When Women Do Not Want It: Young Female Bargoers’ Experiences With and Responses to Sexual Harassment in Social Drinking Contexts

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When Women Don’t Want It: Young Female Bargoers’ Experiences with and Responses to Unwanted Advances in Social Drinking Contexts

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When Women Don’t Want It: Young Female Bargoers’ Experiences with and Responses to Unwanted Advances in Social Drinking Contexts

Abstract

Women frequently experience unwanted sexual touching and persistent advances at bars and parties. This study explored women’s responses to these unwanted experiences through online surveys completed by 153 female bargoers (aged 19-29) randomly recruited from a bar district. Over 75% had experienced sexual touching or persistence (46% both). Most women used multiple deterrent strategies, including evasion, facial expressions, direct refusals, aggression, friends’ help, and leaving the premises. Women experienced negative feelings, especially from incidents involving touching (disrespected, violated, disgusted, angry, embarrassed). Cultural change is needed to reduce substantial negative impacts of sexual harassment on women in drinking and other settings.

Keywords: sexual aggression; alcohol; harassment
When Women Don’t Want It: Young Female Bargoers’ Experiences and Responses to Sexual Harassment in Social Drinking Contexts

Women frequently experience sexual harassment such as sexually explicit comments, unwanted touching and persistent unwanted attention from strangers on the street and in other locations. Fairchild and Rudman (2008) found that 50.1% of female college students in an Introductory Psychology class reported experiencing unwanted touching or stroking from a stranger once a month or more. These experiences are known to vary by context (Fairchild, 2010) but existing data suggest that they are especially common in drinking settings. Schwartz and Pitts (1995) found that 65.1% of college women reported uncomfortable advances at a bar/restaurant in the past year. Correspondingly, in a sample of 264 male college students drawn from 22 colleges and universities, Thompson and Cracco (2008) found that about two-thirds reported that they had pressed up against a woman from behind and close to 80% had “grabbed a woman’s butt” in a bar or off-campus party setting. Studies of barroom settings suggest that women frequently deal with unwanted advances and touching (deCrespigny, Vincent, & Ask, 1999; Fox & Sobol, 2000; Garland, Hughes, & Marquart, 2004; Graham, Bernards, Osgood, et al., 2014; Graham & Homel, 2008; Parks & Miller, 1997; Ronen, 2010). Given the pervasiveness of sexual aggression in social drinking settings, the current study focuses on better understanding the nature of unwanted sexual advances toward women in these contexts, the feelings these aggressive and unwanted advances provoke and women’s strategies to deter perpetrators.

Emerging and young adulthood is a critical period for gender-based social interactions focused on making sexual and romantic connections. For many young adults in North America and elsewhere, these interactions occur in social drinking contexts, mainly bars and parties.
(Purcell & Graham, 2005). However, the gender imbalance is particularly evident in these settings because, while men generally choose the women with whom they want to interact at bars and parties, women are usually “chosen” (Lamont, 2014), and often are deprived of the right of refusal (Kavanaugh, 2013). Power differentials between men and women and the patriarchal culture generally have been seen as influencing workplace sexual harassment (Pryor, Giedd, & Williams, 1995; Pryor, LaVite, & Stoller, 1993); this power imbalance and the vulnerability of women is also evident in the highly sexist and sexualized environment of bars and clubs where boundaries for socially appropriate and inappropriate behavior are set and enforced by male security staff (“bouncers”) who typically promote a culture of hypermasculinity and sexism (Graham & Homel, 2008; Hobbs, O’Brien, & Westmarland, 2007). Thus, women are easy targets for gender-based harassment in drinking settings where they are often subjected to (1) repeated physical or verbal advances despite clearly indicating to the perpetrator that the advances are unwanted, and (2) uninvited and unwanted grabbing and groping by strangers (Graham, Bernards, Osgood, et al., 2014). Evidence suggests that these behaviors are often seen by men as normal (Thompson & Cracco, 2008) and by women as something that must be tolerated (Brooks, 2011).

Observational research in bars (Graham, Wells, Bernards, & Dennison, 2010) and qualitative research at college parties (Ronen, 2010) suggest that gender and power play central roles in unwanted sexual advances in social drinking contexts of young adults. These studies have found that while some unwanted sexual advances occur because men genuinely believe women will be receptive to these advances, many unwanted sexual advances toward women by men are predatory behaviors committed for personal gratification or to amuse or gain status with male friends (Gailey & Prohaska, 2007; Quinn, 2002). In the permissive context of the bar, the
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likelihood of punishment or negative consequences for perpetrating sexual aggression is
negligible, because the female target is often trying to escape from the situation without causing
trouble and bar staff rarely notice unwanted advances and do not intervene even when they do
notice (Graham, Bernards, Osgood, et al., 2014). Moreover, the male perpetrator often receives
positive reinforcement in the form of encouragement from his male friends (Graham et al.,
2014). Thus, the setting is still very much “a man’s world” (deCrespigny et al., 1999; Parks,
Miller, Collins, & Zetes-Zanatta, 1998), and the unwanted sexual advances that occur in social
drinking settings form part of mainstream life for young women and men.

