

Victim but not Perpetrator Attractiveness Influences Blame Attribution in Cases of Male Sexual Assault

Graham G. Scott

University of the West of Scotland, Paisley Campus, UK

Pamela-Suzanne Dawson

Queens University of Belfast, Belfast, UK

Louise Maxwell

St Andrew's Healthcare, Northampton, UK

Male sexual assaults are under-reported and under-convicted, with blame often being attributed to the victim. Such attributions are thought to be driven by defensive heuristics such as belief in a just world, and rape myths based on an "ideal" masculine stereotype. We manipulated victim- and perpetrator-attractiveness in a male sexual assault scenario, and measured victim- and perpetrator-blame and perceived assault severity. One hundred and forty-four participants were recruited on the university campus and from local community centres. Attractive victims received more blame than their unattractive counterparts, while attractiveness did not affect perpetrator blame. We suggest that attractive male victims receive more blame because they are believed to possess positive traits (what is beautiful is good) but, as we also believe we live in a just world, they are judged to be more responsible for the act perpetrated against them.

Keywords: male rape, male sexual assault, victim blame, attractiveness

Introduction

Sexual assaults against male victims are more common than is widely believed and are more under-reported and under-prosecuted than assaults against female victims (Sleath & Bull, 2010). The proportion of men who will be victims during their lifetime is estimated to be as high as 22% (Davies & Rogers, 2006). Despite this, research into the cognitions behind victim blame attribution for such crimes is lagging behind that of female victims (Davies, Gilston, & Rogers, 2012). The current study manipulated both victim and perpetrator attractiveness, and measured victim and perpetrator blame and perceived assault severity, with

Graham G. Scott, Division of Psychology, School of Social Sciences, University of the West of Scotland.

Pamela-Suzanne Dawson, School of Psychology, Queens University of Belfast.

Louise Maxwell, St Andrew's Healthcare, Northampton, Cliftonville, Northampton, NN15DG.

Correspondence concerning this paper should be addressed to Louise Maxwell, St Andrew's Healthcare, Northampton, Cliftonville, Northampton, NN15DG, UK. Phone: 01604 616788. Email: lmaxwell@standrew.co.uk.

the aim of broadening knowledge of rape myths related to male sexual assault, and their associated cognitions.

Physical attractiveness often increases sympathy for a defendant, or crime perpetrator. This phenomenon has been linked to the “what is beautiful is good” stereotype where a halo effect results in the attribution of positive characteristics (e.g., elevated scores on dimensions of social competence and interpersonal ease) to attractive individuals (e.g., Dion, Berscheid, & Walster, 1972). Physical attractiveness negatively correlated with the bail or fine imposed for defendants of minor crimes (Downs & Lyons, 1991), while an attractiveness-leniency bias was shown for defendants of violent crimes (Quigley, Johnson, & Byrne, 1995). An exception to this rule is when attractiveness directly links to the crime committed. In a courtroom-based experiment attractive perpetrators received longer sentences for an attractiveness-related crime (swindle) but shorter sentences for a non attractiveness-related crime (burglary). When no attractiveness information was given results mirrored the unattractive condition, implying that attractiveness leads to leniency except when it is perceived to have facilitated the crime (Sigall & Ostrove, 1975).

Although much research has focused on which perpetrator characteristics may influence conviction and punishment, other studies have concentrated on how victims’ traits impact the blame attributed to them. Victim blame is a phenomenon whereby victims are attributed some responsibility for the act committed against them (Edwards, Turchik, Dardis, Reynolds, & Gidyez, 2011). This is driven by the Belief in a Just World hypothesis (Lerner & Matthews, 1967), which asserts that most individuals believe ‘people get what they deserve’ (e.g., Lerner & Miller, 1978; Shaver, 1970).

Since the 1970s, female victims of sexual assault have been the subject of much experimental investigation into attitudes towards, and beliefs about, victims (for reviews see Anderson, Cooper & Okamura, 1997; Maxwell & Scott, 2014; Suarez, & Gadalla, 2010). Many cognitions which lead to enhanced blame for such victims stem from rape myths: beliefs which generalise, trivialise or deny sexual assault (Franiuk, Seefeldt, Cephress, & Vandello, 2008). These are held by most of the population and severely skew interpretations of rape scenarios, no matter the strength with which they are accepted (Norris & Cubbins, 1992). Attribution of blame towards female victims generally increases if the attack deviated from a stereotypical rape, e.g., if it occurred indoors or the perpetrator was an acquaintance, or if the victim deviated from the stereotype of a submissive female, e.g., if she resisted her attacker or was sexually experienced (Grubb & Harrower, 2008).

