


6-17-2016

# The Effects of Racial Bias on Perceptions of Intimate Partner Violence Scenarios

Batya Yisraela Rubenstein

University of South Florida, [brubenstein@mail.usf.edu](mailto:brubenstein@mail.usf.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: <http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/etd>

 Part of the [Criminology and Criminal Justice Commons](#), and the [Other Social and Behavioral Sciences Commons](#)

## Scholar Commons Citation

Rubenstein, Batya Yisraela, "The Effects of Racial Bias on Perceptions of Intimate Partner Violence Scenarios" (2016). *Graduate Theses and Dissertations*.

<http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/etd/6372>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate School at Scholar Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Graduate Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Scholar Commons. For more information, please contact [scholarcommons@usf.edu](mailto:scholarcommons@usf.edu).

The Effects of Racial Bias on Perceptions of Intimate Partner Violence Scenarios

by

Batya Y. Rubenstein

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts  
Department of Criminology  
College of Behavioral Health and Sciences  
University of South Florida

Co-Major Professor: John K. Cochran, Ph.D.  
Co-Major Professor: Ráchael A. Powers, Ph.D.  
Carla Smith Stover, Ph.D.

Date of Approval:  
June 14, 2016

Keywords: race, public perception, punishment, intimate partner violence

Copyright © 2016, Batya Y. Rubenstein

## DEDICATION

This piece of scholarship and my journey to earning my Master's degree is dedicated to two individuals who deserve the deepest form of gratitude. I want to express my unending appreciation to my Bubbie and Zaydie who are my role models in everything I accomplish. Bubbie, thank you for being my editor, spell-checker, grammar police, and most importantly, my best friend. You have taught me to be fearless, proud, and enthusiastic and for that I am forever grateful. Zaydie, you have been my role model ever since I was a little girl. It is through your unwavering pride in me that I have gathered my strength and courage to set the bar high and never give up. You have both instilled in me a passion for education and bestowed upon me the importance of social justice, I owe all my accomplishments to your love and devotion.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First, I give my utmost gratitude to my advisors, and thesis chairs who have mentored me throughout this journey. To Dr. Cochran and Dr. Powers, you have both guided me in your own unique way, through your guidance, support, time, and humor to help me through every struggle I have encountered, and have never once doubted my ability to complete this project. I would like to thank Dr. Stover, who began supporting me and helping me to grow as an academic scholar before this project began, I am beyond thankful for her guidance and encouragement through all the work we have completed together. There are not enough words to fully convey my gratitude to all my professors and mentors who have guided me and helped me mature from a student to a contributing member of an academic community, and I am a product of all their support and dedication.

Lastly, I want to thank my family for the love and understanding they have provided me every day. They guided me through my entire academic career, as well as offered support and advice that has been integral to helping me to get to where I am today. My parents gave me a gift at a young age of roots and wings, and to this day this gift has helped guide me as a scholar and as a humanitarian. It is through their personal examples in their own careers that I have learned the importance of giving back to my community with whatever tools I may possess.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables .....	iii
Abstract .....	iv
Chapter One: Introduction .....	1
Overview .....	4
Chapter Two: Relevant Scholarship .....	5
Public Opinion about Intimate Partner Violence .....	6
Defining Intimate Partner Violence .....	7
Public Opinions about Seriousness and Blame .....	10
Characteristics of Respondent .....	10
Situational Characteristics .....	12
Public Opinion about Punitiveness .....	15
Effects of Racial Bias on Public Opinion Research .....	17
Present Study .....	21
Research Questions .....	21
Hypotheses .....	21
Chapter Three: Methodology .....	25
Participants and Procedure .....	25
Vignettes .....	27
Sample .....	28
Measures .....	29
Dependent Variables .....	29
Additional Scale and Demographics .....	32
Symbolic Racism Scale .....	33
Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale Revised (IRMA-R) .....	33
Attitudes Towards Violence Scale (ATVS) .....	33
Domestic Violence Myth Acceptance Scale (DVMAS) .....	34
Personal experience with IPV and demographics .....	34
Analytic Strategy .....	35
Chapter Four: Results .....	39
Seriousness .....	39
Victim Culpability .....	42
Offender Culpability .....	44
IPV Labeling and Law Violation .....	47
Punishment .....	52

Chapter Five: Discussion .....	59
Summary of Findings .....	59
Seriousness .....	59
Victim Culpability .....	60
Offender Culpability .....	60
Labeling and Law Violation of IPV .....	61
Punishment of Offender .....	62
Limitations .....	64
Summary and Future Research .....	66
References .....	72
Appendices .....	77
Appendix A: Document of Informed Consent .....	77
Appendix B: Survey Instrument .....	80
About the Author .....	End Page

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1:	Expected Research Significance .....	24
Table 3.1:	Mean Scores for Dependent Variable by Vignette and Condition .....	31
Table 3.2:	Descriptive Statistics .....	38
Table 4.1:	OLS Regression Model for Seriousness of the Scenario .....	42
Table 4.2:	OLS Regression Model for Victim Culpability .....	44
Table 4.3:	OLS Regression Model for Offender Culpability.....	46
Table 4.4:	Multinomial Regression Model for IPV Labeling .....	50
Table 4.5:	Multinomial Regression Model for IPV Law Violation .....	51
Table 4.6:	OLS Regression Model for Whether the Offender Should Be Arrested .....	56
Table 4.7:	Logistic Regression Model for Offender Punishment .....	57
Table 4.8:	Logistic Regression Model for Offender Rehabilitation .....	58

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore how racial bias affects perceptions of intimate partner violence (IPV). Public perceptions of IPV have been studied under numerous contexts to ascertain how characteristics of victim and the offender can affect these attitudes. A portion of this body of research has been dedicated to understanding the role of race in perceptions of IPV and a large portion of the findings have been mixed due to the interaction of biases and attitudes about race and IPV. Very few studies have looked at multiple forms of IPV in comparison with one another while also studying the sole effect of racial bias on these attitudes.

This study aimed to explore how racial bias affects perceptions of multiple forms of IPV. Through a survey design that utilized vignettes to present three forms of IPV, participants were randomly assigned to one of four racial dyads for the offender and victim in the vignette and then asked a series of questions about the vignette that measured perceptions of seriousness of the scenario, offender and victim culpability, and punitiveness of punishment. Participants' attitudes towards domestic violence, racial bias, and violence in general were also measured using known attitudinal scales. The final sample consisted of 401 participants who were recruited through Amazon's Mechanical Turk and completed the online survey.

Findings from this study suggested a role of racial bias on the sample's perceptions of the seriousness of the scenario, offender culpability, and labeling the vignette a violation of the law.



## **CHAPTER ONE:**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Starting in the 1980's and continuing into the 1990's, the American public experienced a change in state and local policies about the public health issue of intimate partner violence (IPV). These changes can be attributed to the women's rights movement when there was an increasing awareness of the issue of IPV during the 1960's and 1970's (Carlson & Worden, 2005; Johnson & Sigler, 2000). These new policies included the criminalization of IPV, which was previously considered a private matter between partners, as well as creation of advocacy programs and awareness initiatives. The first efforts in addressing the issue of IPV were aimed at helping the victim by the creation of shelters, as well as providing the victim with necessary counseling and aid. These efforts have shifted focus over the past few decades from only providing service to the victim, to more legal strategies for punishing the offender and changing the way in which the criminal justice system handles IPV cases (Johnson & Sigler, 2000). However, with this increase in policy and advocacy there is a lack of research about public opinion accompanying it, which is arguably vital in the success of these new policies and advocacy efforts (Carlson & Worden, 2005).

Despite public awareness and advocacy efforts, IPV is still a major health concern today (Truman & Morgan, 2014). Some of the most current estimates of the prevalence of IPV from data collected by the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS) in 2010 estimate that 1 in 6 women have experienced sexual violence, other than rape by an intimate

partner during their lifetime. The prevalence rates increase to 1 in 3 women who have been slapped, pushed, or shoved by an intimate partner during their lifetime (Breiding, Chen, & Black, 2014). Yet, data from the National Crime and Victimization Survey (NCVS) has found that the rate of IPV has declined by 63% from 1994 to 2012 (Truman & Morgan, 2014). The 2003-2012 NCVS also showed that the highest prevalence rates for IPV was among non-Hispanic Blacks, and non-Hispanic persons of two or more races in comparison to non-Hispanic Whites, Hispanics, and persons of other races (Truman & Morgan, 2014).

Although victimization risk varies based on ethnicity and other factors, findings from the NCVS show that everyone is at risk for experiencing IPV regardless of age, race, and ethnicity. In their analyses of the NCVS, Rennison and Planty (2003) found that by analyzing victimization risk beyond bivariate relationships of race and gender and including other variables these rates changed. For instance, when controlling for victim's race when estimating the effect of income on IPV risk, the relationship changed significantly so that income predicted rates of IPV, rather than race, among Black and White racial groups. By strictly looking at the bivariate relationships between race and risk of victimization there is a risk of focusing our efforts and initiatives in the wrong direction. Furthermore, patterns that suggest higher rates of victimization among certain racial groups lead to inaccurate knowledge and perpetuation of IPV myth acceptance.

Attitudes about IPV also play a part in the perpetration of domestic violence, victims' responses, and predicting how the community at large responds to violence against women (Flood & Pease, 2009). Historically, public advocacy and awareness have been the driving force behind legislation and advocacy work. In order to continue in an effort to end IPV as well as dispel IPV myths it is important to understand how the public views this issue, and the mechanisms that create these attitudes and opinions.

An important aspect of studying public opinions of IPV is in understanding attitudes towards offenders. If the public is misinformed about the nature of crime and punishment, this will greatly impact the treatment of offenders (Cullen, Fisher, & Applegate, 2000). Over the past few decades the focus of IPV has shifted towards the punitive punishment of offenders. This shift has coincided with the era of mass incarceration and a global expansion of the American criminal justice system. The consequences of the era of punitive punishments have disproportionately affected minorities, especially the Black community in other types of crimes, resulting in longer, harsher sentences (Western, 2006). It is important to study how public opinion is affected by racism, to further understand the mechanisms behind these disparities and to help answer how our country defines justice.

Public perceptions of IPV have been studied under a number of different contexts, including the effect of victim and offender race (Locke & Richman, 1999). However, studies that have measured the effect of race on IPV opinions and perceptions have not been able to make race ambiguous in their study design, as well as address issues of punishment and punitive attitudes towards the offender. In order to build upon previous studies this study implements vignettes of IPV scenarios and varies the race of the victim and offender by the name of the characters without explicitly mentioning their race. The vignettes measure how racial bias affects the determination of the severity of a situation, as well as determining whether it is an act of IPV, and furthermore, a violation of the law. Next, I will measure how racial bias affects the consequential treatment of the victim and offender. Measuring the effect of racial bias in these scenarios will help to gain an understanding of public perceptions of IPV from a new perspective that can then inform the greater issue of racial disparities in our criminal justice system and our ideas of justice.

## Overview

The following is an overview and description of the chapters included, each description includes a brief overview of the content for that chapter.

*Chapter Two-* is a review of the relevant scholarship related to this study. The review of the literature includes research about public perception of IPV, attitudes about violence against women, the effect of race on public perceptions of IPV, and a theoretical framework for this study. The purpose of this study, along with research questions and hypotheses, are also included in this chapter.

*Chapter Three-* discusses the methodology of the study. This includes subjects and characteristics of the sample, along with a detailed description of the sampling process. Additionally, this chapter includes a detailed study design and list all of the measures and scales used in this study. Finally, the methodology section outlines the analytic strategy that is implemented for data analysis.

*Chapter Four-* is a discussion of the results obtained by the data from this study. Included in the discussion are significant findings and the meaning of these findings.

*Chapter Five-* is the conclusion and implications for the study. The conclusion is a discussion of the most relevant findings and how they are supported or rejected by the hypotheses. This section also includes a thorough review of all limitations of the study. This chapter concludes with implications for future research.

## **CHAPTER TWO: RELEVANT SCHOLARSHIP**

There is a significant growing body of research about public opinion in different areas regarding IPV. Several researchers have explored the different characteristics of both victim and offenders, as well as those of participants in an attempt to understand what mechanisms can be attributed to the formation of attitudes and behavior of IPV beliefs and responses. With this growing body of research, several gaps in the literature have been identified, and an important factor that has garnered much attention is the role of race.

The following literature review begins with an overview of some of the major studies of public opinion and IPV, as well as the various types of variables that have been manipulated in research studies to learn more about the mechanisms behind these attitudes. Following this summary I will then review studies that have measured the factors that influence how society defines IPV including what behaviors are included in society's definition of IPV. Next, I review the current research about attributions of blame and perceptions of seriousness of IPV and how researchers have evaluated this research from both the characteristics of the study participant who is meant to represent public opinion, as well as manipulating the variables of the scenario in order to understand how that can affect opinion. I then summarize studies about punishment of IPV offenders, and what type of characteristics have been found to influence the public's level of punitiveness towards their behavior. Lastly, I review the extant literature about racial bias and

IPV. This includes how race of the offender and victim can affect public perceptions of IPV, as well as racial myths that influence these attitudes.

### **Public Opinion about Intimate Partner Violence**

There is a growing body of research about public opinion on IPV. These studies have evaluated a variety of topics on the subject, including public awareness and definitions of what type of acts constitute IPV, seriousness and blame towards the victim and offender, and prevalence of IPV (Bethke & DeJoy, 1993; Bryant & Spencer, 2003; Carlson & Worden, 2005; Dennison & Thompson, 2011; Esqueda & Harrison, 2005; Flood & Pease, 2009; Harrison & Esqueda, 2000; Johnson & Sigler, 1995; Johnson & Sigler, 2000; Locke & Richman, 1999). As stated previously, it is important to study these public attitudes because of the role they play in the perpetration of violence, victim responses, and community actions towards this type of violence (Flood & Pease, 2009).

As part of studying public perceptions it is important to understand how individuals relate to situations cognitively, even if they have limited experience or knowledge about this situation or occurrence. When relating to victims and their predicaments certain theories can explain how individuals relate to victims especially when they have no prior experience with being a victim. Defensive attributional theory explains that when a person sees themselves as similar to a victim they are less likely to attribute blame, and are more likely to empathize with that victim (Locke & Richman, 1999). In other words, when a person sees similar characteristics or features of themselves in victims they are more easily able to relate to the victim. However, other theories such as the just-world hypothesis explain that in a “just world” people get what they deserve,

which then lowers empathy towards a victim and increases the likelihood of attributing blame (Locke & Richman, 1999).

Attitudes are an important part of the cognitive process that impact behavior both at the conscious and subconscious level. There are a variety of factors that have been identified as predictors or influencing factors on attitudes about IPV. They include gender and culture, and extend from the individual level up to society as a whole (Flood & Pease, 2009). Flood and Pease (2009) studied the existing literature of attitudes of violence towards women. In their review they organize their findings by the different factors that have been known to impact attitudes. They then further organize their findings into the differing levels of the individual, organization, community, and society. One important finding was the consistent evidence of an association between violence-supportive attitudes and perpetration of the violent behavior, which occur at both the individual and community level (Flood & Pease, 2009). This finding further stresses the importance of studying public attitudes, because they are a known predictor of behavior.

### **Defining Intimate Partner Violence**

One of the main gaps in the literature, that has become an overarching theme in IPV research, is the need for more studies to analyze and identify which factors are specifically responsible for the disparity among public perceptions of IPV. Several studies have implemented IPV vignettes and varied different aspects of the scenario to try and capture which factors among both the respondents and the scenarios were responsible for affecting these IPV myths and misunderstandings. Carlson and Worden (2005) began a comprehensive exploration about public definition of IPV by asking participants what acts constitute IPV. It is important to note that

although their study was conducted in 2005 there has yet to be another published study replicating the same methodology in which public attitudes and definitions of IPV were evaluated. In their exploration, Carlson and Worden (2005) found that the variation among their findings about public attitudes regarding IPV could not be attributed to common stereotypes regarding gender, social status, education, and age (Carlson & Worden, 2005). Furthermore, despite the increasing agreement and expansion of the type of acts that are defined as IPV, there is a significant amount of participants who are unsure of the legality of these acts (Carlson & Worden, 2005). Previous to the Carlson and Worden (2005) study, Johnson and Sigler (1995) discovered that participants were more willing to determine that acts of physical abuse warranted legal intervention over non-violent forms of domestic abuse.

Forms of physical abuse are consistently regarded as acts of IPV and more likely to be considered as illegal behavior (Carlson & Worden, 2005). Other studies have found that the type of injury obtained by the victim has been attributed to perceptions of seriousness of incident, as well as blameworthiness of the offender (Miller & Bukva, 2001). Perhaps the support for defining acts of physical abuse as forms of IPV is due to the fact that physical abuse is easier to define, measure, and substantiate (Johnson & Sigler, 2000). Despite the evidence of the growing public inclusion of verbal and psychological abuse being labeled as IPV, several studies have noted that these forms of abuse have yet to be fully investigated by research studies (Bethke & DeJoy, 1993; Carlson & Worden, 2005; Johnson & Sigler, 1995; Johnson & Sigler, 2000; Miller & Bukva, 2001). Although some researchers believe that it is harder to empirically measure verbal and psychological abuse due to a lack of consensus on the definition for these forms of abuse, other studies have successfully found reliable methods of measurement (O'Leary, 1999).



O'Leary (1999) argues that psychological abuse is necessary to study because of the known detrimental effects to the psychological well being of victims and because verbal and psychological abuse often precede physical abuse. It is a commonly upheld agreement among researchers and practitioners that all forms of IPV can result in negative health outcomes such as substance abuse, sleep and eating disorders, suicidal behavior, and many mental health disorders (Pico-Alfonso et al., 2006). Although, there have been very few studies that have focused on just verbal or psychological forms of abuse, Pico-Alfonso and colleagues (2006) found that when isolating the independent effects that psychological abuse had on mental health, this form of abuse was just as detrimental as physical abuse. This finding was further replicated by Mechanic, Weaver, and Resick (2008) who discovered that psychological abuse explained a large percentage of the variance for predicting post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) after controlling for the effects of physical and sexual abus.