Alcohol consumption by both the victim and the perpetrator can also play a role in these
incidents, with intoxicated women more likely than sober women to be targeted for sexual
aggression (Author 1, 2014; Graham et al., 2014), possibly because some men perceive women
who have been drinking to be more sexually available and more willing to engage in sexual
contact compared to women who have not been drinking (Abbey & Harnish, 1995; George,
Gournic, & McAfee, 1988; George et al., 1997; Parks & Scheidt, 2000). Misperceptions about
women who have been drinking may also lead men to make incorrect assumptions about whether
physical contact, including sexual touching, will be welcomed by a woman (Abbey, McAuslan,
Zawacki, Clinton, & Buck, 2001). In terms of drinking by the male perpetrator, a number of
studies suggest that men view their sexual aggression as more excusable when they have been
drinking (see Wegner, Abbey, Pierce, Pegram, & Woerner, 2015). Experimental research also
suggests that men who have consumed alcohol are more likely than those who have not been
drinking to perceive women as deriving enjoyment from forced sexual contact (Ward, Hudson,

Effects of Unwanted Sexual Advances on Women and Women’s Responses

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The concept of gender-related microaggressions (Sue, 2010) provides a useful framing for understanding the impact of unwanted sexual advances toward women in social drinking settings as well as women’s responses to these advances. In particular, as with racial microaggressions, many unwanted sexual advances experienced by women in drinking settings are minor (e.g., persistence without physical contact, unwanted arm around the woman’s waist or shoulders) (Graham et al., 2014). However, like racial microaggressions, the single and cumulative effects can result in a range of harms to the victims, from mild discomfort to feeling demeaned, devalued and powerless (Sue, 2010). Moreover, as with other types of microaggressions, such as subtle racism, targets of sexual aggression are often placed in the unfair position of being forced to respond to a no-win situation, with the perpetrator maintaining (sometimes truthfully) that he or she intended no harm and the victim made to feel that she is over-reacting (Sue, 2010). For example, in the context of the social drinking setting, the female target might feel that she will look like a “bad sport” if she responds with anything but pleasant avoidance to a persistent unwanted sexual advance, despite feeling angry and violated.

Observations of women’s reactions to persistent unwanted advances and uninvited sexual contact by men in bars suggest that women generally find these behaviors aversive (Graham, Bernards, Osgood, et al., 2014). Similarly, studies have found that women report feeling angry and upset in response to experiences of sexism generally (Swim, Hyers, Cohen, & Ferguson, 2001). In addition, experiencing stranger harassment has been found to be associated with self-objectification and women’s objectification of other women (Davidson, Gervais, & Sherd, 2013 ) and increased fear of rape (Fairchild & Rudman, 2008). However, there has been no systematic research on women’s own reports of their feelings when they are the targets of unwanted sexual advances in social drinking settings.
The topic is further complicated because, unlike racism, unwanted sexual advances may not always be experienced negatively – women may feel flattered by the attention, even if it is unwanted and sexist (Fairchild, 2010; Sue, 2010). This might be especially true in social drinking settings where much of the focus is on sexuality, physical attractiveness and appearance. Thus, to improve understanding of women’s experiences of unwanted sexual advances, positive effects such as feeling flattered must also be considered.

In terms of women’s strategies to deter unwanted sexual attention, one study found that the most common responses were ignoring or avoiding the perpetrator and talking to third parties (Cochran, Frazier, & Olson, 1997). This study also found that direct responses were more common when harassment was more severe, with severity defined in terms of the effects on the target. Similarly, women’s responses to public and workplace harassment were found to be mostly nonassertive but increasingly assertive with greater severity of the harassment (Gruber & Smith, 1995).

Although some research has explored women’s strategies for preventing sexual assault in drinking settings (Brooks, 2011), less is known about the ways women respond to individuals making unwanted sexual advances in these settings. In her review of rape avoidance strategies, Ullman (2007) noted that women employ a number of ways to stop sexual assault, with varying degrees of success. But she also suggested that strategies may depend on context and that both strategies and feelings about the behavior may be affected by alcohol consumption. How women respond to unwanted sexual advances in social drinking settings may be influenced both by the nature of the unwanted advance and the feelings it provokes. Observational research on unwanted sexual advances in bars and clubs (Graham, Bernards, Osgood, et al., 2014) found that female bargoers’ responses to unwanted advances from men were more strongly related to the
invasiveness of the touching than to the persistence of the advance, suggesting that unwanted sexual touching may be seen as a more serious violation or may invoke stronger feelings than persistence, per se. Advances that provoke more negative feelings in women are also more likely to cause women to respond directly or aggressively or leave the establishment altogether; on the other hand, more severe emotional effects such as feeling violated or afraid might also lead to greater passivity (and less direct or aggressive responses) due to fear and other factors (Ullman, 2007; Ullman & Najdowski, 2010). We are not aware of any research that has explored the links between women’s feelings about unwanted sexual advances and how they respond to such advances.

Research Objectives and Hypotheses

The main objective of this research was to document women’s most serious incidents of unwanted sexual contact and persistence in social drinking contexts, the feelings these experiences provoked in women, the strategies women used to deter or refuse perpetrators, and the inter-relationships of feelings, strategies and type of unwanted sexual advance. Given the paucity of research in this area, we view this study as exploratory. We hypothesized that:

1) women’s responses to unwanted sexual touching versus persistence would be more likely to include (a) strong negative feelings (e.g., feeling violated, humiliated or afraid) and (b) direct or aggressive refusals or leaving the premises;

2) direct or aggressive refusal strategies and leaving the premises would be positively related to strong negative feelings and negatively related to positive or neutral (e.g., flattered) feelings.

Method

Overview
Data for the present study were collected using an online survey completed by women who were initially recruited on their way to bars on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights in the summer of 2012. This paper combines the responses of women from two samples of bargoers who were recruited to test a *street intercept* method for recruiting individual and groups of young adult bargoers for research studies (Author 2, 2014) and to explore other issues including group influences (Author 3, 2014) and predrinking (Author 4, 2015) as well as experiences with unwanted sexual advances. A previous paper described the relationships between amount of alcohol consumed on the night of recruitment, experiences of unwanted sexual advances that night and status in their peer group among female bargoers recruited in groups (Author 1, 2014). The current paper includes all female participants recruited both individually and in groups and explores in depth the nature of their most serious incidents of unwanted sexual touching and persistence ever experienced, the feelings these experiences provoked and their responses to perpetrators using data collected as part of an online follow-up survey which allowed for more details than was feasible to collect on the night of the survey. Based on past observational bar research suggesting that the large majority of unwanted sexual advances are experienced by women (Graham et al., 2014), only female participants were asked questions about being the target of sexual aggression. This research was approved by the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health Research Ethics Board.