Unattractive female victims are consistently attributed more blame than attractive victims for sexual assaults perpetrated against them (e.g., Gerdes, Dammann, & Heilig, 1988; Kanekar & Nazareth, 1988; Thornton & Ryckman, 1983). An explanation for this phenomenon is an assumption on the part of participants that the unattractive victim must have done more to incite an attack than their attractive counterparts and are therefore more culpable. This is related to the stereotype that “nobody would want to rape an unattractive woman”: participants infer more provocative or blameworthy behaviour on the part of the victim based on her physical appearance (Whatley, 1996). It should be noted that this finding does not generalize to all types of victims of sexual assault: victim attractiveness does not influence attributed blame in cases of child sexual assault (CSA: Rogers, Joesy, & Davies, 2007).

Knowledge of male victim blame is less comprehensive although, as is the case with female victims, blame attribution is thought to be confounded with gender role (e.g., men’s physical size and strength means they are unlikely to be overpowered or forced into sex; men who are victims of rape lose their manhood; men

are strong enough to cope with the experience of being raped: Kassing, Beesley, & Frey, 2005). Although the rape myths which drive blame attribution are specific to either male or female victims, the mechanisms behind such attributions are similar for victims of both sexes. Hostile sexism (negative evaluations of behaviours which deviate from a stereotypical gender role) and benevolent sexism (positive evaluations of behaviours which conform to a stereotypical gender role) are ideologies which form the basis of many rape myths (Chapleau, Oswald, & Russell, 2008). Male victims therefore typically receive more blame if they deviate from the 'ideal' of a masculine stereotype (e.g., if they are homosexual or fail to resist their attacker: Davies, Rogers, & Bates, 2008). Male rape myth acceptance (RMA) is significantly related to female RMA as well as gender role attitudes, negative attitudes towards gay men, and victim blame (Davies et al., 2012) It is important that the cognitions behind such myths are investigated and understood as many male victims reporting sexual assaults are met with reactions of hostility, disbelief, and blame both by police and their family (Mezey & King, 1989; Walker, Archer, & Davies, 2005).

One aspect of male victims not yet investigated is physical attractiveness. Attractive female sexual assault victims are attributed less blame because attractiveness integrates to the submissive feminine stereotype and they are presumed to have done less to instigate an attack. Unlike with female victims, physical attractiveness does not relate to gender identity (masculinity) in males and therefore the link to rape myths is not apparent (physical attractiveness in males is independent from masculinity: Quist, DeBruine, Little, & Jones, 2012; Stephens et al., 2012). There being no connection between physical attractiveness and masculinity, and therefore male rape myths, it is likely that participants will rely on other heuristics to form an opinion of who is to blame. One such heuristic is likely to be Belief in a Just World (Lerner & Matthews, 1967).

Although attractive males may not be considered more masculine, their physical attractiveness will lead them to be viewed as possessing other positive attributes (what is beautiful is good: Dion et al., 1972). If such an individual is the victim of a terrible crime such as a sexual assault this will result in internal conflict on the part of an observer: one heuristic tells them that the attractive individual is inherently good, whereas defensive attributions tell them that people get what they deserve, and so bad things should only happen to bad people (belief in a just world: Lerner & Matthews, 1967). This conflict could potentially be resolved by inferring that the attractive individual behaved in some blameworthy way (e.g., by somehow instigating the attack, or by not doing all they could to resist). The attractive victim could consequently be judge as being more culpable for the act perpetrated against them due to this inferred action (or inaction).

The current study manipulated both perpetrator and victim attractiveness in a male sexual assault scenario and assessed the impact on perceived victim- and perpetrator-blame and assault severity. Participant gender was also treated as an independent variable as men have previously been shown to more readily blame victims of either sex than women (Grubb & Harrower, 2008) as they relate more to the perpetrator than the victim of a sexual assault (Khan et al., 2011). Based on the rationale that attractive male victims would be viewed as less deserving of being attacked, and would therefore be judged as having done more to instigate the attack, it is predicted that attractive male victims will receive more blame than unattractive victims, and that crimes against them will be perceived as more severe. As attractive defendants of violent crimes, including rape, are often viewed more favourably (e.g., Quigley et al., 1995) it was also predicted that attractive perpetrators will receive less blame than unattractive perpetrators.

