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The goal of the present study is to use Terror Management Theory (TMT) as a vehicle for understanding rape myth acceptance. Terror management posits that knowledge of one’s mortality can create overwhelming terror. However, cultural worldviews are one mechanism humans use to protect against this terror. I argue that gender beliefs are a powerful worldview US society, and that being primed with an individual who does not adhere to our expectations will create discomfort, especially if one is reminded of their mortality. Therefore, when people are primed to think of their own death and exposed to a woman who violates gender norms, they should be more likely to have hostile reactions to a victim of sexual assault. One hundred and forty participants were recruited from the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs and the University of Colorado, Denver. Participants were randomly assigned to be primed with a control or death reminder. Next they were primed with one of three women, two of which violated gender norms. Participants were then asked to read a rape script and respond to a survey to assess their level of rape myth acceptance. A preliminary analysis of the results examined gender, MS, and woman prime in a 2 x 2 x 3 ANOVA. A significant effect for gender was found ($p = 0.04$), indicating that men have higher levels of rape myth acceptance. The primary analysis of Right Wing Authoritarianism (RWA), MS, and woman prime was conducted with a hierarchical multiple regression. A significant effect for RWA was found ($p <0.01$); specifically, that participants with low RWA when reminded of death had less rape myth acceptance while individuals high in RWA
appeared to have the highest rape myth acceptance when exposed to MS and primed with
the sexual woman. The results indicate that worldviews about gender may influence rape
myth acceptance in some situations.

*Keywords:* rape myth acceptance, terror management theory, right wing
authoritarianism
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

When one hears of a sexual assault in our society the reaction is harsh – the victim is scrutinized for her role in her own victimization and the perpetrator oftentimes receives no penalty for the crime. While many people deny that this occurs or that they would blame rape victims, victim blaming and false beliefs pertaining to sexual assault are rampant in our society (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994; Suarez & Gadalla, 2010). Given that sexual assault is a pervasive problem in our society, that sexual assault is traumatic, and that the effects are so debilitating (CDC, 2015; RAINN, 2009; WOAR, 2015), it is crucial to understand why many people tend to support sexual assault by accepting rape myths.

This study will explore the role that the threat of female power plays in rape myth acceptance and blaming victims of sexual assault for the crimes committed against them. Unique to this study, I will examine the characteristics of individuals who victim blame or accept rape myths, rather than the characteristics of sexual assault victims. This study will build on Terror Management Theory (TMT; Greenberg, Pyszczynski, and Solomon, 1986) and the literature on gender power differentials as the vehicles for understanding why powerful women are threatening to some and how this could lead to victim blaming and rape myth acceptance.
Sexual Assault as a Pervasive Problem

Sexual assault is a pervasive problem in our society with estimates ranging from 1 in 6 to 1 in 3 women being victims of sexual assault at some point in their lifetime (RAINN, 2009; WOAR, 2015). Estimates suggest that the majority of sexual assaults (68-73%) go unreported to authorities (RAINN, 2009; The National Center for Victims of Crime, 2014). Thus the actual numbers are likely to be closer to the high end of these estimates. The few occurrences of sexual assault that do get reported oftentimes do not result in arrest, let alone conviction. Statistics suggest that for every 100 rapes only 32 will be reported, only 7 will lead to arrest, and only 2 will result in a felony conviction (RAINN, 2009). Sex offenses account for less than 1% of all arrests made- according to the 2004 Uniform Crime Report.

Victims of sexual assault may experience a range of negative physical, psychological, and social effects. Sexual assault may leave a victim with general body trauma, genital injuries, sexually transmitted infections, and unwanted pregnancies as a direct result of the assault (CDC, 2015; RAINN, 2009; Riggs, Houry, Long, Markovchick, & Feldhaus, 2000). Long-term health effects have been documented following sexual assault as well. Cloutier, Martin and Poole (2002) found that victims of sexual assault were more likely to smoke cigarettes, have high blood pressure, have high cholesterol, and be obese. The CDC (2015) reported that chronic pain, gastrointestinal disorders, gynecological disorders, and migraines or frequent headaches may also occur as consequences of sexual violence. The psychological effects of sexual assault are also vast and debilitating including substance abuse disorders, depression, eating disorders, sleep disorders, sexual dysfunction, anxiety disorders, trauma disorders such as acute
stress disorder (ASD) and posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), dissociation, self-harm, and suicide (CDC, 2015; RAINN, 2009; Sarkar & Sarkar, 2005). Victims of sexual assault may also become ostracized, stigmatized, or isolated from their social supports (CDC, 2015). Lack of social support following victimization is associated with poorer health outcomes (Filipas & Ullman, 2001). Victims of sexual assault are also at a heightened risk for revictimization due to their increased likelihood of engaging in high risk behaviors such as substance use or risky sexual behaviors (CDC, 2015; Filipas & Ullman, 2006).

