

Mediating the Effects of Friendship on Male Rape Victim Blame

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By

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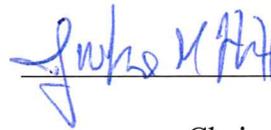
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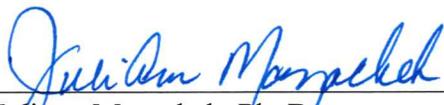
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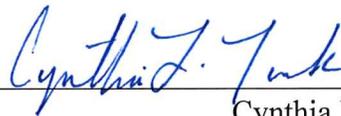
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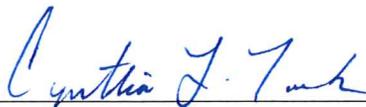


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Abstract

Although male rape victims' underreporting may be partly due to fear of victim blaming and other negative social outcomes, friendship may provide a buffer. We examined friendship's effect on male rape victim blame, and whether just world beliefs, invulnerability feelings, and attributional style mediated this effect. Participants were randomly assigned to imagine they were best friends ($n = 64$), an acquaintance ($n = 74$), or a stranger ($n = 65$) with a male rape victim in a vignette. They completed self-report measures that quantified the three potentially mediating variables. Correlational, ANCOVA, and mediation analyses indicated no effects of condition, but valuable predictive utility of the mediators. Victim blame was generally low across all three conditions. Implications for providing the most effective social support of male rape victims are offered.

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Multiple levels of sexual mistreatment exist, including rape, sexual coercion, and sexual assault. Rape is defined by the Center for Disease Control (CDC; 2015) as “any completed or attempted unwanted vaginal (for women), oral, or anal penetration through the use of physical force, or threats to physically harm and includes times when the victim was drunk, high, drugged, or passed out and unable to give consent” (p. 1). Sexual coercion is defined by the CDC as “unwanted sexual penetration that occurs after a person is pressured in a nonphysical way” (p. 1). Sexual assault is defined as “unwanted sexual experiences involving touch but not sexual penetration, such as being kissed in a sexual way, or having sexual body parts fondled, groped, or grabbed” (p.1). Sexual coercion falls under the umbrella of rape. This study involves perceptions of rape, sexual coercion, and sexual assault, with the main focus being the degree to which individuals perceive an instance of sexual coercion as rape.

Reports of male sexual assault victims have historically been minimal compared to female victims but have increased over the last ten years. In 2010, the *National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey* by the Center for Disease Control (CDC), collected national data in the United States regarding prevalence of sexual violence against men and women. An abundance of data was collected for women, indicating the lifetime prevalence rate of female victims to be one in five (20%); unfortunately, the researchers did not have sufficient data to conduct analyses on male victims. Due to a lack of data, the survey offered only an estimate for men that one in seventy-one (1.4%) males were raped in their lifetimes. In 2015, the survey was replicated and provided additional data regarding men. Just five years after the 2010 study, lifetime prevalence rates for men were reported to be one in fourteen, a five-fold increase. Lifetime prevalence rates for women remained at the one in five ratio reported in 2010.

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More specifically, the CDC (2015) reported that nearly 24.8% of men (27.6 million) in the United States have experienced sexual assault. Twenty percent of United States men (nearly 20 million) reported unwanted sexual contact. Approximately 2.6% (2.8 million) of men in the United States have experienced completed or attempted rape victimization in their lifetime. Among the male victims of completed or attempted rape, 70.8% (nearly 2 million) reported that their first non-consensual experience occurred prior to age 25 (CDC, 2015).

The CDC's new-found acknowledgement of male rape has fostered greater awareness of, greater respect for, and greater interest in, the issue of sexual mistreatment of males. Most researchers and experts in the field of sexual assault assert that the dramatic change in these statistics does not indicate that prior to 2015 men were not victims of sexual violence; rather, it reflects changes in societal attitudes regarding gender violence which have allowed men to become more comfortable speaking out and reporting their victimization with greater frequency. Even so, research supports male victims of rape and sexual assault are reluctant to report for fear that they will be ridiculed or judged for not fighting back (Turchik & Edwards, 2012).

Rape Myths: An Attitudinal Basis of Victim Blame

Like the increase in reports of male victimization over the last 10 years, additional research has been conducted studying psychological aspects of male rape. One such area of research is on rape myths. Rape myths are defined as prejudicial, false, or stereotyped beliefs about rape (Baugher, 2010; Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994). If common rape myths were applied to male victims, they would include beliefs such as, "It is impossible to rape a man," "Men cannot control their sexual urges," "He is to blame for wearing that outfit.," and "He should have fought back" (Baugher, 2010; Stuckman-Johnson & Stuckman-Johnson, 1992). An individual who endorses rape myths is more likely than an individual who does not endorse rape myths to

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assign blame and responsibility to the victim (Baugher; Struckman-Johnson & Struckman-Johnson; Sarimento, 2011).

The core implication of rape myths is to turn the blame from the perpetrator to the victim. When individuals and society (e.g., media) participate in the perpetuation of rape myths, male victims are less likely to report their abuse for fear of being seen as weak or liars (Davies, et al., 2008). A majority of the male victims who *do* choose to report their assault to authorities are often blamed by the authority figures or society in the form of a rape myth (Shaw et al., 2017). Despite the reality that male victims suffer from rape myths, men are more likely than women to endorse and accept rape myths (Sarimento, 2011; Davies, 2012). Rape myths reflect power maintenance and male privilege throughout history and serve both to protect men and maintain their power and control over women (Chiroro et al., 2004; Hockett et al., 2009). These rape myths act as a protectant and deferment from the harmful and life-ruining consequences of being held accountable for committing rape (Chiroro et al.). Allowing the perception of rape to be limited to female victim and male perpetrator promotes male privilege by promoting a view of females as helpless and weaker than men (Chapleau et al., 2008, Hockett et al., 2019). These same dynamics of privilege, power, and victim blame apply to male victims as well, as the vast majority of perpetrators of sexual assaults on males are also male (CDC, 2015).

According to Struckman-Johnson and Struckman-Johnson (1992), male rape myths seem to be captured by three generic beliefs: male rape does not happen; male rape is the victim's fault; and men are not traumatized by rape. As an example of the second belief, research on blame attribution has shown that men are held more responsible than a woman in a similar scenario would be for "allowing" themselves to be raped when they do not fight back (Davies et al., 2001; Davies et al., 2008). With over 3,154 studies published on female rape victims since

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2000, the 2,263 studies published regarding male rape over the same timeframe pale in comparison. Further, most studies of male rape have focused on victims in prison or homosexual relationships, which likely account for only 1% to 21% of all male rapes (Neal et al, 2010). These findings illustrate how the impact of endorsement of rape myths on men remains a neglected area of study. Increasing our knowledge of the relationship between the variables examined in the current study is an important next step toward decreasing the condemning power of rape myths.