Methods

Participants

One hundred and forty-four participants (70 males) with mean age 38.29 (*SD*: 14.66; range 18-70) took part in this experiment. Participants' described their ethnicity as: 68% White British, 24% White European, 6% Black, and 2% Asian. All participants were volunteers; 102 were recruited via advertisements placed around campus and 42 via advertisements in local community centres.

Design

A 2 (Victim Attractiveness: Attractive, Unattractive) \times 2 (Perpetrator Attractiveness: Attractive, Unattractive) \times 2 (Participant Gender: Male, Female) between-participants design was employed. Dependent measures were Victim Blame, Perpetrator Blame and Assault Severity each measured on multi-item 7-point scales.

Materials

Stimuli. The study used the following scenario describing a male-on-male sexual assault:

Mike was introduced to Paul at a friend's housewarming party. They had never met before and only spent a short time chatting to each other before Mike went to talk to his friends. Mike spent the majority of the time in the sitting room drinking and talking to his friends while Paul listened to music in the kitchen. Later on they said hello as they passed in a corridor, but did not resume their conversation for the remainder of the party. At the end of the party, Mike left to walk home on his own and Paul followed him out. He caught up with him and said that as they were going the same way, they might as well walk together. The route home passed through a wooded area. When they reached this, Paul pushed Mike to the ground. Taken by surprise, Mike hit his head while falling and felt too dazed to be able to successfully fight back. In that period, Paul removed Mike's trousers and underwear and proceeded to force him to have sex. Paul fled immediately after the attack.

The scenario was presented to participants along with two photographs depicting the victim and perpetrator. Photographs were taken from the set used in Welling et al. (2007) and had been rated for attractiveness on a five-point Likert scale by 658 participants who took part in the original study. In total, eight photographs were used in the experiment, four attractive (mean = 3.42, *SD* = 1.53) and four unattractive (mean = 2.09, *SD* = 1.20). A paired-samples t-test showed that the attractive faces were significantly more attractive than the unattractive faces [$t(3) = 7.678, p < 0.005$]. The faces were also controlled for masculinity. They were rated on a seven-point scale by the same participants (attractive faces: mean = 4.62, *SD* = 1.41; unattractive faces: mean = 4.48, *SD* = 1.37). A paired-sample t-test showed there was no significant difference between the attractive and unattractive faces on masculinity [$t(3) = 0.198, p = 0.856$].

Measures. Participants responded to sixteen questions in total measuring Victim Blame, Perpetrator Blame, and Assault Severity. The Victim Blame and Assault Severity measures were taken from Davies et al. (2008). The Victim Blame measure consisted of five items with high internal reliability (Cronbach's alpha) $\alpha = 0.78$ ($\alpha = 0.82$ in original paper) and the Assault Severity measure consisted of seven items with high internal reliability $\alpha = 0.84$ ($\alpha = 0.90$ in original paper). The Perpetrator Blame measure was taken from Sleath and Bull (2010) and measured via four items with moderate-to-high internal reliability $\alpha = 0.61$ ($\alpha = 0.88$ in original paper). Each item was measured on a seven-point Likert scale and all items are listed in Table 1. For each question 1 = disagree and 7 = agree, with higher scores representing higher victim blame, perpetrator blame, and assault severity. Responses were given on a seven-point Likert scale (1 = disagree, 7 = agree).

Table 1

Questions Given to Participants Measuring Victim Blame, Perpetrator Blame and Assault Severity.

