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# The Development and Validation of the ARES: A Measure of a Person's Proclivity to Attribute Responsibility to Others for Their Emotions

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The Development and Validation of the ARES: A Measure of a Person's  
Proclivity to Attribute Responsibility to Others for Their Emotions

by

Michael K. Lauritzen

A thesis submitted to the faculty of

Brigham Young University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Science

Department of Psychology

Brigham Young University

April 2008

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BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE COMMITTEE APPROVAL

of a thesis submitted by

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This thesis has been read by each member of the following graduate committee and by majority vote has been found to be satisfactory.

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## ABSTRACT

### The Development and Validation of the ARES: A Measure of a Person's Proclivity to Attribute Responsibility to Others for Their Emotions

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Research involving attribution theories typically surrounds attributions of responsibility for actions in general. However, people also regularly attribute responsibility to themselves, others, or environmental circumstances for emotions. This research aims to develop a measure of a person's proclivity to attribute responsibility to others for their emotions—the Attributions of Responsibility for Emotions Scale (ARES). The research involves two studies, the first designed to develop items for inclusion in the ARES, and the second designed to validate and determine the reliability of the ARES. Participants in Study 1 included 71 (30 male and 41 female) undergraduate students from Brigham Young University. These participants took part either in focus groups or in responding to a preliminary 24-item version of the ARES online. Participants in Study 2 included 306 undergraduate students from Brigham Young University. These participants responded to several scales, including a 21-item version of the ARES, which all measured constructs similar to responsibility for emotions. Results suggested that a 10-item version of the ARES was the most valid and reliable measure of persons' proclivity for attributing responsibility to others for their emotions.

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## The Development and Validation of the ARES: A Measure of a Person's Proclivity to Attribute Responsibility to Others for their Emotions

*“Sing, goddess, the anger of Achilles, son of Peleus, the accursed anger that brought uncounted anguish on the Achaians and hurled down to Hades many mighty souls of heroes, making their bodies the prey to dogs and the birds' feasting...”* (Homer, 1988)

In the Iliad, Achilles' wrath is blamed for the great suffering and loss of life in the Trojan War. But can he really be blamed for his emotions or their consequences? Many traditional and lay theories of emotion would suggest that emotions are simply reactive phenomena, not subject to the will of the emoter (Averill, 1974). But, the fact remains that, often unknowingly, people regularly attribute responsibility to themselves, others, or environmental circumstances for emotions (Parrott, 1993; Spackman, 2002; Spackman, Belcher, & Hansen, 2002; Spackman & Parrott, 2001).

This study aims to develop a measure of a person's proclivity to attribute responsibility to others for their emotions—the Attributions of Responsibility for Emotions Scale (ARES<sup>1</sup>). It is proposed that, while designed to have broad applicability, the ARES will be of special use in the area of psychology and the law. Specifically, it will be useful in predicting murder/manslaughter verdicts, which inherently depend upon jurors' attributions of responsibility for emotions. Before discussing this application and the actual steps in creating the ARES, however, we must first discuss some traditional and contemporary uses of the terms emotion and responsibility.

### *Theories of Emotion*

---

<sup>1</sup> ARES seemed to be an appropriate acronym for this scale because Ares, the Greek god of war who played a central role in Homer's Iliad, is synonymous with anger, wrath, vengeance, and other similar passions.

The employment of the term *emotion* to describe a psychological category is perhaps less than two hundred years old (see Dixon, 2003). However, the idea that humans experience emotion-like phenomena dates back much further. Judeo-Christian tradition, for example, suggests that what would today be called emotions have, in a sense, existed since the creation of humankind. In the first book of Moses, Adam was told “in *sorrow* shalt thou eat of (the ground) all thy life.” Then, only a few passages later, Cain is said to have slain his brother, Abel, because he was *wroth* with him (Holy Bible, 1979, emphases added).

These passages suggest that emotions, at least in some form, have been around for a long time. But what is an emotion? Although the concept of emotion has existed for a very long time, a clear definition of what emotion really is has, for the most part, failed us. In Western culture, some of the earliest attempts at defining emotion were made by the early Greek philosophers (see Calhoun & Solomon, 1984, for a discussion of philosophical views of emotion from various historical periods). Since then, myriad philosophers, scientists, psychologists, and laypersons have developed their own theories of emotion. Some of these theories are consonant with one another, but many are not.

One of the difficulties faced by those attempting to define emotion is a limitation to emotion terminology (see Fehr & Russell, 1984). For example, as stated above, the English language has not always included the word emotion. What’s more, some Eastern languages still lack such a term (Russell, 1991). Therefore, how emotions are discussed and described can differ greatly across time and culture. Some theorists (e.g., Harre, 1986) would go even further and suggest that emotions are defined by their respective time and culture. That is, differences in language are actually reflections of how the

emotion is being experienced. Whether the emotion itself changes or just how we talk about it changes, while interesting, is not of central importance to the current research. What is important is to suggest that any discussion of emotions is contingent upon the vocabulary one employs in discussing them. For example, if, as is the case in German, there is no exact translation of the word “happy” (the closest translations are “lucky” or “joyful”), a discussion between an American and a German about what it means to be happy could be quite different from a discussion between two Americans (or two Germans).

Even if there were no linguistic difficulties associated with emotion terms, developing an appropriate definition of emotion would still be difficult. The sheer number and complexity of emotions is so great that a single, all-encompassing definition seems potentially inadequate. Take, for example, only one emotion, love. Love can be seen not only as an emotion, but as a relationship which involves emotion (e.g., Aristotle, 1926). There are also many different types and intensities of love. One can love her mother, her boyfriend, or her cat, but very few people would argue that each of these types of love is the same. In English, we use one term for all of these forms of love. In Greek, however, each might be attributed a different name (philos, eros, or agape).

Despite the difficulties in defining emotion described above, it seems that most theories of emotion can be fit into one of two categories. To borrow terminology used by Kahan and Nussbaum (1996), most emotion theories define emotions as either *mechanistic*, that is, the idea that emotions are forces devoid of thought or perception, or as *evaluative*, the conception that some level of thought or cognition underpins emotional

response. As we will see, some theories of emotion do not fit neatly on one side of the line or the other but, for the most part, this distinction works quite well.

*A mechanistic conception of emotion.* Kahan and Nussbaum (1996) define this perspective as “the conception that emotions are energies that impel the person to action, without embodying ways of thinking about or perceiving objects or situations in the world” (p. 278). Most traditional interpretations of emotion tend to be in some sense mechanistic (see Averill, 1974). This conception of emotion is very popular in folk theories because it is easily related to. For example, romantic dramas or books tend to portray emotions (especially love and lust) as things that sweep us away or take us off our feet. Most people can relate to this feeling of somehow being overtaken by an emotion (if not by love, then by anger or frustration or pride). We do not say that we “thought our way into love” we say that we “fell in love.” Therefore, it makes intuitive sense that emotions are somehow caused by forces external to ourselves, not necessarily things willed from within us. A brief look at the etymology of the word “emotion” will further show this point.

The English word emotion is defined in the most recent edition of the Oxford English Dictionary (2006) as a “mental feeling or affection as distinguished from cognitive or volitional states of consciousness.” This definition clearly suggests a current folk understanding of emotions as phenomena that occur independent of cognitive processes. What is more, the word emotion itself comes from the Latin “emovere” meaning to disturb, or to move out from (Oxford English Dictionary, 2006). This is in reference to “moving out” from rational thought, suggesting that emotions have long

been thought of as innately irrational, non-cognitive, and somehow separate from the will or the self.

Many popular thinkers have subscribed to this “traditional” conception of emotion. While it is beyond the scope of this paper to detail individual philosophers’ emotion theories, it should be mentioned that many influential thinkers such as Galen, Kant, Darwin, and Freud were proponents of this view (see Galen, 1978; Kant, 1983; Darwin, 1998; Wollheim, 1971).

*An evaluative conception of emotion.* Despite the historical dominance of the mechanistic perspective of emotions, there has more recently been a shift in direction. In psychology today, the most common conception of emotions is that they are the result of cognitive activity. Therefore, most recent emotions research in social psychology and similar areas takes (even if implicitly) a decidedly cognitive approach (see Baars, 1986; Sperry, 1993, regarding the “cognitive revolution” in psychology). This cognitive aspect is a vital part of Kahan and Nussbaum’s evaluative conception of emotion. The evaluative conception suggests that “emotions themselves contain an evaluation or appraisal of the object—that is, the appraisal is part of the belief-set in terms of which the emotion will be defined, and these ways of seeing the world are a part of what the emotional experience includes” (Kahan & Nussbaum, 1996, p. 285). From this view then, emotions do not exist without some form of cognitive evaluation.

I take a similar view in the current research. This is necessary because any attribution of responsibility for (or evaluation of the appropriateness of) an emotion must be based on the assumption that the emoter could have potentially emoted otherwise. In other words, in order for a person to be deemed responsible for his or emotion, it must

first be assumed that he was not determined by some external (or even internal) force to experience that emotion. This is not to say that the person must necessarily have control over his emotion (see Malle, 2004) but he must have had the potential to have acted differently. An example, as suggested by Malle, involves a man throwing darts at a dart board. This man is terrible at darts and has no control over where he throws them. If this man were to hit a person standing a certain distance from the target with a dart, it is likely that we would hold the dart thrower responsible for hitting the person even though he had no control over where he threw the dart. This is because, although the person did not have control over where the dart flew, he still could have chosen not to throw the dart or waited to throw the dart until no one was around. In other words, he had the ability to act otherwise. According to Kahan and Nussbaum, the evaluative conception of emotion assumes that the emoter could have appraised the situation differently. Therefore, he or she had the ability to have emoted otherwise. Because most mechanistic views do not permit for the attribution of responsibility to emoters for their emotions, it makes sense to employ an evaluative approach when discussing responsibility for emotions.

One major exception to the inability of mechanistic theories of emotion to permit for attributions of responsibility for emotions should be noted. William James' theory of emotion (James, 1884) suggests that, because emotions are nothing more than bodily changes, a person can direct his emotions by controlling his bodily responses to certain situations. Because James' theory is devoid of cognitive elements it would be classified by Kahan and Nussbaum as a mechanistic theory. However, it is clearly an exception and doesn't seem to fit neatly with the definition of a mechanistic theory described above.



### *Responsibility Attribution*

To say that someone is responsible for his or her actions requires an understanding of what is meant by the term responsible. Most dictionary definitions equate responsibility with accountability for actions. This definition does not, however, account for the many potential ways we use the term responsibility in the English language. According to Hart (1968) responsibility is typically discussed in at least one of four senses. As will be seen below, each of these four senses of the term responsibility will need to be considered in the current research.

*Senses of responsibility.* Hart's first sense, role-responsibility, suggests that there are certain duties ascribed to each role a person has. For example, a sea captain is responsible for his ship. According to Hart, "A responsible person is one who is disposed to take his duties seriously; to think about them, and to make serious efforts to fulfil [sic] them" (Hart, 1968, p. 213).

The second sense is causal responsibility. In some contexts, Hart suggests, the term "was responsible for" could be replaced by the words "caused" or "produced," such as in the phrase, "The long drought was responsible for the famine in India" (Hart, 1968, p. 214). In this sense, "not only human beings but also their actions or omissions, and things, conditions, and events, may be said to be responsible for outcomes" (Hart, 1968, p. 214).

Hart's third sense is liability-responsibility. Especially in the law, the terms responsible and liable are often used interchangeably. However, according to Hart, this sense of responsibility can only be assigned in the moral realm when certain conditions are met. First, the actor must have knowledge of the potential wrongfulness of the action

for which she is to be held liable. Second, she must also have had the self-control required to have avoided the action. And third, there must be some direct (i.e., not vicarious, as is sometimes suggested in the law) causal link between the actor and the object harmed.

Hart's final sense, capacity responsibility, is intrinsically tied to moral liability responsibility. In this sense a person must have certain normal capacities to be held responsible. In Hart's view, "The capacities in question are those of understanding, reasoning, and control of conduct: the ability to understand what conduct legal rules or morality require, to deliberate and reach decisions concerning these requirements, and to conform to decisions when made" (Hart, 1968, p. 227). It should be noted that this fourth sense of responsibility will be particularly important to the discussion of responsibility for emotions given the typical characterization of emotions as being, at least at times, out of an emoter's control.

*Determining responsibility.* With this understanding of the term responsibility, we can more adequately answer what it means to say that a person is responsible for an event. But how is responsibility determined? Shaver (1985, p. 63) suggests five related philosophical issues that act as guides in attributing responsibility: causality, moral standards, determinism, voluntary choice, and extenuation. Though these issues will be discussed here in terms of attributions of responsibility for actions in general (see Austin's, 1975, discussion of actions and speech acts), it should also be noted that, as will be discussed later, they apply to attributions of responsibility for emotions as well.