Sexual violence, although sometimes considered a sub-form of physical violence, is inherently distinct and yet given the least amount of attention in the empirical literature. The issues of spouse abuse being regarded as a private matter between a married couple has negatively impacted legal sanctions for sexual abuse in marriage. It was not until 1986 when the Federal Sexual Abuse Act criminalized marital rape on all federal lands. Before this, there were no legal protections for women against rape by their husbands (Bennice & Resick, 2003). Research about perceptions of marital rape and sexual IPV have found that sexist ideology might in fact inhibit the notion that married women are allowed to refuse to have sex with their husbands (Duran, Moya, & Megias, 2011) Along with physical, verbal, and psychological forms of IPV, sexual abuse has also consistently been attributed with mental health problems (Mechanic, Weaver, & Resick, 2008).

In sum, the research that has been done in the area of public perceptions and different forms of IPV has given much insight into the growing support for understanding the importance of IPV and the growing public definition of what acts constitute this type of violence. The same studies have also noted the importance of finding the mechanisms behind these attitudes in order to understand how the less understood types of violence such as psychological and verbal, can become more understood as forms of IPV in society. To that end, one purpose of this project is to examine and compare these three forms of IPV.

### **Public Opinions About Seriousness and Blame**

Current literature has studied the seriousness and blame attributed in IPV scenarios from a variety of perspectives. Some studies have focused on the personal factors that influence the respondent's ratings and therefore looked for patterns among the characteristics of respondents. Meanwhile other studies have used another approach by studying what factors of the incident affect the perceived seriousness and blame attributed to both the victim and respondent. Each of these is discussed in turn.

### **Characteristics of Respondent**

A lack of understanding and increased tolerance for IPV can be attributed to a lack of empathy for the victim (Johnson & Sigler, 2000). In many instances it may be hard to empathize with a victim when the person has little in common them, which could explain many of the patterns we see in the assignment of blame and understanding of seriousness of a domestic violent crime. The defensive attribution theory explains that the more similar a person is to a victim, the less responsibility he or she will attribute to the victim for that incident (Locke &

Richman, 1999). For instance, women who have experienced abuse themselves are more likely to regard more acts as IPV and also rate them higher in severity (Wagner & Mongan, 1998). There has also been evidence that the race of the respondent can also influence culpability and blame (Flood & Pease, 2009). Miller and Bukva (2001) found that White respondents were more likely to judge IPV vignettes as more serious, compared to the Black, Latino, and Asian American respondents.

Feminist theories, as well as theories about gender roles, offer an explanation for the differences in gender regarding perceptions of IPV (Locke & Richman, 1999). A common pattern among these studies is that men have been found to perceive domestic violent scenarios less seriously than their female counterparts (Miller & Bukva, 2001). Another study found that male students who use violence in their own relationships are more likely to assign blame to the victim (Bryant & Spencer, 2003).

Even though gender roles have evolved in the past decades, there is still evidence of their effect on public perceptions involving domestic abuse. These patterns are evident when looking at the effect of age on perceptions of IPV. Carlson and Worden (2005) found older respondents are less likely to believe that physical violence exhibited by a husband is unlawful (Carlson & Worden, 2005). These findings are evident of the longstanding history of acceptance of domestic abuse as a private matter between partners. Other studies that have looked at the effects of age on attitudes have found that when young adults have experienced dating violence they are more willing to view physical aggression as acceptable behavior (Bryant & Spencer, 2003). Furthermore, students who experienced violence in their own relationships or at home are more willing to blame societal factors outside the relationship, which included the media or other outlets that accept and promote violence (Bryant & Spencer, 2003). This finding is consistent

with social learning theory, and has been replicated in another study in which witnessing abuse at home and participating in violent acts at school were inversely related to evaluation of the seriousness of IPV incidents (Miller & Bukva, 2001).

Social learning theorists have explained that through this intergenerational pattern of violence, some victims continue to be victims, while others become offenders, because this behavior has been interpreted as acceptable and the norm (Miller & Bukva, 2001). This socialization can happen by either witnessing or personally experiencing violence and abuse as a child. The effect of this experience can either result in perpetuation of violence as a juvenile, or further victimization in other relationships throughout their lives. Juvenile delinquency theorists have identified the correlation between male juvenile delinquency and how the same aggression carries over into their intimate relationships, leading to violence towards their partner (Miller & Bukva, 2001). A meta-analysis of 124 studies that examined the intergenerational cycle of violence found a strong effect size for males who experienced childhood violence and were then IPV perpetrators during adulthood, and a small effect for females who experienced IPV as a child and again as an adult (Smith-Marek, et al., 2015).

### **Situational Characteristics**

Public perception of IPV is not only affected by primary factors of the respondent, but also greatly influenced by the specific characteristics of the situation, including factors associated with the victim and offender. Some patterns that have been identified by this body of research are mentioned below and can be attributed to known rape and IPV myths, such as blaming the victim (Policastro & Payne, 2013). A study that examined acceptance of dating violence found that violent behavior was seen as more acceptable in a serious relationship. This finding suggests how participants minimized the seriousness of the crime when the offender was

well known to the victim, and a greater investment in the relationship was correlated with more acceptability of a violent response to a conflict (Bethke & DeJoy, 1993). They also found that when the perpetrator was a woman, the act of violence was rated less serious because of the belief that women are not capable of inflicting much pain or able to cause severe bodily harm (Bethke & DeJoy, 1993). Other factors, such as the perpetrator having a prior record, have been found to increase the blameworthiness of the offender, as well as increase the perceived seriousness of the scenario (Miller & Bukva, 2001).

Aside from offender culpability, one of the common phenomenon studied in IPV research is the notion of blaming the victim. Society has unknowingly perpetrated this by making the victim the complainant in court during IPV trials. State laws are actively trying to change this by taking the responsibility to protect the victim and making the state the complainant in these cases (Bryant & Spencer, 2003). Victim blaming can further IPV myths by perpetuating the belief that victims can leave an abusive relationship; and if they fail to leave, they are then deemed responsible for the abuse, because it is then perceived as consenting to this abuse (Policastro & Payne, 2013). Through this research we have been able to identify other factors that have perpetuated blaming the victim.

One factor that has attributed to perceptions of blame towards the victim is in the characterization and opinions of the response that a female victim has towards her offender. The way in which the victim chooses to respond to the abuse, as well as her behavior before and during the incident, has been found to influence perceptions of the scenario as well as how society judges the victim (Lacey, 2010; Policastro & Payne, 2013). For example, researchers have tried to understand how the public might blame a victim by studying different ways in which it might be perceived that the woman has enticed the offender to react in an aggressive

manner. Esqueda and Harrison (2005) created vignettes in which they varied the amount of provocation by the female victim, and found that a perceived increase in provocation by the victim lowered the participant's belief that mandatory arrest was needed.

The argument has been made that despite how the woman responds or acts during a IPV scenario, she will always be considered somewhat responsible. This idea stems from the notion 'it takes two to tango' along with the belief that a victim can always prevent an incident. This idea has been confirmed by Esqueda and Harrison (2005) who found that when the woman (victim) responded with serious resistance by aggressively attacking the male offender, and when she responded with no resistance, the general culpability ratings of the victim were not affected.

A large portion of rape myth research has been able to identify other factors that have contributed to victim blaming (Aosved & Long, 2006). Gender role violations can be attributed to perpetrating the effect of victim blaming (Esqueda & Harrison, 2005; Policastro & Payne, 2013). For example, Harrison and Esqueda (2000) studied one form of a gender role violation when they introduced intoxication of the victim into the vignettes in their study. They discovered that drinking behavior also led to increased victim blaming due to gender role violation (Harrison & Esqueda, 2000).

All of the various factors that influence victim blaming become more severe when combined with race. Harrison and Esqueda (2000) found that even though drinking significantly increased blame of the female victim for both White and Black women, when race was included, Black females were regarded more negatively and considered more culpable than their White female counterparts (Harrison & Esqueda, 2000). Stereotypes of Black women put them at a greater risk for victim blaming, especially when they demonstrate a stereotype such as being aggressive through provocative behavior (Esqueda & Harrison, 2005).

## **Public Opinion about Punitiveness**

Many scholars have argued that policy is a reflection of public opinion. Using this theory it can be argued that the drive for more punitive measures against offenders is “democracy at work” (Cullen, Fisher, & Applegate, 2000). In response to IPV, Johnson and Sigler (2000) found that Americans are more supportive of tougher intervention strategies such as mandatory arrest laws, but less likely to endorse required counseling and educational awareness. In accordance with the historical shift to more punitive measures, Johnson and Sigler (2000) discovered the same trend among their subjects who became increasingly more likely to support the passage of laws to make wife abuse a felony.

One major area of concern is that if the public is the decision-maker of correctional policy and what happens if it is misinformed about the nature of the type of crime and how to control it. This problem should be of utmost concern due to the knowledge that most Americans are unaware of the complexity of IPV, and the consequences of the myths and beliefs that their attitudes could have on their decisions. For instance, this issue can be seen in studies that have found a stronger public endorsement for legal intervention for violent forms of IPV, and less consensus regarding punishment of the offender when it is a non-violent form of abuse (Johnson & Sigler, 1995). When there is disagreement among what acts constitute IPV there will be just as much, if not more, disparity among the type of punishment for these offenses.

Another area of concern is the public view of punitive measures and disregard for rehabilitating offenders. Survey research has found patterns of the public being punitive and supportive of policies that inflict “penal harm” on offenders most commonly by imprisonment (Cullen, Fisher, & Applegate, 2000). The issue with a punitive public is that in cases of IPV, one

could argue that one of the goals of intervention should be to rehabilitate the offenders, so that they can reintegrate with their family once they no longer pose a danger to them. However, if the public disregards rehabilitation and believes that a prison sentence is the answer, this will distance the offender from the victim for a certain amount of time, but will not solve any problems or prevent reoffending once the offender is released. Conversely, there is some evidence that due to the growing support of the ineffectiveness of prisons, that widespread support of their use may not be as deep, and the public may be more amenable to alternative punishments (Cullen, Fisher, & Applegate, 2000).

Public opinion research has found that the people agree about the level of severity of offenses; however, there is less agreement about the corresponding amount of punishment an offense is deserving (Cullen, Fisher, & Applegate, 2000). This disagreement has led to the need for a theoretical basis as to how the public defines severity in terms of punishment, as well as to determine what factors may influence this ranking system (May, Wood, Mooney, & Minor, 2005). May, Wood, Mooney, and Minor (2005) addressed this question by using responses from offenders to create exchange rates for prison sentences. By asking offenders their opinions on alternative punishments and sanction severity, these researchers were able to operationalize severity and determine the different types of factors that influenced the variation among responses. For instance, White respondents rated prison more severely than their Black counterparts, due to the growing commonality of prison experiences among young Black males (May, Wood, Mooney, & Minor, 2005). It is important to understand these exchange rates based upon the offenders' experiences because it is their value of severity that should be used to determine the value of punishment, and not a perceived amount by someone who has never experienced these forms of punishment.



## **Effects of Racial Bias on Public Opinion Research**

Previous IPV opinion research has attempted to explain how race affects perceptions of IPV scenarios by incorporating race into their study design. This has been executed using various methodology such as varying the race of the offender and victim in vignettes in a study (Harrison & Esqueda, 2000; Locke & Richman, 1999). Race has also been used as a mediating variable to understand victim blaming when other variables such as drinking are added to the scenario (Harrison & Esqueda, 2000). The study of racial stereotypes in regard to understanding IPV is crucial because regardless of whether or not there is a conscious awareness of the activation of these stereotypes, these attitudes will guide the processing of judgments of a IPV scenario (Harrison & Esqueda, 2000). Studies of juries measuring racial bias have found that when race is salient in the trial, White jurors are more aware of prejudices and make a stronger effort to suppress these beliefs. However, when race is ambiguous in a trial, it is easier for implicit bias to be activated during decision making (Sommers & Ellsworth, 2001). Furthermore, there is yet to be a study that assessed how racial bias affects perceptions of responsibility, blame, seriousness, punitiveness, and law violation in relation to IPV.

One of the main issues involving race and DV research is that a large portion of IPV research has focused on White women and therefore, it is of great importance to study minorities and their cultural norms in order to learn about their attitudes and beliefs about IPV (Lacey, 2010). The research about minority women who are IPV victims can give some insight into some of the stigma and stereotypes that have influenced the public perceptions about these populations. Lacey (2010) researched the reasons why Black and Hispanic women stayed in IPV relationships. Some of the main factors that significantly predicted whether or not they would

remain with their abusive partner included whether or not they were married, due to the fact that they did not want to leave a relationship in which they had committed time and energy, as well as avoid the stigma of a minority single-parent household. Another major factor that influenced whether or not these women would leave their abuser was level of income and the ability to financially support themselves, and in many cases, their children (Lacey, 2010). These findings are important because they give insight into patterns that have influenced stereotypes of minority women, which then explains the perpetuation of victim blaming and negative attitudes towards victims.

Another factor that has influenced perceptions of IPV is the stereotyping of Black women. Black women who are living in poverty and dealing with issues of IPV are restricted by society from accessing help and services. Contemporary societal stigmas of minority women living in low income communities has created an unforgiving community response to IPV in their communities (Richie, 1996). Perpetuations of negative stereotypes of Black women and IPV continue to create a system in which there is no escape. Other stereotypes such as the belief that Black women are more promiscuous and sensual influences attitudes that Black women are then 'unrapeable' because of their promiscuous nature (George & Martinez, 2002).

Negative stereotyping of Black women can lead to victim blaming and less empathy towards a IPV victim if she is Black. One study that measured how victim drinking and race of the victim would affect perceptions of IPV situations found that the effect of the victim drinking was more severe in predicting victim blaming and lack of empathy towards the victim when she was Black compared to if she was White (Harrison & Esqueda, 2000). These types of findings have been replicated by other studies that have measured the effect of race of the victim on participants attitudes towards IPV scenarios (Locke & Richman, 1999). In another study, Black

female victims were perceived as more blameworthy when they were raped by a White male verses a Black male because the stigma of Black women as being promiscuous results in the sexuality to be the course of the White male offender's behavior (George & Martinez, 2002). The effect of these findings have been attributed to Black women reporting sexual abuse and IPV less frequently than their White counterparts and less resources available for Black female victims (George & Martinez, 2002).

In comparison to the stereotypes that affect Black women as victims of IPV, there is another body of research that has revealed a whole other type of stereotype related to Black males as inherently aggressive by nature (Locke & Richman, 1999). George and Martinez (2002) found that White women were deemed more blameworthy when they were raped by a Black man because respondent's belief that a White woman who fraternizes with a Black man is responsible for his actions outweighing his responsibility for raping her. Other studies have found that respondents were more sympathetic towards a White female victim who was married to a Black male offender (Locke & Richman, 1999).

The result of these stereotypes and lack of research has arguably led to the Black community, in particular, being neglected by police and societal concern when it comes to IPV (Esqueda & Harrison, 2005). This is even more disconcerting because, despite the fact that police officers are more likely to intervene in Black communities when it comes to other forms of violence, research has found that the same officers are less likely to intervene in issues of IPV for these minority communities (Esqueda & Harrison, 2005). One finding in particular was that Black males who behave aggressively were judged more severely than their White male counterparts (Harrison & Esqueda, 2000).

Although many studies have looked at the effects of racial bias on IPV, there has yet to be a study that has looked at this problem in a more widened scope and accounted for differences among different forms of IPV. In previous studies race has been found to account for predicting victim blaming and offender responsibility, but these studies have not measured these effects without priming the participant about race. Many of the vignette designs that have included victim and offender race explicitly tell the participant the race of the people in the scenario (Esqueda & Harrison, 2005; Harrison & Esqueda, 2000; Duran, Moya, & Megias, 2011). Priming study participants about race can affect measures of bias because it activates their personal beliefs and their implicit cognitions that are likely to have higher levels of racial bias will therefore not be activated, causing an inaccurate measure of underlying racial bias (Devine, 1989). To be able to understand how racial bias can affect public perceptions of IPV it is important to get an accurate measure of non-conscious attitudes because those can predict behavior in an every day setting (Devine, 1989).

This study will also expand on previous research by measuring the effect of racial bias on different types of IPV scenarios. Previous studies have measured the effect of racial bias on one type of IPV scenario because the study is designed to also measure the interaction of racial bias on perceptions with another variable, such as victim drinking or the length of the relationship between the victim and offender (Harrison & Esqueda, 2000; George & Martinez, 2002). However, there has yet to be a study that specifically measures racial bias and IPV perceptions across different forms of IPV, which has been identified as a major gap in this literature.

## **Present Study:**

### **Research Questions**

- 1) Does the race of the offender and the victim determine how serious an act of IPV is perceived, as well as influence the level of blame for both the offender and the victim?
- 2) What factors determine whether or not a participant will label one of the scenarios as an act of IPV? Will this also predict their endorsement of whether the scenario is also a violation of the law?
- 3) What characteristics of the offender and the victim, as well as the participant, will affect the type of punishment that participants will deem fit for the crime?
- 4) Does race of the offender and the victim affect the severity of the type of punishment that is endorsed?

### **Hypotheses**

- 1) Based on prior research I hypothesize that a significant portion of the variance in the ratings of the various dependent measures from the vignettes will be explained by the racial dyad of the vignette. (See Table 2.1.)
  - a. Offender Culpability- I expect to find that ratings of offender culpability for the Black offender and Black victim dyad to be higher in comparison to the reference group of White offender and White victim. However, for the Black offender and White victim dyad there is conflicting evidence of whether there will a positive or negative relationship between the ratings of victim culpability and the racial dyad. I also hypothesize that the White offender and Black victim dyad to be lower in comparison to the reference group because of the interaction of the culpability for

the Black victim. I also do not believe that the direction of the relationships will differ across the vignettes, however they may differ in strength.