Victim Blame	
Question No	Questions
1	Do you think that Mike was to blame for the attack because he didn't try hard enough to escape?
2	Do you think that Mike can be blamed because he did not put up enough of a fight?
3	Mike could have done something to prevent the attack if he really wanted to. How much do you agree?
4	How much do you think that Mike's behaviour was to blame for the assault?
5	How responsible do you think that Mike was for the assault?
Perpetrator Blame	
Question No	Questions
6	Overall, to what extent was Paul responsible for what happened?
7	How much do you blame Paul for what happened?
8	How much do you consider the incident to be the fault of Paul?
9	To what extent do you consider that Paul is guilty?
Assault Severity	
Question No	Questions
10	How much do you think that Mike will be traumatized by the assault?
11	If you were Mike, how upset do you think you would be by this assault?
12	How severely do you think Paul should be punished for this assault?
13	To what extent do you feel Paul should be held responsible?
14	How seriously do you think the police should take the assault on Mike?
15	How much do you think Mike's life will be adversely affected by the assault?
16	How much sympathy do you feel for Mike in this situation?

Participants were also asked to judge the sexuality of the victim on a seven-point Likert scale (one being homosexual, 4 being unsure, 7 being heterosexual).

Procedure

The study conformed to all ethical guidelines set out by the university's ethics committee and informed consent was obtained. Participants were tested individually in a quiet room. All participants were tested by the same experimenter who was female. Upon arrival they were told that the study required them to read a description of an alleged sexual assault taken from a newspaper article, on which some personal details had been changed to ensure anonymity, before answering a series of questions. The experiment lasted approximately ten minutes. Before participants were thanked and fully debriefed they were asked by the experimenter what they thought the purpose of the experiment was. None guessed that victim or perpetrator attractiveness was had been manipulated.

Results

The majority of participants judged the victim to be heterosexual. Only five participants rated his sexuality as homosexual (one or two on the scale), 87 participants indicated they were unsure (4 on the scale), and 52 participants judged him to be heterosexual (6 or 7 on the scale). Initially a 2 (Victim Attractiveness: Attractive, Unattractive) \times 2 (Perpetrator Attractiveness; Attractive, Unattractive) \times 2 (Participant Gender: Male, Female)

× 2 (Participant Type: Student, Non-student) MANOVA was carried out but as no main effects or interactions involving Participant Type were significant this was dropped for the final analysis.

A 2 (Victim Attractiveness) × 2 (Perpetrator Attractiveness) × 2 (Participant Gender) Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was performed across the dependent variables (Victim Blame, Perpetrator Blame, Assault Severity) using statistics package SPSS 19. Total scores for the measures were calculated by taking the mean responses of each question associated with that measure. Means scores are shown in Table 2. All ratings were on a scale of 1-7, with 7 representing more blame and higher severity.

Table 2

Means (Standard Deviations) for Measures of Victim Blame (VB), Perpetrator Blame (PB), and Assault Severity (AS)

Vic Attract.	Perp Attract.	Gender	VB	PB	AS
Attractive	Attractive	Male	2.12 (1.31)	6.81 (0.40)	6.69 (0.42)
		Female	1.74 (0.91)	6.59 (0.79)	6.59 (0.75)
	Unattractive	Male	1.82 (1.03)	6.86 (0.29)	6.44 (0.91)
		Female	1.81 (1.07)	6.75 (0.43)	6.64 (0.61)
Unattractive	Attractive	Male	1.33 (0.51)	6.91 (0.36)	6.89 (0.18)
		Female	1.61 (0.95)	6.69 (0.60)	6.83 (0.31)
	Unattractive	Male	1.38 (0.45)	6.94 (0.18)	6.77 (0.33)
		Female	1.35(0.68)	6.85 (0.39)	6.87 (0.19)

MANOVA revealed a significant multivariate main effect for Victim Attractiveness [Wilks' lambda = 0.918; $F = 3.985$; $p < 0.05$; $\eta^2 = 0.082$] and a marginally significant multivariate main effect for Participant Gender [Wilks' lambda = 0.951; $F = 2.296$; $p = 0.081$; $\eta^2 = 0.049$]. No further significant multivariate main effects or interactions were found. Post-hoc ANOVAs on each factor revealed the following results.

Victim Blame. ANOVA revealed a main effect of victim attractiveness [$F(1,136) = 9.156$, $p < 0.005$, $\eta^2 = 0.063$] with attractive victims (1.87) receiving more blame than unattractive victims (1.42). There were no other significant main effects or interactions [$F_s < 1$].

Perpetrator Blame. A significant main effect was found for Participant Gender [$F(1,136) = 4.295$, $p < 0.05$, $\eta^2 = 0.031$] with male participants (6.88) blaming the perpetrator more than female participants (6.72). There were no other significant main effects or interactions [$F_s < 1$]. The means and standard deviations for each group are presented in Table 2.