First, similar to Hart, Shaver suggests that responsibility can usually only be attributed when an individual has personally caused the event in question, although there

might be some exceptions. Take, for example, two fictional characters, Martha and Jack. It would not typically make sense to hold Martha responsible for damages caused in an auto accident if Jack were the one who personally caused the crash. However, we would hold Martha responsible if Jack were her underage son to whom she knowingly lent the car illegally. Shaver argues, though, that such scenarios seem so rare that they do not provide convincing evidence against the idea that persons should be held responsible for events they personally cause (see Shultz & Schleifer, 1983, for further discussion of the relationship between causality and responsibility.)

Second, how we decide which actions should receive censure depends upon the standards against which the behavior is to be compared. In other words, again using the fictional characters from above, we would likely hold Martha responsible for Jack's behavior (and therefore punish her accordingly) because there is a generally agreed upon standard of behavior in our society which suggests that it is inappropriate to allow untrained, underage drivers to borrow your car.

Third, if, as is often the case with emotions, an event is said to be caused by some force not within the control of the actor (that is, it is in some sense determined) then responsibility may not be attributed to the actor. For example, Shaver suggests that "If Freud's (e.g., 1920; 1952) internal determinism or Skinner's (1953) external determinism completely accounts for behavior, then no one could be held responsible" for their actions (Shaver, 1985, p. 64). Therefore, and this brings us to Shaver's fourth guide in attributing responsibility, in order for responsibility to be attributed, a person must voluntarily choose to act one way while having the possibility to act otherwise. Returning to the example of Martha and Jack, Shaver would suggest that Martha could

have chosen not to give her keys to Jack. Because she could have done otherwise, she is viewed as being responsible for her (and subsequently his) actions.

Fifth, Shaver's final issue considered when determining responsibility suggests that there might sometimes be other extenuating circumstances which somehow release the actor from responsibility for his or her actions. External coercion, Shaver suggests, is one of the primary circumstances here. For example, if Martha was told at gunpoint to give her keys to her son, we might be less likely to hold her responsible for the damage he caused. She could still have acted otherwise, so therefore could still in a sense be seen as responsible for her actions, but because she was coerced into her decision, attributions of responsibility would tend to be less severe (see Austin, 1961, for a more exhaustive and detailed account of potential extenuating circumstances.)

#### *Attributions of Responsibility for Emotion*

As stated above, these five issues act as guides not only in attributing responsibility for actions in general, but also for emotions. For example, by Shaver's fourth supposition, it would only make sense to attribute responsibility to Martha for lending her car to Jack if she had the ability not to lend him the car. It would also only make sense to deem her responsible for becoming angry at Jack for crashing the car if she had the ability not to become angry (see the above discussion regarding Kahan and Nussbaum's evaluative conception of emotion).

However, when discussing attributions of responsibility for emotions, other issues in addition to Shaver's should also be considered. Previous research has suggested that the appropriateness of an emotion to its context, the type of emotion, and whether the person making the attribution is herself experiencing an emotion can affect how and to

whom or what responsibility for that emotion is attributed (Lauritzen & Spackman, 2006). It may also be the case that personal characteristics, including authoritarian personalities and emotional intelligence, might likewise affect how responsibility is attributed for emotions. Therefore, in addition to Shaver's five philosophical issues, these additional issues were taken into account in the development of the ARES. Following are brief discussions of each of these additional issues.

*Emotion appropriateness.* Many lay theories of emotion tend to suggest that certain situations carry with them expectations for appropriate (and inappropriate) emotions and emotional expressions. For example, convention would suggest that it is appropriate for a grown man to express grief at his mother's funeral, but it would be inappropriate for him to express glee. Therefore, there is a certain amount of politicking involved in emotional expression (see Shields, 2005, for a discussion of three ways in which the appropriateness of emotional expressions can be evaluated). Emotion appropriateness is important to consider in the proposed research because it appears that whether an emotion is deemed appropriate to its context might have an affect on how responsibility is attributed for that emotion (Lauritzen & Spackman, 2006). The ARES will account for emotion appropriateness by including items describing emotions appropriate to their context and some emotions that are not.

*Differences across emotion type.* Research also suggests that persons might attribute responsibility for emotions differently depending on which emotion is being expressed (or experienced, see Lauritzen & Spackman, 2006). This poses a special challenge in developing a scale to measure proclivity for making such attributions. In order to account for these potential differences across emotions, every emotion would

have to be accounted for in the scale. Even if one subscribed to a theory of emotion which limited the number of basic emotions (e.g., Ekman, 1992, who suggests that there are six, or maybe seven, fundamental emotions) it would result in a tedious and unwieldy measure. Therefore, the ARES will discuss emotions in general, but the wording will be such that any specific emotion could be substituted. For example, one item on the ARES might read, “I feel like I should be excused for my actions when I am emotional.” This item could easily be reworded to account for anger by changing the word “emotional” to “angry.” In this sense, the ARES will be highly adaptable and potentially appropriate for any emotion.

*Emoter/observer differences.* One of the most universal findings in research on attributions of responsibility for actions in general is that persons attribute responsibility differently depending on whether they are themselves acting or they are observing another person acting (see Heider, 1958; Gilbert, 1995). Research indicates that there is a similar difference in attributions of responsibility for emotions (Lauritzen & Spackman, 2006). This difference is especially important to recognize in the context of the present study because the ARES is designed to measure a person’s proclivity to attribute responsibility to *others* for their emotions (i.e., the observer condition). Therefore, all items in the scale will be formatted to fit this condition.

*Authoritarianism.* One factor that has been shown to affect attributions of responsibility for actions in general, and which is hypothesized to affect attributions of responsibility for emotions, is the personality trait of authoritarianism. Persons said to be high in authoritarianism tend to be rigid, conventional, conservative, power-oriented, and deferential to authority (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, & Sanford, 1982). One

realm where authoritarianism (and its related construct, dogmatism) has often been shown to affect responsibility attributions is in the law. Specifically, mock juries containing a high proportion of authoritarian/dogmatic jurors tend to convict more often (McGowen & King, 1982; Shaffer & Case, 1982) and impose longer sentences (Bray & Noble, 1978; Shaffer, Plummer, & Hammock, 1986) than juries with a low proportion of such persons. Although no studies have been conducted regarding authoritarianism and attributions of responsibility for emotion specifically, there is reason to believe that a similar relationship would exist here because, as discussed above, emotions are, at least sometimes, treated as actions.

*Emotional Intelligence.* Another construct hypothesized to affect how attributions of responsibility for emotions are made is the ability to regulate one's own emotion. Emotion regulation is an important aspect of what Salovey and Mayer (1990) call emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence has been defined as "the capacity to reason about emotions...to enhance thinking. It includes the abilities to accurately perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions so as to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and to reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth" (Salovey & Mayer, 1990, 189; see also Mayer & Salovey, 1993; Salovey, Hsee, & Mayer, 1993).

It may be suggested that, if a person is generally successful at regulating her own emotions, she would likely see them as willed behaviors. That is to say, she would recognize her ability to have emoted otherwise. Therefore, it is hypothesized that persons who are generally successful at regulating their own emotions will be more likely to

attribute responsibility to others for their emotions because they will assume that other people are similarly able to regulate their emotions.

*Action vs. Emotion.* Finally, it should be noted that, when discussing attributions of responsibility for emotions, it is important to differentiate between attributions of responsibility for the emotions themselves and attributions of responsibility for actions engaged while in an emotionally aroused state. This distinction returns us to the prior discussion of “what is an emotion?” Darwinian theorists, for example, would argue that emotions exist at an expressional level. Therefore, from the Darwinian perspective, any attempt to distinguish between emotions and their associated actions would be impossible. However, as discussed above, any discussion of responsibility for emotions from a mechanistic view such as Darwin’s is difficult if not impossible. Therefore, another explanation must be offered. If we instead assume that emotions exist at an evaluative or cognitive level, as was suggested above, then it makes sense to differentiate between emotions and actions resulting from those emotions.

It could be argued that a discussion of responsibility for emotions themselves is unnecessary since it is typically the resultant action for which responsibility is attributed. For example, it would typically make no sense to try someone in a court of law for becoming angry, but it would make sense to try them for killing someone while in an angered state. Therefore, some might argue that determining whether responsibility is attributed for the anger itself might be superfluous. The problem with making this claim, however, arises if we suggest that the killing was, at least in some regard, dependent upon the killer being angry. That is, in the case of jurors deliberating cases in which the defendant’s emotional state is relevant to their actions, as in murder/manslaughter cases,



jurors must take account of defendants' emotions when rendering verdicts. The deliberations of jurors in such cases necessarily involve the question of responsibility for emotions, and not simply for the actions associated with those emotions.

For example, in cases of extreme emotional disturbance, jurors are instructed that defendants' emotional states may warrant mitigation of their sentences from murder to manslaughter (see Spackman, Belcher, Calapp, & Taylor, 2002, for discussion). In such cases, jurors are instructed that they must determine whether the defendant's emotional state was, in some sense, justified by the circumstances surrounding the crime. To suggest that the defendant's emotions, and the question of his or her responsibility for them, are irrelevant misses the point of the law as stated.

In addition to the legal setting, it may be seen that the question of responsibility for emotions, and not simply actions associated with emotions, is one of importance in such situations as parenting and romantic relationships. In both of these settings, persons attribute and are attributed responsibility for simply experiencing emotions.

### Study 1—Developing the ARES

#### Method

##### *Participants*

Participants for this study included 71 (30 male and 41 female) undergraduate students from introductory and upper-division psychology courses at Brigham Young University. Participants ranged in age from 18 to 53 years of age (median age = 21) with one participant opting not to report her age. 84.9% of participants reported their ethnicity to be European American/White.

Of these 71 participants, 19 (10 male and 9 female) participated as discussants in focus groups. The remaining 52 (20 male and 32 female) participants completed a battery of questionnaires online. Data from 7 of these 52 participants were not included in any analyses because they either did not complete large portions of the battery or completed the entire battery suspiciously quickly. To help maintain confidentiality, participants' names and results were never paired directly. When offered by their professors, extra credit was given as remuneration for participants' time. Otherwise, no compensation was provided.

### *Procedure*

*Theme Generation Focus Groups.* The initial stage in developing items for inclusion in the ARES involved two focus groups. The purpose of these focus groups was to gain a better understanding of lay theories of attributions of responsibility for emotion. A better understanding of these lay theories was deemed necessary because the ARES was intended to be used among laypersons who would likely hold such theories. The first focus group included 7 discussants and the second focus group included 12. A room on the BYU campus was reserved for each focus group. Upon entering the room, participants were asked to read and sign a form of consent to be a research participant (see Appendix I1 for the consent form). Each focus group lasted approximately 50 minutes.

Because in lay conversation people rarely talk about responsibility for emotions, it was anticipated that the participants might have difficulty understanding exactly what the researcher was interested in. For this reason, each focus group began with the researcher reading a script to the participants explaining what was meant by the phrase

“responsibility for emotions” (see Appendix J for a copy of the script). Upon having the script read to them, participants continued with a task in which they were asked to briefly describe in writing a number of instances in which they held another person responsible for his or her emotions. It was suggested that participants not only focus their examples on a single emotion, but on a spectrum of emotions if possible. There was no specific time limit for completion of this task although it did not take much longer than five minutes in either focus group. Responses didn’t need to be especially detailed because the purpose of this exercise was not to get substantive ideas for the present research, but instead to get participants to begin thinking about circumstances in which they might or might not hold a person responsible for his or her emotions.

Upon the participants’ completion of this task, the discussion facilitator asked the group to discuss situations in which persons are or are not responsible for their emotions. Some participants used their own experiences to illustrate such situations but it was made clear that at no time should any participant feel obligated to share personal experiences nor should they divulge any identifying information about others. To ensure that participants understood the importance of maintaining confidentiality throughout the discussion, the discussion facilitator read them a script indicating they should not disclose any identifying information regarding any persons involved in any of the situations they described during the focus group (see Appendix K for this script). As different situations were discussed, participants were asked to identify aspects of those situations that may or may not make it likely that a person would be held responsible for his or her emotions.

Upon conclusion of the second focus group, comments from the two focus groups were compared. From the participants’ comments, as well as from the literature cited

above, several concepts were identified as potentially being key to measuring a person's proclivity for attributing responsibility to others for their emotions. The researcher and his associates compiled these concepts and developed them into preliminary scale items. All of these items are included in the original version of the ARES, as seen in Appendix A1. A description of each of the items and how they relate to the themes generated in the focus groups and to the literature is included in the results section below.

*Scale validation.* In order to determine which items would perform well, this preliminary version of the ARES, along with the other scales described below, was administered to the other 52 participants in an online survey using Qualtrics, an online survey managing program. It was made clear to these participants that their responses would be anonymous and that their names would never be paired with their responses in any way (see Appendix I2 for this consent form).

Validity scores for the ARES were determined by comparing participants' scores on the ARES to scores on the other scales described below because they measure similar constructs. Participants completed these scales as part of a battery of scales which also included a consent form (see Appendix I3) and a demographics page (see Appendix L). Also included in this packet was a fictional vignette depicting the events surrounding a criminal homicide case (see Appendix F). Participants were asked to read the vignette and subsequently determine in a separate questionnaire (see Appendix G) whether they would convict the defendant of murder or manslaughter, and how long they would sentence him to incarceration.