With the occurrence of sexual assault being so high in our society and the known negative effects that it has on its victims, why are the rates of arrest and conviction so low for those who offend? An even more disturbing question to ask: why do many people in our society tend to blame the victims for their own victimization and not blame the offender? Theorists suggest that our society subscribes to rape myths which function to provide a false sense of security regarding the danger of sexual assault (Burt, 1980).

**Rape Myths**

Rape myths are stereotypical beliefs about rape that consist of false beliefs regarding rape, rape victims, and perpetrators (Burt, 1980). Although men may be victims of sexual assault and women may be offenders, rape most typically occurs in the context in which the offenders are men and the victims are women. Rape myths typically focus on women and how they are to blame for men’s assault against them. Burt (1998) states that rape definitions may be broad and inclusive or narrow and restrictive. On one extreme, the belief is that any coercive sex is rape, and on the other extreme the belief is that there is no such thing as rape; most people’s beliefs about sexual assault fall between
the two extremes. Burt (1998) defines this middle ground as the belief that sexual coercion occurs, but with the exclusion of many cases due to the belief in rape myths. This leads people to define what a “real” rape is; typically, this is believed to be an assault by a stranger who uses a weapon or violence to subdue the victim. In reality, the majority of sexual assaults are committed by someone known to the victim most often without the use of a weapon. It is estimated that only 13-38% of sexual assaults are perpetrated by strangers (The National Center for Victims of Crime, 2014; RAINN, 2009; Riggs, Houry, Long, Markovchick, & Feldhaus, 2000) and that an estimated 11-27% of perpetrators use a weapon (RAINN, 2009; Riggs, Houry, Long, Markovchick, & Feldhaus, 2000).

**Classification of rape myths.** There are several facets of rape myths that have been identified. While there are and have been several measures of rape myth acceptance, the most commonly used currently is the Updated Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (IRMA; McMahon & Farmer, 2011; Payne, Lonsway, & Fitzgerald, 1999). The IRMA includes four subscales to differentiate clusters of rape myths. The four subscales include: “she asked for it”, “he did not mean to”, “it was not really rape”, and “she lied.” The items of these four subscales have been updated to reflect current social attitudes, but the content of the subscales has remained the same for several decades. The specific rape myths vary in content, but all support gendered power differentials, specifically by keeping women in fear of backlash (eg., sexual assault) if they deviate from gender roles and norms, such as expected personality traits or occupational/family roles.

Items from the first subscale, “she asked for it”, include beliefs such as “when girls go to parties wearing slutty clothes, they are asking for trouble” and “if a girl
initiates kissing or hooking up, she should not be surprised if a guy assumes she wants to have sex.” These beliefs assume that women who are raped ask for it by the way they behave. These beliefs also assume that there is a proper way to behave as a woman and that women who do not conform are implicitly asking to be assaulted. Research has found support for this. Individuals high in benevolent sexism, and therefore likely to hold traditional beliefs regarding how women should behave, are more to likely blame a victim of acquaintance rape as responsible for the assault (Abrams, Viki, Masser, & Bohner, 2003).

The second subscale of the IRMA assesses the belief that a perpetrator did not mean to rape. Items from this subscale include “guys do not usually intend to force sex on a girl, but sometimes they get too sexually carried away” and “it should not be considered rape if a guy is drunk and did not realize what he was doing.” These myths reinforce the idea that men cannot control their sexual drives, especially in certain contexts such as when they drink. These myths assume that men rape when they are overcome with passion, but that they mean no harm. However, some theorists propose that rape is not about the sexual act itself, but rather is a means of control and domination over another individual (Groth, 1979).

