
The Impact of Males Proposing Condom Use on Perceptions of an Initial Sexual Encounter

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The authors investigated the impact of the introduction of a condom into an initial sexual encounter on the perception of the male condom proposer and the likely outcome of the sexual encounter. College students viewed a videotape depicting the development of an initial sexual encounter. Method of condom introduction (verbal, nonverbal, no condom control) was varied. Respondents evaluated the condom proposer on five characteristics (nice, mature, romantic, exciting, promiscuous). Condom proposers were perceived as nicer and more mature but less romantic and exciting than nonproposers. Women but not men perceived the proposer as nicer and more mature and less promiscuous when he introduced the condom verbally rather than nonverbally. Men but not women estimated that proposing condom use diminished the chance of sexual intercourse. Results are discussed from the perspectives of person perception, sex role stereotypes, the evolutionary perspective on mate selection, and the applied perspective of the implications for intervention.

In a well-intentioned effort to decrease the spread of such sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) as chlamydia, gonorrhea, and HIV, health educators have for some time advocated that sexual partners propose condom use during or directly before sexual encounters. This suggestion to propose condom use to one's partner has been made, however, with little regard for the situational and interpersonal constraints on carrying out that recommendation (Collins & Karney, 1995). There is increasing evidence (Helweg-Larsen & Collins, 1994; McKinney, Sprecher, & Orbach, 1987; Walter, Vaughn, Ragin, Cohall, & Kasen, 1994) that such issues as uncertainty about partner reaction, impression management concerns, and possible effects on the outcome of the sexual encounter may have a more proximal impact on the decision to use a condom than such intrapsychic variables as perceived susceptibility to disease, attitudes

about condoms, and self-efficacy for condom use (Bryan, Aiken, & West, 1997; Wulfert & Biglan, 1994).

In this study, we sought to explore the interpersonal considerations of the sexual encounter into which condom use is being introduced. We asked three main research questions: (a) How is an individual who proposes condom use viewed? What kind of attributions are made about his character? (b) Does the manner in which the condom is introduced into the encounter moderate the effects on either the perception of the proposer or the outcome of the encounter? (c) Regardless of method of introduction, what is the impact of the condom proposition itself?

We examined these questions in an experimental analog study in which participants viewed a videotaped progression of events between a couple, ending with an opportunity for a sexual encounter. At the end of the tape, the male in the couple either verbally proposed condom use, nonverbally proposed condom use, or did not propose condom use at all. Participants were then asked how they thought the female in the video viewed her partner on a number of dimensions. They were also asked what they felt was the most likely outcome of the encounter.

Perceptions of a Condom Proposer

There is a rich history of research in social psychology dealing with the ways in which we form global impressions of others (Jones, 1985), that is, the study of person

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perception. Traditionally, information about an individual (a target) is presented to research participants (perceivers) in the form of a written vignette or a videotaped segment and then participants are asked to make judgments about that individual's personality (Kenny, 1994). These judgments generally consist of ratings on semantic differential adjectives (Osgood, Suci, & Tannenbaum, 1957), which are then combined into scales. The current study uses the classic person perception paradigm to investigate the perception of an individual who proposes the use of a condom in a sexual encounter.

Research on person perception has shown that we attribute a variety of personality traits to individuals based on information, such as a particular physical attribute (Snyder, Tanke, & Berscheid, 1977) or a discrete behavior (Winter, Uleman, & Cunniff, 1985). McKinney et al. (1987) examined the attributions made when the minimal cue on which the inference was based was a target's choice of contraceptive method (condom, contraceptive pill, or no protection) in the context of an established sexual relationship. Targets who used contraception were perceived as more intelligent and warm than those who did not. Of targets who used contraception, those who used the contraceptive pill were viewed more favorably than those who used condoms. Finally, targets who used contraception as opposed to those who did not were viewed as having more liberal attitudes about sexuality and moral issues (McKinney et al., 1987).

Hynie and Lydon (1995) examined the perceptions of women who had condoms versus women whose partners had condoms in the context of an initial sexual encounter. They found that women who provided condoms were perceived as less nice than either those whose partners had condoms or those who had unprotected intercourse. Collins and Karney (1995) examined the impact of proposing condom use on the perception of the proposer in an initial sexual encounter and showed that proposing a condom increased the perception that the proposer was good and nice yet diminished the proposer's sexual appeal. Both of these studies were conducted using written vignettes as stimulus materials. The present study expands on this earlier work by (a) extending the measurement of the characterization of the condom user, (b) replacing written vignettes with more engaging and realistic videotapes, and (c) varying the method by which condom use is proposed.

Method of Condom Proposition

Health education pamphlets and health educators themselves usually advise individuals to propose condom use to a partner by first expressing concern about HIV or other STDs and then expressing the request to use a condom (Jemmott, Jemmott, & McCaffree, 1996, p. 106). Although this direct, verbal approach is cer-

tainly the surest method of unambiguous communication, a sexual encounter is hardly the setting of choice for a frank discussion of STDs and condom use. Gagnon and Simon's (1973) notion of the sexual script suggests that both discussion of STDs and condom use itself may be incongruous with the events in a typical sexual encounter. They describe the stages in a sexual encounter leading to intercourse as a "progression from hugging and kissing, to petting above the waist, to hand-genital contacts (sometimes mouth-genital contacts) and finally to coitus" (Gagnon & Simon, 1973, p. 22). In this progression, there is no discussion of disease or pregnancy prevention or a proposal of condom use. Indeed, a common negative attitude about condom use is that it is intrusive, that it interrupts the flow of a sexual encounter (Baffi, Schroeder, Redican, & McCluskey, 1989; Wilson, Manual, & Lavelle, 1991), and that it ruins the sexual mood (Campbell, Peplau, & DeBro, 1992).