To help avoid order effects, the order of instruments in the battery was alternated. The Qualtrics software used to administer the surveys has a randomize function which

allowed the researcher to completely randomize the order of the five different scales. Because it was assumed that reading and responding to the homicide case might bias responses to all of the other scales, it was placed last in each of the orderings.

### *Materials*

Below are descriptions of each of the scales included in the survey battery.

*Attributions of Responsibility for Emotions Scale (ARES).* The purpose of this scale is to measure a person's proclivity to attribute responsibility to another person for his or her emotions (see Appendix A1). The preliminary version of the ARES developed in this study contained 24 Likert-type items, with response options ranging from 1 "Strongly Disagree" to 6 "Strongly Agree." Items included statements such as, "people should not allow their emotions to get too carried away," and, "people experience emotions because of something they think or do." Several statistical tests were conducted on participants' responses to this list of 24 preliminary items to deselect weak items. As will be discussed below, this stage of analyses produced 21 items that seemed to perform well (see Appendix A2 for the 21-item version of the ARES).

Seven of the items on this version of the ARES were reverse scored. Higher total scores (after reversing the reverse-scored items) denote higher proclivity to attribute responsibility to others for their emotions.

*Right-Wing Authoritarianism scale.* This scale measures the degree to which a person exhibits authoritarian personality traits (see Appendix B for a copy of this scale). Altemeyer (1981) reports Cronbach's coefficient alpha for this scale to range between  $\alpha=.78$  and  $\alpha=.88$ . The scale consists of 30 Likert-type items, with response options ranging from -4 to +4. Items in this scale include statements like, "What our country

needs *most* is discipline, with everyone following our leaders in unity,” and, “There is nothing wrong with premarital sexual intercourse.”

As discussed above, authoritarianism has consistently been shown to affect mock jury members’ tendency to convict or acquit. In cases where there was a conviction, mock jurors who scored high in authoritarianism also tended to sentence the perpetrator to longer terms. Because it appears that persons who are high in authoritarianism tend to hold others more responsible for their actions than do persons who are low in authoritarianism, it is hypothesized that they will also hold others more responsible for their emotions. Therefore, it was hypothesized that this scale would predict, at least to some degree, the degree to which persons attribute responsibility to others for their emotions.

Scores on the right-wing authoritarianism scale were therefore correlated with scores on the ARES to establish convergent validity. However, although authoritarianism is a construct of importance to attributions of responsibility for emotions, it was hypothesized that scores on the authoritarianism scale would not predict participants’ murder/manslaughter verdicts as well as scores on the ARES—thus offering evidence for the discriminant validity of the ARES.

*Beliefs in Fate Scale* (Jasa, 1999). The first and, to my knowledge, only publication of this scale is in Wrightsman, Batson, & Edkins (2004), a text including a number of scales suggested to be useful to applied researchers in the judicial setting. The purpose of this text is to provide the applied researcher with an array of accessible scales, not to elaborate on the psychometric properties of the scales. For this reason, this scale’s

psychometrics have, to the best of my knowledge, never been published. They were, however, assessed in the current study and are reported below.

This scale measures the degree to which persons use fate in deciding causes of happenings (see Appendix C for a copy of the Beliefs in Fate Scale). It includes 24 Likert-type items, with response options ranging from 1 to 7. It includes items such as, “Meeting the right romantic partner is really a question of fate,” and, “I can do very little to change my destiny.” The scale is comprised of three subscales, locus of control, destiny, and luck. The locus of control subscale measures the degree to which respondents attribute the causes of events to themselves internally or to external factors. The destiny subscale measures the degree to which respondents believe their lives are controlled by destiny. The luck subscale measures the degree to which respondents believe that life events are due primarily to luck.

As discussed above, according to Shaver (1985) it is not possible to justifiably attribute responsibility to someone for their actions (or their emotions) if those actions are determined by some force (whether interior or exterior to the actor). Therefore, it is hypothesized that persons who are more fate-oriented will be less likely to attribute responsibility to others for their emotions. Though it was anticipated that this scale would be related to participants’ responsibility attributions (i.e., that it will correlate with the ARES scale), it was hypothesized that the ARES would be a more powerful predictor of participants’ murder/manslaughter verdicts. Therefore this scale was used to determine both convergent and discriminant validity.

*Victim-Blaming/Society-Blaming scale.* This scale measures the degree to which persons attribute blame to a victim for some misdeed and how much they attribute blame

to society (see Appendix D for a copy of this scale). It includes 15 Likert-type items, with response options ranging from 1 to 5. All of the items in the scale refer to those individuals in society who are negatively affected by social problems. The scale consists of subscales covering four dimensions, victim-blaming, society-blaming, stable, and unstable. Victim-blaming items measure the degree to which respondents blame the victims for their circumstances and society-blaming items measure the degree to which respondents blame society for the victims' circumstances. Stable items use superlative wording and unstable items use more indefinite words, like "sometimes." For example one stable society-blaming item say "they suffer unintentionally because of actions/personalities of others," and an unstable victim-blaming item might say, "sometimes they don't try hard enough." Mulford, Lee, & Sapp (1996) reported Cronbach's coefficient alpha for the stable and unstable dimensions of this scale to be Stable:  $\alpha=.66$ ; Unstable:  $\alpha=.74$ .

It is appropriate to include this scale because, according to Shaver (1985), the amount of responsibility attributed to a person can be diminished if there are extenuating circumstances to a situation. It was hypothesized that participants who tend to blame society for their own and others' misfortunes, that is, those who focus on the extenuating circumstances involved in a person's position, will be less likely to attribute responsibility to others for their actions (and ergo their emotions) as well. It is hypothesized that though this will be a significant predictor of the degree to which a person attributes responsibility to others for their emotions, and that it will therefore be correlated with ARES scores, it will not be as predictive of murder/manslaughter verdicts



as the ARES. Therefore it will be used to determine both convergent and discriminant validities.

*Trait Meta-Mood Scale.* This scale measures the degree to which a person can regulate his or her own emotions (see Appendix E for a copy of this scale). It consists of three subscales, attention, clarity, and repair. The attention subscale measures the degree to which respondents are consciously attentive to their emotions. The clarity subscale measures the degree to which respondents understand their own emotions. The repair subscale measures the degree to which respondents regulate their emotions. It includes 48 Likert-type items, with response options ranging from 1 to 5. Items on the scale include statements like, “I don’t usually care much about what I’m feeling,” and, “I think about my mood constantly.” Salovey, Mayer, Goldman, Turvey, & Palfai (1991, pg 129) reported Cronbach’s coefficient alpha for the three dimensions of this scale to be Attention:  $\alpha=.86$ ; Clarity:  $\alpha=.87$ ; Repair:  $\alpha=.82$ .

It was hypothesized that persons who are successful at regulating their own emotions will likewise assume that others are capable of such regulation, resulting in a higher proclivity to attribute responsibility for emotions. Scores on this scale were hypothesized to be correlated with ARES scores, but again to not be as predictive of murder/manslaughter verdicts as the ARES. Therefore the Trait Meta-Mood Scale was used to determine both convergent and discriminant validity.

*Stimulus Vignette and Supporting Documents.* To help determine predictive validity and construct validity of the ARES, a fictional scenario depicting the events surrounding a criminal homicide case was provided to the participants (see Appendix F for a copy of this vignette). Participants were asked to read the vignette and, on a

separate page, to indicate whether they would convict the defendant of murder or manslaughter and how long they would sentence him to prison (see Appendix G for a copy of the vignette questionnaire).

Following the rationale of Spackman, Belcher, & Hansen (2002), the vignette was created to invoke a moderate likelihood of a murder conviction. Spackman et al's research suggests that if the defendant and the victim have a history of violence, if the intentionality of the defendant's feelings is low, and if the intentionality of his actions is low then the likelihood that he will be convicted of murder is moderate (for a more detailed description of this rationale see Spackman, Belcher, & Hansen, 2002, pp. 91-95). Therefore, the vignette was created to fit these specifications. It was decided that a moderate likelihood to convict of murder would be appropriate for this research because those participants who show a high proclivity to attribute responsibility to others for their emotions (that is, those who score highly on the ARES) would be more likely to convict of murder in this case than would those participants who show a low proclivity. It was hypothesized that participants' ARES scores would be more predictive of their murder/manslaughter verdicts and sentence durations than would scores on any of the other instruments included in the packet. Therefore, responses to the stimulus vignette questionnaire were used to determine both predictive and construct validity.

As an additional test of construct validity, an item regarding participants' perception of how responsible the defendant was for his emotions was also included as part of the vignette questionnaire. As a test of discriminant validity, an item regarding participants' perception of how responsible the defendant was for his actions was also included as part of the vignette questionnaire.

To help participants understand in what conditions it might be appropriate to convict of murder (or manslaughter), prior to reading the stimulus vignette, participants read a copy of the actual jury instructions regarding the difference between murder and manslaughter (see Appendix H).

### *Scoring the ARES*

The decision to reverse score some items in the ARES was based primarily upon two criteria. The first was theoretical. If it was anticipated that a particular item should be negatively correlated with a person's proclivity to attribute responsibility for emotions, the item was flagged as likely needing reverse scoring. The second criterion was statistically based. Item-total correlations were calculated for each item in the ARES. Items with negative correlations were also flagged as likely needing reverse scoring. To fully warrant reverse scoring, both of these criteria had to be met.

## Results

### *Theme Generation Focus Groups*

Notes from the two focus groups were compiled and compared. Opinions echoed multiple times as well as topics that received the greatest amount of time and interest from participants were deemed to be the most relevant to the current study. From these comments, eight themes were generated. The themes, and very brief descriptions of each, are as follows:

- Self-control: Participants suggested that the degree to which they thought people should be in control of themselves and their actions would affect their responsibility attributions.

- Age/maturity: Participants suggested that other people's age or maturity level would affect the degree to which the participants held the others responsible for their emotions.
- Expectedness: Participants suggested that the degree to which emotion-inducing stimuli are expected by the emoter would affect the degree to which they would hold the emoter responsible.
- Initial reaction vs. over time: Participants suggested that they would tend to hold persons less responsible for their emotions initially, but also suggested that if the persons were to continue being overly emotional after what might be considered an appropriate amount of time, the participants would hold them more responsible for their emotions.
- Negligence (preconceived expectations): Participants suggested that if other persons fail to meet expectations in certain social situations they would be held more responsible for their emotions in those situations.
- Misinterpretation of situation: Participants suggested that they would be less likely to hold persons responsible for their emotions if they expressed those emotions as the result of a misinterpretation of a particular social situation.
- Intensity: Participants suggested that they would hold others more responsible for their emotions the more intense those emotions are.

Based on these themes, as well as the research cited in the introduction above, 24 preliminary items were created. This 24-item ARES scale was used in this pilot study. The themes, the topics taken from the research literature, and the items created based upon them can be seen in Appendix M.

#### *Scoring*

Items that warranted reverse scoring on both a theoretical and a statistical basis were reverse scored. In total, seven of the original 24 items (item numbers 7, 14, 15, 19, 20, 23, 24) met both criteria to be reverse scored. That is, they could be both theoretically expected to correlate negatively with a person's proclivity to attribute responsibility to another for his or her emotions and have a negative item-total correlation. Those items that met only one of these criteria or the other were considered theoretically weak items and were considered for removal from inclusion in the scale.

#### *Internal Structure Analyses*

Exploratory factor analysis and hierarchical cluster analysis were both used to help determine the internal structure of the ARES. Promax rotation was used on the factor analysis because it was assumed that factors would be oblique. Results from these analyses, along with observations of item-total correlations, suggested that three of the 24 items (item numbers 5, 10, and 18) be removed from the preliminary version of the ARES. Upon removing these items, the cluster analysis suggested that the remaining items clustered primarily into three groups (see Table 1). The exploratory factor analysis performed on the same items, however, suggested that seven factors had an Eigenvalue greater than one (see Figure 1 for a scree plot). Because of this discrepancy, and to help determine which, if either, of these analyses best represents the internal structure of the ARES, the scale will be subjected to additional analyses in study two.

#### *Reliability*

Inter-item consistency reliability was calculated before and after dropping the poorly performing items from the ARES. This preliminary test of reliability was performed by calculating Cronbach's coefficient alpha. According to Nunnally (1978) a

sufficient inter-item alpha coefficient is .60. Therefore, reliability levels on the ARES were compared to this standard. Reliability for the ARES was improved by dropping three items from the original 24-item scale. However, at this juncture inter-item reliabilities were quite low and difficult to interpret. Cronbach's alpha for the 21-item ARES scale before reversing the reverse-scored items was  $r = .721$ . After reverse-scoring it was  $r = -.057$ . Potential reasons for these peculiar scores are discussed below.