Victim Blame and Its Possible Explanations

Rape myths are often perpetuated by fear, and that fear may come in the form of victim blaming. Victim blaming is a belittling/degrading act in which the victim of rape is held wholly or partially responsible for the act committed *against* them (Andrews et al., 2003; Felson & Palmore, 2018). Victim blaming has been linked to mental health risks (e.g., depression and revictimization), which are barriers towards healing the trauma that may be experienced by victims of rape (Ahrens, 2006).

Previous research has tried to explain the prevalence, persistence, and pervasiveness of victim blaming through three broad theories: Invulnerability Theory (Andrews et al., 2003; Johnson et al., 2002), Just World Beliefs Hypothesis (Culda et al., 2018; Vonderhar, 2015), and Attributional Theory (Burger, 1981; Heider, 1958; Kelly, 1972). While each of these theories offers different explanations regarding the perceived reason individuals blame the victim, they all possess the same root cause for blaming a victim for their own suffering: self-protection. If individuals, such as perpetrators or observers can justify blaming the victim, they can perceive themselves as able to avoid applying the supposedly blameworthy characteristics on themselves.

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If they can avoid self-attribution of those characteristics, they feel they are protected from the harm of trauma.

The first theory, Invulnerability Theory, suggests individuals imagine themselves to be insulated from the possibility of being victimized themselves, or that if they were victimized, they would be somehow immune from the negative consequences suffered by victims. Therefore, individuals blame the victim in order to protect the individual's own idea of personal immunity to negative life events, such as rape (Andrews et al., 2003). The core concept of this theory is that individuals blame the victim to mentally ensure their own safety (Andrews et al., 2003). The very fact that people are raped, according to this theory, causes an individual to feel vulnerable to another's actions and can be too much of a cognitive load for the victim blamer to cope with. To mitigate the feeling of vulnerability, victim blamers look for ways in which they are different from the victim. In doing so, a false sense of safety and assurance is created such that each individual can retain confident in the belief that they will always be in control of their own personal fate.

The second theory, the Just World Beliefs Hypothesis, asserts that the world is a safe place and all people get what they deserve, such that good things happen to good people and bad things happen to bad people (Idisis et al., 2007; Kay et al., 2005). From the perception of an individual who endorses just world beliefs, the victim is not just responsible, but is the cause of their victimization through a fault of their own (Johnson et al., 2002). For example, if an individual was raped, someone who endorses just world beliefs would believe that the individual must have been a bad person and deserved to be raped, otherwise the rape would not have happened. Reciprocally, the Just World Beliefs Hypothesis provides a sense of protection—albeit an ultimately false sense—as it supports the notion that if one continues to act like a “good

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person” harm will not befall them. The Just World Beliefs Hypothesis focuses on the internal characteristics of a person and does not account for environmental factors (e.g., substance use) that are often present when a rape occurs.

Conversely, the third theory, Attributional Theory, attends to both internal and external explanations for events. Internal attributions are made when a person believes the personal characteristics of the victim are the cause for their own actions or current situation (Burger, 1981; Heider, 1958; Kelly, 1972). External attributions, in direct contrast, are made when environmental circumstances are blamed for a person’s negative behaviors (Burger, 1981; Heider, 1958; Kelly, 1972). In accordance with this theory, individuals may view the victim as responsible for what happened to them based on attributions to their internal characteristics (e.g., “he was raped because he is a player”). Unfortunately, examining only internal factors detracts from the gravity of environmental factors, such as being pressured into a sexual relationship or feeling coerced (Johnson et al., 2002). Ignoring environmental characteristics may contribute to victim blaming by leaving the victim's negative personal characteristics in focus as a causal explanation of the rape. This perception allows the individual to mentally protect themselves from acknowledging their own vulnerability by contrasting their personal characteristics with the victim’s characteristics (Burger, 1981). If environmental factors (e.g., the perpetrator drugging the victim’s drink) were included in the assignment of victim blame, the individual would have to acknowledge their own vulnerability in uncontrollable environments (Burger, 1981). In creating this mental separation to protect themselves, what individuals fail to realize is that victim blaming can have detrimental mental health consequences for rape survivors.

Mitigating the Psychological Effects of Rape with Social Support

Rape can leave a multitude of lingering psychological effects on the victim immediately after the trauma, as well as weeks and months after the trauma. (Liang et. al, 2005; Ogbe et. al, 2020; Oram, 2019). Some of the areas affected include emotional and social impairments. Emotional reactions can include depression, anger, fear, and shame about the rape or the events leading to the rape (Liang; Rape Abuse Incest National Network [RAINN], 2021). Although social support, such as friendship, has been shown to provide some protection from traumatic stress of the emotional reactions the victim experiences, such support may be difficult to obtain due to both the victim's sense of shame and guilt (Liang et. al). Often, there is a subsequent need to "hide" and "keep secret" the rape. Some supporters face uncertainty about what to say, how best to help, or if they should distance themselves from others' trauma. These effects and symptoms in conjunction with one another can ultimately culminate in mental health disorders including Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), anxiety disorders, insomnia, negative self-esteem, and Major Depressive Disorder (Walker et al., 2005a; Walker et al., 2005b).

Previous research has identified social support, such as friendship, to be a buffer against the negative psychological effects of rape (Brewin et al., 2000; Wagner et al., 2016, Wilcox, 2010). Social support is defined as "the degree to which support is available in general from people including friends, family members, and romantic partners" (Dworkin et al., 2017). A meta-analysis from 2003 analyzed 11 different studies examining the relationship between social support and severity of PTSD symptoms among rape victims (Ozer et al., 2003). This meta-analysis reported a negative correlation ($r = -.28$) between PTSD and social support, meaning that as social support increased, PTSD symptoms decreased.

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Other research has examined the relationship between social support and PTSD symptoms longitudinally. In one study, the researchers examined how a daily increase in PTSD symptoms influenced how sources of support responded to the change in a sexual assault victim's symptoms (Dworkin et al., 2017). The researchers found evidence that the causal direction was reversed: low social support may increase PTSD, but more severe PTSD symptoms may elicit higher levels of social support (Dworkin et al., 2017). This finding highlights the need for early post-victimization social support to prevent increased severity of PTSD symptoms. Dworkin et al.'s work also suggests the crucial role developing ways to help victims express and communicate their symptoms to trusted others plays as a means for engendering the social support that is crucial to recovery. Friendships may offer a source to fulfill both needs.