**Recruitment**

For the first sample, individual young adult bargoers were recruited on their way to a busy bar district in a mid-sized city in Ontario, Canada. To be eligible, participants had to be aged 19 (the legal drinking age) to 29 years and on their way to a bar. Street intercept recruitment occurred during a single weekend in May 2012. Potential participants were approached on the
street by mixed-gender teams of two to three researchers who were stationed in areas with high
foot traffic entering the bar district. To prevent selection bias, research staff were trained to use
the “fixed line method” of recruitment (Voas et al., 2006), which involves approaching the first
apparently eligible person who crosses an imaginary fixed line on the sidewalk, then the next to
cross the line, and so on. Eligible individuals were asked to complete a very brief (2 to 3 minute)
“on-the-spot” interview, for which they were given $5 cash as a token of appreciation. They
were then given an inactive gift card (for $50 or $100 – one of the objectives of the study was to
test the effect of size of incentive) with instructions for accessing a 30-minute online survey and
redeeming the gift card. Of the 75 women approached, 49 (65.3%) agreed to participate in the
street survey and 37 of these women (75.5%) completed the online survey. The average number
of days between street survey and online survey was 3.23 (minimum = 1, maximum = 27). More
details about this recruitment strategy are reported in Author 2 (2014). One finding relevant to
the present study was that while the amount of the incentive affected participation by men, it did
not significantly affect women’s rate of participation.

For the second sample, same-sex groups of three to five individuals were recruited in the
same bar district also using the fixed line method. When a group was approached, they were
asked to complete a brief (10-15 minute) “entry” survey at that time at a mobile research lab
parked nearby and then return to the lab as they were leaving the bar district to complete a brief
“exit” survey. They were given $10 for participating in the entry survey and $25 for the exit
survey. Participants were also given a $50 or $100 inactive gift card at the time of the entry
survey with instructions for accessing the online survey. Of 257 eligible female groups
approached, 41 groups (139 women) participated in the entry survey, and 116 women (83.5% of
those who completed the entry survey) completed the online survey (mean number of days
between recruitment survey and online survey = 3.95, minimum = 1, maximum = 92; if the one person who completed the survey at 92 days is excluded, mean=3.38, maximum = 33). The combined sample size for the present analyses was 153.

Measures

Persistent unwanted sexual/romantic advances (“persistence”). Participants were asked: “When you were out drinking at a drinking establishment or at a party, has anyone ever kept trying to hit on you when you had clearly given them the message that you were not interested in them?” Participants who responded “yes” were asked: “Think of the most serious incident of this kind that bothered you the most. Please briefly describe what happened.” Space was provided for participants to type in a description of the incident. They were also asked a number of follow-up questions about how they felt and how they responded (described below).

Unwanted sexual touching (“sexual touching”). Participants were asked: “When you were out drinking at a drinking establishment or at a party, has anyone ever touched you sexually in a way that you did not want to be touched or done something else sexual to you that you didn’t want, such as rubbing up against you on the dance floor, a stranger putting his hand on your waist, etc.?” Again, those who answered “yes” received a follow-up question asking them to describe the most serious incident and respond to follow-up questions about their feelings and refusal strategies.

Feelings provoked by the incident. Participants who reported touching or persistence were asked, regarding the most serious incident, “How did you feel about what happened?” and given a list of potential feelings such as annoyed, uncomfortable, embarrassed and afraid for which they selected “yes” or “no” for each feeling (see Table 1 in the Results section for the full list) as well as one positive effect (a little flattered) and one neutral effect (didn’t take it seriously).
Participants who reported both touching and persistence completed this question separately for the incident of touching and for the incident of persistence.

**Refusal strategies.** Participants who reported touching were asked, again relating to the most serious incident, “Did you do any of the following things to let them know you didn’t want them to touch you in that way?” Those reporting persistence were asked, “Did you do any of the following things to let them know you didn’t want to be with them?” For this question, participants selected “yes” or “no” for each item in a list of possible responses based on categories defined from observational research in bars (Graham, Bernards, Osgood, et al., 2014) as well as previous studies of responses to unwanted sexual attention (Cochran et al., 1997; Gutek & Koss, 1993; Snow, Robinson, & McCall, 1991) and sexual assault (see Ullman, 2007). Responses included: ignoring the person, moving out of reach, leaving the area, using facial expressions to show the behavior was unwanted, telling the person to stop, aggressive or forceful reactions and getting help from a friend (see Table 2 in the Results section for the full list). If participants reported intervention by a friend, they were asked the friend’s gender.

**Sample characteristics.** At the time of recruitment, participants were asked their age and whether they were a student. The online survey also included standard measures of past 12 months alcohol consumption, including frequency of drinking (every day, 4-6 times a week, 2-3 times a week, once a week, 1-3 times a month, less than once a month, never – converted to number of days per year for analyses), usual number of drinks consumed on drinking occasions (with standard drinks defined as 1 12 oz. beer, 6 oz. wine and 1.5 oz. spirits), and most drinks consumed on a single occasion.
Analysis Plan

We report the proportion of participants who had experienced touching only, persistence only, or both touching and persistence and summarize participants’ descriptions of their worst incident of unwanted touching and persistence. We used Hierarchical Linear Modeling v. 6.03 (HLM) (Bryk & Raudenbush, 1992) to test the significance of differences in (a) feelings provoked by the incident and (b) refusal strategies by whether they were describing an incident of touching or persistence. HLM provides valid statistical inference because it includes additional variance components to extend regression analysis to hierarchical research designs that violate the standard statistical assumption of independence among observations. Specifically, in the present data set, participants in the second sample were nested within groups (i.e., groups were recruited rather than individuals). Additionally, some participants described incidents of both sexual touching and persistence and therefore reported feelings and responses for both incidents. Thus, the primary unit of analysis was the incident of unwanted sexual advance (i.e., feelings and responses were measured at this level), with HLM used to control for the nesting of some participants in groups and the nesting of feelings and responses within participants (for those participants who reported both touching and persistence). We also used HLM to test the significance of the relationships between how the participants felt when the incident happened and strategies they used. Because of the large number of strategies employed, rather than testing all possible relationships between feelings and strategies, these analyses focus on the strategies likely to have the most impact on the participants – direct responses, aggressive or emphatic responses and leaving the premises. Specifically, we conducted three-level Bernoulli regression analyses using HLM with the incident of unwanted sexual advance as level 1, the participant as level 2 and the group as level 3.
Results

In terms of the sample characteristics, the average age of participants was 21.8 years (standard deviation = 2.5), and 62.1% were students. Five participants did not drink in the past year. Among those who drank, the average number of drinking days per year was 70.5 ($sd. = 61.0$), usual number of drinks per occasion was 6.2 ($sd. = 3.6$), and maximum number of drinks was 10.5 ($sd. = 4.2$).