### *Tests of Validity*

*Construct validity.* A linear regression was employed to determine whether the ARES actually measures a person's proclivity to attribute responsibility to others for their emotions. Scores on the ARES were compared to the results on the item from the stimulus vignette questionnaire (see Appendix G) regarding whether the participant considered the defendant to be responsible for his emotions. Results<sup>2</sup> suggest that the ARES is more predictive of responsibility for emotions than it is of responsibility for actions in general. Results show that the ARES approached being significantly predictive of how responsible participants felt the defendant was for his emotions ( $B = -.295$ ;  $p = .061$ ). Total ARES scores were not significantly predictive of the degree to which participants held the defendant responsible for his actions ( $B = .113$ ;  $p = .483$ ).

*Predictive validity.* Results from a linear regression analysis, with total ARES scores included as the sole predictor variable, suggest that the ARES is a significant predictor of sentence duration ( $B = .467$ ;  $p = .002$ ). Additionally, results from a hierarchical linear regression with total scores from each of the other four scales included in the first block and total ARES scores included in the second block showed that the predictive power of the ARES for sentence duration was significant above and beyond

<sup>2</sup> Results of all the linear regression analyses in these studies report standardized beta coefficients.

that of the other scales combined. The R square for the first block was .352. The R square for the second block was .591, resulting in an R square change of .225 (significant at  $p = .006$ ).

Results from a logistic regression analysis, with total ARES score as the sole predictor variable suggest that the ARES is not a significant predictor of verdict ( $B = .043$ ,  $p = .627$ ). Similarly, results from a hierarchical logistic regression did not suggest that the ARES was any more predictive of verdict than were all of the other scales. Chi square for the first block, including all the scales except the ARES, was 4.841 and for the second block, also including the ARES, it was 5.762, resulting in a non-significant change in chi square of .921 ( $p = .337$ ).

### Discussion

The purpose of the current study was to get a general idea of whether the ARES might be a useful tool in measuring a person's proclivity to attribute responsibility to others for their emotions. More specifically, the researchers hoped to determine which items in the ARES seemed to perform well, and which did not. It should be noted that the results in this study were only very preliminary and that no hard conclusions should be made about the reliability, validity, or practical applicability of the scale.

In general, the ARES seemed to perform as hypothesized. Although tests of criterion validity suggested that the ARES was not quite a statistically significant predictor of whether participants held the defendant responsible for his emotions, the tests did suggest that the ARES was much more predictive of the responsibility for emotion factor than it was for the responsibility for the actions factor, suggesting that the

ARES does in fact discriminate between emotions and actions. This lends hope that the ARES might in fact be measuring the construct of responsibility for emotions.

The ARES showed good predictive validity on the sentence variable. However, it was not successful at predicting participants' verdict choices. This lack of predictive power might be due more to the vignette than to the ARES itself. Of the 41 participants who provided a verdict, 30 voted for a murder conviction. Logistic regression is sensitive to imbalances in the criterion variable. Given these numbers, a prediction that a participant would vote for murder would be correct 73.17% of the time. It is much more difficult to improve on this percent than it would be to improve on 50% (the likelihood of correctly predicting murder had the verdicts been distributed equally).

This leads to the question of whether the vignette should be adapted to be less murder biased in Study 2. However, the reason this particular version of the vignette was chosen in the first place was that previous research conducted on a similar population at BYU (Spackman, Belcher, and Hansen, 2002) suggested that it would result in approximately half murder convictions and half manslaughter convictions. Because the use of this particular vignette was based on this rationale, it did not make sense theoretically to adapt it. It is hoped that a larger sample size in Study 2 will help to balance out this discrepancy, thus improving the results on the logistic regression.

In addition to the issues of validity, the issue of reliability is also central to the development of this scale. At present, the inter-item reliability of the ARES is quite low. There are a number of possible explanations for this. First, it is possible that the ARES is simply not a reliable measure. In its present form, the data certainly seem to suggest this. However, other concerns should be addressed before settling on this conclusion.



For example, Cronbach's alpha scores are typically low on multidimensional scales (Cronbach, 1970). Although they contradicted in the exact number of dimensions, both factor and cluster analyses suggested that the ARES likely consists of multiple dimensions. If the factor analysis is correct and there actually are seven dimensions, this might explain the low reliability levels. If the cluster analysis is more accurate, and there are three primary clusters, it is perhaps less likely that the low reliability is due to multidimensionality because there simply are not very many dimensions.

Regardless of which is correct, results from these internal structure analyses should be interpreted very cautiously if not skeptically. Research suggests that exploratory factor analysis, and likely other similar analyses, requires a very high level of reliability to ensure that error in the data is not being interpreted as actual structure (see Lauritzen, et al, 2007 for a discussion of the relationship between reliability and factor structure). This paradox, that low reliability scores might be due to multidimensional internal structure but that internal structure analyses can only be trusted if reliability scores are high, makes this explanation for having such a low reliability score undependable.

A more likely explanation for the low reliability score is that Cronbach's alpha is only appropriately utilized on data that are normally distributed (Cronbach, 1970). Participants' total summed scores on the ARES were decidedly skewed in a negative direction (see Figure 2). Because the distribution of these scores is not normal, it is not surprising that the inter-item reliability would appear to be so low. It is hoped that a larger sample size or the possibility of removing additional items from the ARES in Study 2 will result in more normally distributed data. If the data do not normalize in the

forthcoming study, it might be more appropriate to report standard error of the measurement rather than Cronbach's alpha as a measure of inter-item reliability (see Brown, 1999) for rationale of utilizing standard error of the measurement as a measure of reliability).

Given these considerations, it seems appropriate that the 21-item reverse-scored version of the ARES be used in Study 2. However, it should be noted that further analyses might suggest reducing this number of items even further to help improve reliability and predictive validity scores.

## Study 2—Validating the ARES

### Method

#### *Participants*

Participants in this study included 306 students (108 male, 189 female, and 9 who did not indicate gender) from Brigham Young University. Participants were recruited from undergraduate psychology classes via email or an in-class announcement. The study was also advertised on the psychology department's website using the department's online research recruitment software, called SONA. Ages of the participants ranged from 18 to 52 years of age (median = 20). 82.4 percent of the participants reported their ethnicity as White/European American with nine participants not indicating their ethnicity. Of the original 306 participants, 144 volunteered to participate in a brief follow-up study.

#### *Materials*

The same battery of questionnaires was used in this study as was used in Study 1. This battery included the Right-Wing Authoritarianism scale, Trait Meta-Mood Scale,

Victim-Blaming/Society-Blaming scale, Beliefs in Fate scale, a stimulus vignette depicting a criminal homicide, a questionnaire accompanying the stimulus vignette, and the revised, 21-item Attributions of Responsibility for Emotions Scale (ARES). The only difference between this battery and the one used in Study 1 was that the 21-item version of the ARES (see Appendix A2) was used in lieu of the original 24-item scale (see Appendix A1). All of these materials were loaded electronically onto an online survey hosting site called Qualtrics.

### *Procedure*

The primary purpose of the current study was to determine whether this new, 21-item version of the ARES was reliable and valid. In addition, individual items were tested to determine whether they should still be included in the final version of the ARES. A very similar procedure was followed for this study as was used in the scale validation section of Study 1. The only difference in this study was that participants were given the opportunity to provide their email addresses if they were willing to participate in a brief follow-up study.

Two weeks after the main study was closed, the 207 participants who provided their email addresses were sent an email including a link to the IP address for the follow-up study. Also included in the email was the participant's research identification number. Instead of providing their names in the follow-up study, participants were asked to enter their unique participant ID, as found in their email notification. This number was randomly generated and used to anonymously pair participants' scores from the main study with their scores from the follow-up study. The comparison of these scores was used to measure the test-retest reliability of the ARES.

*Internal Structure.* One difficulty faced in Study 1 in determining internal factor structure of the ARES was that error was likely being interpreted as structure (Lauritzen, et al., 2007), inaccurately suggesting that the scale contained more dimensions than it actually does. One way shown to alleviate this problem is to use data averaged over multiple iterations of persons completing the same scale (Bubb, Brown, & Pedersen, 2007). Although the research suggests that the actual factor structure of the latent variables in a data set can most clearly be reproduced after averaging over four iterations, even using data averaged once reduces the error significantly. Therefore, an exploratory factor analysis was performed after scores from the main study and the follow-up study were averaged. Promax rotation was used because it was not hypothesized that the factors be orthogonal. It should be noted that results from a cluster analysis are not reported in this study because they did not converge with results from the factor analysis and research suggests that cluster analysis is more sensitive to low individual item reliability levels than is factor analysis (Shatzer, Bubb, Lauritzen, & Brown, 2008). For this reason, only the results from the factor analysis are reported.

## Results

### *Item Reduction*

Because of the weaknesses in predictive validity and inter-item reliability in Study 1, analyses were performed to determine whether more items from the scale should be removed or reverse scored. The results discussed in all of the sections below were calculated on a version of the ARES that included only 10 items, none of which were reverse scored (see Appendix A3 for this version of the ARES). It was determined that this 10-item version of the ARES was composed of the best possible combination of the

initial 21 items. This final set of items was determined by comparing reliability scores, validity scores, and results from factor analyses. A sample of comparisons between five of the possible combinations of items tested is included in Table 2.

#### *Internal Structure Analyses*

An exploratory factor analysis with Promax rotation on the averaged data from the 144 participants who completed the ARES twice suggested that all items on the ARES load onto two factors, explaining 54.46% of the total variance (see Figure 3 for a scree plot). Items loading highly on factor number one each focus generally on self control and include numbers 1, 3, 4, 7, and 10. Those that load highly on factor two centered on situational factors and include numbers 5 and 8 (see Table 3 for factor loadings).

#### *Tests of Reliability*

*Inter-item Reliability.* Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used to determine the inter-item reliability of the scale. The coefficient for internal item consistency on the ten-item ARES scale was adequately high ( $\alpha = .762$ ).

*Test-Retest Reliability.* Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to compare initial ARES scores with the 2-week follow-up scores to determine test-retest reliability. This reliability was also moderately high ( $r = .685$ ).

#### *Tests of Validity*

*Construct Validity.* Results suggest that the ARES does, in fact, measure a person's proclivity to attribute responsibility to others for their emotions. Results from a linear regression show that the ARES was significantly predictive of how responsible participants felt the defendant was for his emotions ( $\beta = .148$ ;  $p = .020$ ), suggesting that

as total ARES scores increase, so does the degree to which participants hold the defendant responsible for his emotions. It should also be noted that scores on the ARES were not significantly predictive of the degree to which participants held the defendant responsible for his actions ( $\beta = .070$ ;  $p = .273$ ). This suggests that the ARES is in fact measuring persons' proclivity to attribute responsibility for emotions themselves and not for actions in general.

*Predictive Validity.* The ARES was predictive of sentence duration and verdict. The standardized beta coefficient for a linear regression with total ARES score as the sole predictor variable and sentence duration as the criterion variable was significant ( $\beta = .134$ ;  $p = .035$ ), suggesting a positive relationship between holding the defendant responsible for his emotion and sentence duration. Results from logistic regression with total ARES score as the sole predictor variable and murder/manslaughter verdict as the criterion were also significant ( $\beta = -.055$ ;  $p = .048$ ), suggesting that the more participants hold the defendant responsible for his emotions, the more likely they are to convict him of murder.

A hierarchical linear regression with total scores from each of the other four scales included in the first block and total ARES scores included in the second block showed that the predictive power of the ARES for sentence duration was significant above and beyond that of the other scales combined. The R square for the first block was .020. The R square for the second block was .045, resulting in an R square change of .025 (significant at  $p = .029$ ).

A hierarchical logistic regression with total scores from each of the other four scales included in the first block and total ARES scores included in the second block

showed that the predictive power of the ARES for murder/manslaughter verdict was significant above and beyond that of the other scales combined. Chi square for the first model was 6.106 and for the second it was 13.507, resulting in a significant change in chi square of 7.401 ( $p = .007$ ).

*Convergent/Discriminant Validities.* In addition to calculating construct and predictive validity, convergent and discriminant validities were also calculated. It was hypothesized that the ARES would measure constructs similar to those of the other scales. Pearson correlation coefficients between total ARES scores and total scores from each of the other scales and each of their major subscales are depicted in Table 4. As can be seen in this table, the ARES had significant convergent validity with the Right-Wing Authoritarianism Scale, the attention and clarity subscales from the Trait Meta-Mood Scale, and the victim-blaming subscale of the Victim-Blaming Society-Blaming Scale. These results suggest that each of these scales or subscales measure constructs similar to attributions of responsibility for emotions. It should also be noted that there was a trend for significance on the society-blaming subscale.

Although these constructs are significantly correlated, the ARES was still more predictive of the degree to which participants held the defendant responsible for his emotions than was any of the other constructs. Standardized Beta coefficients and significance levels for each of the subscales are as follows: Authoritarianism scale ( $B = -.033$ ,  $p = .609$ ); Attention subscale ( $B = .061$ ,  $p = .342$ ); Clarity subscale ( $B = -.108$ ,  $p = .098$ ); Victim-blaming subscale ( $B = .062$ ,  $p = .331$ ); Society-blaming subscale ( $B = -.112$ ,  $p = .075$ ).