We explored the impact of apparently minimally intrusive methods of condom use introduction on both the perception of the condom proposer and the outcome of the sexual encounter. The introduction of a condom into a sexual encounter deviates from the expected normative sexual script. Such unexpected behavior sets the stage for observers to make strong attributions that internal characteristics of the condom proposer determined his behavior (Kelley, 1971). We sought to examine these attributions. In addition, we wished to address the question of whether even such apparently minimally intrusive methods of condom proposal would have a chilling effect on the sexual encounter. We purposefully did not include mention of STDs in the condom introduction. The male in the video either proposed a condom verbally by saying, "I have a condom. Do you want to use it?" and then placing the condom in his partner's hand or nonverbally by simply placing the condom in his partner's hand. Even though the condom proposer did not mention STDs or HIV in the verbal introduction, we hypothesized that the nonverbal introduction would be less intrusive than the verbal introduction in the context of the unfolding sexual script. Thus, the proposer would be more positively viewed on characteristics closely related to the sexual encounter itself, that is, being a romantic and exciting partner, following a nonverbal introduction.

Evaluation of the Condom Proposer

To examine the impact of the proposal of condom use on the perception of the male stimulus person who introduced the condom into the sexual encounter, we required a multidimensional characterization of the sexual partner. To develop this characterization, we sampled adjectives from a representation of the Big Five personality dimensions provided by Hofstee, de Raad, and

Goldberg (1992). The Big Five locates a large sample of trait adjectives in the English language on five broad bipolar dimensions: (a) extroversion or surgency (Factor 1), (b) agreeableness (Factor 2), (c) conscientiousness (Factor 3), (d) emotional stability (Factor 4), and (e) intellect or openness to experience (Factor 5) (Goldberg, 1990; Hofstee et al., 1992). Hofstee et al. (1992) argued that most trait words reflect at least two dimensions of the Big Five, with relatively few trait words representing a single pure dimension. According to Hofstee et al., simple structure models that merely assign traits to the Big Five dimension with the highest loading “neglect secondary factor loadings that may run almost as high as the primary loadings” (p. 147) and may yield misleading interpretation of factors themselves. Hofstee et al. characterized 587 trait adjectives in terms of their primary loading on a Big Five factor and, in addition, a secondary loading on another factor. More specifically, each adjective is located on a facet, that is, a combination of one pole (positive or negative) of each of two Big Five factors.

To assess the effects of our independent variables, we sought to describe condom users in terms of relatively homogeneous clusters of traits that are meaningfully related to culturally normative conceptions of a potential sexual partner. We selected 20 adjectives from the Hofstee et al. (1992) representation, all of which had their primary loadings on the first three dimensions, with secondary loadings systematically spread over all five dimensions. For example, in selecting adjectives with primary loadings on Factor 3, conscientiousness, we chose words that might characterize a partner, for example, *mature*, with its secondary loading on Factor 2, agreeableness. We did not include in our adjective set other adjectives with primary loadings on Factor 3 that did not appear to relate to sexual relationships, for example, adjectives such as *economical* (primary loading on Factor 3 and secondary loading on Factor 4, emotional stability). The adjectives we selected are provided in Table 1 along with their locations on Big Five facets. Facets are represented as the positive or negative pole of each of two Big Five dimensions (e.g., for *romantic*, II+ or high on agreeableness but IV- or low on emotional stability). The selection of a large number of adjectives with primary or secondary loadings on Factor 2 is consistent with the findings of Graziano, Jensen-Campbell, Todd, and Finch (1997) that agreeableness in men is an important factor in their being perceived as attractive by women. Several adjectives we sampled overlapped with those of Collins and Karney (1995) and Casteñada and Collins (1995), who used them to characterize a condom proposer in written scenarios. Finally, three additional adjectives were sampled from the work of Collins that did not

appear in the Hofstee et al. (1992) characterization (see Table 1). The 23 adjectives served as the basis of the evaluation of the condom proposer.

Gender Differences in the Perception of Condom Users

Gender differences exist with regard to intrapsychic correlates of condom use (Campbell et al., 1992; Goldman & Harlow, 1993; Sacco, Levine, Reed, & Thompson, 1991; Wulfert & Wan, 1993). For example, women exhibit significantly more positive attitudes about condom use (Helweg-Larsen & Collins, 1994; Sacco et al., 1991), whereas men express higher intentions to use condoms (Bryan, Schindeldecker, & Aiken, 1998; Sacco et al., 1993). Men are more likely to say that they might have unprotected sex in the “heat of the moment” of a sexual encounter if condoms were unavailable (Herold & Mewhinney, 1993; Sacco et al., 1991). Women report being more embarrassed than men about purchasing condoms (Helweg-Larsen & Collins, 1994), but women are also more comfortable negotiating condom use than are men (Bryan et al., 1998; Sacco et al., 1991).

There are also differences in the inferences made by men and women about an individual who proposes condom use, and these differences appear to reflect the sexual double standard (Oliver & Hyde, 1993). As described earlier, Hynie and Lydon (1995) conducted a study of perceptions of actors in a sexual encounter based on their contraceptive behavior. In addition to the contraceptive method differences discussed above, they also found some evidence for the sexual double standard in these perceptions. Participants (all females) were presented with a fictitious diary of a female target in which she described a sexual encounter in which either she or her male partner provided a condom. The female participants felt that a male partner would view the target more negatively when she provided a condom than when her male partner provided a condom. The authors suggest that women are subscribing to the sexual double standard that says it is socially acceptable for males to be the sexual aggressor and to appear prepared for sexual activity (by providing a condom), whereas the same is socially unacceptable for women (Hynie & Lydon, 1995).

