An electronics whiz who talked about kinky sex with a woman over the Internet was charged with raping her in his Greenwich Village apartment, police said yesterday. Six weeks after meeting in cyberspace, suspect Paul Krauth, 46, shared a dinner with the woman, then pounced on her with a small whip when she came to his home for the first time, police said. “He punched her, paddled her buttocks with his hand and with a leather-handled flogging device,” said a law enforcement official. Krauth and the woman, a 41-year-old from Syracuse, had talked about “dominant role playing” in E-mail messages, said sources. The woman, however, said she had no intention of sleeping with Krauth when she arranged to meet him for dinner in his Barrow St. apartment Friday evening. “She told detectives that she was going on a date but had not planned on sleeping with him,” said a police source. “She just saw it as something innocent.

“They talked about S and M over the Internet. She told the perp over the Internet that she was interested in S and M after he introduced the subject to her,” the source said. She told detectives that after dinner, he took out a small whip and began to beat, sodomize and rape her, leaving her bruised and shaken. The woman, a graduate assistant at an upstate college, said she was too scared to try to open the many locks on his front door, so she stayed until 11 am. Saturday.

After she departed, police said, she left one message on his phone machine saying she had a nice time and another in which she said she was upset over the attack. Police believe Krauth erased that second message. Cops said the woman tried to take an Amtrak train back home but was in too much pain and contacted a cop at Penn Station. Krauth’s defense attorney, Robert Horn, could not be reached for comment. Krauth is president of a W. 27th St. firm, Integrated Media Design, which creates and installs music, phone, lighting and home theater systems. The company's Internet Web page features a smiling photo of Krauth saying, “Your client will appreciate our knowledgeable, friendly, ‘no pressure’ attitude.

“Francine Justa, executive director of Neighborhood Housing Service of New York, who works across the hall from Krauth’s office, was shocked by the charges. “If this is the Paul I know who rides to work on a bicycle, he’s the most normal guy in the world,” she said. At Krauth’s posh condominium complex on Barrow St., where rock star Billy Idol used to live, neighbors described the suspect as a quiet but polite man who lived by himself. “He was a bit of a health freak, always out jogging or cycling,” said James Deane, the building’s
superintendent. “This is hard to believe. I’ve never actually seen him with anybody, male or female. He seemed like a nice guy. Quiet guy, but very polite.”