*Demographics.* In addition to analyses of internal structure, reliability, and validity, demographic data were also subjected to analysis. Gender, ethnicity, and age were each entered as predictors of each of the criterion variables. Gender was also tested for as a moderating variable in the regression analyses. None of these analyses produced statistically significant results.

## Discussion

The primary purpose of the current study was to determine whether the ARES is a reliable and valid measure of a person's proclivity to attribute responsibility to others for their emotions. In addition, analyses were performed to help understand the internal structure of the ARES as well as to help determine its practical applicability. In general, it appears as though the ARES is in fact a reliable, valid, and practically useful measure.

### *Internal Structure*

Although the ARES is designed to measure a person's proclivity to attribute responsibility to others for their emotions, results from the exploratory factor analysis suggest that the ARES has two primary sub-issues associated with responsibility attributions for emotions. Items loading heavily on the first factor (see Table 3) all deal with the issue of controlling emotions or emotional reactions. Items loading heavily on the second factor deal with situational factors. Because the ARES was not designed specifically to measure either of these two dimensions, no subscale scores will be calculated. However, understanding the nature of these two dimensions is helpful in determining what issues seem to be most relevant to whether a person will hold another person responsible for his or her emotions.

### *Validity*



The 10-item version of the ARES proved to be sufficiently valid in all areas. It was not only significantly predictive of sentence and verdict, but it was more predictive of these variables than were any of the other scales or subscales. Therefore, it showed high predictive validity. It should be noted, however, that the concerns brought up in Study 1 surrounding the skew in verdicts toward murder were not alleviated in Study 2. Of the 258 participants who provided a verdict, 176 of them (68.1%) voted for murder. Perhaps the regression coefficient and p-value were not higher for the verdict variable because it is more difficult to reject the null hypothesis in logistic regression when there is an imbalance in the criterion variable. In order to be more certain that the ARES is indeed predictive of murder/manslaughter distinctions, further research should be conducted in which the criterion variable is more equally balanced.

In addition to the sentence and verdict variables, the ARES was also a significant predictor of the degree to which participants held the defendant responsible for his emotions. It was not, however, a significant predictor of how responsible participants held the defendant for his actions in general. This suggests that the ARES is in fact measuring responsibility attributions for emotion and not for actions in general—thus displaying high construct validity. In addition, the ARES was more predictive of the responsibility for emotion variable than were all of the other scales combined, suggesting that the ARES has high discriminant validity. Finally, the ARES was only moderately correlated with some of the other scales and subscales used in the analyses. This suggests that it had only a moderate degree of convergent validity. However, this is likely not entirely problematic because only very few scales in publication measure constructs

similar to responsibility for emotion. Therefore, it should not be alarming that convergent validity was only moderate.

### *Reliability*

Inter-item reliability raised considerably in Study 2 from Study 1. This is likely due to the fact that, as stated in Study 1, Cronbach's alpha is only appropriately employed on normally distributed data. Total scores on the more preliminary versions of the ARES were not normally distributed. However, scores on the 10-item version tended to be distributed much more normally (see Figure 4). The shape of the distribution of total ARES scores on this version is likely the primary reason for the drastic improvement in inter-item reliability. Test-retest reliability also proved to be sufficiently high.

### *Limitations*

A few caveats not evident from the results described above should be noted in implementing and interpreting ARES scores. First, a post-hoc power analysis on the regression of the sentence variable suggested that the power of the ARES was quite low (.51). This suggests that the likelihood of obtaining the same result under the same conditions in a future study is not high. Perhaps this is one reason that the test-retest reliability was not as high as the inter-item reliability.

Second, as was evidenced in the hierarchical regression on the sentence variable, the effect sizes were quite low in this study, generally explaining between 1.5% and 3% of the variability. Even with such an abstract construct as responsibility for emotions, effect sizes should ideally be higher. These low effect sizes are likely the cause of the low power.

Finally, another concern not addressed in the results above is that the ARES is predictive of all the appropriate variables when only females are included in the analysis, but not when males are included alone. However, tests of gender as a moderating variable come out non-significant. This is a peculiar finding for which the researcher has no good explanation. Perhaps future research should investigate further the possibility of a gender effect in measuring attributions of responsibility for emotions.

#### *Implications and Future Research*

Results suggest that, overall, the ARES is an appropriate measure of a person's proclivity to attribute responsibility to others for their emotions. Therefore, the courtroom is a potentially important outlet for the use of the ARES. However, at present the ARES has only been tested on aggregate data. Before being used as a tool for jury deselection, research should be conducted to determine the efficacy of the ARES on individual participants.

Also, attributions of responsibility for emotions are not only made in the courtroom. To be certain that the ARES is a useful measure of this construct in situations outside the courtroom, other scenarios in which such attributions are commonly made, including romantic relationships, parenting techniques, and others, should also be studied.

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## Appendix A1

## Attributions of Responsibility for Emotions Scale (24-item Version)

**Instructions**

The following statements refer to *emotions in general* and not to any single emotion in particular (that is, not only to happiness or sadness but also to jealousy, love, hate, and so on). The statements also refer to *people in general* and not to any single individual. Rate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each statement by selecting the appropriate value from the scale below. If you are unsure how to respond to a particular item, just give your best estimate.

**1**—Strongly Disagree

**2**—Disagree

**3**—Somewhat Disagree

**4**—Somewhat Agree

**5**—Agree

**6**—Strongly Agree

1. In general, people are pretty good at controlling their emotions.

**1      2      3      4      5      6**

2. Sometimes, people do or say things that make others experience emotions.

**1      2      3      4      5      6**

3. Children should not be held responsible for their emotions.

**1      2      3      4      5      6**

4. People should not allow their emotions to get too carried away.

**1      2      3      4      5      6**

5. More intelligent people experience fewer emotions.

**1      2      3      4      5      6**

6. Sometimes, the roles people take on in their lives (for example, parent, police officer, doctor, etc.) may affect the sorts of emotions they experience.

**1      2      3      4      5      6**

7. Usually people experience emotions because of things that happen to them and not because of something they do.

**1      2      3      4      5      6**

8. As people get older they should be held more accountable for their emotions.

**1      2      3      4      5      6**

9. People should avoid situations in which they might become too emotional.

**1      2      3      4      5      6**

10. There are times when emotions should not be experienced in the workplace.

**1      2      3      4      5      6**

11. People shouldn't allow themselves to get carried away by their emotional reactions.

**1      2      3      4      5      6**

12. There are certain situations in which particular emotions are not appropriate.

**1      2      3      4      5      6**

13. People experience emotions because of something they think or do.

**1      2      3      4      5      6**

14. Emotions can sometimes overwhelm people at first but then fade over time.

**1      2      3      4      5      6**

15. There are certain situations in which people should experience emotions.

**1      2      3      4      5      6**

16. It is important for people to control their emotions.

**1      2      3      4      5      6**

17. Sometimes, people allow themselves to be in situations that may result in strong emotions.

**1      2      3      4      5      6**

18. Some people just experience more emotions than other people.

**1      2      3      4      5      6**

19. Children should be taught to be more open with their emotions.

**1      2      3      4      5      6**

20. Most people have a difficult time controlling their emotions.

**1      2      3      4      5      6**

21. Even when people misinterpret a situation they should still be held responsible for their emotions in that situation.

**1      2      3      4      5      6**

22. Even in the ups and downs of life, it is important for people to not get too emotional.

**1      2      3      4      5      6**

23. Some people just can't seem to control their emotions.

**1      2      3      4      5      6**

24. Sometimes, unexpected situations bring out emotions in people.

**1      2      3      4      5      6**

### Scoring the ARES

Reverse score the following items (i.e., 1=6, 2=5, 3=4, etc.):

- 7 \_\_\_\_\_
- 14 \_\_\_\_\_
- 15 \_\_\_\_\_
- 19 \_\_\_\_\_
- 20 \_\_\_\_\_
- 23 \_\_\_\_\_
- 24 \_\_\_\_\_

Sum the reversed scores \_\_\_\_\_

Write the scores of each of the following non-reversed items:

- 1 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 \_\_\_\_\_
- 5 \_\_\_\_\_
- 6 \_\_\_\_\_
- 8 \_\_\_\_\_
- 9 \_\_\_\_\_
- 10 \_\_\_\_\_
- 11 \_\_\_\_\_
- 12 \_\_\_\_\_
- 13 \_\_\_\_\_
- 16 \_\_\_\_\_
- 17 \_\_\_\_\_
- 18 \_\_\_\_\_
- 21 \_\_\_\_\_
- 22 \_\_\_\_\_

Sum the non-reversed scores \_\_\_\_\_

Add the sums of the reversed and non-reversed items together \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix A2

## Intermediate 21-item ARES

**Instructions**

The following statements refer to *emotions in general* and not to any single emotion in particular (that is, not only to happiness or sadness but also to jealousy, love, hate, and so on). The statements also refer to *people in general* and not to any single individual. Rate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each statement by selecting the appropriate value from the scale below. If you are unsure how to respond to a particular item, just give your best estimate.

- 1—Strongly Disagree  
 2—Disagree  
 3—Somewhat Disagree  
 4—Somewhat Agree  
 5—Agree  
 6—Strongly Agree

1. In general, people are pretty good at controlling their emotions.

1      2      3      4      5      6

2. Sometimes, people do or say things that make others experience emotions.

1      2      3      4      5      6

3. Children should not be held responsible for their emotions.

1      2      3      4      5      6

4. People should not allow their emotions to get too carried away.

1      2      3      4      5      6

5. Sometimes, the roles people take on in their lives (for example, parent, police officer, doctor, etc.) may affect the sorts of emotions they experience.

1      2      3      4      5      6

6. Usually people experience emotions because of things that happen to them and not because of something they do.

1      2      3      4      5      6

7. As people get older they should be held more accountable for their emotions.

1      2      3      4      5      6

8. People should avoid situations in which they might become too emotional.

1      2      3      4      5      6

9. People shouldn't allow themselves to get carried away by their emotional reactions.

**1      2      3      4      5      6**

10. There are certain situations in which particular emotions are not appropriate.

**1      2      3      4      5      6**

11. People experience emotions because of something they think or do.

**1      2      3      4      5      6**

12. Emotions can sometimes overwhelm people at first but then fade over time.

**1      2      3      4      5      6**

13. There are certain situations in which people should experience emotions.

**1      2      3      4      5      6**

14. It is important for people to control their emotions.

**1      2      3      4      5      6**

15. Sometimes, people allow themselves to be in situations that may result in strong emotions.

**1      2      3      4      5      6**

16. Children should be taught to be more open with their emotions.

**1      2      3      4      5      6**

17. Most people have a difficult time controlling their emotions.

**1      2      3      4      5      6**

18. Even when people misinterpret a situation they should still be held responsible for their emotions in that situation.

**1      2      3      4      5      6**

19. Even in the ups and downs of life, it is important for people to not get too emotional.

**1      2      3      4      5      6**

20. Some people just can't seem to control their emotions.

**1      2      3      4      5      6**

21. Sometimes, unexpected situations bring out emotions in people.

**1      2      3      4      5      6**

Scoring the ARES

Reverse score the following items (i.e., 1=6, 2=5, 3=4, etc.):

6 \_\_\_\_\_

12 \_\_\_\_\_

13 \_\_\_\_\_  
 16 \_\_\_\_\_  
 17 \_\_\_\_\_  
 20 \_\_\_\_\_  
 21 \_\_\_\_\_

Sum the reversed scores \_\_\_\_\_

Write the scores of each of the following non-reversed items:

1 \_\_\_\_\_  
 2 \_\_\_\_\_  
 3 \_\_\_\_\_  
 4 \_\_\_\_\_  
 5 \_\_\_\_\_  
 7 \_\_\_\_\_  
 8 \_\_\_\_\_  
 9 \_\_\_\_\_  
 10 \_\_\_\_\_  
 11 \_\_\_\_\_  
 14 \_\_\_\_\_  
 15 \_\_\_\_\_  
 18 \_\_\_\_\_  
 19 \_\_\_\_\_

Sum the non-reversed scores \_\_\_\_\_

Add the sums of the reversed and non-reversed items together \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix A3

## Final 10-item ARES

**Instructions**

The following statements refer to *emotions in general* and not to any single emotion in particular (that is, not only to happiness or sadness but also to jealousy, love, hate, and so on). The statements also refer to *people in general* and not to any single individual. Rate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each statement by selecting the appropriate value from the scale below. If you are unsure how to respond to a particular item, just give your best estimate.