These findings are consistent with the stereotypical sexual script, in which men traditionally have more power and status and women are more deferent and passive (Oliver & Hyde, 1993). Evolutionary theory suggests that mate selection may proceed along similar lines (Kenrick, Sadalla, Groth, & Trost, 1990; Kenrick & Trost, 1997). In the verbal condom condition, the man steps out of the traditional role by consulting with the woman about condom use, thereby elevating her status in the

TABLE 1: Exploratory Factor Analysis of 23 Trait Adjectives: Principal Axis Factoring With Promax Rotation

Adjective	Loading on Factor 1	Loading on Factor 2	Loading on Factor 3	Big Five Facets ^a		Condom Proposer Dimension
				Primary	Secondary	
Romantic	0.82	-0.07	0.04	II+	IV-	Romantic
Affectionate	0.80	-0.05	0.05	II+	IV-	Romantic
Warm	0.67	0.14	-0.01	II+	II+	Romantic
Passionate	0.66	0.11	0.14	II+	IV-	Romantic
Cool	0.54	0.17	0.14		Collins ^b	Romantic
Smooth	0.68	-0.18	0.17		Collins ^b	Romantic
Responsible	-0.18	0.83	0.14	III+	II+	Mature
Cautious	-0.15	0.78	0.07	III+	I-	Mature
Mature	0.14	0.66	0.18	III+	II+	Mature
Dependable	0.11	0.63	-0.01	III+	II+	Mature
Conscientious	0.10	0.53	-0.02	III+	II+	Mature
Thoughtful	0.38	0.52	0.06	II+	III+	Nice
Respectful	0.42	0.42	-0.22	II+	III+	Nice
Moral	0.25	0.48	-0.30	II+	III+	Nice
Considerate	0.45	0.29	-0.04	II+	III+	Nice
Sincere	0.48	0.38	-0.17	II+	II+	Nice
Bold	-0.08	0.14	0.69	I+	IV+	Exciting
Assertive	0.09	0.08	0.51	I+	I+	Exciting
Bland	-0.37	-0.12	-0.31	I-	V-	Exciting
Adventurous	0.35	0.02	0.39	I+	V+	Exciting
Spontaneous	0.21	-0.05	0.36	I+	V+	Exciting
Uninhibited	0.15	-0.06	0.37	I+	IV+	Exciting
Promiscuous	-0.07	-0.10	0.31		Collins ^b	—

NOTE: Roman numerals correspond to Big Five dimensions: I = extroversion or surgency (Factor 1), II = agreeableness (Factor 2), III = conscientiousness (Factor 3), IV = emotional stability (Factor 4), and V = intellect or openness to experience (Factor 5). Factor analysis conducted on the pooled within-cell covariance matrix partialling out experimental condition.

a. Taken from Hofstee, de Raad, and Goldberg (1992).

b. Taken from Collins and Karney (1995).

sexual encounter. In the nonverbal condom condition, in contrast, he maintains control by implying that she should accede to his desire to use a condom. Thus, female perceivers might respond more favorably to the verbal condition than would male perceivers, such that gender would interact with method of condom introduction. In the current study, we test this hypothesis as well as extending on the findings of Hynie and Lydon (1995) by including both male and female participants instead of relying on the perceptions of one gender about the other gender's opinions.

Impact of Proposing Condom Use on the Outcome of the Sexual Encounter

An area not yet explored even in research regarding the perception of condom proposers is the impact of proposing condom use on the outcome of the sexual encounter. For instance, if individuals feel that by stopping the progression of the sexual script to introduce condom use they may face rejection by the partner and termination of the encounter, they would be unlikely to propose condom use. Perhaps the cessation of the

encounter is less likely if the condom is proposed less obtrusively—in this case, nonverbally. Thus, a final aim of this study was to investigate the effects of condom proposition, method of proposition, and perceiver gender on perceptions of the outcome of the sexual encounter.

METHOD

Participants

Participants were 246 undergraduates (122 male, 124 female) from a large southwestern university who received experimental course credit in exchange for their participation. Mean age was 18.8 years ($SD = 1.40$). Participants were 84% Caucasian, 6% Hispanic/Latino, 4% Asian American, 3% African American, 2% Native American, and 1% other. The majority of participants (78%) classified their relationship status as single, whereas 21% said they were dating one person steadily. The remaining 1% of participants ($n = 3$) were married.

Design

The study used an experimental paradigm in which participants were randomly assigned to one of three conditions: (a) verbal condom proposition (verbal), (b) nonverbal condom proposition (nonverbal), or (c) no condom proposition (no condom). Gender of the participants also served as an independent variable. This resulted in a 3 (condition) \times 2 (gender) between-subjects factorial design.

Procedures

All procedures were approved by a university-level human subjects internal review board. Participants were seated together in groups of approximately 10 in a room with a television screen and videocassette recorder. Adequate spacing was provided between participants to maintain complete privacy of responding. The experimenter gave the following instructions:

We've learned that most people are able to learn a great deal about a stranger—even when they are given only a few details about that person to use as a basis for their impressions. You are about to see a short film about two people, Jeff and Kelly. After viewing the film, we will ask you what you think Jeff and Kelly think of each other and what you think may happen between them.

After viewing the film, participants completed a questionnaire containing items about Kelly's perception of Jeff and what the perceiver thought was going to happen between Jeff and Kelly just after the video ended.

Materials

Film. The film depicted a typical college party with music, dancing, and drinking. Kelly and Jeff meet while they are getting cups of beer at the keg and speak to each other about their mutual friends. The scene fades out. In the next scene, Kelly and Jeff are sitting on a couch together, enmeshed in conversation. Jeff touches Kelly's hair while they are on the couch. Again, the scene fades out. Jeff and Kelly are now slow dancing, and partygoers are beginning to leave. After one last scene change, Jeff and Kelly are in a bedroom kissing. Kelly helps Jeff remove his shirt, and Jeff begins to unbutton Kelly's blouse.

The three videos were identical up to this point. In the final scene, the condom manipulation occurred. In the no condom condition, the scene faded to black. In the verbal condition, Jeff placed a condom in Kelly's hand and said "I have a condom. Do you want to use it?" Before Kelly could respond, the scene faded to black. In the nonverbal condition, Jeff simply placed a condom in Kelly's hand, and the scene faded to black.