Overall, 47.1% of women reported that they had experienced both unwanted sexual touching and unwanted persistence, 11.8% reported only sexual touching, 17.0% reported only persistence, and 24.2% indicated they had experienced neither. Thus, in total, almost 60% had experienced unwanted sexual contact and over 60% unwanted persistence. Women were asked to describe and respond to questions regarding the most serious incident of unwanted sexual touching they had ever experienced and the most serious incident of persistence. Not all women provided full descriptions. In addition, reflecting the reality of women’s experiences, the selected incident of most serious unwanted sexual touching did not necessarily preclude persistence; similarly, the most serious incident of persistence did not always preclude any touching. Two participants said that the most serious incident of touching was the same incident they had described under most serious incident of persistence, although one of these reported slightly different responses to the perpetrator. All incidents described involved a male perpetrator except one that involved two perpetrators, one male and one female.

Descriptions of Incidents

Sexual touching. The most common form of unwanted touching involved a man grabbing, slapping or touching the participant’s buttocks (reported by 27 participants, 18%). Other sexually invasive touching included “grinding” (where the man rubs his genitals against the
woman’s backside while dancing), other forms of nonconsensual dirty dancing that simulated sex, trying to reach up the woman’s dress, grabbing or touching the woman’s breasts, kissing, rubbing up against the woman, and women being forced to touch a man’s genitalia. One woman reported she was raped. Sometimes these incidents involved not only unwanted touching but also clear aggression by the perpetrator in reaction to rejection, such as in the following description: *Keeps rubbing up against and won’t stop. I tell him to go away and he calls me a Bi*ch.* Sometimes, the unwanted touching was done by two men at the same time, as in the following incident: *I have had guys come up behind me and try to grind me on the dance floor, the one guy trying to put his hand up my skirt, another guy touching my butt, etc.*

As part of their descriptions, some women reported unwanted touching as routine and happening every time they went out, for example: *Guys in every bar always rub up on girls and grab their butts or waist. It’s so common it’s shrugged off and the girl tends to just walk away.* One participant commented that “**Butt grabbers are everywhere!**” Another commented “*I just get my ass constantly grabbed and guys seem to think they can just walk up and touch you with no cause.*” Others described themselves as being frightened by the touching: *Grabbed me and pulled me in to dance. Very scary when they come from behind and you have nowhere to go.*

Participants’ descriptions of unwanted touching sometimes also involved persistence, such as in the following three incidents: (1) *Guy kept coming back asking me to dance and constantly rubbing against me.* (2) *Once at a bar, this guy kept trying to dance with me and I had said no. He then proceeded to come up behind me and try to stick his hand up my skirt. This is when I started swearing at him and pushed him away.* (3) *Would not stop dancing and trying to rub against me on the dance floor. Repeatedly walked away and he would find me again.*
Persistence. Some participants described unrelenting persistence, as in the following examples: (1) A guy kept coming behind me to dance at a club but I said no multiple times. Every song he would end up behind me. (2) A guy was trying to dance with me at a club, I declined. He kept coming back then continued to watch me dance all night. (3) Man kept asking to buy me a drink and dance with me. I said no numerous times and he would still creep up behind me and dance on me. I finally stopped moving, turned around, and told him to stop again or else I'd get a bouncer. I stood there with my arms crossed and looked at him until he walked away.

In some incidents, the participant left the bar or party in order to get away from the pursuer, as in the following incidents: (1) Two guys approached my female friend and sat at our table after we said we had boyfriends, which would usually indicate that we are not interested in them. They kept trying to make conversation and would say we were pretty every chance they could get. They wouldn’t leave us alone so we ended up leaving the bar. (2) A guy was hitting on me and kept saying “let’s go upstairs.” I kept saying “no” and he just did not get the hint. He kept trying to talk to me and tell me to give him a chance. Eventually my friends and I left.

As with unwanted touching, participants reported men becoming aggressive when their overtures were refused, for example: (1) A guy would not take no for an answer so he spit on me because I would not give him attention. (2) The guy tried to use pick up lines to get my attention and when I told him I was not interested he followed me around the bar all night making jokes that I thought I was too good for him to impress his friends. (3) A guy got angry when I wouldn’t dance with him and followed us to different bars.

A number of incidents involved intervention by friends or bar staff, as in the following examples: (1) Was dancing with friends at a bar, while a male approached me and tried to dance
with me. I told him I was not interested and he continued to pester me. I finally had to get the bouncer to help. (2) Repeated attempts to dance with me after clearly stating I was not interested several times. My friends had to intervene to make him stop. (3) He tried to talk to me but I continued to walk past him each time where he then pulled me back towards him. A female friend of mine pulled his arm off mine each time.

Finally, for both touching and persistence, the participant was sometimes with her boyfriend when the incident occurred, which in some cases led to a confrontation between the men, as described in the following incident: Someone grabbed my behind and kissed me in front of my boyfriend who then proceeded to confront the assaulter.

**Feelings Provoked by the Experience**

Table 1 shows the percent of participants reporting each type of feeling in response to the most serious incident of touching or persistence, with the negative feelings in descending order by frequency of endorsement for touching and the neutral/positive feelings (didn’t take it seriously, a little flattered) listed at the end. As shown in the table, almost all women reported that they felt annoyed and more than 85% reported that they felt uncomfortable. Other frequent responses were feeling disrespected, disgusted, violated and angry. Feeling embarrassed, afraid and humiliated were reported less often, but still by 25% or more of participants. As shown in the table, participants were significantly more likely to have felt disrespected, disgusted, violated, angry, embarrassed and humiliated in response to unwanted touching than persistence.