The next subscale of the IRMA assesses the belief that in most instances “it is not really rape.” Items in this scale include “if a girl does not say no she cannot claim rape” and “if a girl does not physically fight back, you cannot really say it was a rape.” These myths reinforce the distinction between a “real” rape and an ambiguous sexual encounter. For example, a real rape is defined as a scenario in which typically a weapon will be used and that the woman will do anything she can to resist (Burt, 1998). In reality a woman
may not have the opportunity to fight back or fear that she will put herself at a higher risk if she does (Carr, Thomas, Atwood, Muhar, Jarvis, & Wewerka, 2014). Also, regarding consent there is a belief that women who say no often mean yes, playing into the belief that women are socialized to resist sexual advances even when they really do want them (Frith, 2009). It is also important to keep in mind the issue of consent in which the victim is unable to provide verbal consent. In many cases the assault involves alcohol or drugs that make verbal consent difficult or impossible. However, some people believe that women who put themselves in situations where they drink or can be taken advantage of are not acting properly, and therefore their assault cannot be seen as a “real” rape (Aronowitz, Lambert, & Davidoff, 2012; Grubb & Turner, 2012). Although no longer as widely held as it once was, some people believe that husbands or boyfriends could not rape their partners because consent is always assumed. While this is now considered to be false by many people, the law supported this until recently. In fact, it was not until 1993 that all 50 states in the United States passed marital rape laws (National Clearinghouse on Marital & Date Rape, 2005).

The last subscale of the IRMA is that “she lied”, which addresses the false belief that women lie about rape. Items from the IRMA include “a lot of times, girls who say they were raped agreed to have sex and then regret it,” “rape accusations are often used as a way of getting back at guys,” and “a lot of times, girls who claim they were raped have emotional problems.” In reality the number of false reporting is low, usually only an estimate 2-8% (Lonsway, Archambault, Lisak, & The National Center for the Prosecution of Violence Against Women, 2009). It is much more common that a rape will go unreported.
**Functions of rape myths.** Rape itself oftentimes has been interpreted as a means to oppress women and to keep patriarchy in place. One feminist stated that “man’s discovery that his genitalia could serve as a weapon to generate fear must rank as one of the most important discoveries of prehistoric times” (Brownmiller, 1975, p. 14). Feminist scholars, have long noted that the fear of sexual assault has put limitations and restrictions on women (Brownmiller, 1975; Griffin, 1971; Reynolds, 1977). They also have noted that women must rely on their potential attackers for protection; for example, women typically look to male partners to ward off other men. This puts women into a precarious situation; how do they fend off assaults from men while relying on protection from the same individuals? As explained by ambivalent sexism theory (Glick & Fiske, 1997;2001), to be discussed later, while women need men, men also rely on women. Women therefore are valued, but they are valued in relation to men. They are especially valued for their roles that support their male counterparts, as well as for their traits that complement them. A woman therefore must embody what it is men value to ensure her protection, and if she does not she will not receive benefits from men.

The threat of rape keeps women confined, limits their opportunities, and ultimately keeps them under the power of men. Griffin (1979) argues that women are restricted and controlled by men throughout their lives. Women are taught to monitor themselves and to limit their behaviors to maintain their safety. For example, women may avoid dressing too provocatively or avoid walking alone at night. Women who violate these expectations are then blamed for whatever misfortune happens to them. Lonsway and Fitzgerald (1994) argue that rape myths trivialize and justify male violence toward women while obscuring personal vulnerability for women. This allows for the perception
that only certain women are assaulted, and that these women are to blame for not acting
in a proper manner. This also excuses the perpetrator because the belief is that he is not
truly at fault for rape. Rape myths support the notion that women must behave in a
certain manner if they are to be safe. They also afford men a superior position in which
they are blameless of their actions.

Rape myths may also function as a way of maintaining a belief in a just world and
more generally as justifying the status quo. The just world phenomenon is a belief that
good things happen to good people, and bad things happen to bad people (Lerner, 1980).
Consequently, people have a tendency to believe that victims are deserving of their fate.
Lonsway and Fitzgerald (1994) theorize that the just world phenomenon explains how
rape myths function to support the belief that rape victims were somehow at fault and
thus provide a false sense of security to women – rape can be avoided if one follows the
script for appropriate female behavior, dress, and demeanor.