Questionnaire. The questionnaire first asked participants to think about the impression Kelly had formed of Jeff at the point where the video ended. Participants were then asked to rate Jeff on the series of 23 adjectives in the way that they thought Kelly would rate him. Ratings were on a 7-point scale anchored at one end by the trait and at the other end by the negation of the trait (e.g., passionate, not passionate). Participants were thus asked to take Kelly's perspective as the potential sexual partner of Jeff. We wished to avoid confounding of participants' own responses to a situation involving casual sex by having them focus on Kelly's perspective.

Participants were then asked about what they thought happened in the moments after the video ended. They were asked what they felt the chances were that Jeff and Kelly actually had intercourse on a 9-point scale ranging from *no chance they had intercourse* to *100% sure they had intercourse*. The participants were then asked about the believability of the scenario depicted in the film. They were asked how likely it was that events such as the one in the film could happen on their campus and how realistic the situation depicted in the film was for undergraduates in general. Finally, demographic characteristics of the participants such as age, race, gender, and marital status were assessed.

RESULTS

Exploratory Factor Analysis

We used exploratory factor analysis (EFA) with the 23 adjectives found in Table 1 to identify homogeneous clusters of traits with which to characterize condom users. Of particular concern was into which clusters, if any, the three items selected from Collins (Casteñada & Collins, 1995; Collins & Karney, 1995) would fit. Following procedures described in Finch and West (1997), the pooled within-class correlation matrix—that is, the matrix with experimental condition partialled out—was subjected to principal axis factoring with iterated communalities. The use of the within-cell correlation matrix removed any effects of the experimental manipulation from the correlational structure of the data. Initial examination of the eigenvalues and scree plot indicated the presence of three distinct factors. A promax (oblique) rotation was then performed. Table 1 presents the factor loadings of each of the 23 items on the three factors of the promax rotated three-factor solution. This three-factor solution accounted for 97% of the variance in trait ratings.

The adjectives *romantic*, *affectionate*, *warm*, *passionate*, *cool*, and *smooth* had strong primary loadings on the first factor of our factor analysis and were thus aggregated into a cluster we labeled *romantic*. The adjectives *responsi-*

ble, cautious, mature, dependable, and conscientious had strong primary loadings on our second factor and were aggregated into a cluster we labeled *mature*. The adjectives *thoughtful, respectful, moral, considerate, and sincere* had strong loadings on our second factor but also had strong secondary loadings on Factor 1. We followed the recommendation of Gorsuch (1983, p. 211) to aggregate these adjectives with double loadings into a unique cluster.¹ Thus, these items were aggregated into a cluster separate from the mature cluster, which we labeled *nice*. The adjectives *bold, assertive, bland, adventurous, spontaneous, and uninhibited* all had strong loadings on our third factor and were aggregated into a dimension labeled *exciting*.² Thus, we defined four clusters: three corresponding to Factors 1, 2, and 3 of our exploratory factor analysis and a fourth corresponding to trait adjectives with high loadings on both Factors 1 and 2.

The four clusters reflected combinations of Big Five factors, following the conceptualization of Hofstee et al. (1992). The adjectives of the romantic cluster all have primary loadings on Factor 2, agreeableness. In addition, three of the four adjectives—romantic, affectionate, and passionate—all have substantial secondary loadings on the negative end of Factor 4, emotional stability, that is, the end representing high emotionality. Together, these adjectives describe a congenial and emotional partner.

Our mature cluster draws all adjectives with a primary loading on Factor 3, conscientiousness, with secondary loadings predominantly on Factor 2, agreeableness. Thus, the mature cluster characterizes highly conscientious people who are also pleasant.

Our third cluster of adjectives, nice, again draws on adjectives with a combination of loadings on Factors 2 and 3 as in the mature cluster. However, the emphasis is reversed: The primary loading is on Factor 2, with a secondary loading on Factor 3. The cluster of mature adjectives is distinct from the nice cluster in emphasis—that is, an emphasis on being responsible and dependable in the former versus pleasant and thoughtful in the latter.

Our fourth cluster of adjectives, exciting, contains adjectives that have their primary loading on Hofstee et al. Factor I, Surgency. The secondary loadings reflect either positive loadings on Factor 4, reflecting emotional stability or positive loadings on Factor 5, openness to experience. Here, we are characterizing the intense, bold, spontaneous, and uninhibited lover.

The adjective promiscuous had a final communality estimate of only .12, the lowest of all the adjectives. Thus, we did not include it in a cluster but instead retained it for further analyses as a separate single-item dependent variable. We felt that the evaluation of a potential sexual partner's promiscuity was central to the situation of condom proposal in a first time sexual encounter.

Confirmatory Factor Analyses

We used confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to verify that the four clusters and the single promiscuity item could be treated as distinct in analysis.³ Again, the analysis was conducted on the pooled within-class correlation matrix, controlling for experimental condition. The adjectives comprising each of the four scales were permitted to load only on the constructs that they were hypothesized to represent, and promiscuity served as the single indicator of its own construct. All correlations among factors were estimated. Model fit was assessed with the comparative fit index (CFI) (Bentler, 1990), which ranges from 0 to 1, with .90 indicating acceptable fit and .80 indicating marginal fit.

The five construct model fit the data adequately, $\chi^2(220, N=235) = 453.733$, CFI = .89, with all items being significant indicators of their hypothesized constructs⁴ and no evidence of significant cross-loadings. Correlations among the five latent constructs ranged between $-.09$ and $.85$ (see Table 2). Given the high correlation between the nice and mature factors ($.85$), a second model was estimated in which the correlation between these factors was constrained to 1.00. Reduced fit in the constrained model versus the original model indicates that the two clusters represented by the factors are distinct and should be retained as separate (see, e.g., Bollen, 1989, p. 292, Equation 7.76). The fit was significantly worse with the correlation constrained to 1.00, $\chi^2_{\Delta}(1, N=235) = 39.94$, $p < .001$. Finally, because there was also a high correlation between the nice and romantic factors ($.84$), we tried a third model in which this correlation was constrained to 1.00 and again obtained a significantly worse fit, $\chi^2_{\Delta}(1, N=235) = 61.82$, $p < .001$. We thus retained the four clusters plus the single item promiscuous as distinct for further analysis.