In addition to these negative feelings, about one-quarter of participants reported feeling flattered and about half said they “didn’t take it seriously.” Most of the women who reported feeling flattered also reported one or more negative feeling. Only a few participants described
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“other” responses. These included feeling “like a piece of meat,” “confused,” “frustrated,” “indifferent” and “it irritates me that guys think they are allowed to grope.”

Refusal Strategies

Table 2 shows the relationship between type of refusal strategy and whether the incident was described as the most serious sexual touching or the most serious incident of persistence. As shown in Table 2, the most frequently used strategies were indirect refusals, especially evasion (94% for touching and 100% for persistence), and facial expressions, especially showing annoyance (90% for both) and discomfort (86% and 87% for touching and persistence respectively). Ignoring the perpetrator was also a common strategy, especially for persistence (68% for touching and 93% for persistence). The next most frequent strategy overall was involvement of friends (84% for persistence and 67% for touching), followed by telling the person directly that the behavior was unwanted (about 70% for both touching and persistence). An aggressive or angry response was more frequent for touching (77%) than for persistence (50%). More than half of participants reported leaving the area (e.g., moving to another room) because of the unwanted sexual touching or persistence and about one-third left the bar or party altogether. Participants were significantly more likely to ignore the perpetrator and involve third parties for the worst incident of persistence than they were for touching and more likely to respond aggressively or emphatically for touching than for persistence.

Relationships between Participants’ Feelings and Specific Refusal Strategies

Table 3 shows the relationships between how the participant felt about the incident and whether refusal involved a direct response, an aggressive response (i.e., speaking angrily, pushing or punching/slapping), or leaving the bar or party because of the unwanted sexual touching or persistence. These analyses control for whether the feelings and refusal behaviors...
were for a touching incident or a persistence incident in order to assess the extent that each feeling was associated with each type of response over and above whether the feeling and response were associated with the type of incident. As shown in the first set of columns of Table 3, direct refusal was significantly and positively associated with only two feelings – disgusted and angry, with participants almost three times more likely to make a direct refusal if they felt angry or disgusted. The relationship also was close to significant ($p < .10$) for feeling annoyed, uncomfortable and disrespected (with direct refusal more likely) and for feeling a little flattered (direct refusal less likely – i.e., odds ratio less than 1).

As can be seen in the second set of columns of Table 3, aggressive responses were significantly more likely for almost all negative feelings except uncomfortable and embarrassed, and significantly less likely when the participant reported not taking the incident seriously or feeling a little flattered. However, there were large differences in the size of the relationship with the odds of aggressive responses much larger when the woman felt humiliated or angry followed by disgusted, disrespected and violated, and smaller (but >1 and significant) for feeling afraid and annoyed.

As seen in the third set of columns in Table 3, leaving the party or bar was significantly more likely for feelings of disgust, anger, embarrassment, humiliation, and afraid. The relationship also was close to significant ($p < .10$) for uncomfortable, disrespected, and violated.

**Discussion**

The finding that more than three-quarters of young female bargoers had experienced unwanted sexual contact and/or persistence in social drinking contexts is consistent with the high occurrence of sexual harassment found in previous research (deCrespigny, 2001; Fox & Sobol, 2000; Parks & Miller, 1997; Ronen, 2010). Although we did not ask about the frequency of
these experiences, some participants volunteered that these experiences were common and
normative. The finding that about half of participants reported that they did not take the incident
seriously and about one-quarter said they felt flattered, despite almost all reporting at least one
negative feeling in response to the act, supports the perceived normality for women of being the
victim of unwanted persistence and touching. The high rate of experiencing sexual aggression is
even more striking considering that the measure of unwanted sexual advances included only
unwanted touching and persistence and did not include other commonly experienced sexual
harassment such as catcalls, ogling and unwanted sexual advances that do not involve persistence
or touching (see e.g., Fairchild & Rudman, 2008; Fox & Sobol, 2000; MacMillan, Nierobisz, &
Welsh, 2000).

The most commonly reported unwanted sexual touching was grabbing, slapping or touching
the woman’s buttocks, but a variety of other acts were reported, including “grinding,” grabbing
or touching the woman’s breasts, reaching under the woman’s clothing, being rubbed against and
being raped. Many of these incidents meet legal definitions of criminal assault and would likely
have been reported to the police if they had occurred in other contexts. Some incidents of
persistence were also quite extreme including following the participant to other bars when she
tried to get away. Some of these incidents would meet standard definitions of stalking (Westrup
& Fremouw, 1998). Yet, no participants volunteered in their narrative that they reported the
incident to the police, and most incidents appeared to be seen by women as normative and
unavoidable in the social drinking contexts of bars and parties. Further, not only were women
subjected to unwanted advances, some participants also reported aggressive reactions by men in
response to their direct refusals, sometimes being subjected to verbal abuse and harassment for
refusing the advance.
That over 50% of participants endorsed not taking the incident seriously is consistent with findings from an analysis of women’s sexual victimization narratives in which women justified incidents by considering them not serious or by blaming themselves (Hlavka, 2014; Weiss, 2009). Weiss (2009) argued that women’s excuses and justifications for men’s sexual aggression reflect common rape myths and gender stereotypes, such as men’s sexual aggression being natural, believing that unwanted sexual advances actions were not criminal acts if there was no violence, and the stereotype that women “contribute to their own victimization by reckless behavior or by failing to resist effectively” (pp. 828). The present findings reinforce Weiss’s suggestion that there is a need for change in normative perceptions and stereotypes about the acceptability of sexual aggression toward women. This may be especially true for young adults in highly sexualized drinking environments such as bars (Purcell & Graham, 2005) and parties (Ronen, 2010) where women and men are often in these environments to meet sexual/romantic partners, and the sexualized context can be used to provide license for sexual behavior, even when this behavior is against the will of one of the participants, usually the woman (see Galdi, Maass, & Cadinu, 2013). It is surprising that gender role norms regarding men’s role in initiating sexual interactions are so resistant to change. The intense pressure and anxiety that some men feel because of social and peer pressure to successfully initiate sexual encounters may contribute to some men’s persistence and anger when refused. Initiatives are needed to help young men and women feel comfortable with less rigid sexual gender roles.