- b. Victim Culpability- I hypothesize that the Black offender and Black victim dyad will have a negative effect on victim culpability. Due to conflicting prior research about victim culpability for a White victim and Black offender the direction of the relationship could be both positive or negative for victim culpability. Based on prior studies I further hypothesize a positive relationship in victim culpability for the White offender and Black victim dyad. I believe these relationships will be the same direction across the three vignettes, however, I believe that the vignette of marital rape will be much weaker in strength.
- c. Severity of Offender Punishment- I hypothesize that for both the Black offender dyads with a White victim and Black victim the Black offender will have higher ratings of severity of punishment. Conversely, I expect to find lower ratings of punishment severity for the White offender and Black victim dyad in comparison to the control group. The direction of these relationships should remain the same across all three vignettes but will be stronger among the marital rape vignette and the physical violence.
- d. Seriousness of the Scenario- I believe that for the both racial dyads that include a Black victim the ratings of the seriousness of the scenario will be lower than the control group and will be the same among all three vignettes. The seriousness of the scenario for the Black offender and White victim will be higher in comparison to the control group because of the Black offender and will have the same directional relationship across all three vignettes.

- e. Rehabilitation of Offender- I hypothesize that for both racial dyads in which the offender is Black the rehabilitation of offender score will be lower than the control group. I also expect that the score for rehabilitation of the offender for the White offender and Black victim will be higher than the control group. The direction of these relationships should remain the same across all of the vignettes.
- 2) In accordance with previous studies, I hypothesize that respondents will be more willing to label a scenario an act of IPV, and less likely to label it a violation of the law, and will be more likely to be unsure if the act is against the law than if it is an act of IPV, I believe that race of the offender and the victim will help explain the variance in this relationship.
- 3) Based on prior studies I believe that respondent characteristics such as age and gender will affect ratings of seriousness of the scenario and both victim and offender culpability. I hypothesize that women will be more sympathetic towards victims and have lower ratings of culpability for the victim, higher scores of culpability for the offender and higher scores of seriousness of the scenario across all three vignettes in comparison to males in this sample. I also expect that age will have a negative relationship with seriousness of the scenario, in which younger participants will deem the scenario more serious than older participants across all of the vignettes. Furthermore, I expect younger participants to be more lenient in offender punishment and more willing to select a rehabilitative option for the offender across all of the vignettes.

**Table 2.1** Expected Research Significance (compared to White Offender-White Victim IPV Vignette)

	Offender Culpability	Victim Culpability	Offender Punishment Severity	Seriousness of Scenario	Rehabilitation of Offender
Black on Black	+	-	+	-	-
Black on White	+/-	+/-	+	+	-
White on Black	-	+	-	-	+



## **CHAPTER THREE:**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **Participants and Procedure**

Participants for this study were a convenience sample recruited from Amazon's Mechanical Turk (Peer, Vosgerau, & Acquisti, 2014). Mechanical Turk also referred to as MTurk, was created in 2005 as a service to "crowd-source" labor intensive tasks, but now has become an online platform for experimental research that offers complete anonymity for both researchers and participants (Paolacci, Chandler, & Ipeirotis, 2010). This new innovative technology outsources to an online workforce that complete HITs (Human Intelligence Tasks) for a small compensation (Bartneck, Duenser, Moltchanova, & Zawieska, 2015). Task creators set parameters for participants depending upon what they want for their sample. For tasks in which they meet the eligibility criteria, users are able to see a short description of tasks, and the amount that they will be paid upon completion (Paolacci, Chandler, & Ipeirotis, 2010).

Mechanical Turk provides numerous benefits for researchers who are looking for large samples and may be limited by resources and time. One of the greatest benefits is the ease of recruitment and data collection (Bartneck, Duenser, Moltchanova, & Zawieska, 2015). After the creation and uploading of a survey to the website, the researcher does not have to personally administer the survey to participants, unlike most experimental research designs. This is extremely beneficial for this study which requires a large sample. Although there are concerns regarding the type of participants that use MTurk for data collection, there have been

recommendations from other researchers to help increase the control over the type of participants by using the option to set limitations or qualifiers for the survey, such as setting limitations to workers who are U.S. residents (Paolacci, Chandler, & Ipeirotis, 2010). The limits set for this study were that the user must live in the U.S., be a Master worker, or have a HIT approval rate of 98% or higher and been approved for completing at least 10,000 HITs.

With this new technology there are concerns for the reliability and validity of using an anonymous survey site, but MTurk data collection has shown to reduce the threats to reliability and validity that experimental researchers frequently encounter (Paolacci, Chandler, & Ipeirotis, 2010). MTurk participants are required to use a credit card to create an account, which limits the possibility of one participant taking a survey under false identities multiple times (Paolacci, Chandler, & Ipeirotis, 2010). Sampling high-reputation workers (participants that completed more than 500 HITs on MTurk), known as Master Workers, has increased the reliability of collected data (Peer, Vosgerau, & Acquisti, 2014).

A pilot study of 100 participants tested the wording of the vignettes and the measures used in this study. The pilot survey consisted of the same vignettes, however the questions were not worded with names of the participants and just referred to the offender and victim with pronouns. After analysis of the pilot data the vignette questions were expanded by including more questions that measured responsibility and culpability of both offender and victim by using different phrasing of the questions and by using the name of the offender and the victim in the questions. A convenience sample of 10 students was utilized to test what race they associated with the names used in the vignettes, and there was 100.00% accuracy of name and race recognition.

## Vignettes

The use of vignettes in social science research, especially studies that seek to measure opinion or decision making is arguably the most reliable form of measurement (Alexander & Becker, 1978). By implementing a short story or description of an event in which references to the subject matter are strategically implemented the researcher is able to create a standardized measure across subjects over a questionnaire or interview (Alexander & Becker, 1978). Another benefit of vignette design is the ability to create multiple conditions by varying aspects of the vignette across participants, which allow for the analysis of these effects on participants' judgments or decision making (Alexander & Becker, 1978). This study implements the use of vignette design by including three different vignettes assigned to each participant, each of which depict a unique IPV scenario that involves a form of IPV. The first vignette involves physical assault by the husband in which he shoves his wife causing definite physical harm. The second vignette is a form of verbal assault where the husband threatens to physically abuse his wife. In this situation the husband is mad at his wife after she comes home from a night at the bar with friends and accuses her of cheating, and looks through her phone before threatening to slap her if he ever caught her cheating. The third and last vignette is a form of marital rape, when the husband forces his wife to have sex with him even when she explicitly denies him. (See Appendix B)

There were four conditions for the vignettes that varied based upon the race of the offender and the victim; the four conditions included: White offender/White victim, Black offender/Black victim, Black offender/White victim, and White offender/Black victim. Each respondent was randomly assigned all three vignettes with one of the four conditions of race that remained the constant throughout all three vignettes. In each vignette the race of the victim was

not explicitly included in order to prevent priming of race which could influence the effect of racial bias on the vignette responses. In attempts to make race ambiguous and prevent conscious priming, this study implemented race by using stereotypical Black and White names for the offenders and victims in the vignette instead of explicitly stating their race (Fazio & Olson, 2003). In this study, the Black female is named Aaliyah and the Black male is named Jamaal, and the White female is named Katie, and the White male is named Jake.

### **Sample**

The final sample of 401 participants was comprised of 47.88% male and 52.12% female participants. The average age of respondents was 40 years old, and respondents aged from 20 to 72 years old. The sample consisted of 76.56% White Non-Hispanic/ Latino and 8.73% Black Non-Hispanic/Latino participants, the remaining 10.22% of the sample included American Indian, Asian, Samoan, and other. Only 7 out of 401 of the participants were non-White or Black Hispanic/Latino, therefore, race and ethnicity were coded as three categories- Non-Hispanic or Latino White, Non-Hispanic/Latino Black, and the 10.22% of respondents who identified as neither Black or White. Almost half of the sample (49.87%) had a college degree or higher, and 45.64% reported a total annual household income of more than \$50,000 (approximately the national average). Participants also reported their political orientation with the majority of the sample (42.39%) labeling themselves as liberal, 33.92% were moderate, and 23.69% were conservative. As far as participant's prior IPV experience, 38.15% indicated personal experience of IPV, and 59.35% of the sample knew someone who had experienced some form of IPV. (See Table 3.2 for full sample characteristics)

## Measures

### Dependent Variables

The questions following each of the vignettes were created and adapted from previous vignette design studies (Carlson & Worden, 2005; George & Martinez, 2002; Harrison & Esqueda, 2000; Pierce & Harris, 1993; Trangsrud, 2010). The participants were asked the same series of 20 questions following each vignette. The first two questions following each vignette gauged the perceived overall seriousness of the scenario and asked the participant to rate how violent they perceived the scenario to be. Next, the participant was asked six questions about Katie or Aaliyah depending on which condition they were assigned. These questions asked about the seriousness of her injuries (if she was injured) both physically and emotionally, her level of responsibility for what happened, if she had control over the situation, and whether she provoked Jake or Jamaal in some way. The respondent then answered another set of questions about the level of culpability of either Jake or Jamaal. These questions included asking the participant if they thought Jake or Jamaal's character was responsible for what happened and if his behavior was responsible for what happened. The next two questions asked the respondent to rate how much Jake or Jamaal was to blame for the incident and overall, was he the most at fault for what transpired. Next, the respondent was asked how likely is it that Katie or Aaliyah had been in this type of situation before and whether or not they believe Jake or Jamaal will become more violent with her in the future.

The concept of seriousness of the scenario was conceptualized using the first four questions from the vignette that include ratings of seriousness of the vignette and evaluation of injury of the victim. These four items had an internal consistency of 0.81. The next concept was victim culpability and was measured using 4 questions from the vignette questionnaire and had

an internal consistency of 0.92. Offender culpability was measured using 5 questions and had an internal consistency of 0.82.

The next set of questions was adapted from Carlson and Worden (2005) study about public perceptions of what acts are considered domestic violence and asked the participant if the scenario is an act of IPV as well as if it is a violation of the law. The possible answers for their response are consistent with the Carlson and Worden (2005) study in which the participant can answer: *Yes, No, Do Not Know*. Each of the two questions was measured as its own dependent variable.

The variable of punishment was conceptualized using two questions separately. Using a likert scale, the first question asked whether or not Jake or Jamaal should be arrested. The next question asked participants if Jake or Jamaal was arrested and convicted with a criminal act of domestic violence what should the punishment be: (they could select all that apply) fine, community service, mandatory domestic batterer treatment program, probation, prison/jail sentence. This measure was measured with two measures of punishment if they selected the option of jail/prison or parole, and rehabilitation if they selected community service or a mandatory batterer's treatment program.

**Table 3.1** Mean Scores for Dependent Variable by Vignette and Condition

	White Off/ White Vic	Black Off/ Black Victim	White Off/ Black Victim	Black Off/ White Victim
	<b>Physical</b>			
Seriousness M (SD) Range	3.32 (0.42) 2-4	3.10 (0.54) 1.50-4	3.23 (0.43) 2-4	3.15 (0.48) 2-4
Victim Culp M (SD) Range	1.72 (0.88) 1-4.50	1.79 (1.05) 1-6	1.79 (0.85) 1-4.25	1.86 (0.95) 1-4.75
Offender Culp M (SD) Range	6.63 (0.54) 4.40-7	6.60 (0.60) 4.20-7	6.59 (0.56) 3.80-7	6.54 (0.60) 4.20-7
DV Label-Yes F(%) Range	94 (96.91%) 0-1	91 (91.92%) 0-2	91 (91.92%) 0-2	100 (95.24%) 0-2
DV Law Violation- Yes F(%)	75 (77.32%) 0-2	83 (83.84%) 0-2	77 (77.78%) 0-2	88(83.81%) 0-2
Offender Arrest M (SD) Range	5.32 (1.40) 2-7	5.57 (1.61) 1-7	5.77 (1.24) 2-7	5.49 (1.45) 1-7
Offender Punishment-Yes F(%)	21 (21.65%)	32 (32.32%)	24 (24.24%)	22 (20.95%)
Offender Rehabilitation- Yes F(%)	93 (95.88%)	85 (85.86%)	94 (94.95%)	97 (92.38%)
	<b>Verbal</b>			
Seriousness M (SD) Range	2.53 (0.61) 1-4	2.31 (0.72) 0.75-4	2.37 (0.65) 1-4	2.28 (0.71) 0.75-4
Victim Culp M (SD) Range	2.39 (1.42) 1-7	2.16 (1.44) 1-7	2.25 (1.33) 1-7	2.33 (1.34) 1-5.75
Offender Culp M (SD) Range	6.29 (0.87) 1.80-7	6.40 (0.94) 2-7	6.09 (0.86) 2.40-7	6.27 (0.95) 2.40-7
DV Label F(%) Range	41 (42.71%) 0-2	42 (42.42%) 0-2	48 (48.48%) 0-2	42 (40.00%) 0-2
DV Law Violation F(%) Range	13 (13.40%) 0-2	22 (22.22%) 0-2	28 (28.28%) 0-2	22 (20.95%) 0-2
Offender Arrest M (SD) Range	2.86 (1.49) 1-7	3.22 (1.79) 1-7	3.29 (1.70) 1-7	3.19 (1.67) 1-7
Offender Punishment F(%)	3 (3.09%)	8 (8.08%)	6 (6.06%)	6 (5.71%)
Offender Rehabilitation F(%)	83 (85.57%)	79 (79.80%)	84 (84.85%)	93 (88.57%)

**Table 3.1** Mean Scores for Dependent Variable by Vignette and Condition Continued

	White Off/ White Vic	Black Off/ Black Victim	White Off/ Black Victim	Black Off/ White Victim
<b>Marital Rape</b>				
Seriousness M (SD) Range	3.53 (0.61) 0.50-4	3.35 (0.60) 1.25-4	3.62 (0.48) 1.50-4	3.58 (0.51) 2-4
Victim Culp M (SD) Range	1.73 (1.01) 1-5	1.75 (1.36) 1-7	1.74 (1.22) 1-7	1.63 (1.10) 1-7
Offender Culp M (SD) Range	6.70 (0.61) 4-7	6.65 (0.72) 2.80-7	6.78 (0.45) 4.60-7	6.69 (0.63) 4-7
DV Label F(%) Range	88 (91.67%) 0-2	89 (90.82%) 0-2	91 (91.92%) 0-2	86 (91.43%) 0-2
DV Law Violation F(%) Range	80 (82.47%) 0-2	86 (86.87%) 0-2	85 (85.86%) 0-2	89 (86.41%) 0-2
Offender Arrest M (SD) Range	5.86 (1.51) 1-7	6.14 (1.53) 1-7	6.22 (1.31) 1-7	6.32 (1.21) 1-7
Offender Punishment F(%)	63 (64.95%)	78 (78.79%)	75 (75.76%)	82 (78.10%)
Offender Rehabilitation F(%)	76 (78.35%)	65 (65.66%)	71 (71.72%)	72 (68.57%)

*Note: Seriousness= perceived seriousness score of the vignette, Victim Culp= victim culpability score, Offender Culp= offender culpability score, DV Label= if participant's answered that the vignette was an act of IPV, DV Law Violation= if participant's answered that the vignette was a violation of the law, Offender Arrest= likert scale score of agreement that offender should be arrested, Offender Punishment= if participant chose parole, and/or jail/prison as punishment for offender, Offender Rehabilitation= if participant chose domestic batterer program and/or community service as punishment for offender*

### **Additional Scales and Demographics**

The last portion of the survey measured demographics and additional scales to measure other known correlates to racial biases, as well as collected additional information used during data analysis. The purpose of this study was to determine how racial bias influences public perceptions of IPV, and the choice to label the scenario a violation of the law. There is evidence that attitudes about women, rape myth acceptance, violence, and racism are all correlated with one another (Aosved & Long, 2006). The addition of these scales also provided the data



necessary to discover any type of interaction effects as well as provide further information about participant characteristics.

**Symbolic Racism Scale.** This scale was created to measure symbolic racism, which is meant to be a modern construct of racism in today's culture (Sears & Henry, 2003). The scale was created using items from the National Elections Study (NES) and the Los Angeles County Social Surveys (LACSS). Some of the items are: "Most Blacks who receive money from welfare could get along without it if they tried," and "Blacks are getting too demanding in their push for equal rights." In this sample the overall mean for SRS was 3.84 (SD=1.05).

**Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale Revised (IRMA-R).** This scale was created with the two goals of modifying the existing IRMA scale by updating the language and to capture more subtly rape myths with a more direct focus on victim blaming (McMahon & Farmer, 2011). The new scale contains 22 items and produced a Cronbach's alpha of 0.87 among 951 undergraduate students. Some of the items are: "When girls go to parties wearing slutty clothes, they are asking for trouble," and "If a girl doesn't physically resist sex—even if protesting verbally—it really can't be considered rape." The overall mean for IRMA-R in this sample was 2.47 (SD=1.08).

**Attitudes Towards Violence Scale (ATVS).** The ATV is a 20 item scale that was derived from an original 47-item scale and designed to measure two concepts-attitudes towards violence in intimate partner relationships, and in other domains (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1995). Lonsway and Fitzgerald (1995) obtained an alpha of 0.87 in the first trial of their shortened measure. A study of high school students also obtained an alpha of 0.87 for the ATV (Davidson & Canivez, 2012). The items are all measured on a 7-point likert scale ranging from 1(not at all agree) to 7(very much agree), and then the items are summed for a total score. Some of the items

are: “Violent crimes should be punished violently,” and “it is all right for the partner to hit the other if they are unfaithful.” The overall mean for ATVS in this sample was 3.06 (SD=0.95).