Analyses were conducted on scale scores representing each of the four clusters, which were created by averaging item scores within each cluster and using appropriate reverse scoring. Promiscuity served as a separate score. These five scores served as the dependent variables for the section of the analyses detailing the impact of condom introduction. Means and standard deviations for the four clusters and the promiscuity item in each of the three conditions are presented in Table 3.

Perceptions of a Male Condom Proposer

The effects of the condom introduction manipulation on observer judgments of Kelly's perceptions of Jeff were examined in a series of analyses of variance (ANOVAs) with planned contrasts. The main effect of condom introduction (verbal, nonverbal, no condom) was examined with two planned contrasts: (a) the combination of the verbal and nonverbal proposition conditions versus the no condom condition and (b) the verbal versus the

TABLE 2: Correlations Between the Four Latent Person Perception Factors

Dimension	Romantic	Mature	Nice	Exciting
Romantic	—			
Mature	.52***	—		
Nice	.84***	.85***	—	
Exciting	.61***	.36***	.22**	—
Promiscuous	-.09	-.14	-.17*	.22**

NOTE: Promiscuous is a one-item scale.
 * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

TABLE 3: Means and Standard Deviations for the Four Person Perception Dimensions and Promiscuity in the Verbal, Nonverbal, and No Condom Conditions

Dimension	Condition		
	Verbal (n = 81)	Nonverbal (n = 75)	No Condom (n = 89)
Romantic	5.19 (1.00)	5.15 (1.04)	5.46 (.98)
Mature	5.66 (.86)	5.51 (.88)	4.33 (1.06)
Nice	4.97 (.96)	4.74 (1.12)	4.47 (1.18)
Exciting	5.37 (.71)	5.37 (.69)	5.59 (.75)
Promiscuous	5.12 (1.43)	5.24 (1.18)	5.06 (1.45)

NOTE: All dimensions were measured on a 1 to 7 scale, with higher numbers indicating a stronger endorsement of that dimension. Standard deviations appear in parentheses.

nonverbal proposition conditions. Participant gender was included as a second factor.

Mature. There was an overall effect of condom introduction, $F(2, 235) = 49.28, p < .001$. Jeff was seen as substantially more mature when he proposed condom use, $F(1, 235) = 97.90, p < .001$, but the method of introducing the condom had no main effect on maturity judgments, $F(1, 235) < 1, ns$. However, as can be seen in Figure 1a, there was a significant Condom Introduction \times Gender interaction on perceptions of Jeff, $F(2, 235) = 5.39, p < .01$. In the verbal condition, females ($M_{\text{female}} = 5.88$) thought Kelly perceived Jeff as significantly more mature than did males ($M_{\text{male}} = 5.35$), $F(1, 235) = 6.45, p < .05$. In the no condom condition, females ($M_{\text{females}} = 4.09$) thought Kelly perceived Jeff as significantly less mature than did males ($M_{\text{males}} = 4.58$), $F(1, 235) = 6.07, p < .05$. There was no significant gender difference in the nonverbal condition, ($M_{\text{female}} = 5.49, M_{\text{male}} = 5.54$), $F(1, 235) < 1, ns$.

Nice. There was an overall effect of condom introduction on the perception of Jeff's niceness, $F(2, 235) = 4.18, p < .05$, such that Jeff was perceived as nicer when he proposed a condom than when he did not, $F(1, 235) = 6.96, p < .01$, regardless of method of introduction $F(1, 235) = 1.29, ns$. Again, however, there was a significant interaction between condom introduction and gender, $F(2, 235) = 3.72,$

$p < .05$. As can be seen in Figure 1b, females showed a significant decreasing linear trend such that Kelly felt Jeff was nicest in the verbal condition ($M_{\text{verbal}} = 5.07$), less nice in the nonverbal condition ($M_{\text{nonverbal}} = 4.51$), and the least nice in the no condom condition ($M_{\text{no condom}} = 4.16$, contrast $F(1, 235) = 14.28, p < .001$). Males, on the other hand, did not differentiate among ratings of Jeff in the three condom introduction conditions, contrast $F(1, 235) < 1, ns$.

Exciting. Participants felt Kelly perceived Jeff as more exciting when he did not propose the use of a condom ($M_{\text{verbal}} = 5.47, M_{\text{nonverbal}} = 5.29, M_{\text{no condom}} = 5.60$), $F(1, 235) = 5.65, p < .05$, and this effect was consistent across participant gender, $F(2, 235) < 1$, for the Gender \times Condom Introduction interaction. There was a main effect of gender such that females thought that Kelly perceived Jeff as more exciting than did males ($M_{\text{females}} = 5.59, M_{\text{males}} = 5.34$), $F(1, 235) = 7.04, p < .01$.

Romantic. Both males and females thought that Kelly perceived Jeff to be more romantic when he did not propose the use of a condom ($M_{\text{verbal}} = 5.17, M_{\text{nonverbal}} = 5.13, M_{\text{no condom}} = 5.47$), $F(1, 235) = 5.67, p < .05$. There was no main effect of gender, $F(1, 235) < 1, ns$, and no interaction between condom condition and gender, $F(2, 235) = 1.33, ns$.

Promiscuous. Overall, there was no effect of condom introduction on estimates of Kelly's perceptions of Jeff's promiscuity, $F(2, 235) < 1, ns$. However, there was a Condition \times Gender interaction, $F(2, 235) = 3.32, p < .05$. Probing of this interaction revealed that women perceived Jeff to be significantly less promiscuous in the verbal introduction condition, $F(1, 235) = 4.34, p < .05$, than in the other conditions. They also felt Jeff was less promiscuous in the verbal condition than did males, $F(1, 235) = 4.07, p < .05$. Males did not differentiate between condition, $F(2, 235) = 2.50, ns$, nor was there any main effect of gender, $F(1, 235) < 1, ns$.