Participants endorsed a range of negative feelings in response to the unwanted sexual advances ranging from annoyance to humiliation and fear. As hypothesized, the more serious negative feelings (disrespected, violated, angry, humiliated) were generally more likely for unwanted sexual touching than for persistence. This suggests that unwanted sexual touching can
have a more negative effect on women than does persistent advances. The one exception was feeling afraid which was found for about 25% of participants for both touching and persistence, suggesting that persistence, while less invasive, can also have a substantial impact on women as has been found for stalking generally (Westrup & Fremouw, 1998). However, we had not anticipated that some men would escalate verbal persistence at bars and large parties to the point that they followed the woman around and made her feel physically threatened. This is an understudied type of bar aggression that affects women’s personal safety.

Most women reported using multiple responses, with almost all using evasion, consistent with findings from previous observational research in bars (Graham et al., 2014) and parties (Ronen, 2010) and from sexual harassment research in general (Cochran et al., 1997; Dansky & Kilpatrick, 1997). However, over 70% of female targets told the aggressor directly to stop and 77% used some form of aggressive or forceful response to touching (52% to persistence). These rates of direct and aggressive responses are higher than those found in observational research (Graham et al., 2014), perhaps reflecting the focus of the present paper on the most serious incident experienced by the participant. The discrepancy may also reflect methodological differences between self-report and barroom observations, with women possibly perceiving that their responses are more obvious than they actually are or observers unable to see all responses made by female targets. Intervention by friends was also frequent, especially for persistence, and higher than the rate of third party involvement observed in bars (Graham et al., 2014), again possibly reflecting the severity of the incidents in the present study or differences attributable to self-report versus observational methods. It is noteworthy that more than one-third of participants reported having to leave a bar or party because of unwanted touching or persistent advances, suggesting considerable impact on their personal freedom.
Although it is likely that women’s responses change from less direct (e.g., ignoring and evasion) to more direct refusals (e.g., aggression, involvement of third parties) as sexual touching and persistence continue or escalate, further research is needed to better understand the sequencing of responses and the factors that influence the lack of deterrence following the female target’s initial responses. As noted in the introduction, use of alcohol and/or other drugs by the perpetrator and the victim may have influenced how both of them responded. Intoxicated victims sometimes miss cues that signal escalating danger and intoxicated perpetrators often are more physically aggressive (Abbey, Zawacki, Buck, Clinton, McAuslan, 2004; Norris, Nurius, & Dimeff, 1996). In the present study, alcohol and drug use at the time of the incident were not assessed. Therefore, further research is needed to assess the role played by intoxication in the series of actions and reactions in incidents of unwanted sexual aggression at bars and parties.

Consistent with hypothesis 1, aggressive responses were more likely for sexual touching than for persistence, perhaps reflecting the greater emotional impact of touching. However, it is also possible that unwanted sexual touching was seen as a more personal attack or as more intentional on the part of the perpetrator (i.e., the man might persist with a sexual advance in the mistaken belief that the woman is interested but is likely to know that she does not want her body grabbed by a stranger). Ignoring the perpetrator, on the other hand, occurred more frequently for persistence than for touching, perhaps as a first tactic in the process of discouraging the perpetrator. Also, with quick acts of unwanted touching (e.g., grabbing a woman’s behind and disappearing into the crowd), there may be little opportunity for ignoring as a response.

Friends were more likely to intervene in incidents of persistence than touching. This may be partly because touching sometimes comprises a one-time act done in passing, while persistence, by definition, involves multiple acts and thus more opportunities for third parties to become
involved. This highlights the potentially important role of companions as protectors when women are out drinking. Previous qualitative research has found that women use female friends for protection (i.e., the “buddy system”) (deCrespigny, 2001; Ronen, 2010). However, it can be difficult to execute these types of plans once group members are intoxicated (Brooks, 2011); moreover, there is some evidence that some men use strategies to get around the buddy system such as one man intentionally distracting the sober female guardian while the other moves in on her more intoxicated friend (Gravitt & Krueger, 1998). Therefore, it is important that bar staff (Graham et al., 2014), party hosts and men generally become more aware of sexual aggression and take a role in stopping it. Training bar staff to recognize signs of unwanted touching may be especially important given that such incidents receive fewer interventions from third parties.

We also hypothesized that participants who had experienced stronger negative feelings would be more likely to use responses that were more direct or reflected a greater impact on the target’s situation – namely, responding directly, aggressively or by leaving the premises. This hypothesis was generally supported, especially for aggressive responses, with the largest odds ratios found for feelings of being humiliated, angry, disgusted, violated and disrespected and smaller odd ratios found for more minor feelings such as being annoyed or uncomfortable. Being afraid was significantly related to responding aggressively but the effect was smaller than for most other feelings, perhaps reflecting that fear might prevent, as well as provoke, an aggressive response. Interestingly, disgust was associated with all three responses. More research is needed on the meaning of disgust for women in these situations, the types of behaviors that provoke disgust and the role it plays in the interaction. For example, research suggests that social identity is a major concern for young men in social drinking settings (Graham et al., 2013; Miller et al., 2014; Wells, Graham, & Tremblay, 2009). This suggests that
a man making an unwanted sexual advance might escalate his advances if he perceives an
expression of disgust by the female target as an insult to his manhood.

