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Bias in a Just World? Sexual Prejudice, Gender Self-Esteem, and Intimate Partner Violence

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BIAS IN A JUST WORLD? SEXUAL PREJUDICE, GENDER SELF-ESTEEM, AND INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

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ABSTRACT

Each year, approximately 835,000 men and 1.3 million women are victims of intimate partner violence (IPV; American Bar Association, n.d). Although the prevalence of same-sex intimate partner violence (IPV) is approximately the same as IPV in heterosexual couples (Alexander, 2002), fewer studies have examined perceptions of IPV in same-sex couples or of IPV perpetrated against heterosexual men compared to heterosexual women. In the current study, Just World Theory (Lerner & Miller, 1978) is used as a framework for understanding factors associated with perceptions of heterosexual and same-sex IPV, including sexual prejudice and gender self-esteem.

Perceptions of IPV were examined in a sample of 251 male and female undergraduate students from Indiana State University. Participants were randomly assigned to one of four vignette conditions in which the gender of the perpetrator and victim were manipulated, resulting in two heterosexual and two same-sex conditions. Participants then completed several self-report measures, including the Collective Self-Esteem Scale (assesses self-esteem related to gender) and the Modern Homonegativity Scale (assesses sexual prejudice). Participants also completed a measure of social desirability and a measure assessing attributions of blame in the IPV scenario. Results indicated that men and women did not differ significantly in their blame of perpetrators and victims as a function of target character gender or sexual orientation. Additionally, gender self-esteem was not related to blame of victims and sexual prejudice was related to victim responsibility for women but not for men. Sexual prejudice and gender self-esteem were not significantly correlated for men or women. Results emphasize the importance of professionals'

awareness of their biases and potential sexual prejudice when working with victims and perpetrators of IPV, particularly gay men and lesbians. Results also highlight the difficulty that heterosexual and gay men and lesbians likely have in obtaining support following IPV victimization. Although results do not appear to provide support for the Just World Theory construct of position identification, it is possible that other factors such as sexual prejudice outweighed the need for women to protect their potential position as a victim.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Overview

In the United States, approximately 835,000 men and 1.3 million women are victims of intimate partner violence (IPV) each year (American Bar Association, n.d.). Research indicates that between 25 and 50% of gay and lesbian couples experience IPV (Alexander, 2002) with more conservative estimates citing prevalence rates of 25-35% (McClennen, 2005). This translates to approximately 5.7 million people. In addition to similar rates of occurrence, in a qualitative study of Japanese sexual minority (gay, lesbian, intersex, and transgender) IPV, DiStefano (2009) found that participants understood sexual minority IPV as differing very little from heterosexual IPV, with both tending to follow a cycle of violence. Participants identified cheating, breaking up, psychological or verbal victimization, and a senior-junior relationship as factors that could lead to IPV in sexual minority relationships. Although these rates and patterns are similar to those of heterosexual couples, it is possible that they have been significantly underestimated due to the reluctance of sexual minorities to report IPV to the authorities (Alexander, 2002). Based on data from the Bureau of Justice (i.e., Catalano, 2007), fear of retaliation, desire to protect the offender, belief that the violence was a minor offense, and belief that the police would not act, account for much of the underreporting of IPV. However, for both men and women, the most common reason for not reporting IPV was the belief that it was a private/personal matter, with approximately 40% of male and 22% of female victims giving this

reason. Adding to this, Bornstein, Fawcett, Sullivan, Senturia, and Shiu-Thornton (2006) found that lesbian, transgender, and bisexual women did not report abusive behavior to law enforcement because they did not want to expose their partners to potential discrimination or dangerous interactions with the police. Participants also expressed concern about attracting negative attention to their relationships, which are not widely accepted by the heterosexual culture. Similarly, DiStefano found the following as commonly cited reasons for the underreporting and lack of help-seeking behavior seen in IPV victims: fear of being "outed," fear of secondary victimization by the authorities, belief or concern that no action would be taken, belief that IPV is a private matter, discomfort discussing sexual orientation issues with medical professionals, belief that injuries sustained are not serious enough to report, stigma, fear of being ostracized, and belief by some sexual minorities that reporting and help-seeking are not masculine behaviors (particularly by sexual minority women). Aside from reluctance to report to the police, it is possible that the underestimation of IPV is due to the lack of recognition by IPV within the gay and lesbian community. In a qualitative study examining the experience of IPV of bisexual, transgender, and lesbian (LBT) women, Bornstein et al. found that nearly all participants reported that there is an overall lack of awareness of IPV within the LBT community, and LBT victims lack the language to describe abusive relationships in IPV terms. It's important to note that this study used a small sample size that did not permit separate analyses for lesbian participants.

Despite the similar prevalence and patterns of same-sex and heterosexual IPV, compared to heterosexual IPV, same-sex IPV has been virtually ignored in the literature (Renzetti, 1997). Renzetti proposed that the two most common reasons behind this lack of attention are

heterosexism in the social sciences and, for lesbian couples, the belief that women are not aggressive and do not abuse other women.

The current study was designed to contribute to the understanding of the factors that contribute to victim-blaming, particularly to the differential blame of male and female victims and of homosexual and heterosexual victims that is seen in much of the literature (Merten & Williams, 2009; Seelau & Seelau, 2005; Seelau, Seelau, & Poorman, 2003). The constructs of sexual prejudice and gender self-esteem were explored to gain an understanding of their contributions to victim blame. Gender self-esteem, a component of an individual's self-esteem involving the importance and salience of his/her membership in a gender group (Falomir-Pichastor & Mugny, 2009), is a relatively new construct that has not been thoroughly examined, particularly with reference to attitudes toward victims of IPV. Acquiring additional knowledge about the influence and interaction of gender self-esteem, sexual prejudice, and gender on attributions of blame may provide a better understanding of why research consistently shows gender differences in ratings of victim blame, particularly why men tend to blame the victim of violence more than women do. Overall, this study intends to investigate whether a couple's sexual orientation and gender affect ratings of blame in incidents of IPV as presented in a vignette. Specifically, it will investigate whether gender self-esteem and/or sexual prejudice influence blame attributions in men and women.

This study also intends to provide a conceptualization of the literature through the lens of Just World Theory. Just World Theory has been used in several studies as a lens through which to view and understand victim blame (Kristiansen & Giulietti, 1990). The strengths and limitations of several of these studies are explored in an attempt to provide evidence in support of a Just World framework for the understanding of perceptions of IPV. In the next sections,

research on abuse myths, perceptions of abuse seriousness, gender self-esteem, and sexual prejudice will be discussed in order to provide a foundation for the understanding of both victim and perpetrator blame in cases of IPV.

Literature Review

Background

Although there has been a decline in nonfatal IPV since 1993, statistics from the Bureau of Justice (Catalano, 2007) suggest that women still experience significantly higher rates of IPV victimization than their male counterparts. Between 2001 and 2005, nonfatal IPV accounted for 21.5% of violent victimizations against girls and women ages 12 and older and 3.6% of violent victimizations of boys and men of the same age. Furthermore, IPV accounted for 30.1% of homicides against women and 5.3% of homicides against men. During this same time period, an estimated 50% of female victims of IPV suffered injuries from violence with approximately 5% suffering serious injuries and 44% enduring minor injuries. Bachman (1998) cited several studies (e.g., Straus, 1993) indicating that the rate of IPV committed by women against men is approximately the same as the rate of IPV perpetrated by men against women. The difference between these studies may be accounted for by the difference in reporting rates between men and women. Women are likely more apt to report IPV than men because such victimization does not involve breaking traditional sex roles, which may involve a significant degree of shame for men above and beyond that which many women may experience. Furthermore, if considering hospital visits, it is likely that more women report to the emergency room with injuries inflicted by a male partner than the reverse.

Each year, IPV costs 5.8 billion dollars. Approximately four billion dollars of this is spent on mental health and medical services (National Coalition Against Domestic Violence,

2009). Adding to this cost, victims lose approximately eight million days of paid work as a result of IPV. Despite these significant personal, economic, and social costs, IPV was not recognized as a social issue until the 1970s with the emergence of the women's movement (Richie & Menard, n.d.), and it was not until the last ten to fifteen years that same-sex IPV was recognized as a problem of similar significance (An Abuse, Rape, and Domestic Violence Aid and Resource Collection [AARDVARC], 2008). Even today, several states, including Delaware, Montana, and South Carolina explicitly exclude same-sex relationships in their IPV laws (NCADV, 2009). This exclusion may be due in part to sexual prejudice (negative attitudes toward others because of their sexual orientation; e.g., "Who cares if they are being abused?"). The exclusion may also be the result of endorsement of sexual stereotypes and minimization of the abuse (e.g., "It was only two lesbians acting 'butch;'" Renzetti, 1997). In a study of sexual minority (gay, lesbian, intersex, and transgender) IPV in Japan, DiStefano (2009) noted that some participants did not believe sexual minority IPV exists. The primary reason cited for this denial was the belief that sexual minority relationships (especially those of gay men) tend to end quickly when signs of serious problems begin to arise, leaving fewer opportunities for violence to develop. It is important to note, however, that a number of participants viewed sexual minority IPV as a serious problem, with one third of participants asserting that general understanding of the seriousness of sexual minority IPV is skewed as a result of underreporting rather than lack of occurrence. The lack of acknowledgment of the extent and seriousness of same-sex abuse, in addition to a belief in the myth of mutual battering, may contribute to higher levels of victim blame in same-sex IPV. Understanding why these myths are endorsed and what is associated with victim-blaming, particularly in same-sex relationships, is vital to the creation of interventions that can reduce such discrimination and unfair attributions of blame.

Abuse Myths

A number of myths of intimate partner exist that may contribute to a reluctance to report IPV to the authorities, and to negative perceptions and blame of victims of IPV. In a study examining responses to abuse myths, Ewing and Aubrey (1987) found that participants endorsed the myth that an abused woman can easily leave her abuser. Similar findings have come from studies examining male victims and victims of same-sex IPV. Brown and Groscup (2009), for example, found that crisis center staff believed that it would be easier for the victim of a same-sex couple to leave the relationship compared to the victim of a heterosexual couple. Furthermore, when the victim was male, participants deemed it easier to leave than when the victim was female. These authors also found that this sample of crisis center staff believed that the same-sex scenarios presented in a vignette were less likely to occur again and less likely to intensify over time as compared to the heterosexual scenarios. The endorsement of such myths is concerning because it could possibly lead to increases in victim blame (e.g., "He did not leave the relationship, so he deserves what is coming to him"), which may contribute to further reluctance of victims to report their abuse, including to those who are in helping fields. It may also contribute to the bias seen in ratings of victim blame when comparing heterosexual and homosexual victims. Beliefs in such myths, particularly those pertaining to same-sex couples, may be due in part to the lack of willingness of some heterosexuals to acknowledge the legitimacy of same-sex romantic relationships. In a vignette study examining heterosexual individuals' perceptions of same-sex relationships as compared to heterosexual relationships, Testa, Kinder, and Ironson (1987) found that compared to heterosexual couples, gay and lesbian couples were rated as less satisfied with their relationships, more prone to discord, and less in love regardless of the level of love presented in the vignette. Such lack of acknowledgment of

the legitimacy of same-sex relationships likely contributes to a lack of empathy and an increase in the ease of blaming the victim in cases of same-sex IPV.

Perceptions of Seriousness

Perceptions of IPV seriousness can also contribute to overall perceptions of IPV and the individuals involved as well as to the type of response received from outsiders. Overall, women tend to rate IPV as more serious than men (Locke & Richman, 1999). Furthermore, several studies have found that participants deemed an IPV incident as more serious when the abuser was male (Brown & Groscup, 2009; Seelau & Seelau, 2005; Seelau et al., 2003) and the victim was female (Seelau & Seelau, 2005; Seelau et al., 2003). In conjunction with these results, Seelau et al. found that undergraduate participants were more likely to recommend outside intervention (i.e., calling the police or a domestic violence hotline) and less likely to leave the couple alone if the victim was female, and they were more likely to recommend the police arrest the perpetrator or issue a citation when the victim was female. Furthermore, Wise and Bowman (1997) found that masters and doctoral-level counseling students were more likely to charge a male perpetrator with assault than a female perpetrator. These results may be accounted for by the participants' assumptions that male perpetrators are more capable of injuring the victim than female perpetrators, leading to a belief that abuse by a woman is less damaging than abuse perpetrated by a man. Supporting this idea, Seelau and Seelau found that female victims were assumed to have sustained more injury than male victims despite vignette descriptions indicating otherwise. In addition to this, Wise and Bowman found that a vignette describing an IPV incident was rated as more violent in the heterosexual condition with a male perpetrator compared to a lesbian condition by masters and doctoral level counseling students. These results are concerning because helping responses are likely influenced by the degree of severity

onlookers perceive when approaching IPV. If observers or helping professionals (e.g., police officers, mental health professionals) believe that abuse perpetrated by a woman is not serious, many individuals victimized by female abusers are likely to be overlooked. Their experiences of abuse may also be minimized, which could, in turn, lead to re-victimization by the very system in place to assist them.