Research has also supported system justification theory as being related to rape
myth acceptance (Ståhl, Eek, & Kazemi, 2010). System justification theory posits that
there is a general motivation for people to justify and rationalize the existing social order
(Jost & Banaji, 1994); numerous studies have found support for this theory (Jost, Banaji,
& Nosek, 2004). Research (Jost & Banaji, 1994) found that people sometimes even
justify the system when they are the disadvantaged, especially when complementary
stereotypes are activated that highlight the positive and negative qualities of the
advantaged and disadvantaged groups in society. For example, men are thought to be
agentic but not communal while women are thought to be communal but not agentic.
Ståhl, Eek, & Kazemi, (2010) used these complementary stereotypes to assess whether
they would impact men’s and women’s system justification motivation and level of victim blaming while controlling for individual differences in modern sexism. They predicted that the system justification motive would lead to victim blaming in cases of rape, while ruling out general apathy toward women. The results of the above study indicated that men’s level of system justification was related to their rape myth acceptance regardless of whether or not complementary stereotypes had been primed. However, priming complementary stereotypes affected women’s level of victim blaming when they had high system justification motivation.

**Gender Inequality**

The underlying gender structure of society needs to be examined to more fully understand rape culture. Many scholars point to gender inequality as a factor responsible for the prevalence of rape in our culture (Russel, 1975; Whaley, 2001; William & Holmes, 1981). Consistent with this view, Whaley (2001) found that long-term gender inequality is associated with increased rape. While US society is seemingly becoming more egalitarian, men and women still have gendered expectations and sexism continues to exist. Theory and research on sexism, gender roles, and gender stereotypes document the extent to which gender shapes cultural expectations for women and men.

**Ambivalent sexism.** Ambivalent sexism theory (Glick & Fiske, 1997;2001) distinguishes between two different but complementary attitudes toward women, hostile sexism and benevolent sexism. Originally sexism was thought to be composed of only hostile beliefs toward women, but this theory also encompasses positive beliefs regarding women. This theory recognizes that sexism is ambivalent, meaning that it encompasses positive and negative beliefs. Hostile sexism is more overtly negative and consists of
derogatory beliefs (e.g. women should only strive to become wives and mothers).

Benevolent sexism is seemingly more positive and consists of a general belief that women should be protected and cherished. Glick and Fiske (1997) posit that both forms of sexism function as a means to maintain and justify patriarchy and traditional gender roles. Our society (the United States), as well as most other societies, relies on a patriarchy, or a system in which men are in control. Male structural control leads to women being put into lower status roles. Glick and Fiske (1997) argue that this gender structure creates an attitude of hostility toward women. However, because men and women must interact, their relationships cannot be entirely hostile. In many cases of interaction between a dominant and submissive group, benevolent ideologies are formed. These ideologies allow the dominant group to justify their power and control while also allowing the submissive group benefits for knowing their place and behaving according to the rules.

Clearly men and women need each other. At the most basic level their interaction ensures reproduction and the survival of our species. Benevolent sexism theory posits that women have dyadic power, meaning that women have some power because of men’s dependence on them for sex and interpersonal relationships. Glick and Fiske (1997) state that the “simultaneous existence of male structural power and female dyadic power creates ambivalent sexist ideologies composed of hostile and benevolent sexism” (p. 121). Specifically, there are several subcomponents of the two sexist ideologies that pertain to beliefs regarding power, sexuality, and trait differentiation. For example, the hostile sexist belief of power is that women should be controlled by men, while the benevolent sexist belief is that men should protect and provide for women. The hostile
sexist belief regarding sexuality, is that women are sexual objects for men. The benevolent sexist belief regarding sexuality, is that women are necessary and highly desirable romantic partners for men. Lastly the beliefs pertaining to gender traits are that men possess better traits than women (hostile), and that women have traits that complement men (benevolent). Clearly beliefs that men and women have different expectations for the roles they take on and the traits they possess exists in society. But how do men decide to subscribe to either hostile or benevolent sexist beliefs?