We also measured two non-negative feelings, didn’t take it seriously and felt a little flattered.
Both were found to be negatively related to all three responses, although this relationship was
significant only for aggressive response. Further research is needed to identify when and why
incidents are flattering. It is possible that those who reported feeling flattered had experienced
less severe sexual aggression. It may also be that women in the present study felt flattered as an
initial reaction but their reactions turned to annoyance, upset or even fear with increasing
persistence or invasiveness. That some women reported feeling flattered by unwanted
persistence and sexual contact may also reflect that women have been socialized to feel that such
attention should be construed as flattering even if they actually find it unpleasant or frightening.

Limitations

One limitation of the present exploratory study is that we measured only the immediate
feelings caused by unwanted sexual touching and persistence and not the extent of lasting harm.
Several studies of workplace harassment have linked sexual harassment to physical and mental
health problems (Dansky & Kilpatrick, 1997; Fitzgerald, Drasgow, Hulin, Gelfand, & Magley,
1997). Similar research is needed to measure the longer-lasting emotional effects of
experiencing unwanted sexual contact and persistence in drinking settings. Another limitation is
that we asked participants to describe the most serious incidents of sexual harassment/aggression
in social drinking settings and these may not reflect typical incidents. Also, the most serious
incident of unwanted sexual touching sometimes involved persistence and persistence sometimes
involved touching; thus, our estimates of the differences in feelings and refusal strategies in
response to these two types of advances should be considered conservative. In terms of
responses, we did not address the sequence of responses which would be important to do in future research to better understand the process of rejection and its consequences for the female target. Another limitation is the relatively small sample of female bargoers from a single community. Although a strength of the sample is the inclusion of student and non-student participants recruited randomly on the street, these results need to be replicated with a larger sample of young women from diverse communities. In addition, research is needed to explore the extent that experiences of unwanted sexual touching and persistence change as women age. Finally, although the questions did not specify the gender of the aggressor, all participants described incidents by male perpetrators; therefore, these results would not necessarily generalize to contexts where unwanted sexual advances are made by others of the same sex.

Conclusions

Overall, the present findings suggest that most young female bargoers experience unwanted sexual contact and persistence in social drinking contexts; in fact, many report the experience as common, even expected. While many of these incidents might be considered minor, some involved serious sexual assault. These experiences provoked negative feelings and resulted in limitations on women’s freedom of movement and enjoyment. Moreover, recent research found that men’s acceptance of these kinds of unwanted advances (e.g., whether acceptable for a man passing a woman in a bar to “grab her ass when she passes him by” or “continue to hit on her when she tells him she has a boyfriend”) is significantly associated with rape proclivity and negative attitudes toward women who have been raped (Strain, Hockett, & Saucier, 2015). Therefore, these sometimes subtle yet pervasive forms of unwanted sexual advances by men toward women in social drinking settings may provide the underpinnings that support more vicious and violent assault and rape.
Much of the research on sexual aggression in drinking contexts has focused on finding ways for women to avoid sexual assault (e.g., Testa & Livingston, 2009); however, the present findings suggest that women are mostly quite clear and direct in their refusals, suggesting that the focus for prevention needs to be placed on men, as argued by Brooks (2011). Accordingly, research is needed to better understand men’s attitudes and beliefs regarding the normality and acceptability sexual aggression in social drinking settings and, the intent and intended impact of their sexual advances despite women’s refusals in order to develop strategies to prevent this form of sexual aggression. In addition, although educating women is an important part of reducing risk of sexual assault, the ubiquity of sexual aggression in drinking contexts suggests that prevention needs to address changing cultural norms, not just educating women. In particular, prevention needs to focus on counteracting the assumption by both men and women that sexual aggression in social drinking settings is acceptable, especially if the woman has been drinking (George et al., 1997; Parks & Scheidt, 2000; Young, McCabe, & Boyd, 2007). In addition, bars and clubs need to implement policies to prevent sexual aggression, and bar staff need to be trained on how to recognize and intervene to stop men from perpetrating acts of unwanted sexual touching and persistence as well as generally preventing harassment by intoxicated male patrons. As well, bystander training (e.g., see special issue of Violence Against Women, volume 20, issue 10) and other approaches need to be implemented to encourage men and women in drinking as well as other environments to intervene effectively when women are targets of unwanted sexual advances. More broadly, cultural change is needed to prevent street harassment and the objectification of women generally (Fairchild & Rudman, 2008) and, of course, broader initiatives are needed aimed at changing social norms to prevent all forms of violence against women (Jewkes, Flood, & Lang, 2015).
References

Author 1, 2014

Author 2, 2014

Author 3, 2014

Author 4, 2015


Jewkes, R., Flood, M., & Lang, J. (2015). From work with men and boys to changes of social norms and reduction of inequities in gender relations: A conceptual shift in prevention of


Wells, S., Graham, K., & Tremblay, P. F. (2009). "Every male in there is your competition": Young men's perceptions regarding the role of the drinking setting in male-to-male barroom aggression. *Substance Use & Misuse, 44*(9), 1434-1462. doi: 10.1080/10826080902961708


### Table 1

**Similarities and differences in women’s feelings after unwanted touching or persistence**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Touching N=84</th>
<th>Persistence N=93</th>
<th>Odds ratio and confidence interval for touching vs. persistence</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Negative feelings</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annoyed</td>
<td>90.5%</td>
<td>94.6%</td>
<td>0.54 (0.24, 1.21)</td>
<td>.134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncomfortable</td>
<td>89.3%</td>
<td>85.0%</td>
<td>1.49 (0.62, 3.56)</td>
<td>.372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disrespected</td>
<td><strong>83.3%</strong></td>
<td>67.7%</td>
<td>2.58 (1.44, 4.65)</td>
<td>.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violated</td>
<td><strong>82.1%</strong></td>
<td>57.0%</td>
<td>3.75 (2.11, 6.66)</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disgusted</td>
<td><strong>78.6%</strong></td>
<td>64.5%</td>
<td>2.12 (1.24, 3.62)</td>
<td>.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angry</td>
<td><strong>64.3%</strong></td>
<td>51.1%</td>
<td>1.87 (1.26, 2.75)</td>
<td>.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embarrassed</td>
<td><strong>41.7%</strong></td>
<td>31.2%</td>
<td>1.75 (1.12, 2.74)</td>
<td>.015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humiliated</td>
<td><strong>27.7%</strong></td>
<td>14.1%</td>
<td>2.42 (1.29, 4.52)</td>
<td>.006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afraid</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>23.7%</td>
<td>1.04 (0.57, 1.89)</td>
<td>.897</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Neutral or positive feelings</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Didn’t take it seriously</td>
<td>47.6%</td>
<td>59.8%</td>
<td>0.61 (0.35, 1.06)</td>
<td>.078</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A little flattered</td>
<td>22.6%</td>
<td>29.0%</td>
<td>0.70 (0.40, 1.22)</td>
<td>.206</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note.** Significantly higher percentages bolded (p < .05)