Assault Severity. ANOVA revealed a main effect of victim attractiveness [$F(1,136) = 8.015$, $p < 0.01$, $\eta^2 = 0.056$] with assaults against unattractive victims (6.84) judged to be more severe than assaults against attractive victims (6.59). There were no other significant main effects or interactions [$F_s < 1$].

Discussion

The principal aim of this study was to discern the role played by victim attractiveness on blame attribution in cases of male sexual assault. The finding that attractive victims received more blame than unattractive victims supported the first hypothesis and demonstrated for the first time the effect male victim attractiveness

has on attributed blame. Additionally, assaults against attractive victims were rated as less severe than assaults against unattractive victims. These results represent an important initial step into investigating the role played by victim attractiveness in blame attribution in cases of male sexual assault, demonstrating that attractiveness has a different effect on attributed blame when the victim is male compared to when the victim is female (where increased victim attractiveness results in diminished attributed blame: e.g., Gerdes et al., 1988) or when the victim is a child (where attractiveness does not impact victim blame: Rogers et al., 2007).

These results could be explained not by the victim's deviation from a masculine ideal, which has previously been shown to be a basis for inflated attributions of male victim blame (e.g., Chapleau et al., 2008; Davies et al., 2008), but by the self-defensive attribution of Belief in a Just World (Lerner & Matthews, 1967). Attractive individuals are assumed to possess positive attributes (Dion et al., 1972), but if such an individual is then the victim of a terrible crime this conflicts with our belief that we live in a 'just world' where bad things only happen to those who deserve it. We could resolve this incongruence by judging that the attractive individual must have done more than an unattractive counterpart (who is not as 'good', and therefore not as undeserving of being attacked) to incite the attack, and is therefore more deserving of blame. The fact that assaults against attractive victims were judged as less severe is another operationalization of the negative reaction towards the victim that arises from the internal conflict of seeing that a bad thing (being sexually assaulted) happened to a good (physically attractive) person.

This explanation is empirically testable. Participants' individual beliefs, biases and attitudes (e.g., adherence to rape myths) influence their evaluation of sexual assault scenarios and attributions of victim blame (Russell, Oswald, & Kraus, 2011). Reliable scales exist which measure both individuals' belief in a just world (e.g., Dalbert, Montada, & Schmitt, 1987, English version as cited in Dalbert, 1999) and the degree to which they accept male rape myths, most of which are based on an ideal masculine stereotype (e.g., Melanson, 1999; C. Struckman-Johnson and D. Struckman-Johnson, 1992). If our supposition is correct, and attractive victims receive more blame than unattractive victims because they are judged to have done more to elicit an attack due to belief in a just world, then this effect could be shown to be strongest with participants who strongly believe in a just world, but would not be predicted by participants' score of male rape myth acceptance.

Other non-masculinity based defensive attributions (Shaver, 1970) have previously been shown to influence the amount of blame assigned to victims. Participants' perceived similarity to victims decreased attributed blame as individuals are reluctant to think of anyone similar to themselves being culpable for an undesirable act perpetrated against them (female victims: Grubb & Harrower, 2008; male victims: Sleath & Bull, 2010). The current finding provides further evidence that blame attribution for victims of male sexual assault is not solely driven by deviations from an "ideal" masculine stereotype.

It appears to be only adult female victims of sexual assault for whom physical attractiveness is inversely correlated with blame (e.g., Whatley, 1996). Current results show the opposite pattern with male victims, and in cases of Child Sexual Assault (CSA) victim attractiveness had no impact of perceived victim culpability, and no direct influence on perpetrator blame (Rogers et al., 2007). It has traditionally been thought that males are typically blamed for their behaviour in a sexual assault situation (e.g., not offering resistance) where as females are blamed for their character (e.g., not being cautious, Howard, 1984; cited in Davies & Rogers, 2006). In terms of physical attractiveness being a character trait, this attribute could be most important is the attribution

of blame to female victims (as well as being associated with female but not male gender stereotype, as discussed above). This is not clear cut, however, with some recent studies suggesting that victims of both sexes are attributed blame primarily for their behaviours (Anderson, 1999) and the role of behavioural vs. characterological blame has not been investigated with victims of CSA.