Friendship as an Essential Form of Social Support

In the literature, friendship has been studied within the category of "social support." Research suggests that individuals who are most likely to share their traumas with their friends are less likely to struggle with mental health issues later on (Banyard et al., 2010). Despite efforts to increase victim's willingness to file official reports of sexual assaults to law enforcement, individuals are 68% less likely to report their sexual assaults to authorities than to friends (Fisher et al., 2003). If patterns evident in the reporting behavior of female rape victims parallel the behavior of male rape victims, the value of having a trusted friend is evidenced by the finding that eighty percent of female victims disclosed their sexual assault to a friend (Banyard et al., 2005).

Recent increases in awareness and acknowledgement of male rape has promoted a willingness to openly discuss and investigate the underlying dynamics. Evidence that positive change has already occurred is found in increased prevalence rates, with a recent trend toward

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more male individuals reporting their rape (CDC, 2010; CDC, 2015). However, while some progress has been made, many male rape victims still do not report for fear of ridicule, judgment, and disbelief from authority figures, friends, and family. As noted by Antaki et al. (2015), these fears seem to be fueled by the acceptance and perpetuation of rape myths by large segments of society, including decision-makers such as police officers and members of the criminal justice system, who possess the opportunity to take actions that could serve to help shift societal beliefs and policies in a direction more favorable to male rape victims.

In summary, if a victim anticipates that their attempts to reach out and share their experience will be met with skepticism or ignored—and even worse, subjected to ridicule and victim blaming—they may be much less likely to seek social support. This lack of support mitigates the chances of finding healthy resolution of the unwelcome psychological effects that arise after a rape. Continued widespread endorsement of rape myths provides the societal level foundation which allows individual victim blaming to flourish. These points lead to the rationale for the current study.

The Current Study

The purpose of the current study was two-fold. First, the current study was designed to fill a gap in the literature on male rape victims by examining the extent to which friendship with a male victim of rape will influence attributions of blame assigned to the victim, thereby perpetuating rape myths. Second, the current study examined the degree to which each of the three theories of victim blaming act as mediators of the relationship between friendship status and victim blame.

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Hypothesis 1: Victim blame will vary based on participants' friendship status with a hypothetical victim, such that participants who imagine they are best friends with a hypothetical victim will endorse significantly *lower victim blame* compared to those who imagine they are strangers to the victim.

Research question: Which of the three theories related to victim blame is the most likely explanation for the reason individuals blame the rape victim in this circumstance?

Method

Participants

Participants were recruited using snowball sampling via social media sites (e.g., Facebook), as well as from Amazon's Mechanical Turk (MTurk). Three hundred seventeen participants began the study. Of those individuals, 25 consented but immediately dropped out and 89 failed the manipulation check. The final sample consisted of 203 participants. Of the participants, ages ranged from 17 to 77 ($M_{age} = 31.66$, $SD = 12.07$). Of the participants, 121 identified as male, 81 identified as female, one identified as another gender. Of the sample, 129 participants identified as White, 74 identified as another race or ethnicity. Of the sample, 42 participants indicated they were Freshmen, 15 participants indicated they were Sophomores, 8 indicated they were Juniors, and 11 participants indicated they were Seniors in college, while 22 participants indicated they were in graduate school, and 105 indicated they were currently not students. Of the sample, 71 participants indicated high school/GED as their highest completed level of education, 93 participants indicated bachelors, 31 participants indicated masters, three participants indicated doctoral degree, four indicated another degree, and one participant did not report.

Design and Procedure

The design of the study is a between groups design. Friendship status was the manipulated independent variable with three levels (stranger versus acquaintance versus best friend), participants' male rape myth acceptance was controlled as a covariate, and participants' attributions of victim blame served as the dependent variable. Participants read a description of the study to determine if they were interested in participating (see Appendix A). Participants then clicked an online link with instructions to read an informed consent form and select one of two options: Yes- I consent to participate or No- I do NOT consent to participate (see Appendix B). Participation was voluntary and participants were reminded they were free to withdraw at any point in the study without penalty. Participants first completed the MRMS (see Appendix C). Next, participants were randomly assigned one of three vignettes to read with the text of each vignette varying only in the degree of the participants' relationship with a hypothetical male victim (see Appendix D). These vignettes were based on Romero-Sánchez et al. (2012) with several important adaptations made to examine the dynamics of male victimization. These adaptations included making the perpetrator's sex ambiguous by not specifically assigning a gender or stating a name (to keep the focus on the victim rather than on the perpetrator), adding a classroom context such that the victim was telling the story to a friend in past tense instead of describing it in the moment (to incorporate the manipulated friendship element), excluding the use of excessive alcohol to get the victim drunk (again, to maintain focus on the victim sharing their story versus on the perpetrator's coercion), and changing the location of the assault from at the bar to in the victim's house (consistent with research demonstrating much victimization occurs at the victim's home; e.g., RAINN , 2013). Participants were then asked to complete a

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manipulation check (see Appendix E) to determine the salience of the condition they were randomly assigned to. Participants then completed the Rape Perceptions Scale measure of assignment of blame to the victim and perpetrator followed by the Just World Beliefs Scale, Adolescent Invulnerability Scale, and the Attributional Style Questionnaire measures used to quantify the three theoretical explanations for victim blame. All participants completed the survey in the same order. Demographic information was collected at the end of the study. Finally, participants were fully debriefed and provided with contact information for mental and physical health resources (see Appendix K).

Measures

Male Rape Myth Scale. The Male Rape Myth Scale (MRMS; Struckman-Johnson & Struckman-Johnson, 1992; see Appendix C), was designed to examine differences in the blame assigned to male and female perpetrators of rape against men. This measure was included to control for participants' pre-existing rape-related attitudes, which are a precursor to situation-specific perceptions. While this measure is met with some criticism in the literature (Chapleau et al., 2008), it is the only measure to date of male rape myth acceptance that distinguishes between male and female assailants (Spruin & Reilly, 2018). The scale contains six statements that alternate the perpetrator of rape as a male or female and reflects three different rape myth dimensions for a total of 12 statements. Twenty-five distractor items were added to the scale in order to keep the participants from being primed to the true nature of the study. The 25 items were not scored or included in the results. Participants responded on a Likert scale ranging from one (strongly disagree) to six (strongly agree). Four of the twelve statements are reverse scored. Mean item scores were then calculated by summing the scores across all 12 statements and dividing by the total number of statements. Scores can range from 1 to 12 with higher mean item

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scores indicating stronger endorsement of rape myths. Psychometric examination has indicated alpha's ranging from .50-.82 (Chapleau et al., 2008; Spruin & Reilly, 2018). Cronbach's alpha was calculated in the present sample ($\alpha = .91$), indicating excellent reliability. Female subjects showed stronger disagreement with rape myths than did male subjects $p = .0001-.02$ (Spruin & Reilly, 2018).