Impact of Condom Proposition on the Perceived Outcome of the Encounter

We also explored the effects of the method of condom proposition and gender on perceptions of the outcome of the sexual encounter in terms of the chances that the mood stayed sexual or "cooled off" sexually in the moments after the video ended as well as the chances that Jeff and Kelly actually had sex.

Perceived chances the mood stayed sexual. There was a significant main effect of condom proposition on the participants' estimates of the chances that the mood stayed sexual in the moments after the video ended, $F(2, 235) = 5.04, p < .05$. Specifically, participants said that the mood was more likely to stay sexual when there was not a condom proposed (pooled across verbal and nonverbal con-

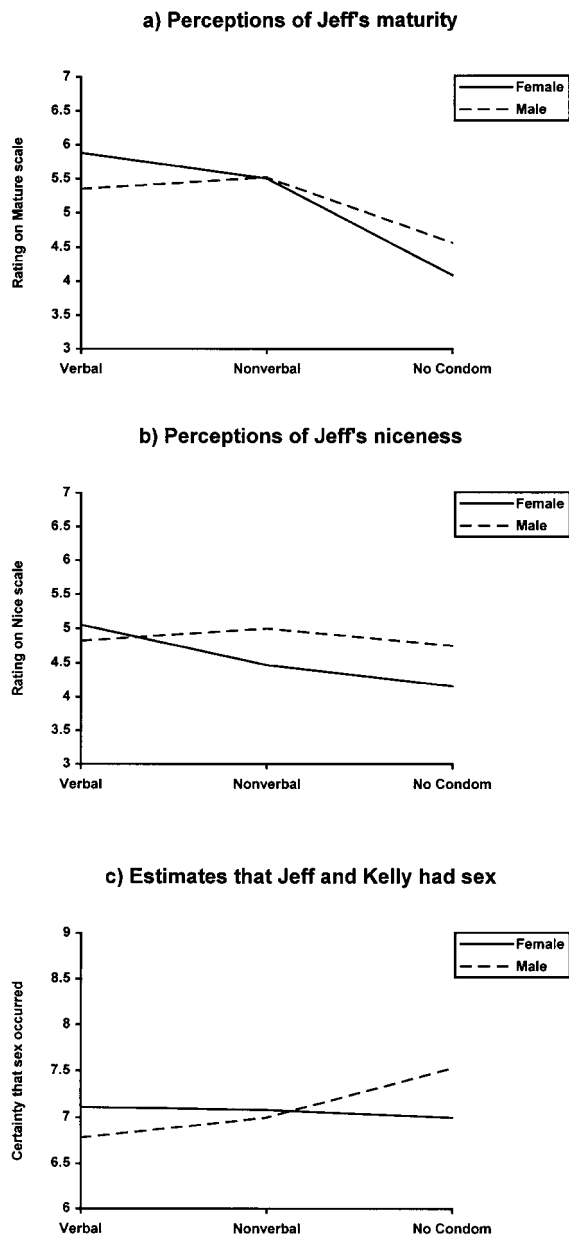


Figure 1 Impact of condom proposition and gender of the perceiver on perceptions of the male condom proposer's maturity and niceness (1-7 scale) and perceptions about the outcome of the sexual encounter (1-9 scale).

ditions, $M_{\text{condom}} = 6.84$, versus $M_{\text{no condom}} = 7.52$). There were no effects of gender and no interaction between gender and condom proposition.

Perceived chances the mood cooled off sexually. This was essentially the opposite question to the one posed above, and the results of the ANOVA reflect this. Partici-

pants thought that the mood was more likely to cool off sexually when there was a condom proposed, pooled across verbal and nonverbal conditions, $M_{\text{condom}} = 4.14$, $M_{\text{no condom}} = 3.20$, $F(2, 235) = 8.17$, $p < .001$. Again, there were no effects of gender and no interaction between gender and condom proposition.

Perceived chances that Jeff and Kelly had sex. Pooled across genders, there was no overall impact of condom proposition method on ratings of the likelihood that sex occurred, $F(2, 235) = 1.40$, *ns*. However, as shown in Figure 1c, the pattern of ratings varied notably by gender. In fact, for males, there were substantial differences among conditions, $F(1, 235) = 7.31$, $p < .01$, such that males thought intercourse was most likely in the no condom condition and less so in the condom introduction conditions. There were no such differences for females, $F(1, 235) < 1$, *ns*. Males were more likely than females to say that Jeff and Kelly had sex when there was no condom proposed, $F(1, 235) = 3.80$, $p = .05$, whereas there was no such difference in either condom condition ($p < .10$ in both cases).

Manipulation Checks

Two types of manipulation checks were employed. First, we assessed participants' awareness of the introduction of a condom in the two condom conditions. Second, we examined the extent to which participants found the situation to be realistic.

Condom proposition. Participants were asked to recall whether they saw that Jeff had a condom in the video. Virtually all (98%) of those in the verbal condition and all (100%) of those in the nonverbal condition answered that Jeff did indeed have a condom. None of the participants in the no condom condition said that they saw that Jeff had a condom.

Realism of the situation. Participants were asked how likely it was that events like this could happen to undergraduate students on this campus. The majority of participants felt that it was either very likely (68%) or somewhat likely (16%) that events like these could happen to their peers. When participants were asked, "Do you believe the situation in the video was realistic for undergraduate students in general?" 68% said it was very realistic and 31% said it was somewhat realistic. Fewer than 1% ($n = 2$) of participants said that the situation was not at all realistic.

DISCUSSION

The goal of this study was to examine the impact of proposing condom use to a potential sexual partner on both the perception of the proposer by the partner and the outcome of the sexual encounter.