**Domestic Violence Myth Acceptance Scale (DVMAS).** The DVMAS was created with the concept of the IRMA, but instead measures IPV myths. The final scale contains 18 items with a measured internal reliability of 0.81 (Peters, 2008). Some of the myths included in the scale are: “If a woman continues living with a man who beat her then its her own fault if she is beaten again,” and “A lot of IPV occurs because women keep on arguing about things with their partners.” The overall mean for DVMAS in this sample was 2.78 (SD=1.03).

**Personal experience with IPV and demographics.** Lastly, participants were asked to provide demographic information as well as information regarding personal experience with IPV. This data was collected last in an attempt to limit stereotype threat on performance (Maass & Cadinu, 2003). The questions about personal experience were developed using the CTS2 as a basis (Straus, Hamby, Boney-McCoy, & Sugarman, 1996). The questions included whether the participant or someone they are close to had experienced various forms of IPV using specific examples (see Appendix B). This measure is important as it was used to control for any bias among responses. During analysis these answers were created into two binary variables of primary and secondary IPV exposure and used in the models as a demographic variable of control.

Demographics were collected and prevalence rates can be found in Table 3.2. Participants were also asked how they define their personal religion (options included: None, Jewish, Catholic, Protestant, Muslim, Presbyterian, Episcopalian, Lutheran, Methodist, Baptist, Other), and how often they practice religion. Participants were then asked to indicate how important religion is to their personal beliefs and to their political opinions. And finally, participants were

asked to label their personal political orientation from the following categories that were derived from public opinion polling: extremely conservative, conservative, moderate, liberal, and extremely liberal (Jones, 2016). In final analysis moderate was used as a reference category and conservative and extremely conservative were dummy coded into one category while liberal and extremely liberal were dummy coded as the other category. Religion and political orientation were measured in this survey because of known correlations to attitudes towards women, punishment, and racial bias (Aosved & Long, 2006; Green, Starkle, & Sears, 2006).

### **Analytic Strategy**

The first step of the preliminary analyses was cleaning the data. This process included removing any responses that were multiples from the same respondent, as well as deleting responses that were completed in less than 8 minutes. To create a time cutoff, I analyzed the distribution of timing of completion for the survey by first eliminating all participants who took more than an hour and then used the mean of 18.22 minutes minus 1 standard deviation of 10.30 minutes to create a cutoff of 8 minutes. After cleaning the data, 12 respondents were dropped for multiple responses and another 7 responses dropped for completing the survey in less than 8 minutes. After the removal of these responses I analyzed each item in the data set to assess how the percent of missing data, however, none of the items had more than 3.00% missing data (see Table 3.2), and therefore analyses do not include imputation.

The next set of analyses were conducted in order to answer the research questions directly:

- 1) Does the race of the offender and the victim determine how serious an act of IPV is perceived, as well as influence the level of blame for both the offender and the victim?

This question was answered by analyzing the relationship of the race of the offender and the victim with the variables of seriousness of the scenario, victim culpability, and offender culpability. For each of the dependent variables, three separate models were constructed for each of the vignettes (physical, verbal, and sexual abuse). All three variables were estimated using OLS regression. Analyses proceeded in a step-wise fashion. First, the dependent variables were regressed on the racial dyads. Second, relevant controls reflecting the demographic characteristics of the respondent were added to the models, these variables included gender, age, education, SES, race, and IPV experience. Finally, information pertaining to attitudes regarding rape myth acceptance and attitudes towards violence were included.

- 2) What factors determine whether or not a participant will label one of the scenarios as an act of IPV? Will this also predict their endorsement of whether the scenario is also a violation of the law?

The measure of labeling the vignette an act of domestic violence and indicating if was a law violation were both measured with the participant answering yes, no, or do not know for each question. These variables were then analyzed using a multinomial regression model (MRM). The models were estimated using a similar step-wise progression as the models before by first estimating a MRM models for each of the vignettes with just the variable of interest and the racial dyads. The next set of models included demographic variables of interest, and the last complete model include known measures of attitudes and feelings of rape myth acceptance, racism, violence, and each model included whether or not the participant answered yes to the other question.

- 3) What characteristics of the offender and the victim, as well as the participant, will affect the type of punishment that participants will deem fit for the crime?

Punishment was measured using three variables, the first was a likert scale measure of whether or not the participant believed that the offender should be arrested, the next two measures were based upon the participant's indication of what the punishment should be if the offender were arrested and were dichotomized into punishment or rehabilitation. The first variable of arrest was analyzed using an OLS regression model, and the two binary variables of punishment and rehabilitation were measured using a logistic regression model. The models were estimated using a step-wise progression as previous models in which each vignette was measured separately using three different models. The first model included just the dependent variable and the racial dyad. The second model added in demographic control variables, and the last full model included known measures of attitudes about domestic violence, violence, and racial beliefs.

- 4) Does race of the offender and the victim affect the severity of the type of punishment that is endorsed?

This question was answered similar to the previous question by analyzing the variables of arrest and punishment and rehabilitation.

**Table 3.2** Descriptive Statistics

Variable- (% missing)	F (%)	M(SD)	Range	Alpha
<b>Dependent Variables</b>				
Seriousness of the Scenario-(0.91%)		3.05 (0.76)	0.50-4	0.81
Victim Culpability-(1.25%)		1.93 (1.20)	1-7	0.92
Offender Culpability-(1.58%)		6.52 (0.74)	1.80-8	0.82
Previous Victimization-(0.50%)		5.27 (1.40)	1-7	
Future Aggression-(0.42%)		6.26 (1.00)	1-7	
DV Label- Yes (0.50%)	304 (75.89%)			
DV Law Violation- Yes (0.42%)	249 (62.18%)			
Offender Arrest (0.42%)		4.94 (1.98)	1-7	
Offender Punishment	140 (34.91%)			
Offender Rehabilitation	331(82.71%)			
<b>Demographics</b>				
Age- (0.25%)		39.73 (11.48)	20-72	
Gender- Male	192 (47.88%)			
Sexual Orientation- Heterosexual	369 (92.02%)			
Race-Other	123 (10.22%)			
Black Non-Hispanic	35 (8.73%)			
Married	174 (43.39%)			
Has Children	194 (48.38%)			
Education- Bachelors or higher (0.25%)	200 (49.87%)			
SES- over \$50,000/yr	183 (45.64%)			
Religion-None	188 (46.88%)			
Religion- Christian	155 (38.65%)			
Political Beliefs- Conservative	95 (23.69%)			
Liberal	170 (42.39%)			
<b>Attitudes and Experiences</b>				
Symbolic Racism Scale-(3.74%)		3.84 (1.05)	1.66-6.22	0.96
IRMA-R- (1.75%)		2.47 (1.08)	1-6.95	0.94
ATV- (2.24%)		3.06 (0.95)	1.10-6.30	0.90
DVMAS- (1.50%)		2.78 (1.03)	1-5.94	0.92
Primary IPV experience	153 (38.15%)			
Secondary IPV experience	238 (59.35%)			

*Note: Race-Other= all participants that did not indicate that they were White or Black, Religious-None= participants that indicated that did not associate with any religious groups, Religion-Christian= participants that identified as either Catholic or Protestant*

## CHAPTER FOUR:

### RESULTS

For the following analyses each model was estimated separately for each of the three vignettes (physical, verbal, rape). The models were estimated step-wise with the first model only including the racial dyads, the second model including the racial dyads and demographic variables (gender, age, education, SES, race, experience with IPV), and the final model including the racial dyads, demographic variables, and known measures of attitudes (SRS, IRMA-R, ATV, DVMAS).

#### **Seriousness**

The variable of seriousness was measured using the average score of the first four vignette questions and had an internal consistency of 0.81 (See Table 4.1). The first model for physical violence was able to significantly predict ratings of seriousness. The Black offender and Black victim racial dyad was associated with lower ratings of seriousness in comparison to the White offender and White victim ( $b=-0.22$ ,  $SE=0.07$ ,  $p<.001$ ). The Black offender and White victim dyad was also associated with lower ratings of seriousness in comparison to the White offender and White victim ( $b=-0.17$ ,  $SE=0.07$ ,  $p.05$ ). The second model of physical violence that included the racial dyads and demographic variables was also able to significantly predict seriousness scores. The same racial dyads were significant predictors in the second model with the addition of male participants being associated with lower scores of seriousness in comparison

to female participants ( $b=-0.12$ ,  $SE=0.05$ ,  $p<.05$ ). The final model for physical violence vignette significantly predicted participants' ratings of seriousness of the scenario. The two racial dyads were still significant predictors in the final model. Seriousness scores were significantly lower for the Black offender and Black victim condition ( $b=-0.29$ ,  $SE=0.069$ ,  $p<.001$ ) in comparison to the control condition of White offender and White victim, controlling all other variables in the model. The Black offender and White victim condition's scores were also significantly lower ( $b=-0.21$ ,  $SE=0.07$ ,  $p<.01$ ) in comparison to the control condition while controlling for all other variables in the model. In the final model Black victim and Black offender dyad had stronger effect on serious scores in comparison to the effect of the Black offender and White victim dyad. Even though both racial dyads that had a Black offender were significant predictors in the model, the Black offender and Black victim had a stronger magnitude of an effect on the ratings of seriousness.

The first model for verbal threat that included just the racial dyads was a significant predictor of seriousness scores. The Black offender and Black victim racial dyad was associated with lower seriousness scores in comparison to the White offender and White victim dyad ( $b=-0.22$ ,  $SE=0.10$ ,  $p<.05$ ). The racial dyad of Black offender and White victim was also associated with lower scores of seriousness in comparison to the reference group of White offender and White victim ( $b=-0.25$ ,  $SE=0.10$ ,  $p<.01$ ). The second model for verbal threat that included the racial dyads and demographics was also a predictor of ratings of seriousness. In this model the same racial dyads were still significant predictors with the addition of male participants being associated with lower seriousness scores in comparison to female participants ( $b=-0.26$ ,  $SE=0.07$ ,  $p<.001$ ). The second vignette for verbal threat's final model significantly predicted ratings of the seriousness of the scenario. The racial dyads of Black offender and Black victim and



Black offender and White victim remained significant predictors, however in the final model the White offender and Black victim dyad also became a significant predictor ( $b=-0.20$ ,  $SE=0.10$ ,  $p<.05$ ). Males had significantly lower scores in comparison to females ( $b= -0.16$ ,  $SE=0.08$ ,  $p<.05$ ), while controlling for all other variables. Race and higher scores on the DVMAAS were predictive of lower ratings of seriousness of the scenario while controlling for all other variables. The last model showed a significant negative relationship between the racial dyads and the ratings of seriousness, in comparison with one another the Black offender and Black victim had the strongest effect size, the Black offender and White victim had the second strongest effect, and the White offender and Black victim had the weakest effect size in comparison.

The first model for marital rape that included just the racial dyads was not able to predict seriousness scores. The second model that included the racial dyads and demographics was able to predict seriousness scores. A one year increase in age was associated with a decrease in seriousness score ( $b=-0.01$ ,  $SE=0.00$ ,  $p<.05$ ) while controlling for all other variables. In comparison to participants that were White or Black, minority participants were associated with higher scores of seriousness ( $b=0.27$ ,  $SE=0.10$ ,  $p<.01$ ). The third vignette for marital rape's final model significantly predicted ratings of the seriousness of the scenario. Again, participants who were neither Black nor White had higher scores for serious ratings ( $b=0.20$ ,  $SE=0.10$ ,  $p<.05$ ), after controlling for all other variables in the model. And in the final model higher scores on the SRS and DVMAAS scales were both associated with lower seriousness scores.

**Table 4.1** OLS Regression Model for Seriousness of the Scenario

	Physical Violence Vignette B(SE)	Verbal Aggression Vignette B(SE)	Marital Rape Vignette B(SE)
Black Offender X Black Victim	<b>-0.29 (0.07)***</b>	<b>-0.32 (0.10)***</b>	-0.05 (0.08)
White Offender X Black Victim	-0.12 (0 .07)	<b>-0.20 (0.10)*</b>	0.06 (0.08)
Black Offender X White Victim	<b>-0.21 (0.07)**</b>	<b>-0.29 (0.10)**</b>	0.04 (0.07)
Gender	-0.04 (0.05)	<b>-0.16 (0.08)*</b>	0.06 (0.06)
Age	-0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.08)	-0.00 (0.00)
Education	-0.05 (0.03)	-0.04 (0.04)	-0.02 (0.03)
SES	0.01 (0.01)	-0.00 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)
Black Non-Hispanic/Latino	0.11 (0.09)	0.17 (0.13)	<b>0.20 (0.10)*</b>
Race Other (non-Black or White)	0.06 (0.08)	<b>0.24 (0.12)*</b>	0.07 (0.09)
Primary IPV Experience	-0.04 (0.05)	-0.09 (0.07)	-0.09 (0.06)
Secondary IPV Experience	0.04 (0.05)	-0.02 (0.07)	0.06 (0.06)
SRS	-0.05 (0.03)	-0.07 (0.04)	<b>-0.08 (0.03)*</b>
IRMA-R	-0.07 (0.04)	0.07 (0.05)	-0.04 (0.04)
ATV	0.02 (0.03)	0.05 (0.06)	0.00 (0.04)
DVMAS	-0.04 (0.04)	<b>-0.20 (0.06)***</b>	<b>-0.12 (0.05)**</b>
N	365	364	366
Adj. R <sup>2</sup>	0.11	0.11	0.14
F	<b>3.87***</b>	<b>3.86***</b>	<b>4.90***</b>

Note \*= $p < .05$  \*\*= $p < .01$  \*\*\*= $p < .001$ ; Black Offender X Black Victim, White Offender X White Victim, and Black Offender X Black Victim refer to the racial dyad condition, SRS= Symbolic Racism Scale, IRMA-R= Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale Revised score, ATV= Attitudes Towards Violence Scale, DVMAS= Domestic Violence Myth Acceptance Scale Scores

### Victim Culpability

Victim culpability was measured using the average of 4 questions from the survey and had an internal consistency of 0.92 (See Table 4.2). The first set of models for victim culpability that included the racial dyads were not significant. The racial dyads also were not significant in the second model, however, the gender of the respondent was with male participants ( $b=0.40$ ,  $SE=0.10$ ,  $p < .001$ ). The final model for the physical violence vignette significantly predicted ratings of victim culpability. Higher IRMA-R scores was associated with higher scores of victim culpability ( $b=0.19$ ,  $SE=0.06$ ,  $p < .05$ ), controlling for all other variables in the model. Higher

offender culpability scores were significantly associated with lower victim culpability scores ( $b=-0.67$ ,  $SE=0.07$ ,  $p<.001$ ), after controlling for all other variables. Gender was no longer a significant predictor in the final model for physical violence.

The racial dyads also were not significant in the second model for verbal aggression, however, the gender of the respondent was with male participants ( $b=0.73$ ,  $SE=0.14$ ,  $p<.001$ ). The final model for the second vignette significantly predicted ratings of victim culpability. The racial dyad of White offender and Black victim was associated with lower victim culpability scores in comparison to the White offender and White victim ( $b=-0.32$ ,  $SE=0.14$ ,  $p<.05$ ), while controlling for all other variables. Higher ATV and DVMAS scores were also significantly associated with higher victim culpability scores while controlling for all other variables. Higher offender culpability scores were associated with lower victim culpability scores, ( $b=-0.76$ ,  $SE=0.06$ ,  $p<.001$ ) controlling for all other variables. Again, in the full model gender was no longer a significant predictor of victim culpability.

The racial dyads also were not significant in the second model, however, the gender of the respondent was with male participants ( $b=0.48$ ,  $SE=0.12$ ,  $p<.001$ ), and race was with minority respondents ( $b=0.40$ ,  $SE=0.20$ ,  $p<.05$ ), while controlling for all other variables in the model. The final model for marital rape significantly predicted ratings of victim culpability. Higher IRMA-R and DVMAS scores were both associated with higher scores of victim culpability while controlling for all other variables. Higher victim culpability scores were also significantly associated with lower victim culpability scores ( $b=-0.98$ ,  $SE=0.08$ ,  $p<.001$ ), while controlling for all other variables. In the final model gender and race were no longer significant predictors of victim culpability.