Attractive perpetrators were attributed no less blame than unattractive perpetrators. Previous studies have not always measured perpetrator blame *per se*, but have instead recorded related measures such as recommended sentence (e.g., Sigall & Ostrove, 1975), or the level of bail or fine imposed on a defendant (e.g., Downs & Lyons, 1991). It may be the case that a perpetrator's attractiveness is associated with positive traits and therefore inspire participants' sympathy, while not necessarily making them appear less blameworthy of the crime in question. Another possible reason for attractiveness failing to influence attributions of Perpetrator Blame is a ceiling effect. Individuals may blame the victim more under certain circumstances due to self-serving attributions. Such mechanisms protect individuals by allowing them to believe that victims are in some way deserving of the crime perpetrated against them, but do not necessarily reduce the perceived severity of that crime or displace any guilt attributed to the perpetrator. This may be especially true in the case of a crime as serious as sexual assault. Ceiling effects in attributions of Perpetrator Blame in such cases have been reported before (e.g., Whatley & Riggio, 1993).

Although attractiveness had no effect on perpetrator blame, male participants blamed the perpetrator more than female participants, although it must be noted that this effect was marginal. While this was not in line with expectations, gender differences have not always been found with perpetrators of crimes against male victims (Sleath & Bull, 2010). Also, previous results may stem from attributions based on rape myth acceptance, for which men typically score higher than women (Chapleau et al., 2008; D. Struckman-Johnson & C. Struckman-Johnson, 1992). If the current results are not based on rape myth acceptance, but rather belief in a just world, that could explain why women were not found to attribute more blame than men to the perpetrator in this case. This result might also reflect the tendency of men to favour more punitive punishments than women (Hough & Moxon, 1985; Mattinson & Mirrlees-Black 2000).

The vignette methodology employed in the current experiment is widespread and acknowledged to be the best approach to investigate issues of this sort (Davies et al., 2012). Additionally, the use of a non-exclusively student sample increases the generalizability of these findings. If this experiment were to be repeated or extended it might be useful to include a no-photograph condition as a control in order to definitively determine whether attractiveness or unattractiveness is influencing participants. Such a condition was not included in the current design as it would have diminished the statistical power.

Given the extremely low report- and conviction-rates associated with male sexual assault, and the stigma currently attached to victims, it is vital that more is discovered about the cognitions behind the myths driving victim blame, and this information disseminated to the public. Jurors have been shown to hold naïve representations of legal concepts which lead them to rely on previous knowledge and sexual scripts, rather than legal definitions, when assessing victim culpability (Smith, 1991; 1993). This inevitably leads to biases and errors in judgment. If the victim is blamed for the act perpetrated against them then sexual assault is seen to be tolerated, the recovery of the victim impeded (Frazier & Schauben, 1994, cited in Russell et al., 2011) leading to self-blame and re-victimization, and in some cases post-traumatic stress, depression, and suicide (Randall &

Graham, 2011). It has also been reported that 63% of male perpetrators of sexual aggression had themselves suffered abuse (Russell & Oswald, 2002).

Fortunately, there is evidence that education can reduce the degree to which myths are held (Edwards et al., 2011). Future studies could not only investigate the success of educating participants on attractiveness-related rape myths in reducing the blame attributed to attractive victims, but could assess how this increase in blame manifests in a courtroom situation by comparing sentences handed down to perpetrator of crimes against attractive vs. unattractive male victims of sexual assault.

In conclusion, it was found that physically attractive victims of male sexual assault were attributed more blame than their unattractive counterparts. This might occur because attractive individuals are believed to be “good” but, because we also believe we live in a just world where people get what they deserve, these attractive individuals are assumed to be more culpable for the act perpetrated against them. There was no effect of perpetrator attractiveness on measures of either victim- or perpetrator-blame.