Rape Perceptions Scale

The Rape Perceptions Scale (RPS; Hockett et al., 2014; see Appendix F), a measure designed to assess rape-related perceptions in a traditional rape scenario in which a man is the perpetrator, and a woman is the victim. The scale was modified to fit the current study by changing the names and pronouns of the victim from female to male. The RPS contains eight sub-scales assessing positive personological attributions, negative personological attributions, adaptive coping, maladaptive coping, positive outcomes, negative outcomes, and attributions of blame/responsibility to the victim. This subscale is comprised of seven items (see Appendix F). An example item is "James deserved what happened to him." Participants indicated the degree to which they agree with each statement on a Likert scale ranging from one (Disagree Very Strongly) to nine (Agree Very Strongly). Mean items scores were calculated for each subscale by summing responses across all items and dividing by the number of items such that higher scores indicated higher levels of blame. Past research has demonstrated this subscale's internal consistency reliability at $\alpha = .76$ (Hockett et al., 2014). Cronbach's alpha was calculated in the present sample for Attributions of Victim Blame, $\alpha = .94$, indicating excellent reliability. Rape myth acceptance positively predicted victim blame, demonstrating the measure's convergent validity; additionally, higher individuals who were higher versus lower in perspective taking

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attributed less blame to the victim (Hockett et al., 2014), demonstrating the measure's divergent validity.

Just World Beliefs Scale

The Just World Belief Scale (JBS; Vonderhaar & Carmody, 2015; see Appendix G) is a measure designed to assess the extent to which a person endorses belief in a just world, meaning that the world is fair and individuals get what they deserve. The JBS was modified from the World Assumption Scale (Janoff-Bulman, 1989) and has 15 items. Participants indicated the degree to which they agree with each statement on a Likert scale ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 6 = Strongly Agree. The total scale score is calculated by summing responses across all items to produce scores ranging from 15-90 with higher scores reflecting stronger adherence to Just World Beliefs. The JBS total scale score has demonstrated good internal consistency at $\alpha = .79$ (Vonderhaar & Carmody, 2015). Cronbach's alpha was calculated in the present sample as $\alpha = .84$, indicating excellent reliability. The JBS indicates predictive validity in that those who scored higher on the scale tended to score higher on rape myth acceptance scale ($r=.105$; $p < .01$)

Adolescent Invulnerability Scale

The Adolescent Invulnerability Scale (AIS; Duggan et al., 2000; see Appendix H) is a measure designed to assess invulnerability in emerging adults. The AIS has 21 items. Participants indicated the degree to which they agree with each statement on a Likert scale ranging from one (Strongly disagree) to five (Strongly Agree). Scores are summed across all 21 items producing a total scale score ranging from 21 to 105, with higher numbers indicating higher levels of feelings of invulnerability. The original authors reported showed strong internal consistency ($\alpha = .87$) for the AIS, as well as a weak but significant positive correlation with risk-

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taking behaviors ($r = .33$). Cronbach's alpha was calculated in the present sample, $\alpha = .92$, indicating excellent reliability. AIS has predictive validity for risk-taking behavior ($r = .33$) as well as predicts substance use ($r = .17$) and mastery and coping ($r = .21$; Duggan et Al., 2000).

Internal and External Attributions

Internal and external attributions for bad events were measured using the Internality subscale for bad events drawn from the Attributional Style Questionnaire (ASQ-I; Peterson et al., 1982; see Appendix I). The ASQ is a measure designed to assess individual differences in attributional styles. Internality measures the extent to which individuals tend to perceive causes of uncontrollable events—in this case, bad events—as being due to a person versus to a situation. Participants are provided with 12 situations, six that have a favorable outcome, and six that have an unfavorable outcome. For each situation, they are asked to provide a “cause” that would explain the outcome, and then respond to three Likert-style items that assess the primary elements of Attribution Theory. The first item assesses whether the attribution is Internal or External. The second item assesses whether the attribution is Global or Situational, and the third item assesses whether the attribution is Stable or Temporary. In the current study, only the Internal items related to situations with “bad” outcomes were used to calculate an Internality subscale score. This score was calculated by summing responses to the six items and dividing by six, which produced an Internality subscale score ranging from 1 to 7, with higher scores indicating greater tendencies to make internal attributions for bad events. In its creation, the ASQ's Internality subscale demonstrated moderate internal consistency reliability with an alpha of .21. Cronbach's alpha was calculated in the present sample for Internality for bad events ($\alpha = .66$), indicating acceptable reliability. The test-retest reliability for the negative composite score was $r = .64$ (Asner-Self & Schreiber, 2004). The negative events subscale has been used

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throughout literature to measure the depressiogenic attributional style, where higher scores are correlated with general dysphoria and depressive symptoms (Asner-Self & Schreiber), indicating the measure's validity to represent a tendency to make and perhaps internalize negative attributions.

Demographic information

A short demographics questionnaire (see Appendix J) was created for the researcher to obtain an accurate record of participant age, gender, ethnicity, grade if in school, and highest level of completed education.

Results

Preliminary analyses using Pearson's bivariate correlation were conducted to examine relationships among all measures, regardless of condition (see Table 1). Participant's preexisting rape myth scores showed a strong positive correlation ($r = .76$) with their victim blame scores. Preexisting rape myth scores also showed a strong positive correlation ($r = .68$) with participants' feelings of invulnerability. Attitudes of victim blame showed a strong positive correlation ($r = .72$) with participants' feelings of invulnerability. Attitudes of victim blame were moderately positive correlation ($r = .51$) with beliefs in a just world. Participants' feelings of invulnerability were moderately positively correlated ($r = .47$) with belief in a just world.

To test hypothesis 1, that victim blame will vary based on participants' friendship status with a hypothetical victim, a one-way Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was conducted using SPSS, controlling for participants' MRMS scores, with Attributions of Victim Blame scores as the dependent variable. The effect of condition on victim blame was not significant, $F(2, 203)$

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$=.35$, $p = .71$, partial eta squared = $.67$, equal variances assumed (Levene's test was nonsignificant, $p = .71$), as shown in Figure 1.

To answer the research question of which of the three theories related to victim blame is the most likely explanation for the reason individuals blame the rape victim in this circumstance, three Hayes (2017) mediation analyses were conducted for the outcome variable (Attributions of Victim Blame), controlling for preexisting rape myth beliefs, with all continuous variables centered. To establish mediation, we must first show that the hypothesized cause predicts the outcome. The regression of condition on victim blame, ignoring the mediators, was significant, $F(2, 163) = 112.10$, $p < .0001$, $R^2 = .58$, with the effect driven by MRMS, $b = .13$, $t(163) = 14.83$, $p < .0001$ ($Y = .24 + .13X$), but not by condition, $b = -.11$, $t(163) = -.81$, $p = .42$ ($Y = .24 + -.11X$).