**Table 4.2** OLS Regression Model for Victim Culpability

	Physical Violence Vignette B(SE)	Verbal Aggression Vignette B(SE)	Marital Rape Vignette B(SE)
Black Offender X Black Victim	-0.03 (0.10)	-0.20 (0.14)	-0.07 (0.12)
White Offender X Black Victim	0.02 (0.10)	<b>-0.32 (0.14)*</b>	0.10 (0.12)
Black Offender X White Victim	0.09 (0.10)	-0.03 (0.13)	-0.09 (0.12)
Gender	0.08 (0.08)	0.11 (0.11)	0.08 (0.09)
Age	-0.01 (0.00)	-0.01 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)
Education	-0.02 (0.04)	0.05 (0.06)	-0.01 (0.05)
SES	0.02 (0.01)	0.01 (0.02)	-0.01 (0.02)
Black Non-Hispanic/Latino	0.14 (0.14)	0.04 (0.18)	-0.19 (0.15)
Race Other (non-Black or White)	0.15 (0.13)	0.31 (0.17)	0.28 (0.14)
Primary IPV Experience	-0.04 (0.08)	0.13 (0.10)	-0.05 (0.09)
Secondary IPV Experience	-0.03 (0.08)	0.22 (0.10)	0.03 (0.09)
SRS	-0.00 (0.05)	-0.08 (0.06)	-0.05 (0.05)
IRMA-R	<b>0.19 (0.06)***</b>	0.14 (0.08)	<b>0.16 (0.07)*</b>
ATV	0.03 (0.05)	<b>0.16 (0.07)*</b>	0.02 (0.06)
DVMAS	0.11 (0.06)	<b>0.31 (0.08)***</b>	<b>0.24 (0.07)**</b>
Offender Culpability	<b>-0.70 (0.07)***</b>	<b>-0.76 (0.06)***</b>	<b>-0.98 (0.08)***</b>
N	361	360	360
Adj. R <sup>2</sup>	0.44	0.57	0.53
F	<b>18.93***</b>	<b>30.43***</b>	<b>26.61***</b>

Note \*= $p < .05$  \*\*= $p < .01$  \*\*\*= $p < .001$ ; Black Offender X Black Victim, White Offender X White Victim, and Black Offender X Black Victim refer to the racial dyad condition, SRS= Symbolic Racism Scale, IRMA-R= Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale Revised score, ATV= Attitudes Towards Violence Scale, DVMAS= Domestic Violence Myth Acceptance Scale Scores, Offender Culpability= participants score on the variable for offender culpability

### Offender Culpability

The variable of offender culpability was measured using an average of the scores from 5 questions and had an internal consistency of 0.82 (See Table 4.3). None of the first models that consisted of only the racial dyads were able to predict offender culpability. The second model that included the demographics along with the racial dyads for physical violence was not able to predict offender culpability, however, the final model for the first vignette significantly predicted

ratings of offender culpability. Higher levels of education were associated with lower scores of offender culpability ( $b=-0.07$ ,  $SE=0.03$ ,  $p<.05$ ), while controlling for all other variables. Participants who were not Black or White were also associated with higher scores of offender culpability in comparison to the scores of Black and White participants ( $b=0.18$ ,  $SE=0.09$ ,  $p<.05$ ), while controlling for other variables. Lastly, a one-unit increase in victim culpability was associated with a 0.35 unit decrease in offender culpability, controlling for all other variables in the model.

The racial dyads also were not significant in the second model for verbal aggression, however, the gender of the respondent was with male participants ( $b=-0.448$ ,  $SE=0.095$ ,  $p<.001$ ). The final model for the verbal threat vignette significantly predicted ratings of offender culpability. The racial dyad White offender and Black victim racial dyad was associated with lower scores of offender culpability in comparison to the White offender and White victim racial dyad ( $b=-0.23$ ,  $SE=0.11$ ,  $p<.05$ ), controlling for all other variables. A one-unit increase in SRS scores was associated with a -0.11 decrease in offender culpability scores while controlling for all other variables in the model. The last predictive variable in this model was scores for victim culpability which were also associated with lower scores of offender culpability ( $b=-0.44$ ,  $SE=0.03$ ,  $p<.001$ ). In the final model gender was no longer a significant predictor of offender culpability.

The second model for marital rape was not able to predict offender culpability score, however, the final model for the marital rape vignette significantly predicted ratings of offender culpability. The only significant predictor of offender culpability scores was victim culpability scores. A one-unit increase in victim culpability scores was associated with a -0.44 decrease in offender culpability scores while controlling for all other variables in the model.

In both models of offender and victim culpability the measure of the other was added to the final regression and was a significant predictor across all final models. This finding is consistent with known research that indicates that lower culpability for the victim is associated with culpability for the offender, and is indicative of a good measure for both victim and offender culpability.

**Table 4.3** OLS Regression Model for Offender Culpability

	Physical Violence Vignette B(SE)	Verbal Aggression Vignette B(SE)	Marital Rape Vignette B(SE)
Black Offender X Black Victim	-0.03 (0.07)	-0.03 (0.11)	-0.03 (0.07)
White Offender X Black Victim	-0.02 (0.07)	<b>-0.23 (0.11)*</b>	0.10 (0.07)
Black Offender X White Victim	-0.03 (0.07)	-0.03 (0.10)	-0.00 (0.07)
Gender	0.02 (0.06)	-0.13 (0.08)	0.03 (0.05)
Age	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)
Education	<b>-0.07 (0.03)*</b>	-0.03 (0.04)	-0.05 (0.03)
SES	0.02 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	0.00 (0.01)
Black Non-Hispanic/Latino	0.10 (0.10)	0.04 (0.14)	-0.10 (0.09)
Race Other (non-Black or White)	<b>0.18 (0.09)*</b>	0.15 (0.13)	0.09 (0.09)
Primary IPV Experience	-0.07 (0.06)	-0.10 (0.08)	-0.07 (0.05)
Secondary IPV Experience	0.07 (0.05)	0.05 (0.08)	0.08 (0.05)
SRS	0.05 (0.03)	<b>-0.11 (0.05)*</b>	-0.01 (0.03)
IRMA-R	-0.01 (0.04)	0.10 (0.06)	0.06 (0.04)
ATV	-0.00 (0.04)	0.05 (0.05)	-0.00 (0.03)
DVMAS	-0.07 (0.04)	-0.06 (0.07)	-0.08 (0.04)
Victim Culpability	<b>-0.35 (0.03)***</b>	<b>-0.44 (0.03)***</b>	<b>-0.34 (0.03)***</b>
N	361	360	360
Adj. R <sup>2</sup>	0.33	0.44	0.43
F	<b>12.24***</b>	<b>18.92***</b>	<b>18.06***</b>

Note \*= $p < .05$  \*\*= $p < .01$  \*\*\*= $p < .001$ ; Black Offender X Black Victim, White Offender X White Victim, and Black Offender X Black Victim refer to the racial dyad condition, SRS= Symbolic Racism Scale, IRMA-R= Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale Revised score, ATV= Attitudes Towards Violence Scale, DVMAS= Domestic Violence Myth Acceptance Scale Scores, Victim Culpability= respondents scores on victim culpability measure

## IPV Labeling and Law Violation

The variables for labeling the vignette as an act of IPV and deciding whether or not it was a violation of the law were each measured using one question with an option of three answers (yes, no, do not know). Each of the questions was analyzed separately and by each of the vignettes and the answer of *yes* was used as the base outcome in the models because we were interested in what factors were significant predictors of *not knowing* and answering *no*. Across all 4 conditions 94.00% of respondents labeled the physical violence vignette an act of IPV, while 4.50% were unsure, and 1.50% did not label it as an act of IPV. The first two models for physical violence did not predict IPV labeling (See Table 4.4). However, the final model for the physical violence vignette significantly predicted ratings of whether or not respondents would label the vignette as an act of IPV. Consistent with the findings by Carlson and Worden (2005) male respondents were associated with not knowing and not labeling physical violence as IPV. The odds of answering do not know for whether or not the vignette is an act of IPV were 575.30% for males than females, while controlling for all other variables. The odds for not knowing whether or not the physical violence vignette was an act of IPV were 97.30% lower for participants who thought the act was against the law.

Across all of the 4 conditions only 43.36% of respondents labeled the verbal aggression vignette and act of IPV, 18.55% were unsure, and 38.10% did not believe it was an act of IPV. The first model of verbal aggression with just the racial dyads was not able to predict IPV labeling. The second model that included the racial dyads and demographic variables was able to significantly predict IPV labeling. The predictor variables in this model remained significant in the final model. The final model for the verbal aggression vignette significantly predicted ratings of whether or not respondents would label the vignette as an act of IPV. The odds of answering

do not know for the verbal aggression vignette were 145.20% higher for males compared to females, and 79.70% lower for a participant that was not White or Black, while controlling for all other variables. Level of education decreased the log odds of not knowing whether the verbal aggression vignette was an act of IPV by 0.44 while controlling for all other variables. Males had a 154.20% higher odds of not labeling the act of verbal aggression as IPV compared to females. A one unit increase in DVMA scores was associated with a 121.90% increase in the odds of labeling the act of verbal aggression as not a form of IPV.

The responses for the marital rape vignette showed that across all of the conditions 91.46% labeled the vignette an act of IPV, 4.27% were unsure, and another 4.27% did not believe it was an act of IPV. The first model for marital rape was not able to predict IPV labeling. The racial dyads also were not significant in the second model, however, the race of the respondent and experiencing secondary IPV were significant predictors. The final model for marital rape was a significant predictor of whether or not the participant would label the vignette an act of IPV. Participants that had experienced secondary forms of IPV were 79.90% less likely to not know whether or not marital rape is a form of IPV.

The first two sets of models for all three vignettes that included the racial dyads and demographic variables were not able to predict whether or not the participant would label the vignette a violation of the law. Among the responses for the physical violence vignette 80.75% of respondents believed that it was against the law, 5.00% did not believe it was illegal behavior, and 14.25% were unsure of the legality of the scenario. The final model for the physical violence vignette significantly predicted ratings of whether or not participants believed the vignette was a violation of the law (See Table 4.5). Males were 54.40% less likely to not know whether or not the vignette was against the law in comparison to females. A one-unit increase in SRS increased



the odds of labeling the vignette as not a violation of the law by 117.50% while controlling for all other variables. If the participant labeled the scenario as an act of IPV, this decreased the odds of not knowing whether it was a law violation by 97.10% and decreased the odds of deciding the vignette was not a law violation by 98.90%.

The verbal aggression vignette showed that only 21.25% of respondents agreed that it was illegal behavior, 27.75% were unsure if the scenario was a violation of law, and 51.00% believed that the vignette did not present any illegal behavior. The final model for verbal aggression vignettes significantly predicted ratings of whether or not participants believed the vignette was a violation of the law. The White offender and Black victim racial dyad decreased the odds of the participant not being sure whether or not it was a violation of the law by 64.80%, and decreased the odds of not labeling the vignette as a violation of the law 60.00% compared to the White offender and White victim dyad. An increase in socio-economic status increased the odds of not knowing whether or not the vignette was a violation of the law by 14.30%, and increased the odds of not labeling the vignette as a violation of the law by 14.10%. In the marital rape vignette only 85.43% of respondents believed it was illegal, 4.27% did not think it was illegal, and 10.30% of respondents were unsure if the vignette was a form of illegal behavior. The final marital rape vignette model was a significant predictor for whether or not the participant labeled the vignette as a violation of the law. A one year increase in age was associated with an increase of 5.20% in not knowing whether or not the vignette was a law violation while controlling for all other variables.

**Table 4.4** Multinomial Regression Model for IPV Labeling

		Physical Violence Vignette B (SE)	Verbal Aggression Vignette B (SE)	Marital Rape Vignette B (SE)
Do Not Know	Black Offender X Black Victim	1.13 (1.04)	0.63 (0.47)	-1.12 (1.25)
	White Offender X Black Victim	1.23 (1.01)	0.29 (0.49)	-0.26 (1.03)
	Black Offender X White Victim	0.86 (1.10)	0.67 (0.48)	0.41 (0.96)
	Gender	<b>1.91 (0.82)*</b>	<b>0.90 (0.36)*</b>	0.43 (0.86)
	Age	-0.01 (0.03)	-0.01 (0.02)	-0.05 (0.03)
	Education	-0.20 (0.39)	<b>-0.44 (0.20)*</b>	0.16 (0.40)
	SES	0.10 (0.13)	0.08 (0.07)	-0.27 (0.15)
	Black Non-Hispanic/Latino	-1.48 (1.44)	<b>-1.60 (0.73)*</b>	-0.21 (1.44)
	Race Other (non-Black or White)	-1.69 (1.45)	0.27 (0.53)	0.64 (1.05)
	Primary IPV Experience	-0.11 (0.73)	-0.03 (0.36)	0.11 (0.92)
	Secondary IPV Experience	-0.86 (0.70)	-0.08 (0.34)	<b>-1.60 (0.79)*</b>
	SRS	-0.32 (0.45)	-0.24 (0.22)	0.34 (0.43)
	IRMA-R	-0.12 (0.56)	0.11 (0.26)	0.34 (0.49)
	ATV	0.21 (0.45)	-0.04 (0.24)	0.12 (0.47)
	DVMAS	0.35 (0.59)	0.40 (0.29)	0.64 (0.61)
	Vignette was against the law	<b>-3.60 (0.76)***</b>	<b>-2.97 (0.65)***</b>	<b>-3.59 (0.75)***</b>
No	Black Offender X Black Victim	23.96 (2886.68)	0.01 (0.40)	-0.09 (0.97)
	White Offender X Black Victim	21.65 (2886.67)	-0.21 (0.40)	-0.92 (1.08)
	Black Offender X White Victim	22.63 (2886.68)	0.31 (0.39)	-2.44 (1.49)
	Gender	0.84 (2.37)	<b>0.93 (0.31)**</b>	1.46 (1.00)
	Age	0.08 (0.13)	-0.01 (0.01)	-0.05 (0.04)
	Education	-2.25 (1.71)	-0.16 (0.17)	-0.68 (0.45)
	SES	-0.36 (0.43)	-0.01 (0.06)	0.22 (0.15)
	Black Non-Hispanic/Latino	4.81 (3.39)	-0.98 (0.52)	0.27 (1.40)
	Race Other (non-Black or White)	5.74 (5.65)	-0.54 (0.53)	-0.62 (1.64)
	Primary IPV Experience	-1.71 (2.39)	0.46 (0.30)	1.20 (0.84)
	Secondary IPV Experience	-3.74 (3.91)	-0.17 (0.29)	-1.33 (0.84)
	SRS	2.34 (1.99)	-0.08 (0.18)	0.44 (0.46)
	IRMA-R	3.52 (2.62)	-0.02 (0.22)	-0.10 (0.58)
	ATV	-2.73 (2.19)	0.05 (0.20)	0.02 (0.56)
	DVMAS	-3.88 (3.45)	<b>0.80 (0.24)***</b>	0.60 (0.74)
	Vignette was against the law	-23.58 (2185.04)	<b>-2.67 (0.45)**</b>	<b>-4.31 (0.90)***</b>
	N	367	366	365
	LR chi2	<b>92.24***</b>	<b>143.21***</b>	<b>117.46***</b>
R <sup>2</sup>	0.48	0.19	0.47	

Note \*= $p < .05$  \*\*= $p < .01$  \*\*\*= $p < .001$ ; Black Offender X Black Victim, White Offender X White Victim, and Black Offender X Black Victim refer to the racial dyad condition, SRS= Symbolic Racism Scale, IRMA-R= Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale Revised score, ATV= Attitudes Towards Violence Scale, DVMAS= Domestic Violence Myth Acceptance Scale Scores, Vignette was against the law= if respondent indicated that the vignette was against the law

**Table 4.5** Multinomial Regression Model for IPV Law Violation

		Physical Violence Vignette B (SE)	Verbal Aggression Vignette B (SE)	Marital Rape Vignette B (SE)
Do Not Know	Black Offender X Black Victim	-0.72 (0.51)	-0.77 (0.51)	-0.74 (0.62)
	White Offender X Black Victim	-0.15 (0.45)	<b>-1.05 (0.50)*</b>	0.11 (0.54)
	Black Offender X White Victim	-0.47 (0.45)	-0.56 (0.50)	-0.24 (0.56)
	Gender	<b>-0.79 (0.39)*</b>	0.07 (0.36)	-0.43 (0.45)
	Age	0.01 (0.02)	0.03 (0.02)	<b>0.05 (0.02)**</b>
	Education	0.29 (0.20)	0.06 (0.20)	0.11 (0.23)
	SES	-0.05 (0.07)	<b>0.13 (0.07)*</b>	0.03 (0.08)
	Black Non-Hispanic/Latino	-0.17 (0.66)	-0.04 (0.59)	-1.40 (1.16)
	Race Other (non-Black or White)	-0.45 (0.69)	0.32 (0.54)	0.63 (0.67)
	Primary IPV Experience	0.32 (0.35)	0.26 (0.37)	-0.05 (0.44)
	Secondary IPV Experience	0.36 (0.36)	0.12 (0.34)	-0.44 (0.41)
	SRS	-0.01 (0.21)	-0.17 (0.22)	-0.17 (0.25)
	IRMA-R	-0.04 (0.26)	-0.10 (0.28)	0.16 (0.31)
	ATV	0.28 (0.24)	0.30 (0.24)	0.12 (0.28)
	DVMAS	0.32 (0.28)	0.04 (0.30)	-0.06 (0.33)
Vignette was an act of IPV	<b>-3.53 (0.73)***</b>	<b>-1.07 (0.26)***</b>	<b>-3.22 (0.61)***</b>	
No	Black Offender X Black Victim	-0.31 (0.81)	-0.40 (0.47)	0.14 (0.85)
	White Offender X Black Victim	-0.25 (0.78)	<b>-0.92 (0.45)*</b>	-1.01 (1.07)
	Black Offender X White Victim	-0.65 (0.83)	-0.69 (0.46)	-0.74 (0.94)
	Gender	0.08 (0.66)	-0.23 (0.34)	0.08 (0.87)
	Age	0.01 (0.03)	0.00 (0.01)	0.03 (0.03)
	Education	0.08 (0.32)	0.00 (0.18)	0.03 (0.36)
	SES	-0.02 (0.11)	0.13 (0.06)*	0.06 (0.12)
	Black Non-Hispanic/Latino	0.87 (1.12)	-0.07 (0.53)	-1.00 (1.52)
	Race Other (non-Black or White)	9.28 (0.86)	-0.12 (0.54)	-1.11 (1.61)
	Primary IPV Experience	-0.18 (0.63)	0.21 (0.33)	1.01 (0.71)
	Secondary IPV Experience	0.72 (0.63)	0.25 (0.31)	1.02 (0.79)
	SRS	<b>0.78 (0.37)*</b>	0.10 (0.19)	0.25 (0.42)
	IRMA-R	0.79 (0.46)	-0.16 (0.25)	-0.03 (0.51)
ATV	-0.25 (0.40)	0.00 (0.21)	0.87 (0.47)	

**Table 4.5** Multinomial Regression Model for IPV Law Violation Continued

		Physical Violence Vignette B (SE)	Verbal Aggression Vignette B (SE)	Marital Rape Vignette B (SE)
No	DVMAS	-0.37 (0.49)	0.42 (0.27)	-0.05 (0.62)
	Vignette was an act of IPV	<b>-4.53 (0.85)***</b>	<b>1.13 (0.24)***</b>	<b>-4.48 (0.84)***</b>
	N	367	366	365
	LR chi2	<b>89.09***</b>	<b>148.48***</b>	<b>103.97***</b>
	R <sup>2</sup>	0.20	0.20	0.28

Note \*= $p < .05$  \*\*= $p < .01$  \*\*\*= $p < .001$ ; Black Offender X Black Victim, White Offender X White Victim, and Black Offender X Black Victim refer to the racial dyad condition, SRS= Symbolic Racism Scale, IRMA-R= Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale Revised score, ATV= Attitudes Towards Violence Scale, DVMAS= Domestic Violence Myth Acceptance Scale Scores, Vignette was an act of IPV= if respondent labeled the vignette an act of IPV

### Punishment

Punishment was measured with three measures from the vignette questions (See Tables 4.6, 4.7, and 4.8). The first measure asked the participant the degree to which they agreed that the offender should be arrested. The next question asked if the offender was arrested what type of punishment the offender should receive. Participants were allowed to select as many options as they wanted and then their answers were dichotomized into two binary variables of arrest-jail/prison/probation and rehabilitate. The first set of analyses assessed the question of whether the offender should be arrested. The first set of models that included just the racial dyads were not able to predict participants level of agreement to arrest the offender. The second model for physical violence with the addition of demographic variables to the racial dyads was not able to predict participants' agreement to arrest the offender. The final model for physical violence that included demographics, racial dyads, and known measures of attitudes significantly predicted level of agreement for arresting the offender. Higher levels of education were associated with lower scores of whether the offender should be arrested ( $b = -0.20$ ,  $SE = 0.09$ ,  $p < .05$ ). Higher

IRMA-R scores were also associated with lower levels of agreement that the offender should be arrested ( $b=-0.27$ ,  $SE=0.12$ ,  $p<.05$ ), controlling for all other variables.