References

- Anderson, I. (1999). Characterological and behavioral blame in conversations about female and male rape. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology, 18*, 377-394. doi: 10.1177/0261927X99018004002
- Anderson, K. B., Cooper, H., & Okamura, L. (1997). Individual differences and attitudes toward rape: A meta-analytic review. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 23*(3), 295-315. doi: 10.1177/0146167297233008
- Chapleau, K. M., Oswald, D. L., & Russell, B. L. (2008). Male rape myths: The role of gender, violence, and sexism. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 23*(5), 600-615. doi: 10.1177/0886260507313529
- Dalbert, C., Montada, L., & Schmitt, M. (1987). Glaube an eine gerechte Welt als Motiv: Validierungskorrelate zweier Skalen (Belief in a just world as motive: Validity correlates of two scales). *Psychologische Beiträge, 29*, 596-615.
- Davies, M., Gilston, J. & Rogers, P. (2012). Examining the relationship between male rape myth acceptance, victim blame, homophobia and ambivalent sexism. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 27*(14), 2741-2757. doi: 10.1177/0886260512438281
- Davies, M. & Rogers, P. (2006). Perceptions of male victims in depicted sexual assaults: A review of the literature. *Aggression and Violent Behavior, 11*, 367-377. doi: 10.1016/j.avb.2006.01.002
- Davies, M., Rogers, P. & Bates, J. (2008). Blame towards male rape victims in a hypothetical sexual assault as a function of victim sexuality and degree of resistance. *Journal of Homosexuality, 55*(3), 533-544. doi: 10.1080/00918360802345339
- Dion, K., Berscheid, E., & Walster, E. (1972). What is beautiful is good. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 24*(3), 285-290. doi: 10.1037/h0033731
- Downs, C., & Lyons, P. (1991). Natural observations of the links between attractiveness and initial legal judgments. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 17*(5), 541-547. doi: 10.1177/0146167291175009
- Edwards, K. M., Turchik, J. A., Dardis, C. M., Reynolds, N. & Gidycz, C. A. (2011). Rape Myths: History, individual and institutional-level presence, and implications for change. *Sex Roles, 65*, 761-773. doi: 10.1007/s11199-011-9943-2
- Franiuk, R., Seefeldt, J. L., Cephess, S. L., & Vandello, J. A. (2008). Prevalence and effects of rape myths in the media: The Kobe Bryant case. *Violence Against Women, 14*, 287-309. doi: 10.1177/1077801207313971
- Gerdes, E. P., Dammann, E. J., & Heilig, K. E. (1988). Perceptions of rape victims and assailants—Effects of physical attractiveness, acquaintance, and subject gender. *Sex Roles, 19*(3-4), 141-153. doi: 10.1007/BF00290151
- Grubb, A. & Harrower, J. (2008). Attribution of blame in cases of rape: An analysis of participant gender, type of rape and perceived similarity of the victim. *Aggression and Violent Behavior, 13*, 396-405. doi: 10.1016/j.avb.2008.06.006
- Hough, M. and Moxon, D. (1985). Dealing with offenders: Popular opinion and the views of victims. Findings from the British Crime Survey, *The Howard Journal, 24*, 160-175. doi: 10.1111/j.1468-2311.1985.tb00526.x
- Kanekar, S. & Nazareth, A. M. (1988). Attributed rape victims fault as a function of her attractiveness, physical hurt, and emotional disturbance. *Social Behaviour, 3*(1), 37-40.

