people: _____

[IF '0' TO ALL, GO TO NEXT SECTION. OTHERWISE, ASK SV02.M]

SV02.M_ We would like to learn more about your experience. You said that [# people given in each of SV01_a-d] had [SV behavior named in SV01_e-h]. Think about the [person / 1st person/2nd person] who did this to you. When this happened, did this person...

a. use physical harm to make you, such as pinning or holding you down, using violence or threats of violence or not stopping after you said no?

- Yes
- No

b. make you engage in sexual activity when were you unable to consent to sex or stop it from happening because you were too drunk, high, drugged, or passed out from alcohol or drugs?

- Yes
- No [**SKIP TO SV03.M**]

c. Do you think you were ever given alcohol without your knowledge?

- Yes
- No

d. Do you think you were ever given other drugs without your knowledge?

- Yes
- No

SV03.M

Was this person...

- Male
- Female

SV04.M

Still thinking about the [person / 1st person/2nd person] who [Individual SV behavior from SV01_e-h] and [Context(s) given in SV02_a-b]. Please choose a category that best describes how you knew this person.

[SHOW CARD 2]

- Someone I was involved with romantically or sexually *at the time* 1
- Someone I *previously* had been involved with romantically or sexually 2
- A family member..... 3
- A friend or acquaintance (e.g., neighbor, roommate, classmate, etc.)..... 4
- Someone I knew through work (e.g., co-worker, boss/supervisor, client/customer/patient, etc.) 5
- A person of authority (e.g., teacher, doctor, police officer, etc.)..... 6
- Someone I knew less than 24 hours (e.g., taxi driver, someone met at party/bar) 7
- A complete stranger 8
- Someone else (Please specify: _____) 9

SV05.M How old were you the FIRST TIME this [Relationship type from SV04] did this to you?

Age in years _____

SV06.M

Did this [Relationship type from SV04] do this to you in the past 12 months, that is, since [fill date]?

- Yes
- No

[REPEAT SV03 – SV06 FOR EACH PERP/BEHAVIOR. THEN ASK SV07.M]

SV07.M

To review, you said that [Show relationship type(s) given in SV04] made you engage in sexual activity when [show what was endorsed in SV02a—b]. In total, how many different people did this/these things to you?

Number of people: _____

ATTEMPTED BUT UNSUCCESSFUL ASSAULT – MEN: SHOW CARD 4

The next set of questions are about times in your life when someone ever ATTEMPTED to have sex or sexual contact with you by using physical force or threats of harm but sex did NOT happen. Examples of physical force are being pinned or held down, using violence or threats of violence, or not physically stopping after you said no. To be clear, we are now asking only about times when sex was unwanted and you did not give consent, and sex was attempted but did not happen. In your lifetime, how many people have EVER...

FA02.M used physical force or threats of physical harm to TRY to put their mouth on your penis, or TRY to make you put your penis in their mouth, but it DID NOT happen?

- 0, this never happened to me
- Number of people: _____

FA03.M used physical force or threats of physical harm to TRY to make you put your penis in their vagina, but it DID NOT happen?

- 0, this never happened to me
- Number of people: _____

FA04.M used physical force or threats of physical harm to TRY to put their penis in your mouth or anus, but it DID NOT happen?

- 0, this never happened to me
- Number of people: _____

[ASK NEXT QUESTION (FA05 – FA09) FOR EACH PERP; IF ZERO TO ALL, END SURVEY]

FA05.M

We would like to learn more about your experience. You said [#] person/people [fill behavior from FA02 – FA04]. Think about the [person/1st person/2nd person] who did that to you. Was this person...

- Male
- Female

FA06.M

Still thinking about the [person / 1st person] who [Individual SV behavior from FA02-FA04]. Please choose a category that best describes how you knew this person. **[SHOW CARD 2]**

- Someone I was involved with romantically or sexually *at the time* 1
- Someone I *previously* had been involved with romantically or sexually 2
- A family member..... 3
- A friend or acquaintance (e.g., neighbor, roommate, classmate, etc.)..... 4
- Someone I knew through work (e.g., co-worker, boss/supervisor, client/customer/patient, etc.) 5
- A person of authority (e.g., teacher, doctor, police officer, etc.)..... 6
- Someone I knew less than 24 hours (e.g., taxi driver, someone met at party/bar) 7
- A complete stranger 8
- Someone else (Please specify: _____) 9

FA07.M

How old were you the FIRST TIME this [Relationship type from FA06] did this to you?

Age in years _____

FA08.M

Did this [Relationship type from FA06] do this to you in the past 12 months, that is, since [fill date]?

- Yes
- No

[REPEAT FA05 – FA08 FOR EACH PERP. AFTER ALL PERPS ARE ASKED, GO TO FA09]

FA09.M

To review, you said that [say all relationship type(s) given in FA06] ATTEMPTED to have sex or sexual contact with you [say all that was endorsed in FA02—FA04] by using physical force or threats of harm but sex did NOT happen.

In total, how many different people did this to you?

Number of people: _____