The second model for verbal aggression was also not able to predict agreement about offender arrest, but the final model was able to significantly predict levels of agreement about offender arrest. Higher scores on the DVMAS were associated with lower levels of agreement about arresting the offender ( $b=-0.38$ ,  $SE=0.15$ ,  $p<.01$ ), while controlling for all other variables in the model. The second model for marital rape was able to significantly predict levels of agreement of arresting the offender. The White offender and Black victim and Black offender and White victim were both associated with higher levels of agreement about offender arrest in comparison to the White offender and White victim dyad. Older participants were associated with lower levels of agreement for offender arrest ( $b=-0.02$ ,  $SE=0.01$ ,  $p<.01$ ), while controlling for all other variables. Non-Hispanic Black respondents and respondents with secondary IPV experience were also associated with with higher levels of agreement for offender arrest. The final model for marital rape was a significant predictor of levels of agreement about arresting the offender. In this model The Black offender and White victim remained a significant predictor of agreement to arrest in comparison to the White offender and White victim ( $b=0.42$ ,  $SE=0.19$ ,  $p<.05$ ). Age, race, and secondary IPV experience also remained significant predictors in the model with the addition of higher DVMAS scores associated with lower agreement levels of offender arrest ( $b=-0.28$ ,  $SE=0.12$ ,  $p<.05$ ).

The first set of models of the three types of vignettes and the racial dyads were not able to predict whether or not the participant chose the option of jail, prison, or probation for the offender. The racial dyads also were not significant in the second model, however, the age of the respondent was with age decreasing the odds of choosing a punitive punishment by 2.60%. In

comparison to Non-Hispanic White participants, Non-Hispanic Black participants were 159.60% more likely to select a punitive punishment. The final model for physical violence was able to predict whether or not participants would select a punitive punishment for the offender. Age and race remained significant predictors in this model.

The racial dyads also were not significant in the second model for verbal aggression, however, SES was associated with a 24.60% decrease in odds of choosing a punitive punishment while controlling for all other variables. Racial dyads were not significant predictors in the final model for verbal aggression but SES was again a significant predictor with the addition of age decreasing the odds of selecting a punitive punishment by 5.10%, controlling for all other variables in the model.

The second model for marital rape significantly predicted the odds of choosing a punitive punishment for the offender. The Black offender and Black victim dyad increased the odds of selecting a punitive punishment by 113.60% in comparison to the White offender and White victim dyad. Age of the participant was also associated with a decrease in the log odds of selecting a punitive punishment ( $b=-0.02$ ,  $SE=0.01$ ,  $p<.05$ ). Non-Hispanic Black participants were 484.20% more likely to choose a punitive punishment in comparison to Non-Hispanic White participants. Secondary IPV exposure increased the odds of a punitive punishment by 88.70% while controlling for all other variables. The final model for marital rape was a significant predictor of punitive punishment of the offender. In this model age, race, and secondary IPV exposure remained significant predictors, while the racial dyad of Black offender and Black victim was no longer a significant predictor of punitive punishment after the addition of known measures of attitudes to the model. In the final model males were 80.60% more likely

than females to choose a punitive option. Level of education decreased the odds of choosing a punitive punishment by 26.80%.

The first model for physical violence and the racial dyads significantly predicted the odds of participants choosing the option for rehabilitating offenders. The Black offender and Black victim dyad was 74.20% less likely to be chosen for rehabilitation in comparison to the White offender and White victim dyad. The second model that added the demographic variables to the racial dyads for the physical violence vignette was also a predictor of rehabilitation of the offender, however none of the variables were significant. The last full model for physical violence significantly predicted the odds of participants choosing a rehabilitative option for the offender. In this model the racial dyads were not significant predictors but age and IRMA-R scores both increased the odds of participants choosing rehabilitation for the offender.

The first two models for verbal aggression were not able to predict the odds of participants choosing a rehabilitative option for offenders. The last model was a significant predictor of the odds of the participant choosing a rehabilitative option for the offender but there were no significant predictor variables in the model. All three models for marital rape were not able to predict whether participants would choose a rehabilitative option for the offender.

**Table 4.6** OLS Regression Model for Whether the Offender Should Be Arrested

	Physical Violence Vignette B (SE)	Verbal Aggression Vignette B (SE)	Marital Rape Vignette B (SE)
Black Offender X Black Victim	0.14 (0.21)	0.14 (0.24)	0.25 (0.20)
White Offender X Black Victim	0.34 (0.21)	0.38 (0.24)	0.35 (0.19)
Black Offender X White Victim	0.04 (0.20)	0.29 (0.24)	<b>0.42 (0.19)*</b>
Gender	0.03 (0.16)	-0.17 (0.19)	0.12 (0.15)
Age	-0.01 (0.01)	-0.01 (0.01)	<b>-0.02 (0.01)**</b>
Education	<b>-0.20 (0.09)*</b>	-0.11 (0.10)	-0.09 (0.08)
SES	0.03 (0.03)	-0.04 (0.03)	0.00 (0.03)
Black Non-Hispanic/Latino	0.27 (0.27)	0.01 (0.31)	0.52 (0.25)
Race Other (non-Black or White)	0.34 (0.26)	0.29 (0.30)	<b>-0.14 (0.24)*</b>
Primary IPV Experience	-0.05 (0.16)	-0.23 (0.18)	-0.23 (0.15)
Secondary IPV Experience	0.13 (0.15)	-0.11 (0.17)	<b>0.29 (0.14)*</b>
SRS	-0.00 (0.09)	-0.07 (0.11)	-0.00 (0.09)
IRMA-R	<b>-0.27 (0.12)*</b>	0.02 (0.14)	-0.19 (0.11)
ATV	0.07 (0.10)	0.11 (0.12)	-0.11 (0.10)
DVMAS	-0.24 (0.13)	<b>-0.38 (0.15)**</b>	<b>-0.28 (0.12)*</b>
N	367	367	366
F	<b>3.49***</b>	<b>2.18**</b>	<b>5.63***</b>
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.09	0.05	0.16

Note \*= $p < .05$  \*\*= $p < .01$  \*\*\*= $p < .001$ ; Black Offender X Black Victim, White Offender X White Victim, and Black Offender X Black Victim refer to the racial dyad condition, SRS= Symbolic Racism Scale, IRMA-R= Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale Revised score, ATV= Attitudes Towards Violence Scale, DVMAS= Domestic Violence Myth Acceptance Scale Scores



**Table 4.7** Logistic Regression Model for Offender Punishment

	Physical Violence Vignette B (SE)	Verbal Aggression Vignette B (SE)	Marital Rape Vignette B (SE)
Black Offender X Black Victim	0.53 (0.37)	0.72 (0.80)	0.67 (0.38)
White Offender X Black Victim	0.21 (0.38)	0.42 (0.79)	0.65 (0.38)
Black Offender X White Victim	-0.11 (0.39)	0.44 (0.77)	0.69 (0.36)
Gender	0.05 (0.29)	-0.68 (0.56)	<b>0.78 (0.30)**</b>
Age	<b>-0.03 (0.01)*</b>	<b>-0.05 (0.03)*</b>	<b>-0.02 (0.01)*</b>
Education	-0.30 (0.16)	0.11 (0.30)	<b>-0.31 (0.16)*</b>
SES	-0.07 (0.05)	<b>-0.38 (0.12)**</b>	-0.01 (0.05)
Race Other (non-Black or White)	0.74 (0.42)	0.84 (0.68)	0.37 (0.50)
Black Non-Hispanic/ Latino	<b>1.24 (0.43)**</b>	0.09 (0.88)	<b>1.57 (0.77)*</b>
Primary IPV Experience	0.05 (0.28)	-0.79 (0.60)	0.08 (0.29)
Secondary IPV Experience	-0.13 (0.27)	-0.44 (0.50)	<b>0.74 (0.27)**</b>
SRS	0.26 (0.17)	0.53 (0.31)	-0.15 (0.16)
IRMA-R	-0.30 (0.21)	-0.56 (0.36)	<b>-0.47 (0.21)*</b>
ATV	0.18 (0.18)	0.32 (0.34)	-0.04 (0.19)
DVMAS	-0.32 (0.23)	0.13 (0.40)	-0.18 (0.23)
N	368	368	368
LR chi2	<b>35.51**</b>	<b>27.84**</b>	<b>62.30***</b>
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	0.09	0.17	0.15

Note \*= $p < .05$  \*\*= $p < .01$  \*\*\*= $p < .001$ ; Black Offender X Black Victim, White Offender X White Victim, and Black Offender X Black Victim refer to the racial dyad condition, SRS= Symbolic Racism Scale, IRMA-R= Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale Revised score, ATV= Attitudes Towards Violence Scale, DVMAS= Domestic Violence Myth Acceptance Scale Scores

**Table 4.8** Logistic Regression Model for Offender Rehabilitation

	Physical Violence Vignette B (SE)	Verbal Aggression Vignette B (SE)	Marital Rape Vignette B (SE)
Black Offender X Black Victim	-1.22 (0.71)	-0.56 (0.43)	-0.43 (0.35)
White Offender X Black Victim	-0.25 (0.78)	-0.04 (0.46)	-0.09 (0.36)
Black Offender X White Victim	-0.62 (0.73)	0.59 (0.48)	-0.20 (0.35)
Gender	-0.71 (0.53)	0.57 (0.38)	-0.26 (0.27)
Age	<b>0.05 (0.03)*</b>	0.02 (0.02)	0.02 (0.01)
Education	0.18 (0.26)	0.28 (0.19)	0.11 (0.15)
SES	0.04 (0.09)	-0.06 (0.06)	0.04 (0.048)
Black Non-Hispanic/Latino	0.07 (0.74)	1.92 (1.05)	-0.64 (0.40)
Race Other (non-Black or White)	-0.43 (0.69)	-0.68 (0.52)	-0.62 (0.41)
Primary IPV Experience	-0.39 (0.48)	0.11 (0.34)	-0.17 (0.26)
Secondary IPV Experience	0.48 (0.44)	-0.07 (0.33)	-0.01 (0.25)
SRS	-0.39 (0.27)	-0.37 (0.20)	0.00 (0.16)
IRMA-R	<b>0.65 (0.32)*</b>	0.10 (0.26)	0.42 (0.20)
ATV	-0.42 (0.29)	-0.13 (0.22)	-0.27 (0.17)
DVMAS	-0.42 (0.37)	-0.13 (0.29)	-0.34 (0.21)
N	368	368	368
LR chi2	<b>29.13*</b>	<b>27.19*</b>	22.32
Pseudo R <sup>2</sup>	0.15	0.09	0.05

Note \*= $p < .05$  \*\*= $p < .01$  \*\*\*= $p < .001$ ; Black Offender X Black Victim, White Offender X White Victim, and Black Offender X Black Victim refer to the racial dyad condition, SRS= Symbolic Racism Scale, IRMA-R= Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale Revised score, ATV= Attitudes Towards Violence Scale, DVMAS= Domestic Violence Myth Acceptance Scale Scores

## CHAPTER FIVE:

### DISCUSSION

#### Summary of Findings

##### Seriousness

To answer my first research question, race of the offender and victim predicted the participants' ratings of the seriousness of the scenario for the physical violence and verbal threat vignettes. My hypothesis was partially correct, for both the physical and verbal vignette the Black offender for both White and Black victims' had a significantly lower scores for seriousness than the reference group of White offender and White victim. However, I was incorrect in predicting that the Black offender and White victim would have a higher seriousness score. From the findings it appears that the effect of a Black offender is a more significant predictor in lowering seriousness rating than a Black victim, because the White offender and Black victim were only significant predictors in the final model for the verbal vignette, while the Black offender dyads were significant predictors in the final model for both physical and verbal vignettes. This finding could be attributed to bias that Black males are inherently more aggressive and therefore aggressive behavior is the norm and would not evoke the perception of a more serious scenario. This also supports the belief that a White female dating a Black male should be aware of the myth of the 'aggressive Black male' and therefore her situation would not be deemed as serious.

## **Victim Culpability**

These models answer the first research question which asked if the race of the offender and the victim will influence victim culpability. From the findings in these models the only instance in which the race of the offender and the victim affected victim culpability scores was in the final model for verbal aggression in which it was a negative relationship. I was incorrect in my hypotheses about the presumed effect of racial bias on victim culpability. I also believed that the White offender and Black victim dyad would have a positive relationship with victim culpability when the only relationship that was found was a negative one. I was correct in hypothesizing the relationship between gender and victim culpability. Across all three vignettes in the second model that only included demographics and racial dyads, gender was a significant predictor of victim culpability. These findings are congruent to previous literature that has shown a relationship between gender and victim culpability, in which males have higher scores of victim culpability in comparison to female participants. It also is believable that known measures such as IRMA-R, DVMA, and ATV would be the significant predictors for victim culpability. Due to the fact that the symbolic racism scale was not a significant predictor in any of the models, with the additional finding that there was no significant difference among ratings of victim culpability among the different vignettes and the mean for each condition, I think it is safe to conclude that victim culpability was not affected by racial bias in this experiment.

## **Offender Culpability**

The offender culpability models answered the final part of the first research question about whether the race of offender and victim would affect ratings of offender culpability. In the first set of models that only included racial dyads and offender culpability none of the models could significantly predict scores of offender culpability. In the second set of models the only

vignette that could significantly predict offender culpability scores was verbal aggression. All three of the final models were significant predictors of offender culpability, however, the only model that had a significant predictor related to race was verbal aggression in which the White offender and Black victim predicted lower scores of offender culpability and higher scores of SRS also predicted lower scores of victim culpability. This would disprove my hypothesis of the strength of the relationship between offender culpability and race of the offender and victim. However, I hypothesized that the White offender and Black victim would have lower scores of offender culpability which was found in the verbal aggression vignette and was related to racial bias. Also, consistent with my hypothesis about gender and culpability of the offender, males were more likely to have lower scores of offender culpability for verbal aggression.

### **Labeling and Law Violation of IPV**

The models for labeling the vignette as an act of IPV helped to identify what factors would help predict what types of behaviors people define as IPV. One factor that was common among both the physical and verbal vignettes was gender. In both models males were more likely to be unsure of whether or not the vignette was an act of IPV, and in the verbal aggression model males were also more likely to not label the vignette as a form of IPV. The model for marital rape did not have many predictors aside from whether or not the participant also labeled the vignette a violation of the law and secondary IPV exposure. Unlike my hypothesis, racial bias did not play a role in any of the models for defining IPV.

There was not as much consistency among the predictor variables in the models for law violation across the three vignettes. The model for physical violence showed that gender was again a predictor of not knowing whether the vignette was against the law and therefore revealed a pattern that was consistent among the model for labeling the vignette as an act of IPV. The last

model for verbal aggression showed a relationship between the White offender and Black victim for both outcomes of do not know and no, which means that if the respondent had the White offender and Black victim condition in comparison to the White offender and White victim they were more likely to label the verbal aggression as a violation of the law. The last vignette of marital rape showed a relationship between age and not knowing whether or not the violation was a violation of the law. This relationship could be due to the fact that marital rape did not become illegal until the early 80's and older participants may still be unsure of whether or not it is in fact a violation of the law.

The findings from this study further supported my hypothesis that respondents would be more willing to label the vignette an act of IPV and less likely to label it a violation of the law. In this study 76.23% of the vignettes were labeled an act of IPV, but only 62.43% were considered a violation of the law. Further, in 9.12% of the vignettes participants were not sure if the vignette was an act of IPV, in comparison, in 17.41% of the vignettes participants were not sure if the vignette was a law violation. In the vignette of verbal aggression, the race of the victim and offender when it was a White offender and Black victim did explain the variance in predicting the odds of respondents deciding it was a violation of the law.