Although most studies examine perceptions of undergraduate students, Younglove, Kerr, and Vitello (2002) used a sample of police officers to investigate the effect of biases on police response to IPV as presented in a vignette. Overall, police officers did not respond differently to heterosexual versus homosexual IPV based on sexual orientation stereotypes. Although these findings are promising, they do not imply that no stereotypes existed. They do suggest, however, that the police officers seemed to recognize the need to respond to IPV despite any biases held. Hence, it could be concluded that even if police officers' biases resulted in perceptions of same-sex IPV as less serious than heterosexual IPV, their responses to the IPV would not reflect this bias. It is important to note that the study focused on perception rather than actual conduct, and social desirability may have influenced the responses. Additionally, no explicit measure of sexual prejudice was used. Rather, the authors made assumptions about the underlying meaning of certain questions used (e.g., not endorsing an item regarding the need for the couple to receive counseling was assumed to serve as the application of the sexual stereotype that same-sex relationships are fleeting). Perhaps one of the greatest limitations, however, was the lack of probing for sexual orientation of the participants, which may have significantly affected the results obtained, particularly given the small sample size.

Gender Self-Esteem

One factor that may affect the way in which participants perceive IPV seriousness and affect the endorsement of abuse myths is gender self-esteem. Gender self-esteem is a component of self-esteem derived from membership in one's gender group (Falomir-Pichastor & Mugny, 2009). It is composed of four components: membership self-esteem (judgment of one's worthiness as a member of one's gender group), private gender self-esteem (personal judgments of how good one's gender group is), public collective self-esteem (judgments of how an individual thinks other people evaluate his/her gender group), and identity importance (the importance of gender group membership to one's self-concept) (Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992). According to Luhtanen and Crocker, gender self-esteem (as a type of collective self-esteem) may influence in-group biases toward out-group members. Members of a gender group may compare themselves to relevant out-groups to ensure distinctiveness (Falomir-Pichastor & Mugny, 2009). Comparison with similar out-groups may result in a threat to one's feelings of group distinctiveness (Branscombe, Ellemers, Spears, & Doosje, 1999), and when distinctiveness cannot be ensured, several steps may be taken, including discriminating against out-group members and/or evaluating them negatively. In a study examining the relationship between gender self-esteem and attitudes toward homosexuality, Falomir-Pichastor and Mugny (2009) found that increases in gender self-esteem (as measured by three items assessing pride, satisfaction, and overall esteem related to one's gender group membership) were related to negative attitudes toward homosexuality in men but not in women. Moreover, compared to men with high levels of gender self-esteem, men with low levels of gender self-esteem had similar attitudes toward homosexuality as women. Thus, the more a man rated his membership in his gender group as an important part of his self-identity and self-esteem, the more negative his

attitudes became toward homosexuality. These negative ratings may be due in part to a threat to the heterosexual male group's distinctiveness. According to Branscombe et al. (1999), men who do not identify highly with an exclusively masculine identity are not likely to be threatened by a lack of group distinctiveness from a similar out-group. Similarly, given that gay men are not a relevant out-group to which women would compare themselves, it is not surprising that attitudinal differences between this group and men with low gender self-esteem were similar. Given these results, it is thought that for men, high levels of gender self-esteem are likely to result in higher ratings of victim blame in cases of IPV between gay men due to their overall negative perceptions of homosexuality. Their ratings of IPV incidents in lesbian couples are not likely to be affected by gender self-esteem because lesbian women are a group that does not threaten the heterosexual male group's distinctiveness. In addition to this, it is likely that men with high levels of gender self-esteem will blame heterosexual male perpetrators less. Locke and Richman (1999) proposed that the lower levels of blame of the male abuser in their study may have resulted from men's perceived need to defend their gender. Although gender self-esteem was not measured in this study, the need to defend one's gender may be related to higher levels of gender self-esteem.

Just World Theory

The effects of gender self-esteem, abuse myths, and perceptions of IPV seriousness can be better understood through a theoretical lens that is able to pull each element together. Just World Theory (Lerner & Miller, 1978) asserts that people who believe they live in a just world believe that everyone gets what they deserve. Justice is equated with deservingness (Hafer & Bègue, 2005) and is considered a basic human motive that influences the way in which people behave (Lerner, 2003). Lerner and Miller (1978) asserted that belief in a just world allows the

individual to function in his/her environment with the assumption that it is organized and stable. If an individual encounters evidence contradicting these beliefs, significant distress can result because the certainty that justice provides (Hafer & Begue, 2005) has been decreased or eliminated.

Several components have been identified as related to maintaining the need to believe in a just world and are important in understanding an individual's reaction to certain potentially distressing events including person identification, position identification, psychological distancing, and reinterpretation of the outcome (Lerner & Miller, 1978; van Zomeren & Lodewijkx, 2005). Person identification involves feelings of empathy for the victim (van Zomeren & Lodewijkx, 2005). Position identification, on the other hand, involves being able to identify with the individual's position as a victim as a result of the realization that one may be in a similar position in the future. Rather than empathizing with the victim, the individual thinks about the potential implications for oneself (van Zomeren & Lodewijkx, 2005). Psychological distancing involves seeing victims of perceived injustice as so different from oneself that they are part of a distinct world with different rules (Hafer & Bègue, 2005). This perception allows individuals to tolerate injustice while maintaining just world beliefs. It also allows them to reduce the imminent need for belief in a just world by permitting them to convince themselves that a similar fate will not transpire against them. When individuals experience a threat to their need to believe in a just world, their likelihood of distancing themselves from the victim becomes greater.

The last component of Just World Theory of interest to this study is reinterpretation of the outcome. With this defense mechanism, an individual will minimize the victim's suffering or the seriousness of victimization in order to preserve his/her belief in a just world (Hafer &

Bègue, 2005). Given the aforementioned findings of the perceptions of seriousness of various IPV incidents, it is possible that participants in those studies were simply reinterpreting the outcome in order to reinstate justice in unjust situations. This being said, it is important to note that this element of the Just World Theory is not widely supported in the research literature and requires more validation (van Zomeren & Lodewijkx, 2005).

Although Just World Theory has been employed for a number of years to explain human behavior, there are a number of limitations that are important to address. First, the need to believe in a just world can be difficult to assess. Many studies use Rubin and Pelau's (1975) Just World Scale. Hafer and Bègue (2005) asserted that this scale has good face validity but is low in reliability and has a multidimensional and unstable structure. They reviewed efforts to create new measures to assess beliefs in a just world, noting mixed results regarding possible correlations with social desirability. Another avenue that has been pursued is implicit measurement of the need to believe in a just world. People are not always aware of their need to believe in a just world or their actual beliefs in a just world (Dalbert, 2001), and as a result, self-reports that assess explicit, cognitive functions may not tap into the emotionally-based functions that implicit measures do. Hafer and Bègue have also pointed out that one reason for the use of different types of measures is that many studies examine the belief in a just world, whereas others examine the *need* to believe in a just world. "Belief" implies a measureable construct with minimal affective or motivational requirements, whereas a *need* to believe is more consistent with Just World Theory and describes the motivation behind behavior of which a person may not be aware.

A second concern that arises when studying Just World Theory is the level of believability of scenarios used in research (Hafer & Bègue, 2005). Hypothetical scenarios may

be considered irrelevant and unrealistic, and, as such, they may not threaten an individual's need to believe in a just world. As a result, responses will not be representative of an attempt to restore justice or a need to believe in a just world. Furthermore, in non-threatening situations, responses may be driven by other motives such as social desirability. Hence, it is important that the stimulus is believable and engages the participant emotionally such that an automatic need to believe in a just world is primed, resulting in the prompting of attempts to maintain or restore justice to the situation.

Overall, Just World Theory combines the elements of psychological distancing, person identification, position identification, and reinterpretation of the outcome to provide an explanation for perceptions of IPV. It is important to note that variations in the measurement of just world beliefs and the need to believe in a just world tap into different sources of human thought and behavior (i.e., conscious, cognitive, and explicit beliefs versus unconscious, emotionally-based, implicit beliefs). Given the focus of Just World Theory on implicit beliefs, it is important that the stimulus be believable. Such believability allows for a more genuine, emotionally-based reaction from participants that will be more representative of the types of reactions that would occur in real-life situations.

Psychological Distancing, Gender Self-Esteem, and Sexual Prejudice

One element of Just World Theory, psychological distancing, has been examined in conjunction with several other constructs that may affect perceptions of IPV. Falomir-Pichastor and Mugny (2009) examined the relationship between gender self-esteem, sexual prejudice, and psychological distancing in a sample of heterosexual men. Sexual prejudice was measured on a 25-item scale addressing morality, feelings toward homosexuals, civil rights endorsement, and acceptance of contact with homosexuals. They found that psychological distancing may occur as

a reaction to members of an out-group who appear very similar to one's social group (i.e., the in-group).

Adding to this, Falomir-Pichastor and Mugny (2009) found that as attitudes toward gay and lesbian individuals became more negative, psychological distancing increased. Heterosexual men's gender self-esteem and sexual prejudice were related to one another only when perceived psychological distance was high. The authors suggested that heterosexual men with high gender self-esteem use sexual prejudice to maintain psychological distance from homosexual men, thus allowing maintenance of their gender identity. On the other hand, when the heterosexual participants were told that there were biological differences between themselves and gay men, psychological distance was reduced which, in turn, led to a decrease in sexual prejudice. Hence, if in-group members' differences from out-group members are emphasized, the need to distance oneself psychologically becomes less necessary. Falomir-Pichastor and Mugny also found that when gender self-esteem was high, men's sexual prejudice was higher than that of women. Hence, gender self-esteem only appeared to predict sexual prejudice for men. This is likely to occur because men who score high on gender self-esteem value masculinity and are less likely than women and gay men to be victimized. This makes it difficult to relate to the victim's position, resulting in increases in psychological distancing and victim blame. Furthermore, high gender self-esteem in men may be related to negative attitudes toward homosexuality given the violation of traditional masculine gender norms inherent in homosexuality. Given that women (heterosexual and lesbian) compose a group that does not represent a threat to a man's gender identity, the effects of high scores on a measure of gender self-esteem are not likely to significantly affect ratings of blame of female victims. It is important to note that although this study provides significant insight into the relationship between gender self-esteem, sexual

prejudice, and psychological distancing, the measure of gender self-esteem was limited to three questions (i.e., “Overall, I have a very high esteem of myself as a [wo]man,” “Overall, I am very proud to be a [wo]man,” and “Overall, I am highly satisfied that I am a [wo]man”), which may not have provided a comprehensive assessment of the construct.

Perpetrator Blaming

Studies such as that of Falomir-Pichastor and Mugny (2009) create a link between Just World Theory and other important constructs that contribute to such factors as levels of perpetrator blame. Studies on rape perpetration, for example, have lent much light to the gender similarities and differences in perpetrator blaming as a function of sexual orientation. For example, in a sample of students at a British university, Wakelin and Long (2003) found that participants deemed perpetrators of rape of gay men less responsible for the rape than perpetrators of rape of lesbian women or heterosexual men. The authors proposed that men may have had difficulty identifying with a male victim in the vignette due to the belief that heterosexual men cannot be raped and should have the physical strength to overcome it. Gay men, on the other hand, may be viewed as having an unconscious desire for the rape, given that his sexual orientation implies potential attraction to a male perpetrator. From this perspective, the perpetrator cannot be held entirely responsible because the gay victim desired to be raped and the heterosexual victim did not fight back enough. Research has also found that men blame the perpetrator less than women (Wakelin & Long, 2003) and women view the rapist more negatively than men (Caron & Carter, 1997). George and Martinez (2002) suggested that prejudicial attitudes may influence ratings of perpetrator responsibility. In a study of the effects of victim and perpetrator race, type of rape, and participant racism on attributions of blame, they found that higher scores on the racism scale were associated with lower ratings of perpetrator

responsibility, particularly in interracial rapes, in a sample of undergraduate students. This suggests that prejudicial attitudes are related to perceptions of culpability of the perpetrator of a violent crime against another individual.