- 1—Strongly Disagree  
 2—Disagree  
 3—Somewhat Disagree  
 4—Somewhat Agree  
 5—Agree  
 6—Strongly Agree

1. People should not allow their emotions to get too carried away.

1      2      3      4      5      6

2. As people get older they should be held more accountable for their emotions.

1      2      3      4      5      6

3. People should avoid situations in which they might become too emotional.

1      2      3      4      5      6

4. People shouldn't allow themselves to get carried away by their emotional reactions.

1      2      3      4      5      6

5. There are certain situations in which particular emotions are not appropriate.

1      2      3      4      5      6

6. People experience emotions because of something they think or do.

1      2      3      4      5      6

7. It is important for people to control their emotions.

1      2      3      4      5      6

8. Sometimes, people allow themselves to be in situations that may result in strong emotions.

1      2      3      4      5      6

9. Even when people misinterpret a situation they should still be held responsible for their emotions in that situation.

1      2      3      4      5      6

10. Even in the ups and downs of life, it is important for people to not get too emotional.

1      2      3      4      5      6

Scoring the ARES

Write your score for each of the scale items:

1 \_\_\_\_\_  
 2 \_\_\_\_\_  
 3 \_\_\_\_\_  
 4 \_\_\_\_\_  
 5 \_\_\_\_\_  
 6 \_\_\_\_\_  
 7 \_\_\_\_\_  
 8 \_\_\_\_\_  
 9 \_\_\_\_\_  
 10 \_\_\_\_\_

Sum all of your scores \_\_\_\_\_

Higher scores denote a higher proclivity to hold other people responsible for their emotions.





10. The “old-fashioned ways” and “old-fashioned values” still show the best way to live.  
-4   -3   -2   -1   0   +1   +2   +3   +4
11. You have to admire those who challenged the law and the majority’s view by protesting for abortion rights, for animal rights, or to abolish school prayer.  
-4   -3   -2   -1   0   +1   +2   +3   +4
12. What our country really needs is a strong, determined leader who will crush evil, and take us back to our true path.  
-4   -3   -2   -1   0   +1   +2   +3   +4
13. Some of the best people in our country are those who are challenging our government, criticizing religion, and ignoring the “normal way things are supposed to be done.”  
-4   -3   -2   -1   0   +1   +2   +3   +4
14. God’s laws about abortion, pornography, and marriage must be strictly followed before it is too late, and those who break them must be strongly punished.  
-4   -3   -2   -1   0   +1   +2   +3   +4
15. There are many radical, immoral people in our country today, who are trying to ruin it for their godless purposes, who the authorities should put out of action.  
-4   -3   -2   -1   0   +1   +2   +3   +4
16. A “woman’s place” should be wherever she wants to be. The days when women are submissive to their husbands and social conventions belong strictly in the past.  
-4   -3   -2   -1   0   +1   +2   +3   +4
17. Our country will be great if we honor the ways of our forefathers, do what the authorities tell us to do, and get rid of the “rotten apples” who are ruining everything.  
-4   -3   -2   -1   0   +1   +2   +3   +4
18. There is no “ONE right way” to live life; everybody has to create their *own* way.  
-4   -3   -2   -1   0   +1   +2   +3   +4
19. Homosexuals and feminists should be praised for being brave enough to defy “traditional family values.”  
-4   -3   -2   -1   0   +1   +2   +3   +4
20. This country would work a lot better if certain groups of troublemakers would just shut up and accept their group’s traditional place in society.  
-4   -3   -2   -1   0   +1   +2   +3   +4
21. It would be best for everyone if the proper authorities censored magazines so that people could not get their hands on trashy and disgusting material.  
-4   -3   -2   -1   0   +1   +2   +3   +4

22. There is nothing wrong with premarital sexual intercourse.  
-4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4
23. People should pay less attention to the Bible and the other forms of religious guidance, and instead develop their own personal standards of what is moral and immoral.  
-4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4
24. What our country needs *most* is discipline, with everyone following our leaders in unity.  
-4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4
25. A lot of our rules regarding modesty and sexual behavior are just customs that are not necessarily any better or holier than those which other people follow.  
-4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4
26. The facts on crime, sexual immorality, and the recent public disorders all show we have to crack down harder on deviant groups and troublemakers if we are going to save our moral standards and preserve law and order.  
-4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4
27. It's better to have trashy magazines and radical pamphlets in our communities than to let the government have the power to censor them.  
-4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4
28. The situation in our country is getting so serious, the strongest methods would be justified if they eliminated the troublemakers and got us back on our true path.  
-4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4
29. It is wonderful that young people today have greater freedom to protest against things they don't like, and to make their own "rules" to govern their behavior.  
-4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4
30. Once the government leaders give us the "go-ahead," it will be the duty of every patriotic citizen to help stomp out the rot that is poisoning our country from within.  
-4 -3 -2 -1 0 +1 +2 +3 +4

## Appendix C

## Beliefs in Fate Scale

**Scale Items and Directions:** Read each statement and then circle the number that comes closest to how much you Disagree or Agree with the statement, according to the following scale:

**1 = strongly disagree**

**2 = moderately disagree**

**3 = slightly disagree**

**4 = neutral**

**5 = slightly agree**

**6 = moderately agree**

**7 = strongly agree**

1. If something is meant to happen, it will.

1      2      3      4      5      6      7

2. Things that happen in life are the result of choices made.

1      2      3      4      5      6      7

3. Careful drivers are just as likely to get hurt in traffic accidents as careless ones.

1      2      3      4      5      6      7

4. Things that happen in life are part of a greater plan.

1      2      3      4      5      6      7

5. Too many people refuse to take charge of their own lives.

1      2      3      4      5      6      7

6. Luck played a large part in where I am today.

1      2      3      4      5      6      7

7. Success in life depends mostly on being in the right place at the right time.

1      2      3      4      5      6      7

8. Nowadays a person has to live pretty much for today and let tomorrow take care of itself.

1      2      3      4      5      6      7

9. I can do just about anything I really set my mind to do.

1      2      3      4      5      6      7

10. What happens to me in the future mostly depends on me.

1      2      3      4      5      6      7

11. Whether you succeed in business is mostly a function of being in the right place at the right time.

1      2      3      4      5      6      7

12. Our future is largely the result of choices we make today.

1      2      3      4      5      6      7

13. I got where I am today because of my own talent and hard work.

1      2      3      4      5      6      7

14. "Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow you may die" is a good philosophy to live by.

1      2      3      4      5      6      7

15. I have little control over the things that happen to me.

1      2      3      4      5      6      7

16. Meeting the right romantic partner is really a question of fate.

1      2      3      4      5      6      7

17. I can do very little to change my destiny.

1      2      3      4      5      6      7

18. Everything happens for a reason.

1      2      3      4      5      6      7

19. Life is like playing the lottery.

1      2      3      4      5      6      7

20. I've always felt like the right person was out there waiting for me.

1      2      3      4      5      6      7

21. I feel like I was put here on earth for a reason.

1      2      3      4      5      6      7

22. There is little I can do to change my future.

1      2      3      4      5      6      7

23. When something bad happens, it is usually because something good is right around the corner.

1      2      3      4      5      6      7

24. I have a great deal of influence on what happens to me.

1      2      3      4      5      6      7

## Appendix D

## Victim-Blaming/Society-Blaming scale

**Scale Items and Directions:** For the subsequent statements, please use the following criteria when responding:

- 1 = strongly agree**
- 2 = somewhat agree**
- 3 = neutral**
- 4 = somewhat disagree**
- 5 = strongly disagree**

Before replying to the following statements, think for a moment about those individuals in society who are negatively affected by social problems. Keep this group of people in mind while responding to the statements.

1. They have poor personalities.  
1 2 3 4 5
2. Human services agencies are too slow to help them.  
1 2 3 4 5
3. Sometimes human service agencies interfere too much and make matters worse.  
1 2 3 4 5
4. Sometimes they are not diligent/don't persevere enough.  
1 2 3 4 5
5. They have loose morals.  
1 2 3 4 5
6. Sometimes they don't try hard enough.  
1 2 3 4 5
7. Some government programs hurt more than help.  
1 2 3 4 5
8. Turf battles between agencies make matters worse.  
1 2 3 4 5
9. They suffer unintentionally because of actions/personalities of others.  
1 2 3 4 5
10. They have inherited weaknesses.  
1 2 3 4 5
11. Sometimes social problems have strong influences/people cannot help themselves.  
1 2 3 4 5
12. Sometimes these people are just plain unlucky.  
1 2 3 4 5
13. Sometimes they are not motivated enough.  
1 2 3 4 5
14. They are being punished by God.  
1 2 3 4 5
15. Federal government doesn't help them enough.  
1 2 3 4 5

## Appendix E

## Trait Meta-Mood Scale

Please read each statement and decide whether or not you agree with it. Place a number in the blank line next to each statement using the following scale:

- 5 = strongly agree  
 4 = somewhat agree  
 3 = neither agree nor disagree  
 2 = somewhat disagree  
 1 = strongly disagree

- \_\_\_\_ 1. The variety of human feelings makes life more interesting.  
 \_\_\_\_ 2. I try to think good thoughts no matter how badly I feel.  
 \_\_\_\_ 3. I don't have much energy when I am happy.  
 \_\_\_\_ 4. People would be better off if they felt less and thought more.  
 \_\_\_\_ 5. I usually don't have much energy when I'm sad.  
 \_\_\_\_ 6. When I'm angry, I usually let myself feel that way.  
 \_\_\_\_ 7. I don't think it's worth paying attention to your emotions or moods.  
 \_\_\_\_ 8. I don't usually care much about what I'm feeling.  
 \_\_\_\_ 9. Sometimes I can't tell what my feelings are.  
 \_\_\_\_ 10. If I find myself getting mad, I try to calm myself down.  
 \_\_\_\_ 11. I have lots of energy when I feel sad.  
 \_\_\_\_ 12. I am rarely confused about how I feel.  
 \_\_\_\_ 13. I think about my mood constantly.  
 \_\_\_\_ 14. I don't let my feelings interfere with what I am thinking.  
 \_\_\_\_ 15. Feelings give direction to life.  
 \_\_\_\_ 16. Although I am sometimes sad, I have a mostly optimistic outlook.  
 \_\_\_\_ 17. When I am upset I realize that the "good things in life" are illusions.  
 \_\_\_\_ 18. I believe in acting from the heart.  
 \_\_\_\_ 19. I can never tell how I feel.  
 \_\_\_\_ 20. When I am happy I realize how foolish most of my worries are.  
 \_\_\_\_ 21. I believe it's healthy to feel whatever emotion you feel.  
 \_\_\_\_ 22. The best way for me to handle my feelings is to experience them to the fullest.  
 \_\_\_\_ 23. When I become upset I remind myself of all the pleasures in life.  
 \_\_\_\_ 24. My belief and opinions always seem to change depending on how I feel.  
 \_\_\_\_ 25. I usually have lots of energy when I'm happy.  
 \_\_\_\_ 26. I am often aware of my feelings on a matter.  
 \_\_\_\_ 27. When I'm depressed, I can't help but think of bad thoughts.  
 \_\_\_\_ 28. I am usually confused about how I feel.  
 \_\_\_\_ 29. One should never be guided by emotions.  
 \_\_\_\_ 30. If I'm in too good a mood, I remind myself of reality to bring myself down.  
 \_\_\_\_ 31. I never give into my emotions.  
 \_\_\_\_ 32. Although I am sometimes happy, I have a mostly pessimistic outlook.  
 \_\_\_\_ 33. I feel at ease about my emotions.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 34. It's important to block out some feelings in order to preserve your sanity.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 35. I pay a lot of attention to how I feel.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 36. When I'm in a good mood, I'm optimistic about the future.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 37. I can't make sense out of my feelings.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 38. I don't pay much attention to my feelings.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 39. Whenever I'm in a bad mood, I'm pessimistic about the future.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 40. I never worry about being in too good a mood.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 41. I often think about my feelings.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 42. I am usually very clear about my feelings.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 43. No matter how badly I feel, I try to think about pleasant things.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 44. Feelings are a weakness humans have.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 45. I usually know my feelings about a matter.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 46. It is usually a waste of time to think about your emotions.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 47. When I am happy I sometimes remind myself of everything that could go wrong.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 48. I almost always know exactly how I am feeling.



## Appendix F

### Stimulus Vignette

On February 28, 1998 a car swerved onto the sidewalk in Middletown, Indiana and the driver rolled out into the street. As the driver tried to stand up, the passenger aimed and shot him twice at short range, then jumped out of the car and ran away from the scene.

The dead man was identified as David Jones, a 25-year-old accountant. He owned the car. The police discovered that David had once lived with his married friends, Janet and Bill.

When police told Bill and Janet about David's murder, they were shocked. Neither had any idea who could have been responsible for such a violent act.

When the police spoke to David's mother, they learned that there was one man who had a motive for the murder---Janet's husband, Bill. Police further learned that it was not uncommon for Janet to periodically spend the evening with David at a local lounge.

The police again visited with Bill, this time privately. Upon questioning, Bill admitted to the murder of David. Bill explained to the officers that one evening, while tucking his daughter into bed, she offered to tell Daddy a secret. She confided that Mommy and David had spent the afternoon in the apartment "napping" in the same bed. Bill was shattered by this information. He confronted his wife with the information, but she adamantly denied the truthfulness of the allegation. When Bill asked David to leave their residence, Janet left with him.

Bill was still in love with his wife, Janet. He sent Janet gifts, but she continually refused to return to their home.