*From three-level Bernoulli regressions using Hierarchical Linear Modeling with the incident as level 1, the participant as level 2 and the group as level 3.*
Table 2

**Similarities and differences in women's strategies to deter unwanted touching or persistence**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Touching %</th>
<th>Persistence %</th>
<th>Odds ratio and confidence interval for touching vs. persistence</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Indirect refusal</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tried to move out of their reach, for example, by stepping away</td>
<td>94.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indicated indirectly to them that you didn’t want to be with them/didn’t want them to touch you in that way (for example, showed you were with someone else)</td>
<td>73.8</td>
<td>77.2</td>
<td>0.81 (0.44, 1.51)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ignored them</td>
<td>68.3</td>
<td>92.5</td>
<td>0.17 (0.08, 0.39)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Showed them by your facial expression that you were...</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annoyed</td>
<td>90.5</td>
<td>90.3</td>
<td>0.99 (0.52, 1.90)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncomfortable</td>
<td>85.7</td>
<td>87.0</td>
<td>0.91 (0.46, 1.83)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disgusted</td>
<td>79.8</td>
<td>76.9</td>
<td>1.18 (0.65, 2.11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angry</td>
<td>66.3</td>
<td>59.3</td>
<td>1.48 (0.93, 2.36)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upset</td>
<td>65.1</td>
<td>65.6</td>
<td>0.99 (0.63, 1.57)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Direct refusal</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Told them directly that you didn’t want to be with them/didn’t want them to touch you in that way</td>
<td>71.4</td>
<td>69.9</td>
<td>1.09 (0.60, 2.00)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Any aggressive or emphatic refusal</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Said something angrily to them</td>
<td>52.4</td>
<td>38.7</td>
<td>1.94 (1.24, 3.03)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pushed them away</td>
<td>59.5</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>3.27 (2.02, 5.27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punched or slapped them</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>1.46 (0.66, 3.27)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When women don’t want it

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leaving the area or the premises</th>
<th>Touching</th>
<th>Persistence</th>
<th>Odds ratio and confidence interval for touching vs. persistence</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Left the area of the drinking establishment (or party)</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>59.0</td>
<td>0.67 (0.41, 1.09)</td>
<td>.106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left the drinking establishment or party because of the person</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>37.6</td>
<td>0.81 (0.46, 1.44)</td>
<td>.473</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any involvement of friends</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Got a friend to help, for example, by getting between you and the person</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>83.9</td>
<td>0.35 (0.19, 0.65)</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…female friend(s)</td>
<td>32.1</td>
<td>40.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…male friends(s)</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…female and male friend(s)</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>30.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Got a friend to tell the person to leave you alone</td>
<td>37.3</td>
<td>63.4</td>
<td>0.32 (0.20, 0.51)</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…female friend(s)</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>31.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…male friends(s)</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>…female and male friend(s)</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Significantly higher percentages bolded (p < .05).

aFrom three-level Bernoulli regressions using Hierarchical Linear Modeling with the incident as level 1, the participant as level 2 and the group as level 3.

bIt was not possible to calculate odds ratio because there was no variation for persistence.
Table 3

Odds that the participant engaged in direct refusal, aggressive response or left bar or party
(compared to all other responses) for each type of feeling

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feeling</th>
<th>Direct refusal</th>
<th></th>
<th>Aggressive response</th>
<th></th>
<th>Left bar or party</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Odds ratio</td>
<td>confidence interval</td>
<td>p-value</td>
<td>Odds ratio</td>
<td>confidence interval</td>
<td>p-value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annoyed</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>(0.94, 9.68)</td>
<td>.063</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>(1.08, 13.61)</td>
<td>.038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncomfortable</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>(0.94, 6.20)</td>
<td>.066</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>(0.75, 6.75)</td>
<td>.145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disrespected</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>(0.93, 4.28)</td>
<td>.075</td>
<td>5.42</td>
<td>(2.06, 14.30)</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violated</td>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>(0.85, 4.46)</td>
<td>.113</td>
<td>5.01</td>
<td>(2.20, 11.37)</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disgusted</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>(1.21, 5.70)</td>
<td>.015</td>
<td>7.63</td>
<td>(3.25, 17.95)</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angry</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>(1.50, 5.34)</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>11.11</td>
<td>(5.24, 23.56)</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embarrassed</td>
<td>1.52</td>
<td>(0.65, 3.55)</td>
<td>.329</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td>(0.95, 5.62)</td>
<td>.064</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humiliated</td>
<td>1.46</td>
<td>(0.59, 3.66)</td>
<td>.413</td>
<td>12.65</td>
<td>(2.72, 58.96)</td>
<td>.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afraid</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>(0.56, 2.73)</td>
<td>.593</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>(1.52, 9.38)</td>
<td>.005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Didn’t take it seriously</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>(0.31, 1.13)</td>
<td>.113</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>(0.19, 0.98)</td>
<td>.044</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A little flattered</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>(0.26, 1.02)</td>
<td>.057</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>(0.11, 0.52)</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Significantly higher percentages bolded (p < .05)

aFrom three-level Bernoulli regressions using Hierarchical Linear Modeling with the incident as level 1, the participant as level 2 and the group as level 3, controlling for type of aggression (i.e., touching or persistence).