Research on IPV has shown similar results. Overall, several studies have found that participants judged the perpetrator to be more responsible than the victim, regardless of participant, victim, or perpetrator gender (Seelau & Seelau, 2005; Seelau et al., 2003). Additionally, the actions of the perpetrator were seen as less reasonable than the actions of the victim, and perpetrators were more likely to be found guilty when the victim was female than when the victim was male (Seelau et al., 2003). This may be due in part to the participants' view that actions against female victims were less reasonable and less acceptable than actions against male victims (Merten & Williams, 2009; Seelau et al., 2003). Furthermore, in a study of counseling students' responses to IPV between heterosexual versus lesbian couples, Wise and Bowman (1997) found that the heterosexual perpetrator was rated as more responsible for the incident than the lesbian perpetrator. However, this finding only approached statistical significance. Although these findings appear to contradict the findings of previous studies, they are confounded by the use of a male perpetrator only in the heterosexual condition compared to a female perpetrator in the lesbian condition. Given findings of previous research, it is likely that these results can be at least partially accounted for by the belief that male perpetrators are capable of doing more harm to female victims than female perpetrators. Consistent with this was the finding that an incident involving a heterosexual couple with a male perpetrator was rated as more violent than the same incident with a lesbian couple.

Contrary to the overall findings of these studies, Merten and Williams (2009) found that male participants rated marital violence as more acceptable than women regardless of the sex of

the perpetrator. Although specific components of Just World Theory were not examined in this study, it is possible that this difference was the result of male participants' inability to identify with the victim. It is also possible that male participants were able to identify more with the perpetrator, who may have been viewed as demonstrating masculine characteristics (e.g., power and control). Branscombe et al. (1999) asserted that the ability to identify with one's social group and to have a distinct social identity may outweigh the negative aspects of the actions of in-group members particularly for individuals who identify highly with that social group. In fact, individuals who highly identify with a social group may defend and rationalize the behavior of in-group members. Consistent with this, Merten and Williams found that men were more accepting of wife-perpetrated violence than women. However, given that levels of gender self-esteem and sexual prejudice were not measured and the sexual orientation of participants was not examined, it is difficult to say with certainty the reasons behind these findings.

Victim Blaming

Even more controversial than the reasons for perpetrator blame for IPV is the consistent finding that many people blame the victims of rape and IPV for their abuse. According to Just World Theory, an individual must perceive an injustice in order for victim blame to occur. If an injustice does occur, individuals will attempt to find a reason why the target character was victimized. If no obvious behavior of the victim can be blamed, assumptions regarding the victim's character, behavior, or his/her unconscious desire for victimization may be made in order to restore justice to the situation. Janoff-Bulman (1982) demonstrated that blaming a victim's behavior is powerful in maintaining just world beliefs because it provides a direct explanation for the events while also allowing individuals to maintain a belief that they would be able to avoid victimization in the future. If the event can be explained by blaming the victim's

behavior, the injustice becomes more justifiable, and it becomes unnecessary to assign negative attributes to the victim. Supporting this idea, one study (George & Martínez, 2002) found that participants rated victims of acquaintance rape as more culpable than victims of stranger rape, suggesting that individuals who knew the perpetrator could have done something to prevent the rape from occurring. It is important to keep in mind, however, that the vignette of acquaintance and stranger rapes differed in the initial violence presented, with the stranger rapist pushing the victim inside of her house.

Coinciding with this, Savani, Stephens, and Markus (2011) found that participants were more likely to blame victims of various negative outcomes (e.g., having a heart attack, being physically abused) if they were primed to believe that the victim had a choice in the cause or prevention of the outcome, regardless of their political orientation (i.e., liberal versus conservative). This suggests that the priming of choice was enough to influence victim blaming, and that political orientation (which was influential in victim blaming in the control condition) did not play a significant role. The authors concluded that priming the concept of choice resulted in an increased assumption that the victims' negative outcomes were a result of their life choices. This suggests that if individuals believe that a victim of IPV has some choice in causing or preventing their victimization (e.g., choosing to stay in an abusive relationship), they will be more likely to blame him/her for their maltreatment.

In a study of perceptions of heterosexual and same-sex rape (Wakelin & Long, 2003), gay male victims and heterosexual female victims received more blame than heterosexual male and lesbian victims (as measured by items relating to both blame and responsibility), and participants believed that gay and lesbian victims could have avoided the rape more than heterosexual victims. The authors asserted that victims of rape received more blame when their

sexual orientation implied that they could potentially be attracted to the perpetrator. As such, these victims were perceived as having more unconscious desire for the rape. The authors also asserted that personal character and chance contributed more to the blame of gay male victims than to either heterosexual male or lesbian victims because of sexual prejudice and sexual stereotypes assigned to gay men (e.g., gay men have high sex drives and are more willing to have sexual encounters whenever the opportunity arises).

Although these general findings apply to both men and women, a number of gender differences in victim blame in rape cases have also been found. For example, several studies have shown that men hold rape victims more culpable than do women (Caron & Carter, 1997; George & Martínez, 2002; Wakelin & Long, 2003). In fact, men believed more than women that victims of a male perpetrator could have avoided the rape, and they assigned more blame to heterosexual female victims as compared to heterosexual male victims, which may be, in part, the result of the aforementioned belief in the unconscious desire for the assault due to a potential attraction to the perpetrator (Wakelin & Long). Additionally, in a vignette study examining intended responses to rape, Earnshaw, Pitpitan, and Chaundoir (2011) found that female undergraduate college students scored lower than men on attributions of fault (an average score of responsibility and blame items) to a female victim presented in a vignette. However, this gender difference was not statistically significant. Potentially contributing to this effect, the authors found that women were less likely to accept rape myths and they scored higher on attitudes toward feminism than men (Earnshaw et al.). Women, on the other hand, blamed gay and lesbian victims more than heterosexual victims, which is likely due to sexual prejudice (Wakelin & Long).

Similar to the findings in studies investigating attributions of blame in rape, a number of similarities exist in the blaming of victims of IPV. Seelau et al. (2003) found that participants were likely to view victims of a female perpetrator as more responsible than victims of a male perpetrator (perceptions of blame were not examined). The authors asserted that, based on sexual stereotypes, it is possible that women were viewed as less aggressive than men; hence, if a woman becomes aggressive by perpetrating violence against her partner, it may have been assumed that she was provoked, resulting in increased victim blame.

Although these similarities exist between genders, a number of gender differences are also evident. For example, men were more likely to blame the victim of IPV than women (Bryant & Spencer, 2003; Caron & Carter, 1997; Ewing & Aubrey, 1987; Locke & Richman, 1999). According to Just World Theory, this gender difference could be due in part to person identification. Women may have had more sympathy and empathy for and/or may have identified with the victim more than with the perpetrator, which may have influenced their responses to questions assessing victim blame and/or responsibility (George & Martinez, 2002; Locke & Richman, 1999; Seelau et al., 2003). It is also possible that men identified with the same-sex perpetrator, resulting in increased ratings of victim culpability (which included elements of both blame and responsibility; George & Martínez, 2002). Identification with the position of a target character also may have influenced the ratings of blame provided by participants. Seelau et al. proposed that women likely feel more vulnerable to victimization. As a result, their ratings of victim blame are lower in an effort to preemptively protect themselves from blame if they are victimized.

In contrast, in a study examining ratings of blame in IPV when the male perpetrator was provoked or not provoked, no significant differences were found in levels of victim blame

between men and women in the no-provocation scenario (Kristiansen & Giulietti, 1990). The authors stated that gender alone could not account for victim blame, acknowledging the influence of other variables. However, it is important to note that in this study, gender self-esteem was not measured. Hence, it is possible that low levels of gender self-esteem in men may have accounted for this finding. It is also possible that sexual orientation, which was not taken into consideration, influenced these results.

In two separate studies, Falomir-Pichastor and Mugny (2009) found that sexual prejudice and gender self-esteem were related in heterosexual men but not in heterosexual women. For these men, as levels of gender self-esteem increased, levels of sexual prejudice also increased. Men who value masculinity highly (i.e., have a high gender self-esteem) and have negative attitudes toward homosexuality may feel that gay male victims are getting what they deserve and/or deserve to be blamed because they are violating masculine gender norms by being homosexual or by being a victim.

Other studies examining gender differences in ratings of victim blame in heterosexual and same-sex IPV have found results that appear to be directly counter to the predictions made by the Just World Theory. Kristiansen and Giuletti (1990) for example, found that women blamed the victims more often than men in a vignette scenario in which the victim verbally provoked the perpetrator by calling him names and yelling obscenities at him. The authors concluded that, in accordance with the "controllability hypothesis," women must decrease their feelings of vulnerability and increase their sense of control by blaming the victim for her abuse. However, it is possible that provocation of a perpetrator by a victim elicited an emotional response from the female participants, triggering their need to believe in a just world. It is also possible that women viewed the provocation as emotional abuse, and were able to empathize to a

certain extent with the individual labeled as the perpetrator, resulting in blame of the individual labeled as the victim.

In their study on perceptions of same-sex and heterosexual IPV, Seelau et al. (2003) asserted that gender of the victim was a more significant predictor of victim responsibility ratings than the sexual orientation of the couple. Although it did not appear that anti-homosexual prejudice influenced ratings, no explicit rating of anti-homosexual views was used and sexual orientation was not explicitly stated in the vignette. As a result, it is not possible to determine with certainty that social desirability did not influence results rather than a lack of anti-homosexual bias. Hence, it is important that the current study reduce this potential confound by implementing a measure of social desirability. It is also possible, but unlikely, that participants misunderstood the level of intimacy in the relationship (i.e., two friends versus a romantic couple), which could have influenced the ratings. Finally, the authors acknowledged that the vignette presented was short, which may have affected the believability of the scenario presented. If the scenario did not present sufficient information to carry the level of believability necessary to elicit an emotional response, it is possible that the results obtained were not the result of a lack of anti-homosexual bias but a cognitive analysis of the situation.

Current Study

Sexual prejudice and the endorsement of IPV myths serve as significant barriers for victims of same-sex IPV (McClennen, Summers, & Vaughan, 2002). Due to the difficulty gay and lesbian victims have in receiving helpful responses from others, including professionals, help-seeking behavior is usually directed toward friends. Although this interpersonal support is likely helpful, gay and lesbian victims are deprived of the professional support they need for their protection (e.g., from the legal system) and well-being (e.g., from mental health

professionals). Although quite a bit is known about IPV perpetrated against women, fewer studies have examined perceptions of IPV in same-sex couples and IPV perpetrated against heterosexual men. This study attempts to develop a better understanding of the reasons behind negative reactions to victims of IPV and gender differences in these views through the evaluation of perceptions of a scenario depicting an incident of IPV.

Hypotheses

Building on previous work on Just World Theory and perceptions of IPV, several hypotheses are proposed:

1. There will be an interaction between gender of the participant and gender of the target character for levels of victim blame. Specifically, men will blame male victims more than female victims; whereas, women will attribute similar levels of blame to victims regardless of the victim's gender.
2. Women will blame the perpetrator more than will men regardless of the target character's sexual orientation or gender.
3. Gender of the participant and gender of the target character will influence the effects of gender self-esteem on victim blame. Men with high levels of gender self-esteem will report high levels of blame for male victims but men's levels of gender self-esteem will not predict levels of blame for female victims. It is expected that women's levels of gender self-esteem will not significantly predict their levels of victim blame.
4. Gender of the participant will moderate the effects of sexual prejudice on blame of gay and lesbian victims. Higher levels of sexual prejudice will predict men's levels of victim blame for gay men but not lesbian women. Levels of sexual prejudice will not be a significant predictor for women's levels of victim blame for either gay men or lesbian women.

5. Levels of sexual prejudice will mediate the effects of gender self-esteem on levels of victim blame of gay men and lesbian women for men but not for women. Higher levels of gender self-esteem will predict higher levels of sexual prejudice, which in turn will predict more victim blame, but only for men.

CHAPTER 2

METHOD

Design

This study utilized vignettes to investigate perceptions of same-sex and heterosexual intimate partner violence (IPV) in an experimental design. Participants were randomly assigned to one of four vignettes describing an IPV incident in which the gender of the victim and perpetrator were manipulated, resulting in two heterosexual and two same-sex conditions. The vignettes mimicked a police report in order to increase the believability of the scenario presented. The predictor variables were gender of the participant, participant's gender self-esteem, vignette character's gender and sexual orientation, and participant's sexual prejudice. The criterion variables were the ratings of blame for the victim and for the perpetrator presented in the vignette.

Participants

Participants were a convenience sample of male and female undergraduate students from Indiana State University. Data from participants who were missing information regarding gender and/or sexual orientation were discarded. Of the 307 initial participants, 56 were excluded for failing to include information on their gender, for not completing questionnaires, and for incorrectly responding to questions on the manipulation check regarding perpetrator and victim names, genders, and sexual orientation. Furthermore, only self-identified heterosexual students

were included, leaving a sample of 226 participants (97 men and 129 women). The majority of participants were Caucasian (77.9%), followed by African American (16.4%), Multiracial (2.2%), Hispanic (1.8%), Asian (0.9%), Native American (0.4%), and Other (0.4%). Approximately one percent of participants were international students. The average age was 20.1 years (*SD* = 4.3), but participants' ages ranged from 18-51 years.