Measurement of Dimensions of Condom Proposers

Culling adjectives from both previous research in this area as well as trait adjectives from the Hofstee et al. (1992) representation of the Big Five personality inventory, we identified four trait clusters on which a potential sexual partner could be evaluated. We elicited these clusters via exploratory factor analysis and then supported their distinctiveness with CFA. Our clustering built on the two-dimensional facet characterization of the Big Five traits by Hofstee et al. (1992), which was particularly useful in distinguishing the two clusters of prosocial attitudes nice versus mature. Our trait clusters of niceness, maturity, excitement, and romanticism form a set of related yet conceptually distinct aspects of personality, each of which was responsive to our condom introduction manipulation. The pattern of results for each of these trait clusters in response to our experimental manipulations was distinct.

Perceptions of Condom Proposers

Consistent with the broad literature of person perception, the single act of introducing a condom into a sexual encounter colored all aspects of the multidimensional characterization of the condom proposer. This was true even in the face of a vivid video that held all aspects of the condom proposer constant across conditions. We found that, all else being equal, a man who proposed condom use was perceived to be nicer and more mature than a man who did not propose condom use. This is encouraging because prosocial traits such as niceness and maturity are desirable characteristics in a heterosexual relationship partner (Jensen-Campbell, Graziano, & West, 1995). Unfortunately, a male condom proposer was also perceived to be less romantic and less exciting than a man who did not propose condom use. There is evidence that, at least in circumstances when only a sexual encounter is desired, both men and women place higher importance on characteristics such as dominance, assertiveness, and attractiveness than on prosocial traits such as agreeableness (Bryan, Klein, & Kenrick, 1997; Buss & Schmidt, 1993; Simpson & Gangestad, 1992). On the other hand, for long-term mate selection, prosocial traits such as niceness and maturity are weighted heavily (Bryan, Klein, et al., 1997). Thus, if one's primary goal is to have a casual sexual encounter, the romantic and exciting clusters might be particularly important. In contrast, if one's goal is to form a long-term relationship with the partner, the mature and nice clusters might be of paramount importance.

From an impression management perspective, an individual's goal in a sexual encounter would be expected to moderate the importance of the exciting and romantic versus nice and mature dimensions. We suspect, however, that in the midst of a potential initial

sexual encounter, proximal goals of sexual activity would dominate more distal relationship goals. Individuals who are considering condom use thus face an interesting dilemma. At least for men, proposing condom use carries with it both image-enhancing (nicer, more mature) as well as image-detracting (less exciting, less romantic) qualities. Perhaps it is these potentially image-detracting qualities that keep some individuals from proposing condom use to their partners.

Method of introducing a condom. The perceptions of the male condom proposer by women participants differed by method of condom introduction. Women believed that Jeff was nicest, most mature, and least promiscuous in the verbal condition when he asked Kelly if she wanted to use a condom. The strategy of this method of introduction, attempting to elicit Kelly's opinion, apparently enhanced these women's view of Jeff. Perhaps women felt that, in the verbal condition, Jeff was concerned about Kelly's thoughts and feelings, whereas in the non-verbal condition, he seemed to assume that Kelly was amenable to both sexual intercourse and condom use without explicitly consulting her about these issues. Looked at from the perspective of gender stereotypes (Oliver & Hyde, 1993), in the verbal condition, Jeff stepped out of his traditional dominant role, moving toward a mutual relationship that gives power and status to the woman.

Outcome of the Sexual Encounter

This study revealed some interesting gender differences with regard to the estimation of the impact of condom proposition on the outcome of the sexual encounter. Men believed that the introduction of a condom decreased the probability of sexual intercourse, whereas females exhibited no such belief. Bryan et al. (1998) recently gathered data that indicated that college males believe that women serve as gatekeepers to sexual encounters—that is, that the decision whether intercourse will occur rests with the female partner. Thus, men would likely be particularly concerned about their partner's reactions during the sexual encounter and would be unlikely to do anything that might lessen their chances of having intercourse with their partner. The males in this study apparently believed that women are less likely to engage in sex when a condom is brought into the encounter. Perhaps these men believe that bringing up condom use and thus explicitly making known their desire to engage in intercourse might give women the opportunity to say no. Such expectations may arise from young men's personal experience, accounts of others' experiences, or from male cultural expectations of women's behavior in sexual encounters. Alternatively, if events were simply to flow seamlessly along following the sexual script, women might be more

likely to engage in sex. Ironically, it appears from our data that women's perceptions of whether sex will occur are not lessened by the presence of a condom introduction. An intervention for men that highlighted the discrepancy in beliefs and clarified the woman's position with regard to sex and condom use might increase the probability that men would introduce condoms.

A second source of men's concerns about the negative impact of condom use may be that young men the age of the participants in the present study fear that condom use may interfere with their sexual performance—that is, that they will lose their erections when putting on a condom. Moreover, we have found young men's perceived sexual self-control (i.e. their sense of their ability to stop sexual interaction in the heat of the moment if no condom is available) to predict, in turn, their perceived self-efficacy for condom use (Bryan et al., 1998).

That women showed no effect of condom introduction on their estimates of the probability that sex would occur may be explained in terms of differential perspective taking across genders. Our participants were instructed to focus on the characters Kelly and Jeff and make judgments from the perspective of these characters. In the videotape, Kelly showed no ambivalence about having sex. Women participants apparently responded to Kelly's behavioral cues veridically and judged that she was willing to have sex, as initially evidenced by the opening of the bedroom scene in which Kelly helps Jeff remove his shirt. We expect that our women participants' judgments were driven by Kelly's behavior. In contrast, we suspect that the male participants judged the likelihood of sex more from their own experience and from cultural expectations about the sexual behavior of young women. Put in terms of more general issues of an observer's capacity to take the perspective of an actor, it appears that female observers were more likely than male observers to take the female perspective exemplified in Kelly's behavior. In addition, women's skills at visually decoding others' nonverbal cues exceed those of men (Eagly & Wood, 1991; Eisenberg & Lennon, 1983).