### **Punishment of Offender**

To answer the question about what type of characteristics of the offender, victim, and participant will predict the type of punishment of the offender two questions from the vignette were analyzed using three different models. The first question asked the participant if they agreed that the offender should be arrested for their behavior in the given vignette. Racial bias was a significant predictor in the marital rape vignette. In the second model that only included the racial dyads and demographics both the dyad of the White offender and Black victim and

Black offender and White victim had higher scores of agreement to arrest the offender. Although the racial dyads were not significant predictors of seriousness in the marital rape vignette, perhaps this finding suggests that the participant did believe that in the case of marital rape between a White offender and Black victim and Black offender and White victim the scenario was serious enough for legal involvement. In the final model for marital rape only the Black offender and White victim remained a significant predictor and supported the hypothesis of more punitive measures towards the Black offender. The finding of secondary IPV experience suggesting more agreement towards arresting the offender in the case of marital rape could be a reflection of the effect of knowing someone who has experienced IPV in comparison to when a person is the primary victim. Victims may have a unique insight into the complexity of the choice of involving legal sanctions especially in the case of marital rape and the possible complications of involving the police and then having to go to court.

The models that predicted respondents choosing a punitive punishment for the offender showed that age was a significant predictor across all three of the vignettes. Contrary to my hypothesis younger participants were not more likely to be less punitive, in fact the opposite was true. Across all three of the vignettes age decreased the odds of choosing a punitive punishment for the offender. This could be explained by the fact that the younger participants could have been raised during a time when punitive punishments increased and the change from helping victims to punishing offenders occurred. This finding could further be a consequence of the era of mass incarceration on the attitudes of punishment of offenders for younger generations. In the second model for marital rape the Black offender and Black victim dyad increased the odds of a punitive punishment, partially supporting the hypothesis that racial bias would be reflected by more punitive punishments of Black offenders. Another significant finding among the physical

violence and marital rape vignette models was that Non-Hispanic Black participants were more punitive in punishing the offenders compared to Non-Hispanic White participants.

The models for rehabilitation of offenders did not show significant findings for verbal aggression or marital rape. However, physical violence models showed that respondents were less likely to choose a rehabilitative option for a Black offender and Black victim in comparison to the White offender and White victim which supports my hypothesis. However, that was the only significant contribution by these models. It is also important to note that the frequency of choosing rehabilitative option for the rape vignette was much lower than the rates of choosing a rehabilitative option for the physical violence and verbal aggression vignette. This could possibly be attributed to a lack of known interventions for sexual violence or perhaps respondents associated the rape vignette as the most severe and therefore rehabilitation would not be appropriate for their punishment. This finding is important for future research and policy implications because it could be a reflection of a lack of rehabilitative programs for sexual violence, and overall belief that this behavior cannot be prevented.

### **Limitations**

One of the main limitations of this study was the sample. According to the U.S. Census the national average household income is \$53,482 and 30.00% of American's 25 years and older having a Bachelor's degree (Bureau, 2016). Although the sample was diverse in age they were also older with the mean age of 40 years old, which could affect attitude and belief scales. The majority of the sample was White, and due to the small percentage of Hispanics and Latinos ethnicity could not be accurately captured. The sample was also more liberal and educated with almost 50.00% having a bachelor's degree, which led to a less representative sample as a whole.



These limitations decreased the potential for accurately measuring public perceptions that can be generalized. However, due to the fact that the sample was more liberal and had a higher education level than a random sample of Americans, racially biased findings among a more liberal sample could be considered highly significant because liberal samples are often regarded as being less racially biased and being less punitive in punishment. This study would therefore benefit from a more representative sample.

A second limitation of this study is the known measures of attitudes and beliefs. Surprisingly, these measures were not always significant predictors in the models for which previous literature has shown a connection between attitudes and behavior. Specifically, IRMA-R and DVMA scores were not associated with offender culpability but were strongly associated with victim culpability. This issue could be due to social desirability affecting the responses, which is likely given that this sample is comprised of participants who have completed thousands of surveys through MTurk and could be more susceptible to social desirability through a stronger exposure to social science surveys in comparison to an average college sample.

Another explanation for the weak associations between the known measures and the dependent variables is due to the fact that these measures may not be as valid as we may presume. McMahon and Farmer (2011) updated the language of IRMA-R with the hopes of creating a scale that used language that younger generations could relate to because of the importance of using relatable language in order to reliably measure subtle rape myth beliefs. Furthermore, McMahon and Farmer (2011) explained that the reason why measures fail to capture subtler and covert rape myths is due to outdated language which would hinder how the participant responds to the question. More importantly, exposure to certain phrasing through previous bystander training or rape prevention education is associated with less adherence to

rape myth beliefs, which makes measuring subtle attitudes extremely difficult (McMahon & Farmer, 2011). As a field there is a need for more valid and reliable measures of attitudes that can detect subtle beliefs and implicit biases.

Furthermore, it is important to note that even though the race of the offender and victim were associated with names and validated by a convenience sample there was no question in the study asking respondents what they believed to be the race of the offender and victim. If replicated the study will include this question at the end of the survey to prevent any priming of racial bias throughout the rest of the questionnaire.

### **Summary and Future Research**

It is interesting that victim and offender culpability were not as affected by racial bias in this study as I would have assumed. The only instance in which the racial dyad was a significant predictor was in the final model of verbal aggression for both victim and offender culpability, in which the racial dyad of White offender and Black victim was negatively predicting victim culpability while controlling for all other variables. I find the specific finding for victim culpability to be troubling because prior research has shown a negative bias towards Black victims in which they have higher scores of victim culpability. However, this dyad did follow the expected relationship of predicting lower scores of offender culpability that prior research has found. It would be important to see if this finding would be replicated among another sample and if so, further exploration should be conducted to understand why this relationship occurred and what mechanisms were behind this relationship. I further believe that a lack of relationship between racial bias and victim culpability could be due to the sample being more liberal and educated than a random sample of American citizens. It would also be reasonable to assume that

given this sample the vignette in which racial bias was evident was in the vignette of verbal aggression which has less agreement as a form of IPV as physical violence and marital rape.

The demographic variables that I believed would have had the most significant effects among the different measures were gender and age. There was evidence of the effect of gender among most of the dependent variables and it was in the direction that previous studies have found. Males were more likely to have higher ratings of victim culpability, and lower ratings of offender culpability, as well as lower ratings of seriousness of the offense. Contrary to my hypothesis, age was only a significant predictor among punishment in which it had a negative relationship and was a significant predictor of rehabilitation for offenders of physical violence.

When Carlson and Worden (2005) conducted their study about the labeling of behaviors as domestic violence and then asking participants whether or not these behaviors were against the law they discovered a disproportionate amount between participants who were unsure about the labeling of an act as domestic violence and the legality of that act. Although their study differed from the present by including others form of IPV such as stalking, and varied the gender of the victim and the offender they had a similar findings that suggested demographic factors explained the difference between those who were unsure of legality of IPV behaviors from those who were sure (Carlson & Worden, 2005). In this study women were more likely than men to be unsure of the legality of physical violence which is consistent with the findings from Carlson and Worden (2005). This finding suggests a greater issue that among a sample of more liberal and higher educated adults over 17% were unsure of the legality of illegal IPV behavior. What is even more troubling is that women are more likely to be unsure of the legality of physical violence from a intimate partner when prevalence rates for women are higher than men (Truman & Morgan, 2014).

This study found that secondary IPV exposure was a significant predictor of decisions to arrest offender in the case of marital rape. This finding is important because it suggests that there is a relationship between secondary IPV exposure and punishment of the offender that is not present with primary IPV exposure. Previous studies have highlighted the complexities of being a victim of IPV and the consequences of confronting the offender and how this difficult situation has led to myths about IPV victims. These findings support the finding of the difficult decision that victims experience about whether or not to involve legal sanctions. The people that these victims confide in may not understand the complex nature of these decisions, or their experience of witnessing loved ones being victims could strengthen their want for justice and make them more punitive to offenders.

Using three different forms of IPV to compare the effects of racial bias on measures of seriousness, victim and offender culpability, and punishment was a strength for this study. This study was able to gather data of the effect of racial bias on attitudes about IPV and further explore how racial bias affects these attitudes based upon the type of IPV. Some of the most interesting findings were among the verbal aggression vignette analyses, I believe this is due to the fact that there is less agreement upon whether or not verbal aggression is a form of IPV. The verbal aggression vignette was a suitable scenario in which to measure these variables of interest because of the lack of agreement of this type of behavior which would lead to more evidence of the mechanisms that affect opinions related to IPV. When there is more agreement and less variation in answers it is harder to measure and see the effects of the significant predictors of behavior. Gender was also a significant predictor of not knowing whether or not a vignette was an act of IPV or a violation of the law.

There has been a serious lack in previous literature dedicated to studying marital rape as a form of IPV. This was one of the main reasons why the three forms of IPV were separately analyzed in this study. In this sample 85.43% thought the vignette of marital rape was against the law, 4.27% said it was not against the law, and 10.30% were not sure if it was illegal. Even more surprising 91.46% of the sample labeled marital rape an act of IPV, but 4.27% were unsure and another 4.27% did not think marital rape was an act of IPV. This is startling given the fact that this sample is arguably more educated and liberal than a representative sample of the US would be. The lack of significant predictors of victim and offender culpability besides known measures of attitudes of IPV is also troubling and shows the need for more studies to investigate attitudes regarding marital rape. However, there was one significant finding that was informative in regards to the marital rape vignette and that was that older respondents were less punitive in punishing offenders. This could be due to the fact that marital rape was not illegal until 1986 and older respondents may have been raised in a time where marital rape was not regarded as a public legal issue (Bennice & Resick, 2003).

One of the anomalies in the data is in the scenario of the verbal aggression vignette for the White offender and Black victim condition. In this scenario the levels of culpability for both the offender and the victim were lower, and the participant was more likely to label this vignette as a violation of the law. The finding for lower culpability of the offender makes sense based upon previous studies that have found that Black female victims as more culpable than their White counterparts (Esqueda & Harrison, 2005). However, it does not make sense that given this prior research the victim would also be less culpable. Even more concerning is the fact that this was the only racial dyad to have a significant effect on explaining the variance of labeling the

vignette a violation of the law. This finding suggests the need for more research to explore this topic and to evaluate if these findings would remain significant among another sample.

Further suggestions for follow up studies would include exploring rehabilitation of offenders more thoroughly by offering more rehabilitative options or creating a separate question to gauge participant's attitudes towards rehabilitation of offenders. Again there needs to be more research dedicated to understanding attitudes about marital rape. Furthermore, the field could benefit from further exploration of the effect of the different myths of the "aggressive Black male," "the sexually promiscuous Black female," and the White female who is no longer seen as a victim when she chooses to be involved with a Black male. When these different biases are combined and interact with one another it is hard to predict how attitudes will be affected and there needs to be more studies that look at these effects in a variety of contexts.

Policy implications from this study include a variety of both educational programming and legal intervention. First, due to lower percent of participants who believed that verbal aggression was a form of IPV, and even lower percent of participants who believed that verbal threats were a violation of the law there is a definite need for more education as well as a standardized law that outlines the legality of different forms of IPV. An opportunity for this education is during high school and college mandatory sexual violence training. This is also important because of the finding that women are more likely to be unsure of the legality of physical violence, indicating a need for not only educating about the occurrence of IPV but also teaching about the legality of these forms of behavior. If victims are unaware that these forms of violence are not only unacceptable but also illegal perhaps there would be more disclosure and involvement of police and law. Furthermore, secondary victims were associated with selecting

more punitive punishments for offenders this is also indicative of a need for more education for victims so that they can be informed of their legal rights.

Next, the finding of smaller percentages of rehabilitation for the offender of marital rape suggests the need for programs targeted at treating this type of behavior and rehabilitating offenders who commit sexual violence. An increase in programming for this type of violence might lead to an increase in awareness and use of rehabilitation for sexually violent offenders which will then decrease the prevalence of this type of violence. Lastly, the racial bias implications of this study show the prevalence of the myth of the “aggressive Black male” and the “unrapeable Black female” based upon lower seriousness scores and less offender victim culpability for the White male offender. To address these myths there needs to be education. These findings should also be noted in terms of their affect in legal cases and how potential jurors will view and relate to the offender and victim.

## References

- Acock, A. C. (2005). Working with missing values. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 67(4), 1012-1028.
- Alexander, C. S., & Becker, H. J. (1978). The use of vignettes in survey research. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 42(1), 93-104.
- Aosved, A. C., & Long, P. J. (2006). Co-occurrence of rape myth acceptance, sexism, racism, homophobia, ageism, classism, and religious intolerance. *Sex Roles*, 55, 481-492.
- Bartneck, C., Duenser, A., Moltchanova, E., & Zawieska, K. (2015, April). Comparing the similarity responses received from studies in Amazon's Mechanical Turk to studies conducted on and with direct recruitment. *PLoS ONE*, 10(4), 1-23.
- Bennice, J. A., & Resick, P. A. (2003). Marital rape: History, research, and practice. *Journal of Trauma, Violence, and Abuse*, 4(3), 228-246.
- Bethke, T. M., & DeJoy, D. M. (1993). An experimental study of factors influencing the acceptability of dating violence. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 8(1), 36-51.
- Breiding, M. J., Chen, J., & Black, M. C. (2014). *Intimate partner violence in the United States-2010*. Center for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. Atlanta, GA: Center for Disease Control and Prevention.
- Bryant, S. A., & Spencer, G. A. (2003). University students' attitudes about attributing blame in domestic violence. *Journal of Family Violence*, 18(6), 369-376.
- Carlson, B. E., & Worden, A. P. (2005). Attitudes and beliefs about domestic violence: Results of a public opinion survey I. Definitions of domestic violence, criminal domestic violence, and prevalence. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 20(10), 1197-1218.
- Cullen, F. T., Fisher, B. S., & Applegate, B. K. (2000). Public opinion about punishment and corrections. *Crime and Justice*, 27, 1-79.
- Davidson, M. M., & Canivez, G. L. (2012). Attitudes toward violence scale: Psychometric properties with a high school sample. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 27(18), 3660-3682.
- Dennison, S. M., & Thompson, C. M. (2011). Intimate partner violence: The effect of gender and contextual factors on community perceptions of harm, and suggested victim and criminal justice responses. *Journal of Violence and Victims*, 26(3), 347-363.



- Devine, P. G. (1989). Stereotypes and prejudice: Their automatic and controlled components. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 56(1), 5-18.
- Duran, M., Moya, M., & Megias, J. L. (2011). It's his right, it's her duty: Benevolent sexism and the justification of traditional sexual roles. *Journal of Sex Research*, 48(5), 470-478.
- Esqueda, C. W., & Harrison, L. A. (2005). The influence of gender role stereotypes, the woman's race, and level of provocation and resistance on domestic violence culpability attributions. *Sex Roles*, 53(11-12), 821-834.
- Fazio, R. H., & Olson, M. A. (2003). Implicit measures in social cognition research: Their meaning and use. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 54(1), 297-327.
- Flood, M., & Pease, B. (2009). Factors influencing attitudes to violence against women. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, 10(2), 125-142.
- George, W. H., & Martinez, L. J. (2002). Victim blaming in rape: Effects of victim and perpetrator race, type of rape, and participant racism. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 26, 110-119.
- Green, E. G. T., Staerkle, C., & Sears, D. O. (2006). Symbolic racism and whites' attitudes towards punitive and preventive crime policies. *Law and Human Behavior*, 30(4), 435-454.
- Harrison, L. A., & Esqueda, C. W. (2000). Effects of race and victim drinking on domestic violence attributions. *Sex Roles*, 42(11-12), 1043-1057.
- Hill, R. (1998). What sample size is "enough" in internet survey research? *Interpersonal Computing and Technology: An Electronic Journal for the 21st Century*, 6(3-4), 1-12.
- Johnson, I. M., & Sigler, R. T. (1995). Community attitudes: A study of definitions and punishment of spouse abusers and child abusers. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 23(5), 477-487.
- Johnson, I. M., & Sigler, R. T. (2000). Public perceptions: The stability of the public's endorsements of the definition and criminalization of the abuse of women. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 28, 165-179.
- Jones, J. M. (2016, January 11). *Gallup*. Retrieved 2016, from Gallup: <http://www.gallup.com/poll/188096/democratic-republican-identification-near-historical-lows.aspx>
- Lacey, K. K. (2010). When is it enough for me to leave? Black and Hispanic women's responses to violent relationships. *Journal of Family Violence*, 25, 669-677.

- Locke, L. M., & Richman, C. L. (1999). Attitudes toward domestic violence: Race and gender issues. *Sex Roles, 40*(3-4), 227-247.
- Lonsway, K. A., & Fitzgerald, L. F. (1995). Attitudinal antecedents of rape myth acceptance: A theoretical and empirical reexamination. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 68*(4), 704-711.
- Maass, A., & Cadinu, M. (2003). Stereotype threat: When minority members underperform. *European Review of Social Psychology, 14*(7), 243-275.
- May, D. C., Wood, P. B., Mooney, J. L., & Minor, K. I. (2005). Predicting offender-generated exchange rates: Implications for a theory of sentence severity. *Journal of Crime and Delinquency, 51*(3), 373-399.
- McMahon, S., & Farmer, G. L. (2011). An updated measure for assessing subtle rape myths. *Social Work Research, 35*(2), 71-81.
- Mechanic, M. B., Weaver, T. L., & Resick, P. A. (2008). Mental health consequences of intimate partner abuse: A multidimensional assessment of four different forms of abuse. *Violence Against Women, 14*(6), 634-654.
- Miller, J., & Bukva, K. (2001). Intimate violence perceptions: Young adults' judgements of abuse escalating from verbal argument. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 16*(2), 133-150.
- Nabors, E. L., Dietz, T. L., & Jasinski, J. L. (2006). Domestic violence beliefs and perceptions among college students. *Violence and Victims, 21*(6), 779-795.
- O'Leary, K. D. (1999). Psychological abuse: A variable deserving critical attention in domestic violence. *Journal of Violence and Victims, 14*(1), 3-23.
- Paolacci, G., Chandler, J., & Ipeirotis, P. G. (2010). Running experiments on Amazon Mechanical Turk. *Judgement and Decision Making, 5*(5), 411-419.
- Peer, E., Vosgerau, J., & Acquisti, A. (2014). Reputation as a sufficient condition for data quality on Amazon Mechanical Turk. *Behavior Research Methods, 46*(4), 1023-1031.
- Peters, J. (2008). Measuring myths about domestic violence and initial validation of the domestic violence myth acceptance scale. *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment, & Trauma, 16*(1), 1-21.
- Pico-Alfonso, M. A., Garcia-Linares, M. I., Celda-Navarro, N., Blasco-Ros, C., Echeburua, E., & Martinez, M. (2006). The impact of physical, psychological, and sexual intimate male partner violence on women's mental health: Depressive symptoms, post-traumatic stress disorder, state anxiety, and suicide. *Journal of Women's Health, 15*(5), 599-611.