Power Analysis

There are no data documenting the specific relationship between attitudes towards lesbians and gay men, gender, gender self-esteem, and perceptions of IPV at this time. However, it is generally accepted that a medium effect size is appropriate because it represents an effect that is noticeable to the careful observer (Cohen, 1992). Consistent with suggestions for determining sample size in a multivariate analysis of variance design with four groups, a sample of approximately 180 participants (45 per group) was needed to detect a medium effect between the variables of interest (i.e., gender of participant, gender of the target character, sexual orientation of the vignette couple, attitudes toward gay men and lesbians, gender self-esteem, and attributions of blame) with an α of 0.05 and power of .80. The current research obtained a sample of 226 undergraduate participants.

Stimuli

Vignettes

Participants were randomly assigned to one of four possible vignettes describing an incident of IPV that was adapted from a study by Brown and Groscup (2009). The vignette conditions are as follows: male perpetrator and female victim, male perpetrator and male victim, female perpetrator and male victim, and female perpetrator and female victim. In the scenario, the victim is verbally and physically attacked by his/her partner after arriving home late from

work, and neighbors call the police after hearing screaming and loud banging. The couple was described as having been romantically involved for one year to make explicit the romantic and longer-term nature of the relationship. In order to enhance the believability of the vignette, it was structured to appear like a police report with victim, perpetrator, and witness information included. Additionally, last names of all characters in the vignette were blacked out in order to give the appearance that the vignette received was a copy of an actual police report. See Appendix A. Hafer and Bègue (2005) asserted that a stimulus must be believable in order for an individual's need to believe in a just world to be primed; hence, in creating the appearance of a police report, it was expected that participants would respond at a more emotional, rather than cognitive, level.

Measures

The titles of all questionnaires were removed prior to presenting them to the participants.

Perceptions of Intimate Partner Violence Scale

After reading the vignette, participants completed the Perceptions of Intimate Partner Violence Scale. See Appendix B. The questionnaire was adapted from Esqueda and Harrison's (2005) measure of blame attributions to fit the current study's purpose. The original questionnaire presented by Esqueda and Harrison had 22 questions that were measured on a Likert Scale from 1 (not at all) to 7 (very much so). Six components were revealed in a Principal Components Analysis (general seriousness, woman's culpability, woman's pattern of domestic violence, overall justification for physical force, general truthfulness, and man's right to use physical force to defend himself), and no alpha values were provided for any of these factors. Items from this questionnaire were selected based on their relationship to guilt, responsibility, provocation, and perpetrator guilt (the items of interest in the current study). Other questions

assessing additional constructs (e.g., typical violence, perceptions of seriousness) were omitted given that they were not constructs of interest in the current study. As in the original questionnaire, questions on the Perceptions of Intimate Partner Violence Scale were measured on a Likert Scale ranging from 1 (not at all) to 7 (very much so) and included such items as "Was Michael/Michelle guilty of abuse?" and "How responsible was Michael/Michelle?" An additional question assessing participants' emotional reactions to the vignette was also included in the questionnaire in order to gauge the level of emotional response to the incident. This question was presented on a Likert scale ranging from (0) No Emotional Reaction to (100) Strong Emotional Reaction. Given that this questionnaire was developed for the purposes of this study, no psychometric properties were available at the outset of the study. A principal components analysis was performed on the scale after data were collected in order to determine the clustering of the items.

Social Desirability Scale-17 (SDS-17)

The SDS-17 is a 16-item questionnaire that measures the tendency to answer questions in a socially desirable way (Stöber, 2001). The original scale contained 17 items; however, in several separate studies, Stöber found that one item addressing the use of illegal drugs was not highly correlated with the corrected item total score. As such, this item was removed, leaving 16 total questions. The scale has adequate convergent validity and discriminant validity. The SDS-17 also demonstrated adequate internal consistency in four studies with alphas ranging from .74 to .80. The alpha coefficient for the current sample was .69. Scores were calculated as the average of the 16 responses with higher scores indicating a tendency to respond in a socially desirable manner. See Appendix C.

Collective Self-Esteem Scale (CSES)

The CSES is a 16-item scale that measures a part of an individual's self-esteem related to the value and importance he/she places on his/her membership in a particular social group (Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992). For the purpose of the current study, the CSES was adapted to assess participants' gender self-esteem. Luhtanen and Crocker found that modifying the social group specified in the scale did not adversely affect the reliability and validity of the scale. The CSES contains four subscales; however, only the total score was used in the current study. An example item is "I am a worthy member of my gender group." Each item is assessed on a Likert Scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). One item was inadvertently omitted in the current study. Scores were calculated as the average of the 15 items with higher scores indicating higher gender self-esteem.

Luhtanen and Crocker (1992) reported adequate construct validity for the scale, and scores are not correlated with social desirability. Overall, reliability was adequate (α=.83-.88) and the scales and subscales are internally consistent. The alpha coefficient for the current sample was .65. See Appendix D.

Modern Homonegativity Scale (MHS)

The Modern Homonegativity Scale assesses sexual prejudice (i.e., modern homonegativity) toward gay men or lesbians (Morrison & Morrison, 2002). The scale comes in two comparable 12-item forms to separately assess attitudes toward gay men and lesbians ("Gay men still need to protest for equal rights;" "Gay men should stop shoving their lifestyle down other people's throats;" "If lesbians want to be treated like everyone else, then they need to stop making such a fuss about their sexuality/ culture;" "Lesbians who are 'out of the closet' should be admired for their courage"). Ratings are given on a Likert Scale ranging from (1) Strongly Disagree to (5) Strongly Agree. Scores were calculated as the average of each of the 12 items

with higher scores indicating higher levels of sexual prejudice. Morrison and Morrison found adequate convergent and discriminant validity. The MHS is not correlated with social desirability bias (r=-.03 for gay male version, r=.03 for lesbian version). The scale's internal consistency is also sufficient (α = .91 for men and women on the MHS-gay male version and α =.89 and .85 for men and women on the MHS-lesbian version). The alpha coefficients for the current sample were .91 for both the gay men and lesbian women versions. See Appendix E.

Manipulation Check

Participants completed a manipulation check that asked for the couple's sexual orientation and victim and perpetrator genders and names. Additional questions about miscellaneous details presented in the vignette (e.g., city and state in which the incident occurred, area code of phone numbers provided) were also included to distract from the purpose of the questionnaire. At the end of the manipulation check, participants were presented with a Likert scale in which they were asked to rate their emotional reaction to the IPV incident (0= no emotional reaction, 100= very strong emotional reaction). Participants who incorrectly responded to questions regarding perpetrator and victim names, genders, and sexual orientation were excluded from data analysis. This questionnaire was completed second to last (immediately prior to the demographic questionnaire) in order to prevent priming effects. See Appendix F.

Demographic Questionnaire

Participants provided information on their gender, age, year in school, race/ethnicity, international status, and sexual orientation. Participants also rated their current sexual orientation on a scale ranging from heterosexual only to homosexual only (Klein, Sepekoff, & Wolf, 1985). Additionally, participants provided information on their personal experience of IPV (e.g., "I have

been the victim of intimate partner violence," "I have witnessed intimate partner violence involving a friend"). See Appendix G.

Procedure

Participants were recruited from undergraduate courses at Indiana State University using the experiment recruiting tracking system online (i.e., SONA systems). They were provided with a brief description of the study so that they could decide whether or not they wanted to participate. (See Appendix H for the Informed Consent form). Individual computer-based administration was completed online using a Qualtrics survey. Participants were randomly assigned to one of four conditions: male perpetrator and female victim; female perpetrator and male victim; male perpetrator and male victim; or female perpetrator and female victim. Participants read a vignette that corresponded to the condition to which they were assigned. After reading the vignette, participants completed the measures. The Perceptions of Intimate Partner Violence Scale was always completed first, and the demographic questionnaire was completed last. The manipulation check was completed after the remaining questionnaires and immediately prior to the demographic questionnaire in order to prevent priming. The CSES, MHS-gay man, MHS-lesbian woman, and SDS-17 were randomized using the Qualtrics program. Completion of the questionnaires took approximately 30 minutes. After the measures were completed, participants were provided with a written debriefing statement. Due to the sensitive nature of the material that was presented to the participants, the debriefing statement included information about where the participants could seek psychological services if needed. See Appendix I.

CHAPTER 3

RESULTS

Descriptive Analyses

There were 57 participants in the lesbian vignette condition (23 men and 34 women), 56 participants in the gay male vignette condition (24 men and 32 women), 54 participants in the heterosexual vignette condition with a male perpetrator (25 men and 29 women), and 59 participants in the heterosexual condition with a female perpetrator (25 men and 34 women).

The ranges, means, and standard deviations of scores on the Perceptions of Intimate Partner Violence Scale, the Collective Self-Esteem Scale (CSES), the Modern Homonegativity Scale-Gay Men (MHS-G), the Modern Homonegativity Scale-Lesbian Women (MHS-L), and the Social Desirability Scale-17 (SDS-17) were calculated for each condition and the total sample. Each question on the Perceptions of Intimate Partner Violence Scale was examined separately.

A Principal Components Analysis was conducted on the Perceptions of Intimate Partner Violence Scale. Results revealed two components, one containing two questions addressing victim and perpetrator responsibility, and the other containing the remaining four questions addressing victim and perpetrator blame, victim provocation, and perpetrator guilt. The loadings of the blame and responsibility items were consistent with the principal components analysis performed by Esqueda and Harrison (2005), in which ratings of a woman's responsibility and of

a man and a woman's level of blame, loaded on the component. However, these authors examined ratings of a man's level of responsibility separately because they did not load on any of the six components. Given the negative correlation between victim and perpetrator responsibility and the variety of concepts addressed in the second component, it was decided to examine each question separately. See Table 1 for means and standard deviations of the Perceptions of IPV subscales.

Several bivariate analyses were used to calculate correlations between all continuous variables (i.e., MHS-L, MHS-G, and CSES scores). MHS-G and the MHS-L were significantly and positively correlated ($r = 0.90$, $p < 0.01$). The CSES was not correlated with the MHS-G ($r = -0.03$, $p = 0.687$) or the MHS-L ($r = -0.05$, $p = 0.428$). The SDS-17 did not correlate significantly with the CSES, MHS-G, or MHS-L (rs = 0.04 to 0.06, ps = 0.346 to 0.59).

Finally, gender comparisons indicated that, compared to women, men had significantly higher MHS-G, $t(224) = 4.42$, $p < .001$, and MHS-L scores, $t(224) = 3.52$, $p = .001$. SDS-17 and CSES scores did not differ by gender, $t(218) = -.63$, $p = .529$ and $t(224) = -1.10$, $p = .274$, respectively. See Table 1 for the means and standard deviations for these scales.

Table 1

Means and Standard Deviations (in parentheses) for the Modern Homonegativity Scale-Lesbian (MHS-L), Modern Homonegativity Scale-Gay Men (MHS-G), Social Desirability Scale (SDS-17), and Collective Self-Esteem Scale (CSES) for Men and Women

	N	Men	*N*	Women	d
MHS-L	110	3.07 (0.82)	116	2.71 (0.71)	.46
MHS-G	110	3.18 (0.83)	116	2.71 (0.76)	.57
SDS-17	106	1.49 (0.21)	114	1.51 (0.18)	-.08
CSES	110	5.15 (0.56)	116	5.23 (0.58)	-.15

Note. Means on the MHS-L and MHS-G differ for men and women.

Primary Analyses

Victim and Perpetrator Blame and Responsibility

Significant correlations between perceptions of victim blame, perpetrator blame, victim provocation, and perpetrator guilt justified using a multivariate analysis of covariance. In addition, significant correlations between the victim responsibility and perpetrator responsibility items justified a second multivariate analysis of covariance. As such, a 2x2x2 factorial multivariate analysis of covariance was conducted to test the hypotheses that: (1) men will blame male victims more than female victims; whereas, women will attribute similar levels of blame to victims regardless of the victim's gender, and (2) women would blame the perpetrator more than men regardless of the target character's sexual orientation or gender. Gender of the participant,

gender of the victim, and gender of the perpetrator were entered as the independent variables and ratings of victim and perpetrator blame, victim provocation, and perpetrator guilt were the dependent variables. Scores on the Social Desirability Scale (SDS-17) and ratings of emotional reaction to the vignette (which differed significantly between women and men) were entered as covariates; however, neither of these items contributed significantly to the results. As such, only the results of the MANOVA are presented. See Table 2 for the means and standard deviations for the perceptions of IPV ratings.