Second, we must show the hypothesized cause predicts the mediators. The regression of condition on the JWB mediator was significant, $F(2, 163) = 7.37$, $p = .0009$, $R^2 = .08$; however, this effect was driven by the MRMS covariate, $b = .24$, $t(9) = 3.71$, $p = .0003$ ($Y = 1.43 + .24X$), not by condition, $b = -.66$, $t(9) = -.66$, $p = .61$ ($Y = 1.43 + -.66$). The regression of condition on the AIS mediator was significant, $F(2, 163) = 66.20$, $p < .0001$, $R^2 = .45$; again, however, this effect was driven by the MRMS covariate, $b = .79$, $t(9) = 11.32$, $p < .0001$ ($Y = 2.08 + .79X$), not by condition, $b = -1.22$, $t(9) = -1.11$, $p = .27$ ($Y = 2.08 + -1.22X$). The regression of condition on the ASQ-I mediator was significant, $F(2, 163) = 3.92$, $p = .02$, $R^2 = .05$; again, however, this effect was driven by the MRMS covariate, $b = .01$, $t(9) = 2.21$, $p = .03$ ($Y = .31 + .01X$), not by condition, $b = -.15$, $t(9) = -1.52$, $p = .13$ ($Y = .31 + -.15X$).

Third, we must show that the mediator predicts the outcome and we must show the effect of the hypothesized cause on the outcome controlling for the mediators is either zero or

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significantly decreased. The regression of condition along with the mediators on attributions to the victim was significant, $F(5, 160) = 78.65, p < .0001, R^2 = .71$; this effect was driven by JWB ($b = .04, t(160) = 4.37, p < .0001 [Y = .08 + .04X]$), AIS ($b = .04, t(160) = 4.91, p < .0001 [Y = .08 + .04X]$), and MRMS ($b = .08, t(160) = 8.62, p < .0001 [Y = .08 + .08X]$), but not by ASQ-I ($b = .03, t(160) = .35, p = .73 [Y = .08 + .03X]$). The effect of condition on attributions to James was not significant, $b = -.02, t(160) = -.21, p = .83 (Y = .08 + -.02X)$.

Discussion

The purpose of the current study was to examine the degree to which closeness with a male victim of rape would influence attributions of blame to the victim, as well as to assess why it did so by examining the mediational value of three theories of victim blame attributions. The expected results were that an increase in closeness with the victim would predict lower levels of blame to the victim, and that this relationship would be mediated by at least one of the three theories of victim blame attributions.

In preliminary analyses, significant positive associations were found between participants' rape myth attitudes, their levels of victim blame, their belief in a just world, their perceived invulnerability, and their perceived control for bad events. The significant correlation between participants' male rape myth beliefs and their blame for the victim provided evidence consistent with theoretical rationale (Ahrens, 2006; Andrews et al., 2003) that preconceived beliefs about male rape (e.g., adherence to beliefs such as, "It is impossible to rape a man") would have an effect on responses large enough that MRMS needed to be controlled for as a covariate. This relationship is consistent with results from previous literature (Baugher, 2010; Stuckman-Johnson & Stuckman-Johnson, 1992).

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The pattern of relationships between participants' attributions of victim blame and each of the mediator variables indicated that as attributions of blame to James increased, so did the individuals' beliefs in a just world, personal invulnerability, and their attributions of negative events to internal causes. These findings are consistent with previous literature (Andrews et al.; Burger, 1981; Heider, 1958; Johnson et al., 2002; Kelly, 1972)

Significant positive relationships were found between beliefs in a just world, invulnerability, and perceived control of negative events. As individuals' believed more in a just world (e.g., "Good things happen to good people, bad things happen to bad people"), their ideas of personal invulnerability increased (e.g., "I am immune to bad things happening"). Similarly, as individuals' beliefs that people get what they deserve increased, their perceptions of internal control over negative events also increased, which is consistent with previous literature (Vonderhaar & Carmody, 2015). As individuals' beliefs in a just world increased, their perceptions of internal control over negative events also increased, which is consistent with previous literature (Andrews et al., 2003).

No support was found in the current study for Hypothesis 1. Notably, however, participants generally assigned low levels of blame to the victim, as shown in Figure 1. The clinical implications of these low attributions of victim blame are particularly encouraging, in that when men seek help for being sexually victimized from friends or providers with mental health backgrounds, they may be likely to receive belief and acceptance from non-judgmental individuals. Previous literature has stated individuals do not report for fear or ridicule of judgment and the potential of being met with disbelief and blame (Antaki et al., 2015; Turchik & Edwards, 2012); however, based on the data reported in the current study, that assumption would not be met.

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Due to the absence of support for Hypothesis 1 that the level of friendship relationship would be predictive of victim blaming, mediation could not be met. However, the mediators—particularly just world beliefs and invulnerability—had predictive value for victim blame, suggesting that they may mediate some other relationship, such as age of the male victim (Stromwall et al. (2013), prior sexual victimization, level of education, and ability to report (Vonderharr & Carmody, 2015) on victim blame. Some other mediators to consider for future research seeking to explain attributions of victim blame more broadly could include participant race. based on potential overlap between invulnerability and experiences of “white privilege” (e.g. as observed in the Stanford Swimmer Case; O’Neal, 2016). Sex of the participants also an important mediator to consider, as previous literature has shown that males endorse stronger rape myth acceptance than females (Hockett et al., 2009).

In summary, we observed significant and positive relationships among victim blame, belief in male rape myths, and the hypothesized mediators of just world beliefs, invulnerability, and tendencies to make external attributions for negative events. Although lack of a friendship condition effect on victim blame prevented us from observing a mediation effect, we still showed the mediators were valuable in predicting the outcome and are deserving of further inquiry—particularly just world beliefs and invulnerability. Despite the limitations of this study, we are optimistic about the low levels of victim blame we observed, and hope that future research on male rape myths may provide additional insight into the development of acceptance and kindness for rape victims.

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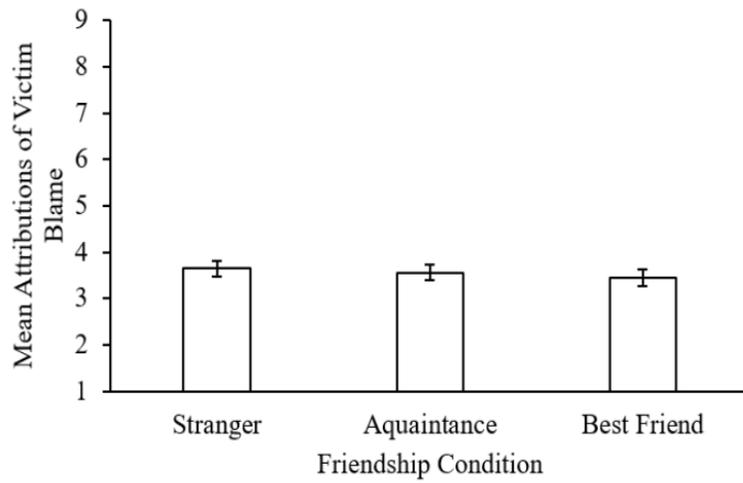
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Figure 1*Friendship Condition and Mean Attribution of Blame to Victim*

Note. Figure depicts the amount of blame participants place on the victim based upon condition with higher numbers indicating more victim blame.