- Pierce, M. C., & Harris, R. J. (1993). The effect of provocation, race, and injury description on men's and women's perceptions of a wife-battering incident. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 23*(10), 767-790.
- Policastro, C., & Payne, B. (2013). The blameworthy victim: Domestic violence myths and the criminalization of victimhood. *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma, 22*(4), 329-347.
- Rennison, C., & Planty, M. (2003). Nonlethal intimate partner violence: Examining race, gender, and income patterns. *Violence and Victims, 18*(4), 433-443.
- Richie, B. E. (1996). *Compelled to crime: the gender entrapment of battered black women*. New York: Routledge.
- Sears, D. O., & Henry, P. J. (2003). The origins of symbolic racism. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 85*(2), 259-275.
- Smith-Marek, E. N., Cafferky, B., Dharnidharka, P., Mallory, A. B., Dominguez, M., High, J., Stith, S. M., & Mendez, M. (2015). Effects of childhood experiences of family violence on adult partner violence: A meta-analytic review. *Journal of Family Theory & Review, 7*(4), 498-519.
- Sommers, S. R., & Ellsworth, P. C. (2001). White juror bias: An investigation of prejudice against black defendants in the American courtroom. *Journal of Psychology, Public Policy, and Law, 7*(1), 201-229.
- Straus, M. A., Hamby, S. L., Boney-McCoy, S., & Sugarman, D. B. (1996). The revised conflict tactics scales (CTS2): Development and preliminary psychometric data. *Journal of Family Issues, 17*(3), 283-316.
- Trangsrud, H. B. (2010). Examination of victim and perpetrator blame in date rape scenarios and exploration of ambivalent sexism subtypes as predictors of male and female rape myths among a sample of college students. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Missouri-Kansas City, Kansas City, Missouri.
- Truman, J. L., & Morgan, R. E. (2014). *Nonfatal domestic violence, 2003-2012*. U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics. Washington D.C.: The Bureau of Justice Statistics.
- U.S. Census Bureau. (2014). *2010-2014 American community survey 5-year estimates*. Retrieved from <http://www.census.gov/en.html>
- Wagner, P. J., & Mongan, P. F. (1998). Validating the concept of abuse: Women's perceptions of defining behaviors and the effects of emotional abuse on health indicators. *Archives of Family Medicine, 7*(1), 25-29.

- Western, B. (2006). *Punishment and inequality in America*. New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Williams, R. (2006). Generalized ordered logit/ partial proportional odds models for ordinal dependent variables. *The Stata Journal*, 6(1), 58-82.
- Williams, R. (2010). Fitting heterogeneous choice models with oglm. *The Stata Journal*, 10(4), 540-567.
- Winship, C., & Mare, R. D. (1984). Regression models with ordinal variables. *American Sociological Review*, 49(4), 512-525.

## APPENDICES:

### Appendix A: Document of Informed Consent



#### **Informed Consent to Participate in Research**

Information to Consider Before Taking Part in this Research Study

#### **Pro#23709**

Researchers at the University of South Florida (USF) study many topics. To do this, we need the help of people who agree to take part in a research study. This form tells you about this research study. We are asking you to take part in a research study that is called: Public Perceptions of Domestic Violence. The person who is in charge of this research study is Batya Rubenstein. This person is called the Principal Investigator.

#### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to learn about public perceptions of domestic violence by asking participants to answer questions in a survey.

#### **Why are you being asked to take part?**

We are asking you to take part in this research study because we want to know your opinion and knowledge about domestic violence.

#### **Study Procedures**

If you take part in this study, you will be asked to complete a survey through a third party website. All data collected is anonymous and the researchers will not have any access to any of your identifiable information.

#### **Alternatives / Voluntary Participation / Withdrawal**

You have the alternative to choose not to participate in this research study.

You should only take part in this study if you want to volunteer; you are free to participate in this research or withdraw at any time. There will be no penalty or loss of benefits you are entitled to receive if you stop taking part in this study.

### **Benefits and Risks**

You will receive no benefit from this study.  
This research is considered to be minimal risk.

### **Compensation**

We will compensate you for your time through the Mechanical Turk website.

### **Privacy and Confidentiality**

We must keep your study records as confidential as possible. It is possible, although unlikely, that unauthorized individuals could gain access to your responses because you are responding online.

Certain people may need to see your study records. By law, anyone who looks at your records must keep them completely confidential. The only people who will be allowed to see these records are: The principal investigator and study staff as well as The University of South Florida Institutional Review Board (IRB).

- It is possible, although unlikely, that unauthorized individuals could gain access to your responses. Confidentiality will be maintained to the degree permitted by the technology used. No guarantees can be made regarding the interception of data sent via the Internet. However, your participation in this online survey involves risks similar to a person's everyday use of the Internet. If you complete and submit an anonymous survey and later request your data be withdrawn, this may or may not be possible as the researcher may be unable to extract anonymous data from the database.

A federal law called Title IX protects your right to be free from sexual discrimination, including sexual harassment and sexual violence. USF's Title IX policy requires certain USF employees to report sexual harassment or sexual violence against any USF employee, student or group, but does not require researchers to report sexual harassment or sexual violence when they learn about it as part of conducting an IRB approved study. If, as part of this study, you tell us about any sexual harassment or sexual violence that has happened to you, including rape or sexual assault, we are not required to report it to the University. If you have questions about Title IX or USF's Title IX policy, please call USF's Office of Diversity, Inclusion & Equal Opportunity at (813) 974-4373.

### **Contact Information**

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact the USF IRB at 974-5638. If you have questions regarding the research, please contact the Principal Investigator at [brubenstein@mail.usf.edu](mailto:brubenstein@mail.usf.edu).

We may publish what we learn from this study. If we do, we will not let anyone know your name. We will not publish anything else that would let people know who you are. You can print a copy of this consent form for your records.

If at any time you feel uncomfortable by the nature of the questions in the survey please contact the National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-7233 | 1-800-787-3224 (TTY).

I freely give my consent to take part in this study. I understand that by proceeding with this survey that I am agreeing to take part in research and I am 18 years of age or older.

## Appendix B: Survey Instrument

### Vignettes and Questions

1. One morning Jake was running late for work and spilled coffee on his clean shirt. His wife, Katie was reading the newspaper when Jake yelled at her to go grab him a clean shirt. Katie responded that she hadn't done the laundry yet and that was his last clean shirt, but he could iron the one he wore yesterday and wear that shirt to work. Jake was so furious that Katie hadn't done the laundry that he grabbed her arm and pulled her by her wrist to the laundry room and told her to iron his shirt for him. As Katie was ironing his shirt, Jake asked her what time she would be home from work to make him dinner. Katie responded by telling him she planned on going out with coworkers that night and he would have to fend for himself for a change. Jake was so angry with his wife that he shoved her away from the ironing board and she lost her balance and fell to the floor. As Katie rubbed her wrist that she used to break her fall, Jake took his shirt and left for work while Katie tended to her wrist. Katie called the police after Jake left to report the incident.
  2. Katie came home at around 11PM one evening, after celebrating a friend's promotion at bar with several other friends. Jake asked Katie why she was home so late, and she reminded him that she had plans to be out with her girlfriends that night. Jake started yelling at Katie and asking her who she was with and where they went and why she was home so late if they only had a 'few' drinks after work. He then asked Katie if there were any guys having drinks with them. When she answered that it was only women and told him he was acting crazy, Jake grabbed her purse and dumped it out on the table looking for her phone. Jake started looking through her phone for text messages from any men, he found a text from a male coworker that Katie said was just a friend who was new to her office and he got her number through the office directory. Jake told Katie that he thought she was out with this coworker tonight and was a lying slut for making up a story about being out with friends. He then told her if this coworker ever texted her again he would slap her so hard she wouldn't be able to sit down for a week. Katie reported the incident to the police the next morning before she went to work.
  3. Katie and Jake were in bed last night; Jake was watching the basketball game on the television while Katie was reading a book next to him. Katie finished reading her book for the evening and turned off the lamp on her nightstand and told Jake she was going to sleep. After the game ended Jake turned off the TV and his lamp and turned to Katie and started kissing her neck and putting his hands under her shirt. Katie pushed his hand away and told him to stop because she was tired and not in the mood. Jake kept kissing her and started moving his hands pulling down her underwear and said, "Please baby, it's been so long." Katie slapped his hand away and firmly said no again, and told him to just go to sleep. Jake started getting angry and flipped her over and held her hands down and told her, "You are never in the mood anymore, and as my wife it's your job to pleasure me." Katie tried fighting Jake off but he held her down and continued to penetrate her.
1. In your opinion how serious was this situation?
  2. In your opinion how violent was this incident?
  3. If (Katie/ Aaliyah) was injured in this situation physically, how serious were her injuries?
  4. If (Katie/ Aaliyah) was emotionally hurt in this situation, how serious was she hurt?



5. (Katie/Aaliyah)'s actions were responsible for what happened in this scenario.
6. (Katie/ Aaliyah) had control over the events that occurred in the described scenario.
7. (Katie/ Aaliyah) was at least somewhat at blame for what happened.
8. (Katie/ Aaliyah) provoked (Jake/ Jamaal) in some way.
9. (Jake/Jamaal) had control over the events that occurred in the described scenario.
10. (Jake/Jamaal)'s character was responsible for the event that occurred in this scenario.
11. (Jake/ Jamaal)'s behavior was responsible for the event that occurred in this scenario.
12. (Jake/ Jamaal) was to blame for what happened.
13. Overall, (Jake/ Jamaal) was most responsible for the event that occurred in this scenario.
14. (Katie/ Aaliyah) has most likely been involved in this type of situation before.
15. It is likely that (Jake/ Jamaal) will become more violent with (Katie/ Aaliyah) in the future.
16. I would consider this incident an act of domestic violence.
17. From what I know, this incident is a violation of the law.
18. (Jake/ Jamaal) should be arrested.
19. If (Jake/ Jamaal) was arrested and convicted with a criminal act of domestic violence, what should the punishment be: (select all that apply)
  - a. Fine
  - b. Community service
  - c. Mandatory Domestic Batterer treatment program
  - d. Sentence to be served in the community without any time in jail or prison (probation)
  - e. Prison/ Jail Sentence
    - i. Less than 6 months
    - ii. 6-12 months
    - iii. 12-24 months
    - iv. greater than 24 months
20. I believe this scenario was realistic.

### **Symbolic Racism Scale**

1. It's really a matter of some people not trying hard enough; if Blacks would only try harder they could be just as well off as Whites.
2. Irish, Italian, Jewish and many other minorities overcame prejudice and worked their way up. Blacks should do the same without any special favors.
3. Blacks work just as hard to get ahead as most other Americans (R).\*
4. Most Blacks who receive money from welfare could get along without it if they tried.
5. Blacks are getting too demanding in their push for equal rights.
6. Blacks are demanding too much from the rest of society.
7. Some say that Black leaders have been trying to push too fast. Others feel that they haven't pushed fast enough.
8. How much of the racial tension that exists in the United States today do you think Blacks are responsible for creating?
9. Blacks generally do not complain as much as they should about their situation in society (R).
10. How much discrimination against Blacks do you feel there is in the United States today, limiting their chances to get ahead (R)?

11. Generations of slavery and discrimination have created conditions that make it difficult for Blacks to work their way out of the lower class (R).
12. Discrimination against Blacks is no longer a problem in the United States.
13. Racial and ethnic discrimination is still as serious problem in the United States (R).
14. Some say that the civil rights people have been trying to push too fast. Others feel that they haven't pushed fast enough.
15. Over the past few years, Blacks have gotten less than they deserve (R).
16. Do Blacks get much more attention from the government than they deserve?
17. Government officials usually pay less attention to a request or complaint from a Black person than from a White person (R).
18. Over the past few years, Blacks have gotten more economically than they deserve (R).

### **Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (short form)**

1. If a girl is raped while she is drunk, she is at least somewhat responsible for what happened.
2. When girls go to parties wearing slutty clothes, they are asking for trouble.
3. If a girl goes to a room alone with a guy at a party, it is her own fault if she is raped.
4. If a girl acts like a slut, eventually she is going to get into trouble.
5. When guys rape, it is usually because of their strong desire for sex.
6. Guys don't usually intend to force sex on a girl, but sometimes they get too sexually carried away.
7. Rape happens when a guy's sex drive gets out of control.
8. If a guy is drunk, he might rape someone unintentionally.
9. If both people are drunk, it can't be rape.
10. It shouldn't be considered rape if a guy is drunk and didn't realize what he was doing.
11. If a girl doesn't physically resist sex—even if protesting verbally—it really can't be considered rape.
12. If a girl doesn't physically fight back, you can't really say it was rape.
13. A lot of times, girls who say they were raped agreed to have sex and then regret it.
14. Rape accusations are often used as a way of getting back at guys.
15. Girls who say they were raped often led the guy on and then had regrets.
16. A lot of times, girls who claim they were raped just have emotional problems.
17. If the accused “rapist” doesn't have a weapon, you really can't call it a rape.
18. Girls who are caught cheating on their boyfriends sometimes claim that it was rape.
19. If a girl doesn't say “no,” she can't claim rape.

### **Attitudes Towards Violence Scale**

1. Violent crimes should be punished violently.
2. The death penalty should be part of every penal code.

3. Any prisoner deserves to be mistreated by other prisoners in jail.
4. Any nation should be ready with a strong military at all times.
5. The manufacture of weapons is necessary.
6. War is often necessary.
7. The government should send armed soldiers to control violent university riots.
8. Our country should be aggressive with its military internationally.
9. Killing of civilians should be accepted as an unavoidable part of war.
10. Our country has the right to protect its borders forcefully.
11. A child's habitual disobedience should be punished physically.
12. Giving mischievous children a quick slap is the best way to quickly end trouble.
13. Children should be spanked for temper tantrums.
14. Punishing children physically when they deserve it will make them responsible and mature adults.
15. Young children who refuse to obey should be whipped.
16. It is all right for a partner to hit the other if they are unfaithful.
17. It is all right for a partner to slap the other if insulted or ridiculed.
18. It is all right for a partner to slap the other's face if challenged.
19. An adult should whip a child for breaking the law.
20. It is all right for a partner to hit the other if they flirt with others.

### **Domestic Violence Myth Acceptance Scale (DVMAAS)**

1. Domestic violence does not affect many people
2. When a man is violent it is because he lost control of his temper.
3. If a woman continues living with a man who beat her then its her own fault if she is beaten again.
4. Making a man jealous is asking for it.
5. Some women unconsciously want their partners to control them.
6. A lot of domestic violence occurs because women keep on arguing about things with their partners.
7. If a woman doesn't like it, she can leave.
8. Most domestic violence involves mutual violence between the partners.
9. Abusive men lose control so much that they don't know what they're doing.
10. I hate to say it, but if a woman stays with the man who abused her, she basically deserves what she gets.
11. Domestic violence rarely happens in my neighborhood
12. Women who flirt are asking for it.
13. Women can avoid physical abuse if they give in occasionally.
14. Many women have an unconscious wish to be dominated by their partners.
15. Domestic violence results from a momentary loss of temper.
16. I don't have much sympathy for a battered woman who keeps going back to the abuser.
17. Women instigate most family violence.
18. If a woman goes back to the abuser, how much is that due to something in her character?

## Personal Experience with Domestic Violence

	I have (1)	Someone I am close to has (2)	No one I know (3)
been slapped, shoved, hit, beaten, kicked, or otherwise hurt by a spouse, boyfriend, or girlfriend? (1)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
been threatened of physical abuse by a spouse, boyfriend, or girlfriend? (2)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
been forced to have sex without consent with a spouse, boyfriend or girlfriend? (3)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
been coerced to have sex with a spouse, boyfriend or girlfriend?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
been verbally harassed or abused by a spouse, boyfriend, or girlfriend?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
got an order of protection as a result of a domestic violence or abuse situation? (4)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
received counseling as a result of being a victim of abuse or violence from a spouse, boyfriend, or girlfriend? (5)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
used a domestic violence shelter, or other type of service, for victims of domestic violence or abuse? (6)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
called the police because a intimate partner was being violent or abusive? (7)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Demographic Questions

1. Age
2. Gender
3. Sexual Orientation
4. Race
5. Ethnicity
6. Marital Status
7. Do you have any children?
8. What is the highest level of education you have completed?
9. What is the combined total of your household's annual income range?
10. In which state do you currently reside?
11. Religion
12. How important is religion in your daily life?
13. How often do you attend religious services or activities?
14. How often do you pray or read religious literature?
15. How important of a factor is religion in your opinions about social issues and/ or politics?
16. How would you describe your political beliefs?

## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Batya Rubenstein is finishing up her Master's degree in Criminology from the University of South Florida and will be continuing her studies at the University of Cincinnati to pursue a doctoral degree in Criminal Justice. She earned her Bachelor's degree in Psychology from Simmons College in Boston, Massachusetts where she graduated with honors in Psychology. She has presented at conferences for Criminal Justice and Family Violence in the field of Psychology. She was inducted into the Phi Kappa Phi Honor's Society in 2015.