Although their relationship was certainly strained and they did not get along with one another as they once did, while all this was happening, Bill and David remained in contact. One afternoon, when Bill's car was being serviced, David offered Bill a ride home. Conversation during the drive prompted Bill to speak of concerns about his failing marriage, expecting some sympathy from David. Bill asked David whether he and Janet were still involved sexually. David looked at Bill in astonishment and replied: "Of course! I have sexual relations with your wife all the time."

This information was too much for Bill. The idea of his wife being intimate with another man caused feelings of jealousy to rush over him. He told the police that "...something just snapped..." inside of him. Without even thinking about it, he pulled out the pistol he had always carried, shooting and killing David.

In interviewing family and friends police discovered that Bill and David had a history of frequent and intense arguments. During these heated events, those close to them expressed concern over the level of safety for both Bill and David, but especially David.

In the closing argument for the Defendant, the defense attorney made clear that the accused admitted killing David. However, the defense attorney claimed that Bill's jealousy qualifies as an Extreme Emotional Disturbance and therefore must be considered as a factor which legally allows the charge to be reduced from murder to manslaughter. The prosecution, obviously, disagreed.

## Appendix G

### Vignette questionnaire

1. How responsible would you say the defendant was for his **emotions**?

1. Not at all responsible
2. Somewhat not responsible
3. Somewhat responsible
4. Entirely responsible

2. How responsible would you say the defendant was for his **actions**?

1. Not at all responsible
2. Somewhat not responsible
3. Somewhat responsible
4. Entirely responsible

3. Would you convict the defendant of murder or manslaughter? (select one)

1. Murder
2. Manslaughter

4. Why would you suggest that conviction?

5. For how long would you sentence the defendant to prison?

- \_\_\_\_\_ 5 years or less
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6 to 10 years
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11 to 15 years
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16 to 20 years
- \_\_\_\_\_ More than 20 years

6. Why would you suggest a sentence of this duration?

## Appendix H

### Actual Federal Instructions on Murder/Manslaughter Distinction

#### **Murder**

Two essential elements are required to be proved in order to establish the offense of murder:

- 1) The act of killing a human being.
- 2) Doing the act unlawfully, and with malice aforethought.

Note that the first of these elements is not in dispute in this case. It has been established that the defendant did kill the victim.

#### *Malice Aforethought*

Malice is but another name for a certain state or condition of a person's mind or heart. Since no one can look into the heart or mind of another, the only means of determining whether or not malice existed at the time of a killing is by inference drawn from the surrounding facts and circumstances, as shown by the evidence in the case.

Malice, as the term is used here, does not necessarily imply any ill will, spite, or hatred towards the individual killed, but does imply an intent willfully to take the life of a human being.

“Malice aforethought” requires predetermination, which is a period of time to deliberate, or think a matter over, before acting. The necessary duration of that period cannot be arbitrarily fixed. The time required to form a deliberate plan or design varies as the minds and temperaments of human beings differ, and according to the surrounding circumstances in which they may be placed. Any interval of time between the forming of the specific intent to kill, and the execution of that intent, which is of sufficient duration for the accused to be fully conscious and mindful of what he intended willfully to set about to do, is sufficient to warrant a finding of predetermination.

In determining whether the victim was unlawfully killed with malice aforethought, the jury should consider all the facts and circumstances preceding, surrounding, and following the killing, as shown by the evidence in the case, which tend to shed light upon the condition of mind and heart of the killer, at the time of the deed.

#### *Manslaughter*

Manslaughter is the unlawful killing of a human being without malice. Voluntary manslaughter is the kind that occurs upon a sudden quarrel or heat of passion.

#### *Heat of Passion*

The heat of passion, which will reduce a murder to manslaughter, must be such passion as would be aroused naturally in the mind of the ordinary reasonable person under the same or similar circumstances, as shown by the evidence in the case.

Neither the passion of fear, in and of itself, nor the passion for revenge, in and of itself, nor the passion induced by and accompanying or following an intent to commit a felony, in and of itself, nor any combination of any one or more of all of these passions, in and of themselves, constitute the heat of passion which will reduce a murder to manslaughter. It is true that the emotions just mentioned may be involved in a heat of passion such as substitutes impulse and rashness for judgment; but it is also true that such emotions may exist in the mind of a person who acts deliberately, and from choice, following his own reasoning, however good or bad that reasoning may be.

The law does not permit a person to set up his own standard of conduct, or to justify or excuse himself, merely because his passions were aroused, unless the circumstances in which he was placed, and the facts with which he was confronted, were such as would have aroused the passion of the ordinary reasonable person, similarly situated. So, the test to be applied, in determining whether a killing was in the heat of passion which will reduce a murder to manslaughter, is whether or not, at the time of the killing, the reason of the accused was obscured or disturbed by passion to such an extent as would cause the ordinary reasonable person to act rashly and without deliberation and reflection, and from such passion, rather than from judgment.

## Appendix I1

### Consent form for focus groups

This focus group is being conducted by Michael Lauritzen, a BYU graduate student, as part of the requirements for his Master's thesis. You will be requested to participate in a group discussion regarding when and how people attribute responsibility to others. Though you will initially be requested to write down some personal experiences regarding emotions, these comments will not be read by anyone else. Nor will you ever be asked to share them with others. It is anticipated that this focus group will last no longer one hour.

There are minimal risks for participation in this study. However, you might feel slight discomfort when thinking and/or about your emotions. There are no direct benefits to your participation in this research, although some psychology professors might offer extra credit for courses in which you are currently enrolled.

Involvement in this research is completely voluntary and you may withdraw at any time without penalty or refuse to participate entirely. Although the meeting will be audio recorded, your name will never be associated with any of your comments at any time. After the research is completed, all notes and audio recordings will be destroyed. By signing below, you consent to allow this discussion to be recorded.

If you have questions regarding this study you may contact Michael Lauritzen at (801) 830-6169. If you have questions regarding your rights as a participant in research projects, you may contact Dr. Renea Beckstrand, Chair of the Institutional Review Board for Human Subjects, 422 SWKT, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT 84602; phone, (801) 422-3873.

By signing below you indicate you have read and understand the above consent form and desire of your own free will to participate in the study.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix I2

## Consent form for item reduction and follow-up analyses

Subject # \_\_\_\_\_

This research is being conducted by Michael Lauritzen, a BYU graduate student, as part of the requirements for his Master's thesis. As a participant in this research you will be requested to fill out a questionnaire regarding emotions. It is anticipated that this research will take you no longer than ten minutes to complete. Your answers will be kept confidential and your name will never be associated with any of your answers at any time.

There are minimal risks for participation in this study. There are no direct benefits to your participation in this research, although some psychology professors might offer extra credit for courses in which you are currently enrolled.

Involvement in this research is completely voluntary and you may withdraw at any time without penalty or refuse to participate entirely. After the research is completed, all questionnaires will be destroyed.

If you have questions regarding this study you may contact Michael Lauritzen at (801) 830-6169. If you have questions regarding your rights as a participant in research projects, you may contact Dr. Renea Beckstrand, Chair of the Institutional Review Board for Human Subjects, 422 SWKT, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT 84602; phone, (801) 422-3873.

By signing below you have read and understand the above consent and desire of your own free will to participate in the study.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix I3

## Consent form for scale validation stage

Subject # \_\_\_\_\_

This research is being conducted by Michael Lauritzen, a BYU graduate student, as part of the requirements for his Master's thesis. As a participant in this research you will be requested to fill out several questionnaires regarding your opinions, attitudes, and emotions. You will also read a brief story describing the events surrounding a criminal homicide. It is anticipated that this research will take you no longer than thirty minutes to complete. Your answers will be kept confidential and your name will never be directly associated with any of your answers at any time. As a participant in this study, you will be assigned a participant ID number. After completing this questionnaire packet, you may volunteer to be involved in a brief follow-up study. To be involved in the follow-up it will be necessary to contact you via email. Only your participant ID number will be used to pair initial and follow-up responses and your name will therefore not be associated with any of your responses in this packet or on the follow-up packet.

There are minimal risks for participation in this study. However, you might experience some slight discomfort reading about a criminal homicide. There are no direct benefits to your participation in this research, although some psychology professors might offer extra credit for courses in which you are currently enrolled.

Involvement in this research is completely voluntary and you may withdraw at any time without penalty or refuse to participate entirely. After the research is completed, all notes, email addresses, and questionnaires will be destroyed.

If you have questions regarding this study you may contact Michael Lauritzen at (801) 830-6169. If you have questions regarding your rights as a participant in research projects, you may contact Dr. Renea Beckstrand, Chair of the Institutional Review Board for Human Subjects, 422 SWKT, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT 84602; phone, (801) 422-3873.

By signing below you have read and understand the above consent and desire of your own free will to participate in the study.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_



## Appendix J

### Focus Group Script

The purpose of this focus group is to help identify what conditions might make a person likely to hold another person responsible for his or her emotions. Because we do not often think of responsibility in terms of emotions, let's begin with an example of what I mean.

Think of a time when your romantic partner or your roommate became angry with you. Why were they angry? Was it something you did? Was it because he or she is just naturally an angry person? Was it something about the environment that caused his or her anger?

A response of "yes" to any one of these questions would show where you attributed responsibility for that person's emotions, either to yourself, to the other person, or to the situation. For this research we are interested in instances in which you attribute responsibility to the other person directly. Keep in mind that the term responsibility can take on several meanings in the English language. For example, in some instances it might be synonymous with cause, in the sense that a drought might cause (and therefore be responsible for) a famine. If you were to hold another person responsible for her emotions using this sense of responsibility, you might say that her personal disposition or personality was the cause of her happiness in that situation.

Another way that we use the term responsible would be specific to a person's role. For example, we might suggest that the captain of a ship is responsible for the safety of his crew. In the same way, we might expect a daughter to be sad if her father dies, but we would not typically expect a complete stranger to experience the same emotion. Another example might involve jealousy. Imagine that you cheated on your romantic partner. It makes sense that, as your romantic partner, he or she might feel more jealous of you cheating because of his or her role as your partner than would someone else. Does that make sense? (resolve any concerns)

You might also consider some people to have a greater capacity than others to control their emotions. For example, it is okay for a two-year-old to throw a tantrum, but it is not okay for a 30-year-old to throw the same tantrum—we would typically be more likely to hold the thirty-year-old responsible for her anger.

Other factors that might affect whether we hold a person responsible might include whether the person knows that what he or she was doing is wrong (or right), whether they have the self-control necessary to have acted otherwise, and whether their action had a direct effect on some other person or object.

Now, let's come up with as many other factors that might affect whether a person would hold another person responsible for his or her emotions. Keep in mind that for this study, we are only interested in what types of things might lead a person to be likely to say *someone else* is responsible for his or her emotions. Are there any questions?

Okay, now I would like you to briefly describe on the paper provided a few instances in which you held another person (perhaps a family member, your romantic partner, or a roommate) responsible for his or her emotions. You should try to not only focus your examples on a single emotion, but on a spectrum of emotions if possible. Are there any questions?

## Appendix K

### Confidentiality script to be read to focus groups

As part of this exercise, you will first be asked to write about times when you have observed other people having certain emotional experiences. You should understand that no one else will ever read these experiences, and you will at no point be asked to speak about them directly. After the focus groups are completed you may either take these papers with you or I will destroy them for you.

Later you will be asked to discuss factors which might affect how people attribute responsibility to others for their emotions. It is likely that you will think of personal experiences that seem to apply to what we are talking about or that might help clarify a point. You should not feel obligated to share any of these experiences. If, however, you choose to relate any personal experiences, please avoid referencing any specific people or names so as to maintain confidentiality of everyone involved. For example, if you have a story about your ex-boyfriend, David, please simply refer to him as your ex-boyfriend and not as David. The confidentiality of every person involved, not just yourself, should be maintained as strictly as possible.

## Appendix L

## Demographics sheet

Please circle the one best answer for the following questions (or write your answer down when applicable).

1) What is your gender?      1. Male      2. Female

2) What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_

3) How do you define your ethnicity?

- |                            |                     |
|----------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. White/European American | 4. Asian            |
| 2. Hispanic                | 5. Native American  |
| 3. African American        | 6. Pacific Islander |
| 7. Other (specify) _____   |                     |

4) Would you be willing to be contacted for a **brief** follow-up study in about two weeks? If so, please provide your email address below.

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix M

Themes generated from focus groups, research literature topics thought to affect attributions of responsibility for emotion, and the ARES items that were created to fit each of these themes.

### **Focus Group Themes**

#### *Self-control*

1. In general, people are pretty good at controlling their emotions.
20. Most people have a difficult time controlling their emotions.
16. It is important for people to control their emotions.

#### *Age/maturity*

8. As people get older they should be held more accountable for their emotions.
3. Children should not be held responsible for their emotions.

#### *Expectedness*

24. Sometimes, unexpected situations bring out emotions in people.
22. Even in the ups and downs of life, it is important for people to not get too emotional.

#### *Initial reaction vs. over time*

14. Emotions can sometimes overwhelm people at first but then fade over time.
11. People shouldn't allow themselves to get carried away by their emotional reactions.