Table 2

Means and Standard Deviations (in parentheses) for the Perceptions of IPV Subscales for Men and Women as a Function of Gender of Perpetrator and Gender of Victim

Men

	Male Perpetrator				Female Perpetrator			
	N	Female Victim	N	Male Victim	N	Female Victim	N	Male Victim
Victim Responsibility	25	2.96 (2.41)	24	2.75 (2.11)	23	4.17 (2.19)	25	3.36 (2.18)
Perpetrator Responsibility	25	4.88 (2.52)	24	4.21 (2.72)	23	3.17 (2.55)	25	4.24 (2.62)
Victim Blame	25	1.76 (1.13)	24	1.79 (1.18)	23	1.65 (1.07)	25	1.92 (1.19)
Perpetrator Blame	25	6.28 (1.10)	24	6.25 (1.33)	23	6.43 (0.83)	25	6.52 (0.82)
Victim Provocation	25	1.84 (1.43)	24	2.21 (1.84)	23	2.30 (1.36)	25	2.08 (1.73)
Perpetrator Guilt	25	6.36 (1.08)	24	6.25 (1.60)	23	6.61 (0.58)	25	6.48 (1.05)

Women

	Male Perpetrator				Female Perpetrator			
	N	Female Victim	*N*	Male Victim	*N*	Female Victim	*N*	Male Victim
Victim Responsibility	29	2.90 (2.04)	32	3.47 (2.23)	34	3.00 (2.19)	34	2.91 (1.69)
Perpetrator Responsibility	29	4.69 (2.78)	32	4.34 (2.66)	34	4.82 (2.68)	34	4.91 (2.53)
Victim Blame	29	1.48 (0.99)	32	1.81 (1.12)	34	1.68 (1.12)	34	2.53 (1.38)
Perpetrator Blame	29	6.83 (0.38)	32	6.25 (1.02)	34	6.38 (1.21)	34	6.12 (1.04)
Victim Provocation	29	2.07 (1.87)	32	1.88 (1.19)	34	1.88 (1.63)	34	2.35 (1.52)
Perpetrator Guilt	29	6.79 (0.49)	32	6.22 (1.60)	34	6.65 (0.65)	34	6.56 (0.75)

None of the multivariate effects were significant (See Table 3 for multivariate results of provocation, guilt, blame and responsibility ratings). To account for multiple univariate tests, a Bonferroni correction was made and set at $p \leq 0.013$. None of the univariate tests were significant although there was a marginally significant main effect for victim blame as a function of victim gender with male victims being blamed slightly more than female victims.

A second MANOVA was calculated using the same independent variables as the preceding MANOVA, but with perpetrator responsibility and victim responsibility scores as the dependent variables (see Table 3 for the multivariate results). A Bonferroni correction was set at $p \leq .025$. None of the multivariate or univariate tests were significant. See Table 4 for the univariate results for blame and responsibility and Table 5 for the provocation and guilt univariate results.

Table 3

Multivariate Results for the Responsibility and Blame Items

	Victim and Perpetrator Blame, Victim Provocation, and Perpetrator Guilt		
	F	*p*	η^2_p
Perpetrator Gender	1.38	0.243	0.025
Victim Gender	1.75	0.141	0.031
Participant Gender	0.52	0.722	0.010
Perpetrator Gender*Victim Gender	1.35	0.253	0.024
Perpetrator Gender *Participant Gender	1.20	0.314	0.022
Victim Gender *Participant Gender	0.90	0.462	0.017
Perpetrator Gender *Victim Gender *Participant Gender	1.09	0.363	0.020

Note. df = 4, 215.

	Victim and Perpetrator Responsibility		
	F	*p*	η^2_p
Perpetrator Gender	0.78	0.458	0.007
Victim Gender	0.20	0.820	0.002
Participant Gender	1.45	0.236	0.013
Perpetrator Gender*Victim Gender	1.17	0.311	0.011
Perpetrator Gender*Participant Gender	2.00	0.138	0.018
Victim Gender*Participant Gender	1.24	0.290	0.011
Perpetrator Gender*Victim Gender*Participant Gender	1.12	0.327	0.010

Note. df = 2, 217.

Table 4

Univariate Results for the Responsibility and Blame Items

	Perpetrator Responsibility			Victim Responsibility		
	F	*p*	η^2_p	*F*	*p*	η^2_p
Perpetrator Gender	0.47	0.494	0.002	1.44	0.232	0.007
Victim Gender	0.01	0.923	0.000	0.22	0.637	0.001
Participant Gender	2.55	0.111	0.012	0.72	0.399	0.003
Perpetrator Gender*Victim Gender	2.35	0.127	0.011	1.22	0.270	0.006
Perpetrator Gender*Participant Gender	2.81	0.095	0.013	3.97	0.048	0.018
Victim Gender*Participant Gender	0.21	0.646	0.001	1.74	0.189	0.008
Perpetrator Gender*Victim Gender *Participant Gender	0.85	0.359	0.004	0.00	0.961	0.000

	Victim Blame			Perpetrator Blame		
	F	*p*	η^2_p	*F*	*p*	η^2_p
Perpetrator Gender	0.08	0.778	0.000	2.24	0.136	0.010
Victim Gender	2.11	0.148	0.010	5.67	0.018	0.025
Participant Gender	0.03	0.864	0.000	0.37	0.545	0.002
Perpetrator Gender *Victim Gender	0.62	0.431	0.003	1.49	0.224	0.007
Perpetrator Gender *Participant Gender	3.42	0.066	0.015	2.05	0.154	0.009
Victim Gender *Participant Gender	2.74	0.099	0.012	2.01	0.157	0.009
Perpetrator Gender *Victim Gender *Participant Gender	0.13	0.716	0.001	0.21	0.645	0.001

Note. df = 1, 218 for both analyses.

Table 5

Univariate Results for the Guilt and Provocation Items

	Perpetrator Guilt			Victim Provocation		
	F	*p*	η^2_p	*F*	*p*	η^2_p
Perpetrator Gender	1.43	0.233	0.007	0.54	0.462	0.002
Victim Gender	2.57	0.111	0.012	0.24	0.622	0.001
Participant Gender	0.85	0.357	0.004	0.09	0.766	0.000
Perpetrator Gender *Victim Gender	0.69	0.407	0.003	0.01	0.933	0.000
Perpetrator Gender *Participant Gender	0.26	0.614	0.001	0.00	0.958	0.000
Victim Gender *Participant Gender	0.57	0.452	0.003	0.02	0.876	0.000
Perpetrator Gender *Victim Gender *Participant Gender	0.81	0.371	0.004	2.18	0.141	0.010

Note. df = 1, 218.

To examine possible differences in ratings of blame between the perpetrator and the victim and in ratings of responsibility between the perpetrator and victim, two repeated measures analyses were conducted. There were no significant effects of gender of participant, gender of victim, gender of perpetrator, and victim versus perpetrator on ratings of responsibility. However, a significant effect was found for blame such that participants blamed perpetrators significantly more than victims (partial $\eta^2 = 0.127$). Additionally, a significant interaction was found between ratings of blame and victim gender (partial $\eta^2 = 0.02$) such that participants blamed male victims significantly more than female victims, $t(224) = 2.60$, $p = 0.01$. No significant differences were found between ratings of perpetrator blame for male and female victims, $t(224) = -1.62$, $p = 0.108$. See Table 6 for the means and standard deviations and Table 7

for the results for the responsibility items and Table 8 for the results for the blame, guilt, and provocation items.

Table 6

Means and Standard Deviations for Repeated Measures Analyses by Gender of Participant, Gender of Victim, and Gender of Perpetrator

Women

	Male Perpetrator		Female Perpetrator	
	Female Victim	Male Victim	Female Victim	Male Victim
Victim Responsibility	2.91 (0.41)	3.38 (0.38)	3.04 (0.37)	2.89 (0.37)
Perpetrator Responsibility	4.71 (0.51)	4.44 (0.47)	4.98 (0.46)	4.94 (0.46)
Victim Blame	1.51 (0.22)	1.75 (0.21)	1.71 (0.20)	2.44 (0.20)
Perpetrator Blame	6.83 (0.18)	6.31 (0.17)	6.53 (0.16)	6.14 (0.16)

Note: N=129. Gay Male Conditions: N=32, Heterosexual Male Perpetrator: N= 29, Heterosexual Female Perpetrator: N=34, Lesbian Condition: N= 34

Men

	Male Perpetrator		Female Perpetrator	
	Female Victim	Male Victim	Female Victim	Male Victim
Victim Responsibility	4.83 (0.54)	2.72 (0.44)	3.04 (0.37)	4.94 (0.46)
Perpetrator Responsibility	3.02 (0.43)	4.25 (0.54)	4.98 (0.46)	2.89 (0.37)
Victim Blame	1.76 (0.24)	1.80 (0.24)	1.65 (0.24)	1.92 (0.23)
Perpetrator Blame	6.24 (0.19)	6.24 (0.19)	6.24 (0.19)	6.52 (0.19)

Note: N=96. Gay Male Conditions: N=24, Heterosexual Male Perpetrator: N= 25, Heterosexual Female Perpetrator: N=25, Lesbian Condition: N= 23

Table 7

Results for Repeated Measures Analysis Comparing Victim Responsibility with Perpetrator Responsibility

	F	p	η^2_p
Responsibility	0.44	0.509	0.002
Responsibility*Social Desirability	1.43	0.234	0.007
Responsibility*Perpetrator Gender	0.96	0.328	0.005
Responsibility*Victim Gender	0.17	0.677	0.001
Responsibility*Participant Gender	2.30	0.131	0.011
Responsibility*Perpetrator Gender*Victim Gender	1.55	0.215	0.007
Responsibility*Perpetrator Gender*Participant Gender	3.63	0.058	0.017
Responsibility*Victim Gender*Participant Gender	0.86	0.354	0.004
Responsibility*Perpetrator Gender*Victim Gender*Gender	0.30	0.583	0.001

Note. df = 1, 211.

Table 8

Results for Repeated Measures Analysis Comparing Victim Blame with Perpetrator Blame

	F	*p*	η^2_p
Blame	30.58	0.000	0.127
Blame*Social Desirability	0.96	0.327	0.005
Blame*Perpetrator Gender	0.70	0.403	0.003
Blame*Victim Gender	4.23	0.041	0.020
Blame*Participant Gender	0.01	0.926	0.000
Blame*Perpetrator Gender*Victim Gender	0.27	0.607	0.001
Blame*Perpetrator Gender*Participant Gender	3.22	0.074	0.015
Blame*Victim Gender*Participant Gender	2.51	0.115	0.012
Blame*Perpetrator Gender*Victim Gender*Gender	0.05	0.822	0.000

Note. df = 1, 211.

Gender, Gender Self-esteem, and Victim Blame

To test the hypothesis that gender of the participant and gender of the target character will influence the effects of gender self-esteem on victim blame, correlations were calculated between gender self-esteem and victim blame. Gender self-esteem was not significantly related to victim responsibility, blame, or provocation ratings for male or female participants regardless of the victim's sex. Based on Fisher's r to z transformation tests, there were no significant differences between the correlations for female and male victims for the responsibility, blame

and provocation ratings for either female or male participants (all *p*s > .10). See Table 9 for these correlations.

Table 9

Correlations between Gender Self-Esteem and Victim Blame, Victim Responsibility, and Victim Provocation for Men and Women

	Men				Women			
	N	Female Victim	*N*	Male Victim	*N*	Female Victim	*N*	Male Victim
Victim Blame	48	-0.15	49	-0.14	63	-0.04	66	-0.07
Victim Responsibility	48	0.07	49	-0.26	63	0.06	66	-0.23
Victim Provocation	48	-0.12	49	0.06	63	-0.05	66	0.01

Gender, Sexual Prejudice, and Victim Blame

Bivariate analyses were conducted to test the hypothesis that gender of the participant will moderate the effects of sexual prejudice on blame of gay and lesbian victims. The sample was split into men and women and separate correlations were calculated for each gender group between ratings of sexual prejudice against lesbians and ratings of blame of lesbian victims and between ratings of sexual prejudice against gay men and ratings of blame of gay men. Men's levels of sexual prejudice against gay men and lesbians were not significantly correlated with their ratings of victim responsibility or blame. On the other hand, significant correlations were found between sexual prejudice and victim responsibility for women in both the gay and lesbian conditions, with higher levels of sexual prejudice associated with holding the victim more responsible. Women's levels of sexual prejudice against gay men and lesbians were not significantly related to ratings of blame of gay or lesbian victims. See Table 10 for correlations.