- Kassing, L. R., Beesley, D., & Frey, L. L. (2005). Gender role conflict, homophobia, age, and education as predictors of male rape myth acceptance. *Journal of Mental Health Counseling, 27*, 311-328.
- Lerner, M. J. & Matthews, G. (1967). Reactions to suffering of others under conditions of indirect responsibility. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 5*, 319-325. doi: 10.1037/h0024304
- Lerner, M. J., & Miller, D. T. (1978). Just world research and the attribution process: Looking back and ahead. *Psychological Bulletin, 85*(5), 1030-1051. doi: 10.1037//0033-2909.85.5.1030
- Mattinson, J., & Mirrlees-Black, C. (2000). *Attitudes to Crime and Criminal Justice: Findings from the 1998 British Crime Survey*. London: HMSO.
- Maxwell, L. & Scott, G. G. (2014). A review of the role of radical feminist theories in the understanding of rape myth acceptance. *Journal of Sexual Aggression, 20*, 40-54. doi: 10.1080/13552600.2013.773384
- Melanson, P. K. (1999). Belief in male rape myths: A test of two competing theories (Doctoral dissertation, Queen's University, 1999). *Dissertation Abstracts International, 59*, 5620.
- Mezey, G., & King, M. (1989). The effects of sexual assault on men. *Psychological Medicine, 19*, 205-209. doi: 10.1017/S0033291700011168
- Norris, J., & Cubbins, L. A. (1992). Dating, drinking and rape: effects of victim's and assailant's alcohol consumption on judgments of their behaviour and traits. *Psychology of Women Quarterly, 16*, 179-191. doi: 10.1111/j.1471-6402.1992.tb00248.x.
- Quigley, B. M., Johnson, A. B., & Byrne, D. (1995, June). Mock jury sentencing decisions: A meta-analysis of the attractiveness-leniency effect. Paper presented at the meeting of the *American Psychological Society*. New York.
- Quist, M. C., DeBruine, L. M., Little, A. C., & Jones, B. C. (2012). Integrating social knowledge and physical cues when judging the attractiveness of potential mates. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 48*(3), 770-773. doi: 10.1016/j.jesp.2011.12.018.
- Randall, A. A. & Graham, C. A. (2011). A review of the evidence on the effects of intimate partner violence on men. *Psychology of Men and Masculinities, 12*(2), 97-111. doi: 0.1037/a0021944.
- Rogers, P., Josey, N., & Davies, M. (2007). Victim age, attractiveness and abuse history as factors in the perception of a hypothetical child sexual abuse case. *Journal of Sexual Aggression, 13*(2), 121-137. doi: 10.1080/13552600701644835
- Russell, B. L., & Oswald, D. L. (2002). Sexual coercion and victimization of college men: The role of love styles. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 17*, 273-285. doi: 10.1177/0886260502017003003.
- Russell, B. L., Oswald, D. L., & Kraus, S. W. (2011). Evaluations of sexual assault: Perceptions of guilt and legal elements for male and female aggressors using various coercive strategies. *Violence and Victims, 26*(6), 799-815. doi: 10.1891/0886-6708.26.6.799.
- Shaver, K. G. (1970). Defensive attribution: Effects of severity and relevance on the responsibility assigned for an accident. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 14*, 101-113. doi: 10.1037/h0028777
- Sigall, H., & Ostrove, N. (1975). Beautiful but dangerous: Effects of offender attractiveness and nature of the crime on juridic judgment. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 31*(3), 410-414. doi: 10.1037/h0076472
- Sleath, E., & Bull, R. (2010). Male rape victim and perpetrator blaming. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 25*(6), 969-988. doi: 10.1177/0886260509340534
- Smith, V. L. (1991). Prototypes in the courtroom: Lay representations of legal concepts. *Personality and Social Psychology, 6*(6), 857-872. doi: 10.1037//0022-3514.61.6.857
- Smith, V. L. (1993). When prior knowledge and law collide: Helping jurors use the law. *Law and Human Behavior, 17*(5), 507-536. doi: 10.1007/BF01045071
- Stephen, I. D., Scott, I. M. L., Coetzee, V., Pound, N., Perrett, D. I., & Penton-Voak, I.S. (2012). Cross-cultural effects of color, but not morphological masculinity, on perceived attractiveness of men's faces. *Evolution and Human Behavior, 33*(4), 260-267. doi: 10.1016/j.evolhumbehav.2011.10.003.
- Struckman-Johnson, C., & Struckman-Johnson, D. (1992). Acceptance of male rape myths among college men and women. *Sex Roles, 27*, 85-100. doi: 10.1007/BF00290011

- Suarez, E., & Gadalla, T. M. (2010). Stop blaming the victim: A meta-analysis on rape myths. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 25(11), 2010-2035. doi: 10.1177/0886260509354503
- Thornton, B., & Ryckman, R. M. (1983). The influence of a rape victims physical attractiveness on observers attributions of responsibility. *Human Relations*, 36(6), 549-562. doi: 10.1177/001872678303600604
- Walker, J., Archer, J., & Davies, M. (2005). Effects of rape on male survivors: A descriptive analysis. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 34, 69-80. doi: 10.1007/s10508-005-1001-0
- Whatley, M. A. (1996). Victim characteristics influencing attributions of responsibility to rape victims: A meta-analysis. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 1(2), 81-95. doi: 10.1016/1359-1789(95)00011-9
- Whatley, M. A., & Riggio, R. E. (1993). Gender differences in attributions of blame for male rape victims. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 8, 220-232. doi: 10.1177/088626093008004005