#### *Negligence (preconceived expectations)*

17. Sometimes, people allow themselves to be in situations that may result in strong emotions.
9. People should avoid situations in which they might become too emotional.

#### *Misinterpretation of situation*

21. Even when people misinterpret a situation they should still be held responsible for their emotions in that situation.

#### *Intensity*

4. People should not allow their emotions to get too carried away.

### **Themes from the research literature**

#### *Causal responsibility*

2. Sometimes people do or say things that make others experience emotions.
18. Some people just experience more emotions than other people.

19. Children should be taught to be more open with their emotions.

*Role responsibility*

6. Sometimes, the roles people take on in their lives (for example, parent, police officer,

doctor, etc.) may affect the sorts of emotions they experience.

10. There are times when emotions should not be experienced in the workplace.

*Capacity responsibility*

5. More intelligent people experience fewer emotions.

23. Some people just can't seem to control their emotions.

*Locus of control*

7. Usually people experience emotions because of things that happen to them and not

because of something they do.

13. People experience emotions because of something they think or do.

*Appropriateness*

15. There are certain situations in which people should experience emotions.

12. There are certain situations in which particular emotions are not appropriate.

Table 1

*Cluster groupings of all items on the 21-item version of the ARES*

Cluster	Case number	ARES item number	
1	8	11	
	13	16	
	3	4	
	4	6	
	12	15	
	2	2	
	10	24	
	9	12	
	14	17	
	11	14	
	2	15	19
		17	21
		6	8
		19	23
10		13	
3	1	1	
	7	9	
	16	20	
	18	22	
	5	7	
	21	3	
No cluster	22	5	

Table 2

*Comparisons of reliability and validity scores on several different versions of the ARES*

		Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
<b>Reliability</b>	test/retest	.716	.704	.687	.704	.643
<b>Coefficients</b>	inter-item	.657	.696	.733	.725	.717
<b>Predictive</b>	sentence	.008	.010	.030	.014	.013
<b>Validity p-values</b>	verdict	.025	.036	.036	.048	.040
<b>Construct</b>	emotion-					
<b>Validity p-values</b>	responsibility	.020	.017	.023	.015	.035

*Items included in models above*

Model number	Items removed from 21-item version
Model 1	12,3,5,6r,13r,16r,20r,21r
Model 2	2,3,5,6r,13r,16r,17r,20r,21r
Model 3	2,3,5,6r,12r,13r,16r,17r,20r,21r
Model 4	1,2,3,5,6r,13r,16r,17r,20r,21r
Model 5	1,2,3,5,6r,13r,16r,17r,20r,21r,(12nor)

Table 3

*Factor pattern on exploratory factor analysis of 10-item ARES*

Item numbers	Factor 1	Factor 2
ARESAvg1	<b>.787</b>	.056
ARESAvg2	.256	.508
ARESAvg3	<b>.766</b>	-.238
ARESAvg4	<b>.796</b>	.129
ARESAvg5	.075	<b>.712</b>
ARESAvg6	.010	.606
ARESAvg7	<b>.694</b>	.117
ARESAvg8	-.211	<b>.843</b>
ARESAvg9	.461	.200
ARESAvg10	<b>.882</b>	-.120



Table 4

*Correlations between total ARES scores and scores on the other scales and subscales***Beliefs in Fate Scale**

	Locus of Control	Destiny	Luck	Scale Total
Pearson $r$	.050	.080	-.038	-.014
p-value	.440	.210	.547	.830

**Right-Wing Authoritarianism Scale**

	Scale Total
Pearson $r$	.258
p-value	.000

**Victim-Blaming/Society-Blaming Scale**

	Stable	Unstable	Victim Blaming	Society Blaming	Scale Total
Pearson $r$	-.045	-.054	-.192	.123	-.059
p-value	.480	.402	.003	.055	.360

**Trait Meta-Mood Scale**

	Repair	Attention	Clarity	Scale Total
Pearson $r$	.106	-.220	.187	.049
p-value	.100	.001	.004	.478

### Figure Captions

*Figure 1.* Scree plot of eigenvalues from exploratory factor analysis of 21-item ARES.

*Figure 2.* Negatively skewed distribution of total scores on the 21-item version of the ARES.

*Figure 3.* Scree plot of eigenvalues from exploratory factor analysis of 10-item ARES.

*Figure 4.* Normal distribution of total scores on the 10-item version of the ARES.

Figure 1

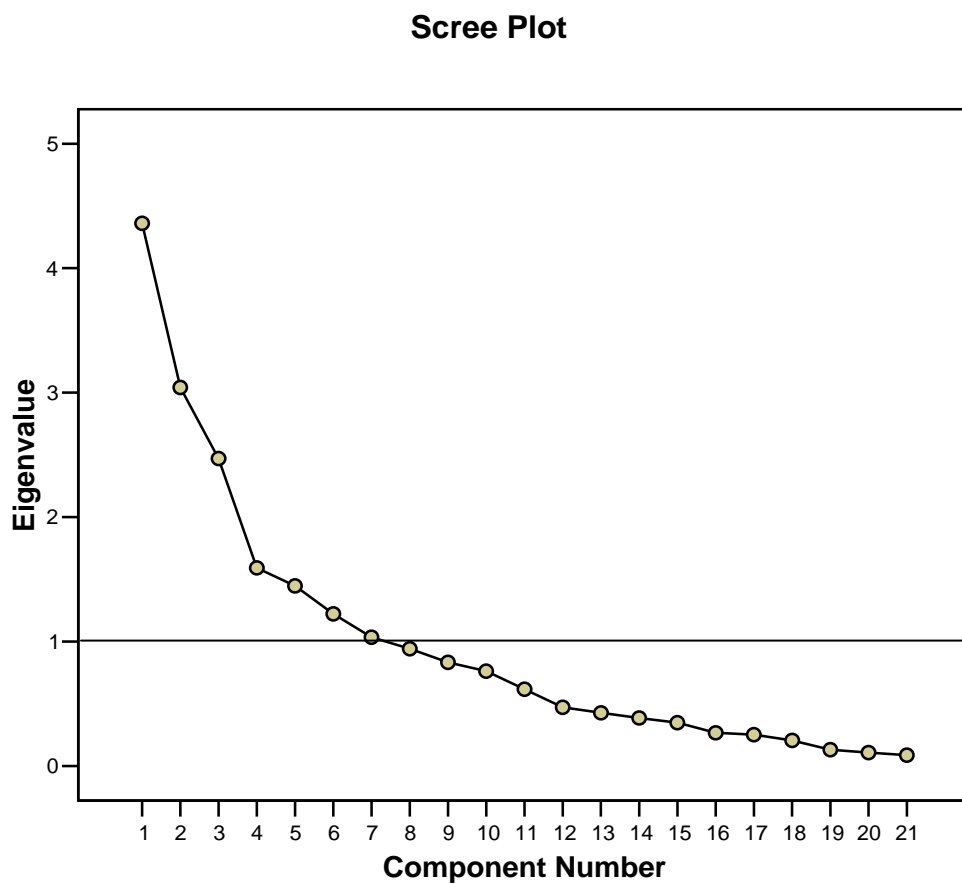


Figure 2

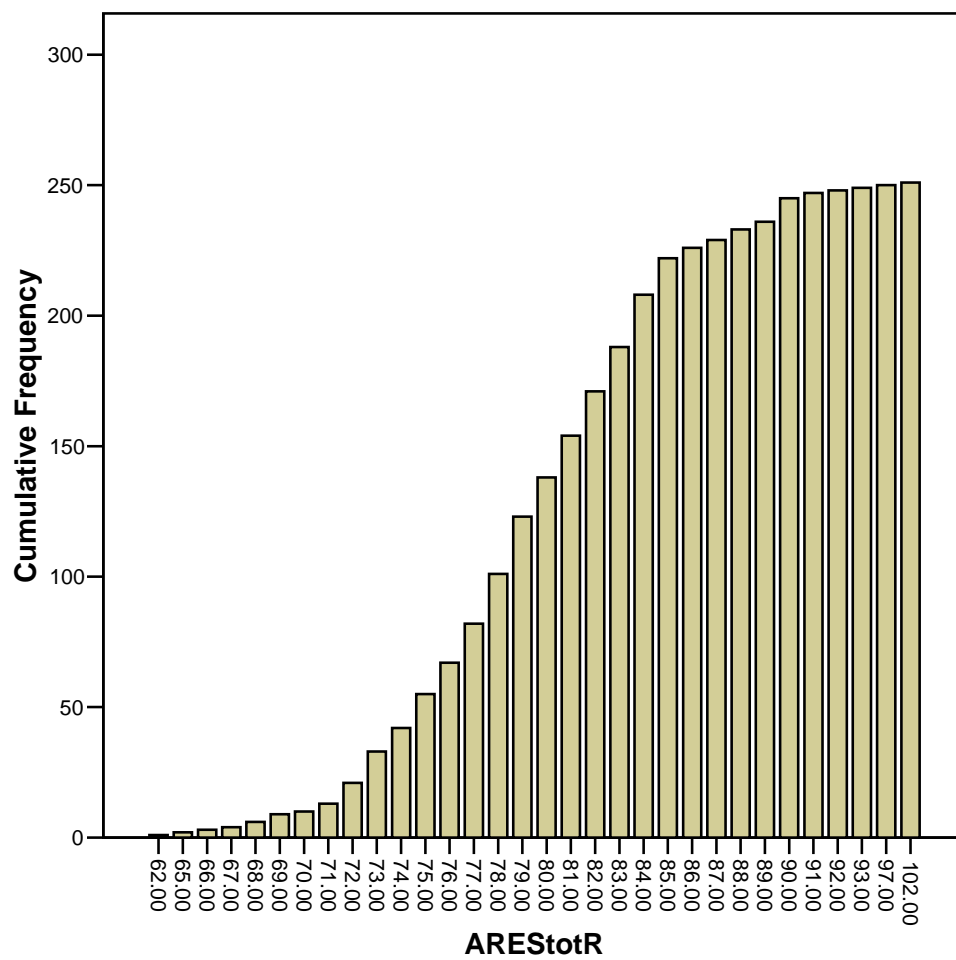


Figure 3

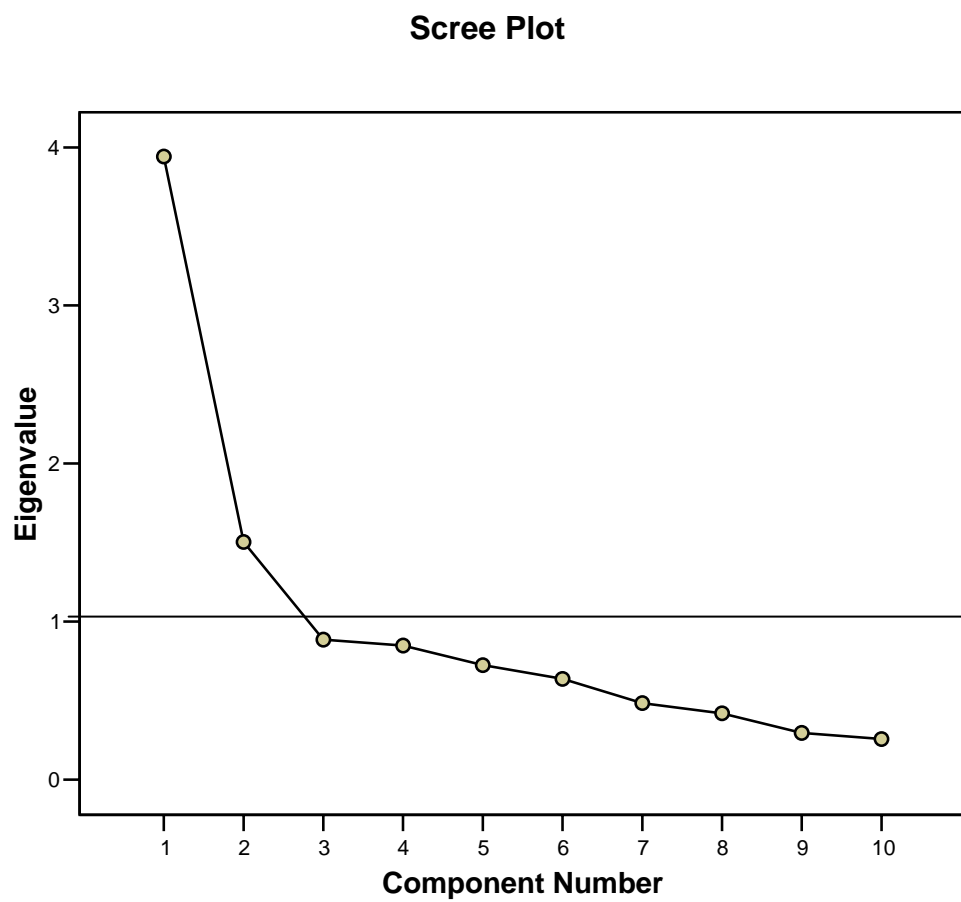


Figure 4