Fisher's r to z transformation tests were completed to determine whether the correlations between women's responsibility ratings and sexual prejudice were significantly different from the same correlations for men. Results indicated no significant differences between men's and women's correlations for sexual prejudice against gay men and ratings of perpetrator responsibility (z= 0.93, p=0.35) and ratings of victim responsibility (z= 0.87, p= 0.38). Marginally significant differences were found for correlations between men's and women's ratings of perpetrator responsibility and sexual prejudice against lesbians (z= 1.81, p=0.07). Finally, significant differences were found for correlations between men's and women's ratings of victim responsibility and sexual prejudice against lesbians (z= 2.11, p= 0.03).

Table 10

Correlations between Sexual Prejudice and Ratings of Responsibility and Blame of Gay Male and Lesbian Couples for Men and Women

		N	Victim Responsible	Perpetrator Responsible	Perpetrator Blame	Victim Blame
Men	MHS-G	24	0.15	-0.10	0.05	0.18
	MHS-L	23	-0.03	0.07	0.20	-0.28
Women	MHS-G	32	0.38*	-0.35*	0.15	-0.03
	MHS-L	34	0.52**	-0.42*	-0.02	0.15

Note. MHS-G = Modern Homonegativity Scale-Gay Men; MHS-L = Modern Homonegativity Scale-Lesbian Women.
*p< 0.05. **p< 0.001.

Sexual Prejudice Mediation

Mediation analyses were not conducted because gender self-esteem scores were not significantly correlated with either sexual prejudice scores or the victim blame and responsibility scores.

Secondary Analyses

Emotional Reaction to Vignette

A 2x2x2 factorial analyses of variance was conducted to test whether or not ratings of emotional reaction were related to the gender of the perpetrator, participant, and victim. There were significant effects for gender of participant, gender of victim, and the perpetrator gender by victim gender interaction. Table 11 presents the results. Emotional reactions were stronger when the victim was female than when the victim was male (partial $\eta^2 = 0.035$). Also, women reacted more strongly to the vignettes than men (partial $\eta^2 = 0.03$). Finally, there was a significant interaction between gender of the victim and gender of the perpetrator (partial $\eta^2 = 0.035$) such that emotional reactions were strongest with a male perpetrator and female victim and weakest with a male victim and male perpetrator, $t(108) = -3.90$, $p < 0.001$. There was not a significant difference in participants' emotional reactions in conditions with a female perpetrator, $t(114) = -0.19$, $p = 0.848$). See Table 12 for means and standard deviations.

Table 11

Results for the ANOVA Examining the Effects of Participant Gender, Perpetrator Gender, and Victim Gender on Ratings of Emotional Reaction

	F	*p*	η^2_p
SDS-17	0.54	0.463	0.003
Participant Gender	6.46	0.012	0.030
Perpetrator Gender	0.93	0.337	0.004
Victim Gender	7.58	0.006	0.035
Perpetrator Gender *Participant Gender	1.00	0.318	0.005
Victim Gender *Participant Gender	0.15	0.700	0.001
Perpetrator Gender *Victim Gender	7.55	0.007	0.035
Participant Gender*Perpetrator Gender *Victim Gender	0.00	0.971	0.000

Note. df = 1, 211.

Table 12

Means and Standard Deviations for Emotional Reaction for Men and Women by Condition

Condition	*N*	Men	*N*	Women	*N*	Total Sample
Lesbian	23	33.91 (30.26)	34	48.53 (29.45)	57	42.63 (30.39)
Gay Male	24	32.92 (24.40)	32	37.81 (27.91)	56	35.71 (26.34)
Heterosexual with Male Perpetrator	25	52.40 (27.43)	29	58.97 (28.70)	54	55.93 (28.05)
Heterosexual with Female Perpetrator	25	35.60 (25.01)	34	46.18 (17.76)	59	41.69 (21.59)

A univariate analysis of variance was also calculated to examine the effects of IPV experience on emotional reaction to the vignettes. IPV experience was defined as having been the victim or perpetrator of IPV, and/or having witnessed IPV involving a friend or family member. Participant gender and IPV experience were entered as the independent variables and emotional reaction as the dependent variable. Results indicated that IPV experience did not influence participants' emotional reactions to the vignette, $F(1, 215)= 0.37$, $p = 0.544$. Participant gender was significantly related to emotional reaction (see above).

Personal Experience with IPV

Two multivariate analyses of covariance were calculated to test whether personal experience with IPV was related to ratings of victim or perpetrator blame or responsibility, provocation, or perpetrator guilt. Participant gender and experience of IPV (experience or no experience) were entered as the independent variables and ratings of victim and perpetrator responsibility and blame were the dependent variables. Average scores on the Social Desirability Scale were entered as the covariate; however, these scores did not contribute significantly to the multivariate results. As such, only the results of the MANOVAs were used. There were no significant multivariate or univariate results. See Tables 13, 14, and 15 for multivariate and univariate results as well as means and standard deviations.

Table 13

Multivariate Results for Responsibility and Blame as a Function of Gender and IPV Experience

	Responsibility		
	F	*p*	η^2_p
SDS-17	0.69	0.505	0.006
IPV Experience	0.69	0.504	0.006
Participant Gender	1.88	0.155	0.017
Participant Gender*IPV Experience	0.08	0.922	0.001

Note. df = 2, 214.

	Blame, Provocation, and Guilt		
	F	*p*	η^2_p
SDS-17	0.62	0.648	0.012
IPV Experience	0.53	0.715	0.010
Participant Gender	0.44	0.781	0.008
Participant Gender*IPV Experience	0.46	0.762	0.009

Note. df = 4, 212.

Table 14

Univariate Results for Ratings of Blame, Responsibility, Victim Provocation, and Perpetrator Guilt as a Function of IPV Experience

	Perpetrator Responsibility			Victim Responsibility		
	F	*p*	η^2_p	*F*	*p*	η^2_p
Social Desirability	1.37	0.242	0.006	0.78	0.378	0.004
IPV Experience	0.44	0.508	0.002	1.27	0.262	0.006
Participant Gender	3.56	0.060	0.016	1.38	0.241	0.006
Participant Gender*IPV Experience	0.06	0.815	0.000	0.001	0.980	0.000

	Perpetrator Blame			Victim Blame		
	F	*p*	η^2_p	*F*	*p*	η^2_p
Social Desirability	1.40	0.237	0.006	0.84	0.360	0.004
IPV Experience	0.07	0.786	0.000	1.48	0.225	0.007
Participant Gender	0.58	0.447	0.003	0.02	0.902	0.000
Participant Gender*IPV Experience	1.33	0.250	0.006	0.17	0.684	0.001

	Victim Provocation			Perpetrator Guilt		
	F	*p*	η^2_p	*F*	*p*	η^2_p
Social Desirability	0.33	0.567	0.002	0.11	0.739	0.001
IPV Experience	0.01	0.940	0.000	0.04	0.835	0.000
Participant Gender	0.08	0.781	0.000	0.98	0.322	0.005
Participant Gender*IPV Experience	0.01	0.925	0.000	0.07	0.790	0.000

Note. df =1, 215 for all analyses.

Table 15

Means and Standard Deviations for Ratings of Victim and Perpetrator Blame and Responsibility, Victim Provocation, and Perpetrator Guilt by IPV Experience for Men and Women

	Women				Men			
	N	IPV Experience	*N*	No IPV Experience	*N*	IPV Experience	*N*	No IPV Experience
Victim Responsibility	77	3.17 (2.04)	52	2.92 (2.04)	30	3.57 (2.29)	67	3.18 (2.25)
Perpetrator Responsibility	77	4.67 (2.74)	52	4.90 (2.52)	30	4.63 (2.83)	67	4.21 (2.67)
Victim Blame	77	2.11 (1.35)	52	2.10 (1.30)	30	2.07 (1.21)	67	1.68 (1.09)
Perpetrator Blame	77	6.42 (1.04)	52	6.33 (0.94)	30	6.23 (1.01)	67	6.43 (1.05)
Victim Provocation	77	2.05 (1.53)	52	2.04 (1.61)	30	2.10 (1.47)	67	2.10 (1.65)
Perpetrator Guilt	77	6.57 (0.97)	52	6.52 (1.02)	30	6.37 (1.07)	67	6.45 (1.16)

Crosstabs were also calculated by gender to determine the percentage of men and women who have experienced or witnessed IPV in some capacity. Of the total sample, 13.7% of participants (5.2% of men and 20.2% of women) reported having been the victim of IPV, 4.4% (4.1% of men and 4.7% of women) reported perpetrating IPV, 23.5% (19.6% of men and 26.4% of women) reported witnessing IPV involving a family member, 28.3% (20.6% of men and 34.1% of women) reported witnessing IPV involving a friend, and 52.7% (69.1% of men and 40.3% of women) reported that they had neither witnessed for experienced IPV. Chi-square results indicated that significantly more women than men had been the victim of IPV ($\chi^2 = 10.53$, $p = 0.001$). Additionally, significantly more women than men reported witnessing IPV involving a friend ($\chi^2 = 4.96$, $p = 0.026$). No significant differences were found between men and women

for IPV perpetration IPV ($\chi^2 = 0.04$, $p = 0.849$) or witnessing IPV involving a family member ($\chi^2 = 1.41$, $p = 0.235$).

CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION

The present study contributes to the current literature on perceptions of intimate partner violence by examining the influence of gender self-esteem, sexual prejudice, and gender on perceptions of intimate partner violence (IPV) in heterosexual and same-sex couples. The current research contributes to the existing research on IPV and attributions of blame in violent scenarios in both heterosexual and same-sex relationships.

Victim Blame

The hypothesis that that there would be an interaction between gender of the participant and gender of the target character for levels of victim blame was not supported, as no significant gender differences in ratings of victim blame were found. Interestingly, both men and women blamed male victims more than female victims. These results suggest that men and women did not differ significantly in their processing of blame attributions in each of the four conditions. According to Just World Theory, if no obvious behavior of the victim can be blamed, assumptions regarding the victim's character, behavior, or his/her unconscious desire for victimization may be made in order to restore justice to the situation (Hafer & Bègue, 2005). It is possible that participants who were unable to attribute overt behavior of the victim to causing the incident, assumed that male victims were more aggressive, thus playing a more significant role in their victimization compared to female victims, resulting in greater blame compared to female victims. It is also feasible that blaming female victims was more difficult for participants due to

the belief that IPV against women is less justifiable than IPV against men. Given that women are more likely to be victimized and that violence against women receives more media attention than IPV perpetrated against men, it is possible that participants viewed violence against women as a greater and more serious social problem, thus increasing their identification with the person of the victim (i.e., increasing participants' sympathy and empathy for the female victim) and reducing blame. Although these results differ from what has been found in the literature previously, it is important to note that the scale assessing attributions of blame and responsibility differed from what has been used previously, which may account for some of the differences found.

According to Just World Theory, an individual is less likely to blame a victim if he/she can identify with the position of the victim, given the potential implications for the self (van Zomeren & Lodewijkx, 2005). The results obtained do not appear to support this, particularly given that previous experience with IPV did not influence ratings of victim blame or responsibility. Given this, it is unlikely that the potential for being in the victim position in the future would greatly affect their ratings of victim blame or responsibility. It is possible that the higher levels of blame of male victims were the result of subscribing to the myth that it is easier for male victims to leave an abusive relationship (Brown & Groscup, 2009). It is also possible that participants had more difficulty identifying and empathizing with a male victim as a result of the disproportionate social focus on female victims. Furthermore, given that the vignette indicated that the incident of IPV was not the first between the couple, it is possible that the aforementioned abuse myth combined with the victim's perceived choice to remain in an abusive relationship resulted in increased blame of male victims.

One particularly interesting finding was that participants appeared to view the constructs of blame and responsibility differently, which may explain the lack of significant results for responsibility despite the aforementioned results for victim blame. It is possible that participants interpreted the term "responsible" as a general descriptor of the target characters (i.e., "I believe the victim/perpetrator was a responsible person"). However, this is unlikely given that the instructions directed participants to think about the incident presented in the vignette when answering the questions. Another possibility is that blame and responsibility denote distinct constructs that were interpreted differently by the participants. Pickard (2011) asserted that responsibility is related to agency and a sense of control over one's own behavior. Blameworthiness, on the other hand, denotes that an individual bears responsibility for harm (to self or others) and has no excuse for his/her behavior. If this is true, then it appears that participants deemed that the victim had similar levels of agency as perpetrators (e.g., he/she made the choice to stay in the relationship, to go to the grocery store before coming home, to stay in the home after the perpetrator's behavior began to escalate, etc.), but was not worthy of blame for the harm committed against him/her.