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Table 1

Correlation among Measurement Variables

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5
1	29.75	13.58	-	.763**	.296**	.676**	.188*
2	27.18	15.79	-	-	.510**	.742**	.237**
3	55.92	11.53	-	-	-	.466**	.260**
4	52.92	16.36	-	-	-	-	.280**
5	27.27	6.46	-	-	-	-	-

Note. 1 = Male Rape Myth Scale, 2 = Attributions of Victim Blame, 3= Just World Beliefs, 4 = Adolescent Invulnerability Scale, 5 = Attributional Internality,

* Correlation is significant at the .05 level (two-tailed). ** Correlation is significant at the .01 level (two-tailed).

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Appendix A

Study Description

Title: Attitudes and Beliefs About Current Social Issues

Brief Description: The purpose of this project is to examine individuals' attitudes and beliefs related to current social issues. You will report your attitudes and beliefs in an online survey that is expected to take approximately 35 minutes to complete. If you are completing this for your PY100 Psychological Research Activities requirement, you will earn 10 points of credit.

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Appendix B

Informed Consent

The Department of Psychology supports the practice of protection for human subjects participating in research. The following information is provided so that you can decide whether you wish to participate in the present study. You should be aware that even if you agree to participate you are free to withdraw at any time, without penalty.

Purpose: The purpose of this project is to examine individuals' attitudes and beliefs related to attitudes and beliefs about sexual violence.

Participation: You will report your attitudes and beliefs in an online survey that is expected to take approximately 30 minutes to complete.

Benefits and rights: You may learn about the psychological research process through your participation, and may gain insight into your own attitudes and beliefs. You will earn 5 points of credit towards your PY100 Psychological Research Activities requirement. If you are completing this on MTurk, you will earn \$2.40 for completion of the survey.

Expected risks: No risks are anticipated. However, if any questions arouse strong emotions, you may choose to not answer the question(s) or stop participating at any time without explanation or penalty.

Extent of confidentiality: Your responses will be anonymous. At no time will your personal data be accessible. Your name and identity will not be associated in any way with the research findings—once your responses are entered into a secure statistical program, data will be examined in aggregate, such that no individual's responses will be traceable from the products of this work, such as journal articles and presentations.

Alternatives: Alternative options to earn points towards your PY100 Psychological Research Activities requirement are available, including participation in other studies or completion of a written assignment. Please see your PY100 syllabus for details.

Do not hesitate to ask any questions about the study at any time. Thank you for your participation!

Sincerely,

Rebecca Livgren, B.S. (Principal Investigator and contact for any problems/questions)

rebecca.livgren@washburn.edu

(785)-670-1964

Henderson 211

Mediating Effects of Friendship on Male Rape Victim Blame

IRB Information:

IRB Number: #20-7

IRB Address/Contact:

Mike Russell, Ph.D. (IRB Director)

irb@washburn.edu

Henderson 211

(785)-670-1566

BY SELECTING:

YES - I verify that I have read and understand this consent form, and willingly agree to participate in this study under the terms described.

NO - I verify that I have read and understand this consent form and do NOT wish to participate in this study under the terms described.

Please retain a copy of this consent form for your records.

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Appendix C

Male Rape Myth Scale

Instructions: Please read and select the degree to which you agree with each statement on the following six-point scale

- | | | | | | |
|---------------------|---|---|---|------------------|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| (Strongly Disagree) | | | | (Strongly Agree) | |
- _____ Crime is a problem in our society.
- _____ Parents should be able to spank their children.
- _____ Smoking is a major social problem.
- _____ It is impossible for a man to rape a man.
- _____ Marijuana should be made legal.
- _____ I have experienced discrimination.
- _____ Police are corrupt.
- _____ It is impossible for a woman to rape a man.
- _____ The maximum age for a President to run for office needs to be regulated.
- _____ Men have no say in the topic of abortion.
- _____ Even a big, strong man can be raped by another man.
- _____ Universal healthcare should be implemented in the United States.
- _____ Abortion should be illegal.
- _____ Crime against People of Color is sought out by police officers.
- _____ Even a big, strong man can be raped by a woman.
- _____ Caucasian men are oppressed.
- _____ Handicap access is not widespread in America.
- _____ Most men who are raped by a woman are somewhat to blame for not being more careful.
- _____ Border Control should not be as strict as it currently is.
- _____ Most men who are raped by a man are very upset by the incident.
- _____ Candidates should not be allowed to promote themselves on social media.
- _____ Men should not be allowed to own guns.

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- _____ Most men who are raped by a man are somewhat to blame for not escaping or fighting off the man.
- _____ Alcohol consumption is a major issue in Kansas.
- _____ Children are given too many trophies.
- _____ Assisted suicide is a human right.
- _____ Most men who are raped by a man are somewhat to blame for not being more careful.
- _____ Sentences for rape perpetrators need to be more severe.
- _____ Most men who are raped by a man do not need counseling after the incident.
- _____ Kneeling during the National Anthem is unpatriotic.
- _____ To be tough, men should not cry.
- _____ Most men who are raped by a woman do not need counseling after the incident.
- _____ Individuals infected by COVID-19 should quarantine longer than 14 days.
- _____ Most men who are raped by a woman are somewhat to blame for not escaping or fighting off the woman.
- _____ Poverty and crime are directly connected.
- _____ Most men who are raped by a woman are very upset by the incident.
- _____ The US government spends too much money on the military.

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Appendix D

Vignettes

Condition 1: Stranger

During an ice breaker game on the first day of class, someone who happened to sit near you asks to talk to you. His name is James. He tells you this past weekend he was out with a group of people dancing. While at the club, James said he noticed an unknown individual taking interest in him by looking and smiling from across the room. After a few minutes, the individual approached James and asked him to dance. After the first song, James stated they begin to talk, laugh, and emotionally connect with one another. James tells you that as the night went on, they continued flirting and having a good time together. James stated he was very attracted to this individual and wanted to potentially take it to the “next level” on a future date, but was ready to go home that night and did not want to engage in intimate activities. James had promised to give the individual a ride home, and when they got to James's car, the individual violated James consent by kissing him. James asked the individual to stop, and after a few seconds, the individual stopped. James drove the individual home and once they arrived, James was talked into one more drink. James tells you the individual began making sexual advances on him and coerced James into having sex with him.