Implications for Intervention

There appears to be a particular identity schema (Markus & Cross, 1990) associated with being a male condom proposer in an initial sexual encounter. Some aspects of this schema are flattering to the proposer, whereas others are not. Interventions to increase condom use should seek to emphasize the positive aspects of proposing condom use—partners will see the condom proposer as more mature and nice and de-emphasize or

change negative perceptions. This is a potential point of intervention from the popular media. Perhaps associating condom use with excitement and romanticism in movies and on television would change the negative aspects of the identity schema associated with condom use. Interventions should also attempt to elucidate the incompatible gender-based expectations with regard to sex with condoms and to assure men that introducing condoms will not have a chilling effect. Proposing condoms may, in fact, lead to attributions that they are highly desirable partners. Graziano et al. (1997) and Jensen-Campbell et al. (1995) have found that highly agreeable men were perceived as more attractive, more desirable as dates, and more desirable as long-term partners than were less agreeable men. Finally, it might be recommended that simply asking the partner whether she wants to use a condom is the strategy of choice.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

There are four limitations to the current research. The first limitation is generalizability. This study was conducted with predominantly Caucasian middle-class late adolescents. Although we expect that our results would generalize to older individuals with similar demographic characteristics, it is unclear whether the obtained results would generalize to younger adolescents, minority populations, or individuals of lower socioeconomic status (SES). This is particularly the case for the gender differences found in this study. The dynamics of power in a heterosexual relationship are likely to be very different depending on SES, minority status, and age (Amaro, 1995).

The second limitation is that, in all conditions, it was the male in the couple who proposed condom use. It would be important to see if the identity schema associated with proposing condoms as well as the impact on the sexual encounter were different depending on the gender of the proposer. There is already some evidence that this is the case; Hynie and Lydon (1995) found that women who had condoms were actually perceived as less nice than those who did not. Hynie and Lydon (1995) suggested that perhaps there is still a sexual double standard at work, and so, a next step in this research would be to conduct a study in which condom proposers are either male or female and conduct direct comparisons of the evaluations made of both.

The third limitation is that we only considered a relationship in which a couple meets and progresses toward an initial sexual encounter on the same evening. Such relationships may be more heavily influenced by factors such as female physical attractiveness, male dominance, and the unfolding of the relationship in terms of a set of

scripted sexual behaviors (Bryan, Klein, et al., 1997). In these types of casual relationships, condom use is likely to be discussed (if at all) in the heat of the moment when impression management concerns about one's image as romantic and exciting may overtake concerns about being considered nice and mature. Other sexual encounters develop more slowly as an initial friendship progresses toward a transition to an intimate sexual relationship. In these latter, more slowly developing relationships, discussions of condom use may be more likely to take place outside the heat of the moment so that considerations such as partner maturity and niceness may be of far more importance.

Our fourth limitation is common to all laboratory analog studies. In the case of highly emotionally charged personal experiences, laboratory analogs do not guarantee complete generalization to the actual experience. We tried to construct a tape of a common sexual interaction in this population; our manipulation check confirmed that the event is, in fact, likely to occur. However realistic the materials, we cannot capture the actual experience of being in a sexual encounter via an analog study.

CONCLUSION

Consistent intrapsychic correlates of condom use have been identified. Positive attitudes toward condoms, self-efficacy for condom use, and norms encouraging condom use are all strongly related to condom use intentions and behaviors across various populations (Abraham & Sheeran, 1993; Bryan, Aiken, & West, 1996, 1997; Bryan et al., 1998; Fisher & Fisher, 1992; Jemmott & Jemmott, 1991; McCoy, Dodds, & Nolan, 1990; Wulfert & Wan, 1993). These attitudes and beliefs indeed relate to an individual's intention to engage in safer sexual behavior and are at least distally related to actual condom use (Bryan, Aiken, et al., 1997). Safer sexual behavior is not, however, an individual event occurring in a vacuum. It occurs in a complex, value-laden, interpersonal context—one in which the participants are likely to be aroused both emotionally and physically and are faced with intense impression management concerns. These concerns may be especially important in the situation we examined, that is, an initial casual sexual encounter. Under these circumstances, impression management is perhaps a more proximal predictor of condom use (Castañeda & Collins, 1995).

Successfully encouraging consistent condom use requires a comprehensive understanding of the behavior. Although we have a grasp on the individual attitudes and beliefs that are related to condom use intentions and behavior, we are only beginning to explore the context in which the behavior occurs. The current study joins with a few others to begin to examine the complex

nature of the sexual encounter and the ways in which the sexual encounter is affected by recommendations to bring up condom use with a potential sexual partner. As behavioral scientists, we need to understand what it is we are asking individuals to do before we can expect to understand why people do and, more important, do not follow these recommendations.

NOTES

1. Gorsuch (1983, p. 211) describes a strategy for identifying clusters of homogeneous items from an exploratory factor analysis. First, items that load on only a single factor are formed into individual clusters. Then, items that exhibit a common pattern of primary and secondary loadings are formed into clusters, thus yielding "several clusters in addition to those that defined the factors" (Gorsuch, 1983, p. 211).

2. The exciting factor has two items with loadings above .5 and an additional five items with loadings above .3. One standard rule of thumb for exploratory factor analysis is to interpret as significant those loadings above .32, that is, 10% of the variance in the item accounted for by the factor (Comrey & Lee, 1992). We have three items with loadings above .32 in addition to the two items that load above .5. A second common practice is to consider as significant loadings any loadings that are twice as large as the correlation coefficient that would be significant with the sample size (n) employed in the factor analysis (Gorsuch, 1983, p. 209). We have 246 cases. At $\alpha = .05$, two-tailed, for $n = 200$, the critical value of the correlation is .138; doubling this value is .276, which would serve as the cutoff according to Gorsuch. By the Gorsuch cutoff, all seven items on the factor have significant loadings.

3. Such tests are not available within the exploratory factor analysis framework.

4. This model included five within-construct correlated errors that were indicated by the LaGrange multiplier modification indices (Chou & Bentler, 1990).

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