Perpetrator Blame

The hypothesis that women would blame perpetrators more than men regardless of the perpetrator's gender or sexual orientation was not supported as no significant differences in ratings of perpetrator blame or responsibility were found between men and women. However, it is important to note than men and women blamed perpetrators significantly more than victims, suggesting that the vignette prompted the need to believe in a just world, and as such, the need to restore justice to the situation via perpetrator blame. However, given that men and women did not differ in their ratings of perpetrator blame, it is possible that the vignette did not *differentially*

elicit the need to believe in a just world in men and women. Given that sex role orientation was not measured, it is possible that there were not significant differences between male and female participants with reference to the gender roles with which they identified. As such, it is also possible that more men than usual identified with a feminine gender role, resulting in a lack of identification with the gender role of the perpetrator and a lack of significant differences between men and women's perceptions. Moreover, despite the inclusion of a measure of social desirability, it remains a possibility that participants responded to questions related to victim and perpetrator blame in a socially desirable manner.

Interestingly, women blamed male perpetrators significantly more than female perpetrators and men did not differ significantly in their ratings of perpetrator blame as a function of perpetrator gender. It is possible that women were better able to identify with a female perpetrator, and blamed her less in order to maintain a sense of justice. It is also possible that, consistent with Seelau and Seelau's (2005) findings, women held the view that female perpetrators are not as dangerous as male perpetrators or cannot do as much harm as male perpetrators, despite the fact that the level of harm was held constant.

Despite the emotional reaction that the vignette elicited, particularly in women, it did not significantly affect ratings of perpetrator or victim blame. This is in contrast to the tenets of Just World Theory, which suggest that a strong emotional reaction should prompt an attempt to restore justice to an unjust situation. However, it is important to note that the rating of emotional reaction was subjective and was measured with only one question on a Likert scale, which may have affected the results obtained. Furthermore, the type of emotional reaction (i.e., positive or negative) that participants rated was not specified. Thus, it is possible that some participants had

positive emotional reactions that, by their nature, would not prompt the need to believe in a just world.

Gender, Gender Self-Esteem, Sexual Prejudice, and Victim Blame

The hypothesis that gender of the participant and gender of the target character would influence the effects of gender self-esteem on victim blame was not supported. Gender self-esteem was not significantly related to victim responsibility, blame, or provocation ratings for men or women regardless of the victim's gender. This suggests that the importance and value that participants placed on their membership in their gender group did not significantly influence their perceptions of the victim's role in the incident of IPV presented in the vignette. It is possible that other factors not measured in this study (e.g., religious affiliation, abuse myth beliefs, political affiliation, gender role), rather than gender self-esteem, may have contributed to the results obtained.

Although gender did moderate the effects of sexual prejudice on blame of gay and lesbian victims, the effect was opposite of what was hypothesized. Specifically, men's levels of sexual prejudice against gay men and lesbians were not significantly correlated with their ratings of victim responsibility or blame. On the other hand, women's sexual prejudice was significantly related to ratings of responsibility (but not blame) of both gay and lesbian victims. However, the correlations for men and women were only significantly different between ratings of victim responsibility in the lesbian condition and sexual prejudice against lesbian women, suggesting that only sexual prejudice against lesbians was a reliable and robust predictor of ratings of victim responsibility. It is possible that women's sexual prejudice outweighed their need to believe in a just world such that their potential identification with the position of the victim was not as strong as their negative feelings against lesbians. One other potential explanation is that men had a

greater internal motivation to appear non-prejudicial than women. In a study of the effects of the internal motivation to appear unprejudiced, Ratcliff, Lassiter, Markman, and Snyder (2006) found that when internal motivation was accounted for, women's negative attitudes toward lesbians became greater than men's. Internal motivation to appear unprejudiced also partially mediated the relationship between gender and attitudes toward gay men. This suggests that the internal motivation to appear non-prejudicial greatly affected women's attitudes. Given this, it is possible that female participants in the current study had less need to appear unprejudiced, resulting in their greater prejudicial attitudes compared to men. In a second study, Ratcliff et al. found that internal motivation was associated with a feminine self-concept. Therefore, it is also conceivable that if more men in this study identified with a feminine self-concept, the internal motivation to appear non-prejudicial would have a greater effect on men. Similarly, if women in this study identified less with a feminine self-concept, it is likely that their internal motivation would not be as great.

An additional possibility is that more men than women in the current study had positive contact with the gay male and lesbian outgroups, resulting in decreased sexual prejudice and/or discriminatory behavior (i.e., blaming gay and lesbian victims as a result of sexual prejudice). In a review of contemporary studies examining intergroup contact, Hodson (2011) found that contact with members of an outgroup increases an individual's empathy and feelings of closeness with outgroup members while simultaneously decreasing negative attitudes and prejudice toward outgroup members for those who were initially highly prejudiced. It is thus feasible that of the participants in this study (most of whom were first year college students) men may have had more contact with sexual minority outgroup members than women, resulting in a decrease in sexual prejudice that potentially pre-dated their college attendance.

It is also possible that sexual prejudice for women in this sample was related to the perceived violation of traditional gender roles in gay and lesbian couples. Perhaps the women sampled identified more with traditional gender roles compared to men or subscribed to a belief system that facilitated negative attitudes toward homosexuality. Caron and Carter (1997) found that negative attitudes toward homosexuality and nonegalitarian views of marital roles contributed to women's attributions of blame to rape victims. Given that sexual stereotypes and gender role orientation were not assessed, it is possible that there was an overrepresentation of stereotyped beliefs and/or nonegalitarian marital views, which could have influenced ratings of sexual prejudice in the women in this sample.

Although sexual prejudice was significantly related to victim responsibility for women, it was not related to gender self-esteem for male or female participants. In other words, increases in gender self-esteem did not lead to increases in sexual prejudice. These results are consistent with Falomir-Pichastor and Mugny's (2009) findings that gender self-esteem did not predict sexual prejudice for women. Additionally, these same authors found that gender self-esteem and sexual prejudice were only related to one another for men when perceived psychological distance was high. These authors posited that men with high gender self-esteem use sexual prejudice as a way to maintain this psychological distance. Given this, it is possible that the lack of relationship between sexual prejudice, gender self-esteem, and victim blame for men in the current study resulted from an already high perceived level of difference from gay male victims that made the need to use sexual prejudice to maintain their sense of gender integrity less necessary. It is also possible that their levels of gender self-esteem did not meet the threshold necessary to be associated with sexual prejudice. It is also possible that that the results obtained were a reflection of the age, college status, and/or geographic location of the participants.

Strengths and Limitations

A number of strengths are evident in this study that should be highlighted. First, although the literature consistently shows gender differences in ratings of victim and perpetrator blame, limited research has been devoted to the reasons why these differences may exist. Several studies have explored Just World Theory as a framework through which to understand research findings, but a construct such as gender self-esteem has not been thoroughly examined with reference to its potential impact on perceptions of IPV. Secondly, this study emphasizes that perceptions of IPV are not easily understood and the factors that underlie an individual's perceptions are multifactorial. Finally, this study contributes to the literature on IPV, and provides a novel way of conceptualizing and interpreting the existing literature.

Although this study provides insight into some of the reasons why men and women view IPV differently, several limitations should be noted. First, all of the participants were undergraduate students, and the sample was predominately Caucasian. Additionally, although the age range was broad due to the inclusion of non-traditional students, the mean age was 20 years. Hence, generalizability of the results is limited to the represented ages. Furthermore, all participants included in the analyses self-identified as heterosexual-only. Aside from sample limitations, it is important to note that one question was erroneously omitted from the gender self-esteem scale. Given the borderline adequacy of the alpha value for the questions included in the scale, it is possible that the omission of this question affected results. Finally, the use of vignettes in this study may be considered a limitation given that they are a less realistic medium for case presentations. Although the vignette was set up to mimic a police report, it is possible that participants did not view the presentation as believable, which may have affected the results obtained.

Implications

These findings emphasize the importance of understanding one's own beliefs, particularly when working with victims of IPV. Brown and Groscup (2009) found that crisis center staff rated violence in same-sex relationships as less serious than violence in other-sex couples. They also rated same-sex scenarios as less likely to occur again and less likely to intensify over time, and believed that it would be easier for the gay male, lesbian, and heterosexual male victims to leave the relationship compared to heterosexual female victims. In a qualitative study, Bornstein et al. (2006) found that a number of lesbian, bisexual, and transgender women in their sample felt that the violence they experienced was minimized by therapists and some asserted that their therapists made them to feel responsible for their abuse. These findings, along with the results of the current study highlight that clinicians working with victims must be aware of their own biases, including their own potential sexual prejudice in order to more effectively and ethically work with victims. This may be particularly true for university students encountering male victims of IPV or for college-aged women working with sexual minorities. Given that much research over the years has been focused on heterosexual female victims of IPV, it is no surprise that women, particularly heterosexual women, have been provided with more opportunities for assistance and support via shelters and domestic violence organizations, than gay and heterosexual men and lesbians. Perhaps research such as this will also allow others, including family members and friends, to better understand the struggles that lesbians and gay and heterosexual men experience in obtaining support and assistance following victimization and the impact of sexual prejudice on one's understanding and interpretation of violent incidents.

The higher levels of blame of male victims provides evidence supporting the idea that it is more difficult for men to receive the empathy and support they need compared to women. This lack of support is readily seen in the lack of services available to men relative to women. Results such as this highlight the need for an increased understanding of men's struggles and an increased need for services available to male victims of IPV. Furthermore, increased formal and informal support for both men and women will help to decrease the exorbitant cost of IPV to society at large.

Moreover, the findings from this study and others highlight the importance of specialized training for professionals such as police officers to gain a better understanding of how their own potential biases could influence the way in which they react to victims and perpetrators of IPV. Such training may help to better assure potential victims, particularly men and sexual minority victims, that they will be treated fairly and with dignity. If findings such as those of the current study are not thoughtfully considered, it is possible that victims of IPV will continue to have their experiences minimized and will continue to be victimized by the system that was put in place to assist and protect them.

Areas for Future Research

Although this study provides important information regarding factors that do and do not contribute to IPV perceptions, there are several areas that future research could explore. First, in order to overcome some of the limitations inherent in the use of vignettes, replication of the current study using video depictions of IPV incidents may provide more evidence for a Just World conceptualization of IPV perceptions because video is a medium that may be more likely to elicit a strong emotional response. Additionally, future research examining the effects of sexual prejudice (i.e., internalized sexual prejudice) on perceptions of IPV in a sample of gay and

lesbian individuals would provide information regarding similarities and differences in IPV blame attributions between individuals of differing sexual orientations. Given that sexual prejudice did not mediate the relationship between gender self-esteem and victim blame, it is possible that psychological distancing in this sample was already high, eliminating the need to use sexual prejudice as a way to maintain one's gender self-esteem. To confirm this, future research in this area would benefit from examining the effects of an individual's perceived psychological distance from same-gender sexual minorities on blame of IPV victims. Finally, because contact with sexual minorities decreases sexual prejudice (Hodson, 2011), future research would benefit from examining participants' level of contact with sexual minorities and the effect of level of contact on sexual prejudice and victim and perpetrator blame in same-sex IPV.

Conclusion

Existing research suggests that when confronted with an injustice, individuals will attempt to restore justice in a number of ways, including blaming the perpetrator or the victim. A number of studies suggest that women tend to blame the perpetrator more than the victim while men are more likely to blame the victim of an injustice. Just World Theory suggests that this occurs as a result of women's tendency to identify with the position of the victim and men's tendency to identify with the perpetrator and/or to distance themselves psychologically from the victim. The current study does not support this entirely. Although men and women blamed perpetrators more than victims, thus restoring some justice to the incident, both men and women blamed male victims more than female victims, suggesting the possible influence of gender role stereotypes.

Research also suggests that the constructs of gender self-esteem and sexual prejudice influence the way in which men respond to sexual minorities. According to Luhtanen and Crocker (1992), gender self-esteem may influence in-group biases toward out-group members, particularly if distinctiveness from a sexual minority outgroup cannot be established (Branscombe et al., 1999). Although the current study found that sexual prejudice influenced women's behavior (i.e., ratings of lesbian and gay male victims levels of responsibility), it did not affect men's behavior. Furthermore, gender self-esteem was not related to sexual prejudice or ratings of victim blame or responsibility for men or women. It is possible that this was the result of increased contact with sexual minorities, resulting in lower levels of sexual prejudice for men. It is also possible that the levels of gender self-esteem did not reach the level necessary to cause an increase in sexual prejudice for men and women.