Condition 2: Acquaintance

After a group project has ended in class, your friend and lab partner asks to talk to you. His name is James. He tells you this past weekend he was out with a group of people dancing. While at the club, James said he noticed an unknown individual taking interest in him by looking and smiling from across the room. After a few minutes, the individual approached James and asked him to dance. After the first song, James stated they begin to talk, laugh, and emotionally connect with one another. James tells you that as the night went on, they continued flirting and having a good time together. James stated he was very attracted to this individual and wanted to potentially take it to the “next level” on a future date, but was ready to go home that night and did not want to engage in intimate activities. James had promised to give the individual a ride home, and when they got to James's car, the individual violated James consent by kissing him. James asked the individual to stop, and after a few seconds, the individual stopped. James drove the individual home and once they arrived, James was talked into one more drink. James tells you the individual began making sexual advances on him and coerced James into having sex with him.

Condition 3: Best Friend

After class, your best friend of seven years asks to talk to you. His name is James. He tells you this past weekend he was out with a group of people dancing. While at the club, James said he noticed an unknown individual taking interest in him by looking and smiling from across the room. After a few minutes, the individual approached James and asked him to dance. After the first song, James stated they begin to talk, laugh, and emotionally connect with one another.

James tells you that as the night went on, they continued flirting and having a good time together. James stated he was very attracted to this individual and wanted to potentially take it to

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the “next level” on a future date but was ready to go home that night and did not want to engage in intimate activities. James had promised to give the individual a ride home, and when they got to James's car, the individual violated James consent by kissing him. James asked the individual to stop, and after a few seconds, the individual stopped. James drove the individual home and once they arrived, James was talked into one more drink. James tells you the individual began making sexual advances on him and coerced James into having sex with him.

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Appendix E

Manipulation Check

What was your relationship with James in the story?

Someone who sits next to you in class.

Your lab partner.

Your best friend of 7 years.

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Appendix F

Rape Perceptions Scale

Instructions: Please use the 9-point scale below to indicate your agreement with each statement.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
Disagree Very Strongly									Agree Very Strongly

Attributions of Blame/Responsibility to James

_____ James's behavior in this situation was immoral.*

_____ What James did was bad.*

_____ James had control in this situation.*

_____ James enjoyed this situation.*

_____ James was interested in having sexual relations that night.*

_____ James deserved what happened to him.

_____ James should blame himself for what happened.

Items with a * are reverse scored

Appendix G

Just World Beliefs Scale

Instructions: Please rate your level of agreement on each statement with the following scale:

1 2 3 4 5 6

Strongly Disagree Disagree Somewhat Disagree Somewhat agree Agree Strongly Agree

- _____ Misfortune is least likely to strike worthy, decent people.
- _____ Bad events are distributed to people at random.
- _____ The course of our lives is largely determined by chance.
- _____ Generally people deserve what they get in the world.
- _____ People's misfortunes result from mistakes they have made.
- _____ I usually behave in ways that are likely to maximize good results for me.
- _____ People will experience good fortune if they themselves are good.
- _____ Life is too full of uncertainties that are determined by chance.
- _____ I almost always make an effort to prevent bad things from happening to me.
- _____ By and large, good people get what they deserve in the world.
- _____ Through our actions, we can prevent bad things happening to us.
- _____ I take the actions necessary to protect myself against misfortune.
- _____ In general, my life is most a gamble.
- _____ I usually behave so as to bring about the greatest good for me.
- _____ When bad things happen, it is typically because people have not taken the necessary actions to protect themselves.

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Appendix H

Adolescent Invulnerability Scale

How well do the following statements describe you? Rate each statement using the following scale:

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly-disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

- ____ 1. I don't get hurt.
- ____ 2. I'm unlikely to be injured in an accident.
- ____ 3. Nothing bad will happen to me when I go to a place by myself.
- ____ 4. Nothing can harm me.
- ____ 5. Nothing seems to bother me.
- ____ 6. My feelings don't get hurt.
- ____ 7. It is not necessary for me to worry about being injured or harmed.
- ____ 8. The problems that happen to people my age are unlikely to happen to me.
- ____ 9. There are times when I think I am indestructible.
- ____ 10. Safety rules don't apply to me.
- ____ 11. I could probably drink and drive without getting in an accident.
- ____ 12. Driving very fast wouldn't be dangerous if I were driving.
- ____ 13. Taking safety precautions is far more important for other people than it is for me.
- ____ 14. I'm unlikely to get hurt if I did a dangerous thing.
- ____ 15. Special problems, like getting an illness or disease, are not likely to happen to me.
- ____ 16. My feelings are easily hurt.
- ____ 17. I am a fragile person.
- ____ 18. What people say about me has no effect at all.
- ____ 19. I feel badly when I know there is gossip about me.
- ____ 20. The opinions of other people just don't bother me.
- ____ 21. It is just impossible for people to hurt my feelings.

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AIS Scoring

Reverse Score: # 16, 17, and 19

Two-Scale Factor Solution Danger Invulnerability Psychological Invulnerability 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 12, 15, 17, 18, 20 2, 4, 7, 9, 13, 14, 16, 19

Three-Factor Solution General Invulnerability Danger Invulnerability Interpersonal 1 2 3 4 5 11
12 20 6 8 10 15 17 18 7 9 13 14 16 19

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Appendix I

Attributional Style Questionnaire

Instructions: Please try to vividly imagine yourself in the situations that follow. If such a situation happened to you, what would you feel would have caused it? While events may have many causes, we want you to pick only one-the major cause if this event happened to you. Please write this cause in the blank provided after each event. Next, we want you to answer

some questions about the cause and a final question about the situation. To summarize, we want you to:

1. Read each situation and vividly imagine it happening to you.
2. Decide what you feel would be the major cause of the situation if it happened to you.
3. Write one cause in the blank provided.
4. Answer three questions about the cause.
5. Answer one question about the situation.
6. Go on to the next situation.

You become very rich.

1. Write down one major cause: _____

2. Is the cause of you becoming rich due to something about you or to something about other people or circumstances? (circle one number)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Totally due to other people						Totally due to me

3. In the future, will this cause again be present? (circle one number)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Will never again be present						Will always be present

4. Is the cause something that just influences becoming rich or does it also influence other areas of your life? (circle one number)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Influences just this particular situation						Influences all situations in my life

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You apply for a position that you want very badly (e.g., important job, graduate school admission) and you get it.

1. Write down one major cause: _____

2. Is the cause of your successful job application due to something about you or to something about other people or circumstances? (circle one number)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Totally due to other people			Totally due to me			

3. In the future, will this cause again be present? (circle one number)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Will never again be present			Will always be present			

4. Is the cause something that just influences your successful job application or does it also influence other areas of your life? (circle one number)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Influences just this particular situation			Influences all situations in my life			

You get a raise.

1. Write down one major cause: _____

2. Is the cause of your unsuccessful raise due to something about you or to something about other people or circumstances? (circle one number)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Totally due to other people			Totally due to me			

3. In the future, will this cause again be present? (circle one number)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

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Will never
again be present

Will always
be present

4. Is the cause something that just influences your raise or does it also influence other areas of your life? (circle one number)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Influences just
this particular
situation

Influences all
situations in my life

You meet a friend who compliments you on your appearance.

1. Write down one major cause: _____

2. Is the cause of your friend complimenting you due to something about you or to something about other people or circumstances? (circle one number)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Totally due to
other people

Totally due to
me

3. In the future, will this cause again be present? (circle one number)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Will never
again be present

Will always
be present

4. Is the cause something that just influences your friend complimenting you or does it also influence other areas of your life? (circle one number)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Influences just
this particular
situation

Influences all
situations in my life

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You do a project that is highly praised.

1. Write down one major cause: _____

2. Is the cause of your project's praise search due to something about you or to something about other people or circumstances? (circle one number)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Totally due to
other people

Totally due to
me

3. In the future, will this cause again be present? (circle one number)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Will never
again be present

Will always
be present

4. Is the cause something that just influences your project's praise or does it also influence other areas of your life? (circle one number)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Influences just
this particular
situation

Influences all
situations in my life

Your spouse (boyfriend/girlfriend) has been treating you more lovingly.

1. Write down one major cause: _____

2. Is the cause of your more loving treatment due to something about you or to something about other people or circumstances? (circle one number)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Totally due to
other people

Totally due to
me

3. In the future, will this cause again be present? (circle one number)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Will never
again be present

Will always
be present

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4. Is the cause something that just influences your more loving treatment or does it also influence other areas of your life? (circle one number)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Influences just						Influences all
this particular						situations in my life
situation						

You have been looking for a job unsuccessfully for some time.

1. Write down one major cause: _____
2. Is the cause of your unsuccessful job search due to something about you or to something about other people or circumstances? (circle one number)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Totally due to						Totally due to
other people						me

3. In the future, will this cause again be present? (circle one number)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Will never						Will always
again be present						be present

4. Is the cause something that just influences your unsuccessful job search or does it also influence other areas of your life? (circle one number)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Influences just						Influences all
this particular						situations in my life
situation						

You give an important talk in front of a group and the audience reacts negatively.

1. Write down one major cause: _____

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2. Is the cause of the negative reaction due to something about you or to something about other people or circumstances? (circle one number)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Totally due to other people						Totally due to me

3. In the future, will this cause again be present? (circle one number)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Will never again be present						Will always be present

4. Is the cause something that just influences the negative reaction or does it also influence other areas of your life? (circle one number)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Influences just this particular situation						Influences all situations in my life

You can't get all the work done that others expect of you.

1. Write down one major cause: _____

2. Is the cause of your inability to get all the work done due to something about you or to something about other people or circumstances? (circle one number)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Totally due to other people						Totally due to me

3. In the future, will this cause again be present? (circle one number)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Will never again be present						Will always be present

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4. Is the cause something that just influences your inability to get all the work done or does it also influence other areas of your life? (circle one number)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Influences just this particular situation					Influences all situations in my life	

A friend comes to you with a problem and you don't try to help.

1. Write down one major cause: _____
2. Is the cause of you not helping due to something about you or to something about other people or circumstances? (circle one number)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Totally due to other people					Totally due to me	

3. In the future, will this cause again be present? (circle one number)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Will never again be present					Will always be present	

4. Is the cause something that just influences you not helping or does it also influence other areas of your life? (circle one number)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Influences just this particular situation					Influences all situations in my life	

You meet a friend who acts hostilely toward you.

1. Write down one major cause: _____
2. Is the cause of your friend acting hostilely toward you due to something about you or to something about other people or circumstances? (circle one number)

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1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Influences just this particular situation						Influences all situations in my life

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Appendix J
Demographics

Instructions: Please read each question and fill in the blank or circle the answer that best fits for you.

1. **What is your age in years? (e.g., 19) _____**
2. **What is your ethnicity?**
 - a. European American / Caucasian
 - b. One of the following identities, or an ethnicity not listed here: African American / Black, Hispanic American / Hispanic, Latino/Latina, American Indian / Alaska Native, Asian American / Asian, Native Hawaiian / Other Pacific Islander, Middle Eastern / Arab, Biracial , Multiracial
 - c. I do not self-identify this way
3. **What is your gender? (Please select one)**
 - a. Female
 - b. Male
 - c. One of the following identities, or a gender identity not listed here: Genderqueer/androgynous, intersex, female transgender, male transgender
 - d. I do not self-identify this way
4. **What is your highest completed level of education? (Please select one)**
 - a. High school/GED
 - b. Bachelor's degree
 - c. Master's degree
 - d. Doctoral degree
 - e. Other (please specify): _____
5. **If you are a student, what is your class standing? (Please select one)**
 - a. First year
 - b. Sophomore
 - c. Junior
 - d. Senior
 - e. Graduate student
 - f. Not applicable

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Appendix K

Debriefing/Resources for Mental and Physical Health:

My name is Rebecca Livgren and I am the lead investigator for the study you completed: Mediating the Effects of Friendship on Male Rape Victim Blame. Thank you for your time and effort in participating in my research. The purpose of this study was to examine how and if friendship plays a role in the way we judge a male victim of rape. This was done in examining if an individual was friends with the hypothetical victim or if they did not know the victim well. The anticipated results are individuals who were slated to be best friends with the hypothetical male rape victim would blame the victim less for the crime committed against them than those who did not know the hypothetical victim. I was also examining what potential causes there were for individuals to blame the victim.

I know research on the topic of rape can cause many emotions to surface, and therefore I have provided resources for mental health as well as physical health on the following page. As stated in the informed consent, you still have the right to withdraw your consent and withdraw your data from the study. If you would like, I will provide you with a copy of the study results when the study is complete.

If you have any more questions or concerns related to the study or your participation, please do not hesitate to reach out! My email address is rebecca.livgren@washburn.edu and my phone number is (785)-670-1964. Once again, I greatly appreciate your participation!

Sincerely,

Rebecca Livgren, B.S.

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Resources for Mental Health:

Valeo in Topeka:
Call: (785) 233-1730
National Suicide Hotline:
Call: 1-800-273-8255
Text: text HOME to 741741
Washburn University Counseling Services:
Call: 785-670-3100 (Option 1)
24 hours a day: 785-670-3100 (Option 2)
Washburn Psychological Services Clinic:
785-670-1750

Resources for Physical Health:

Stormont Vail Healthcare SANE/SART Program
Phone:
785-354-6107
Address:
1500 S.W. 10th Ave.
Topeka, KS 66604