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APPENDIX A: VIGNETTE (LESBIAN CONDITION)

STATE OF INDIANA, COUNTY OF MARION					
DEFENDANT'S NAME	Michelle [redacted]	**DOB**	2/11/1978	**ALIASES**	None
DEFENDANT'S ADDRESS	[redacted]	Indianapolis, IN 46202		**PHONE NUMBER**	317[redacted]
CASE NO.	10-1492				
VICTIM'S NAME	Erin [redacted]	**DOB**	11/23/1978	**ALIASES**	None
VICTIM'S ADDRESS	[redacted]	Indianapolis, IN 46202		**PHONE NUMBER**	317[redacted]
WITNESSES PRESENT	Yes. Neighbors		**WITNESS NAME(S)**	[redacted]	
WITNESS ADDRESS	[redacted]	Indianapolis, IN 46202		**PHONE NUMBER**	317[redacted]

NARRATIVE
At approximately 8pm Monday evening, police were dispatched to a local residence after receiving a call from concerned neighbors. The neighbors stated they heard screaming and loud banging coming from the house next door. When these officers arrived on the scene, they found Erin [redacted] sitting on the couch icing a swollen lip and cut eye. These officers questioned the victim, who stated that she and her partner, Michelle [redacted] had been in a romantic relationship for the past year. Erin said Michelle became verbally abusive when Erin returned home late from work after stopping by the grocery store. The victim further stated that Michelle became very angry and accused her of being unfaithful. The victim reportedly attempted to calm Michelle by showing her the grocery bag as proof of her errand. Michelle reportedly grabbed the bag from Erin and threw it at her, breaking the glass inside. She then pushed Erin against the wall and began choking her. Erin (a 5'9, 140 pound female) was able to push Michelle (a 5'8, 145 pound female) away but Michelle punched Erin twice in the face, cutting her eye and lip.

APPENDIX B: PERCEPTIONS OF INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE SCALE

Please use the following scale to answer the questions below about the scenario you read.

Not at all			Neutral			Very much so
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

1. ____How responsible was Erin/Eric?
2. ____How responsible was Michael/Michelle?
3. ____To what degree did Erin/Eric provoke Michael/Michelle's response?
4. ____Was Michael/Michelle guilty of abuse?
5. ____Was Michael/Michelle to blame for the incident?
6. ____Was Erin/Eric to blame for the incident?

APPENDIX C: THE SOCIAL DESIRABILITY SCALE-17

Below you will find a list of statements. Please read each statement carefully and decide if that statement describes you or not. If it describes you circle *true*; if not, circle the word *false*.

1. I sometimes litter.*	True	False
2. I always admit my mistakes openly and face the potential negative consequences.	True	False
3. In traffic I am always polite and considerate of others.	True	False
4. I always accept others' opinions, even when they don't agree with my own.	True	False
5. I take out my bad moods on others now and then.*	True	False
6. There has been an occasion when I took advantage of someone else.*	True	False
7. In conversation I always listen attentively and let others finish their sentences.	True	False
8. I never hesitate to help someone in case of emergency.	True	False
9. When I have made a promise, I keep it – no ifs, ands, or buts.	True	False
10. I occasionally speak badly of others behind their back.*	True	False
11. I would never live off other people.	True	False
12. I always stay friendly and courteous with other people, even when I am stressed out.	True	False
13. During an argument I always stay objective and matter-of-fact.	True	False
14. There has been at least one occasion when I failed to return an item that I borrowed.*	True	False
15. I always eat a healthy diet.	True	False
16. Sometimes I only help because I expect something in return.*	True	False

* items are reverse coded.

APPENDIX D: COLLECTIVE SELF-ESTEEM SCALE

We are all members of different social groups or social categories, such as gender, race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. Please respond to the following statements on the basis of how you feel about your gender group (women, men, etc.) and about your membership in your gender group. Use the following scale to indicate how much you agree or disagree with the statements below. Put your responses in the blank next to each statement.

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neutral	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

1. _____ I am a worthy member of my gender group.
2. _____ I feel I don't have much to offer to my gender group.*
3. _____ I am a cooperative participant in my gender group.
4. _____ I often feel I'm a useless member of my gender group.*
5. _____ I often regret that I belong to my gender group.*
6. _____ In general, I'm glad to be a member of my gender group.
7. _____ Overall, I often feel that the gender group of which I am a member is not worthwhile.*
8. _____ I feel good about my gender group.
9. _____ Overall, my gender group is considered good by others.
10. _____ Most people consider my gender group, on the average, to be more ineffective than other social groups.*
11. _____ In general, others respect the gender group that I am a member of.
12. _____ In general, others think that the gender group I am a member of is unworthy.*
13. _____ Overall, my gender group membership has very little to do with how I feel about myself.*
14. _____ The gender group I belong to is an important reflection of who I am.
15. _____ The gender group I belong to is unimportant for my sense of what kind of person am.*
16. _____ In general, belonging to my gender group is an important part of my self-image.

* items are reverse scored

APPENDIX E: MODERN HOMONEGATIVITY SCALE

Homonegativity Towards Gay Men

Use the following scale to indicate how much you agree or disagree with the statements below. Put your responses in the blank next to each statement.

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

1. _____ Many gay men use their sexual orientation so that they can obtain special privileges.
2. _____ Gay men seem to focus on the ways in which they differ from heterosexuals, and ignore the ways in which they are the same.
3. _____ Gay men do not have all the rights they need.*
4. _____ The notion of universities providing students with undergraduate degrees in Gay and Lesbian Studies is ridiculous.
5. _____ Celebrations such as "Gay Pride Day" are ridiculous because they assume that an individual's sexual orientation should constitute a source of pride.
6. _____ Gay men still need to protest for equal rights.*
7. _____ Gay men should stop shoving their lifestyle down other people's throats.
8. _____ If gay men want to be treated like everyone else, then they need to stop making such a fuss about their sexuality/culture.
9. _____ Gay men who are "out of the closet" should be admired for their courage.*
10. _____ Gay men should stop complaining about the way they are treated in society, and simply get on with their lives.
11. _____ In today's tough economic times, Americans' tax dollars shouldn't be used to support gay men's organizations.
12. _____ Gay men have become far too confrontational in their demand for equal rights.

*items are reverse scored

Homonegativity Towards Lesbians

Use the following scale to indicate how much you agree or disagree with the statements below. Put your responses in the blank next to each statement.

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

1. _____ Many lesbians use their sexual orientation so that they can obtain special privileges.
2. _____ Lesbians seem to focus on the ways in which they differ from heterosexuals, and ignore the ways in which they are the same.
3. _____ Lesbians do not have all the rights they need.*
4. _____ The notion of universities providing students with undergraduate degrees in Gay and Lesbian Studies is ridiculous.
5. _____ Celebrations such as "Gay Pride Day" are ridiculous because they assume that an individual's sexual orientation should constitute a source of pride.
6. _____ Lesbians still need to protest for equal rights.*
7. _____ Lesbians should stop shoving their lifestyle down other people's throats.
8. _____ If lesbians want to be treated like everyone else, then they need to stop making such a fuss about their sexuality/culture.
9. _____ Lesbians who are "out of the closet" should be admired for their courage.*
10. _____ Lesbians should stop complaining about the way they are treated in society, and simply get on with their lives.
11. _____ In today's tough economic times, Americans' tax dollars shouldn't be used to support lesbian organizations.
12. _____ Lesbians have become far too confrontational in their demand for equal rights.

* items are reverse scored

APPENDIX F: MANIPULATION CHECK

Please answer the following questions about the police report you read.

____1. According to the police report, concerned neighbors called the police.

1. True
2. False

____2. What was the sexual orientation of the couple presented in the police report?

1. Heterosexual
2. Homosexual

____3. What was the state in which the incident occurred?

1. Indiana
2. Kentucky
3. Ohio
4. Illinois

____4. What was the gender of the victim?

1. Male
2. Female

____5. What was the gender of the person who injured the victim?

1. Male
2. Female

____6. In what city did the incident occur?

1. Cleveland
2. Indianapolis
3. Louisville
4. Chicago

____7. What was the name of the victim?

1. Michael
2. Michelle
3. Eric
4. Erin

____8. What was the name of the person who injured the victim?

1. Michael
2. Michelle
3. Eric
4. Erin

Please use the following scale to answer question #9.

No emotional reaction — Very strong emotional reaction

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

9. ___How strong was your emotional reaction to the police report?

APPENDIX G: DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

Age: _____

Please circle the number of the relevant response.

Gender:

1. Male
2. Female
3. Transgender

Current Sexual Orientation:

1. Heterosexual Only
2. Heterosexual Mostly
3. More Heterosexual than Homosexual
4. Heterosexual/Homosexual Equally
5. More Homosexual than Heterosexual
6. Homosexual Mostly
7. Homosexual Only
8. Other (please specify) _____

Year in School:

1. First-Year
2. Sophomore
3. Junior
4. Senior

Race (circle all that apply):

1. White/Caucasian
2. Black/African American
3. Hispanic/Latino(a)
4. Native American/American Indian
5. Asian/Asian American
6. Multiracial
7. Other (please specify) _____

Are you an international student?

1. Yes

   If you circled yes, what is your country of origin? _____

2. No

Intimate partner violence is violence that occurs between people involved in an intimate relationship. Keep this definition in mind when answering the following question.

Have you had any of the following experiences? Please circle all that apply to you.

I have been the victim of intimate partner violence.

I have physically injured someone with whom I was involved in an intimate relationship.

I have witnessed intimate partner violence involving a family member.

I have witnessed intimate partner violence involving a friend.

I have not experienced or witnessed intimate partner violence.

APPENDIX H: INFORMED CONSENT

You are being asked to participate in a research study on perceptions of intimate partner violence. This research is being conducted by doctoral student, Crystal Mahoy, and Dr. Veanne Anderson of the Psychology Department at Indiana State University. Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. Please read the information below and ask questions about anything you do not understand before deciding whether or not to participate.

PARTICIPANT REQUIREMENTS

To participate in this study, you must be at least 18 years old.

PROCEDURE

If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will click on a link below that says "I am at least 18 years old and wish to participate" and you will be routed to an Indiana State University website where you will be asked to answer questions about your attitudes toward men and women and your perceptions of an incident involving a relationship. You will also be asked to complete questions about your race, sex, sexual orientation, age, international status, life experiences, and year in school. The total time that is needed to complete the questionnaires is approximately 30 minutes. Your responses to the questionnaire will be kept in a secure database and we will not be collecting any identifying information. Only the researchers will have access to this database and it will be secured with a password.

PARTICIPANT RISKS AND BENEFITS

Risks of participation are minimal and are not expected to be greater than what you would encounter in everyday activities. When reading about the incident and completing questionnaires, you may remember personal experiences or be asked to examine your beliefs, which may result in mild anxiety. If you experience any distress as a result of participating in this study, you can access psychological services at the University's Student Counseling Center (812-237-3939) or the Psychology Clinic in Root Hall (812-237-3317).

By participating in this study, you will benefit by learning about psychological research and by having an opportunity to evaluate some of your beliefs. In addition, you will have the opportunity to contribute to providing a greater understanding of perceptions of intimate partner violence to society at large.

PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

Your participation is voluntary and you may choose to withdraw at any time without consequence. Your responses will not be entered into the database until the end of the survey, when you click "Submit." If you decide to withdraw in the middle of the survey, you may do so. You may also refuse to answer any questions you do not want to answer.

RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Indiana State University as adequately safeguarding the participant's privacy, welfare, civil liberties, and rights. If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, you may contact the Indiana State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) by mail at 114 Erickson Hall, Terre Haute, IN 47809, by phone at (812) 237-8217, or e-mail the IRB at irb@indstate.edu.

IDENTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATORS

If you have any questions or concerns about this research, please contact the project supervisor, Veanne N. Anderson, in the Department of Psychology at 812-237-2459, or by e-mail at vanderson1@indstate.edu. You may also contact the primary researcher, Crystal Mahoy in the ISU Psychology Clinic at 812-237-3317, or by email at cmahoy@sycamores.indstate.edu.

Please print a copy of this form for your records and click "I am at least 18 years old and wish to participate" below to begin the study.

APPENDIX I: WRITTEN DEBRIEFING

In this study we are interested in college students' perceptions of intimate partner violence. We want to determine whether attitudes toward gay men and lesbian women affect people's attitudes toward victims of partner violence. Also, we are investigating whether there are differences in these attitudes between women and men and some of the potential reasons for those gender differences.

Thank you for your participation in this study. If you have any questions or if you are interested in the results of the study please contact Veanne N. Anderson in the Department of Psychology at 812-237-2459. You can also email her at vanderson1@indstate.edu.

If you experience any distress as a result of participating in this study, you can access psychological services at the University's Student Counseling Center (812-237-3939) or the Psychology Clinic in Root Hall (812-237-3317).

Also, please do not discuss this study with your friends because they may be participating in it in the future.