Glick and Fiske (1997) state that men have a tendency to categorize women into an extreme or polarized subtype to avoid the negative affect of ambivalence. This dichotomization of women is commonly referred to as the “gutter-pedestal” or “whore-Madonna” complex. According to theory, sexist men (and women) have a tendency to place women into good or bad subgroups (Glick & Fiske, 1997; Tanzer, 1985; Tavris & Wade, 1984). Placing women into subgroups would allow arousal of either benevolent or hostile sexism while avoiding any ambivalence concerning particular women. Specifically, benevolent sexism has been found to be related to positive evaluations of women who conform to traditional gender roles and hostile sexism is related to negative evaluations of women who violate traditional gender roles (Glick, Diebold, Bailey-Werner, & Zhu, 1997). Glick and Fiske (1997) refer to this as the “carrot and stick.” Benevolent sexism is the carrot that represents the positive affect, esteem, and protectiveness provided to women who conform to traditional gender roles. Meanwhile hostile sexism is the stick that represents hostility toward women who do not conform to traditional gender roles.
Gender roles and gender stereotypes. Gender stereotypes and gender roles refer to the traits, behaviors, and emotions that are ascribed to a certain gender (Prentice & Carranza, 2002). Gender stereotypes for women usually involve aspects of ambivalent sexism; women may be described in a seemingly positive light but also as subordinate to men. For example, the Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI) identifies 20 traits that are desirable for men and 20 traits that are desirable for women. Examples of the feminine traits on the BSRI include childlike, gentle, warm, and yielding. Gender stereotypes typically involve a description of what is believed to be characteristic of a gender while role prescriptions are beliefs about what a person (based on their gender) should be. Some of the prescriptive traits for women include warm, sensitive, polite, wholesome, and excitable (Prentice & Carranza, 2002). These traits are an example of how women are believed and expected to be, and also put women in a submissive yet somewhat flattering light. Gender roles reflect gender stereotypes with men being described and viewed as more competent and agentic and women as communal and nice (Basow, 1992).

Previous research has found that women who violate their gendered expectations are potentially subject to hostile reactions (Rudman, 1998; Rudman & Glick, 1999; 2001). Because these roles and expectations exist largely to keep women in their place and thus out of power roles, women who exhibit power threaten gender-related aspects of cultural worldviews, for both men and women. This suggests that experiences with powerful women may affect how people respond to unrelated instances of rape and sexual violence because of the violation of norms that being powerful entails for women. The literature on backlash against women tend to focus on women’s violation of
occupational roles and sexuality (Conley, Ziegler, & Moors, 2013; Infanger, Rudman, & Sczesny, 2016; Rudman, 1998; Rudman & Glick, 1999; 2001).

While women have increasingly entered the workforce in the past decades, there is still an existing expectation that women will assume the primary role of caregiver/homemaker (Knudsen & Waerness, 2008). This gender role supports the belief that women are fit for domestic and low-status roles, but not high-status roles, which helps reinforce and maintain men’s power (Eagly, 1987). In one study both sexist and non-sexist men described female homemakers as caring, loving, and nurturing, but sexist men also reported feelings of warmth, respect, trust, and happiness toward homemakers (Glick, Diebold, Bailey-Werner, & Zhu, 1997). These gender role expectations not only keep women in lower status positions and under men’s control, but also complement men’s higher status and reduces competition between the genders. Previous research has shown support that both men and women have positive reactions toward those who adhere to traditional gender roles (Gaunt, 2013; Glick & Fiske, 2011) and hostile reactions toward violation of traditional gender roles (Gaunt, 2013; Glick & Fiske, 2011; Rudman & Glick, 2001). Thus, the above studies demonstrate that women who violate their gender roles as a caregiver/homemaker and instead take on deviant roles (such as career women) often face backlash. Backlash effects refer to social and economic repercussions (Rudman & Fairchild, 2004). For example, career women are violating the expectation of niceness and acting as agentic, a predominantly male characteristic. In this case, if women violate the norm of niceness they may face backlash in the form of job discrimination and social rejection.
Women’s sexuality is another example of how women are regulated. A sexual double standard exists in which women are evaluated negatively and men positively for engaging in similar sexual behavior (Zaikman & Marks, 2014). Women are expected to be passive, submissive, and sexually reluctant while men are expected to be dominant, powerful, and sexually aggressive (Yamawaki, 2007). This expectation for women again highlights how women should be nice and men should be agentic. Dating norms also dictate that men should take active roles, such as initiating the date or paying for the date, while women take passive roles, such as perfecting their physical appearance and resisting sexual advances (McCarty & Kelly, 2015). Women who violate expectations of their sexuality also experience backlash effects. Backlash effects may include greater victim blame in sexual assaults, reduced safe sex practices, and even aggression and violence; for example, women may be less likely to produce or ask for condom use for fear of negative evaluation (Zaikman & Marks, 2014).

Research shows that there is backlash against women who do not conform to expected gender roles/stereotypes (Rudman & Fairchild, 2004; Rudman & Glick, 2001; Zaikman & Marks, 2014). Women who violate expectations would be threatening to men and their power in society. I would argue that the existing gendered power hierarchy functions at the societal level to maintain the status quo. Men are, and have been for quite some time, the dominant gender in US society. However, as explained by ambivalent sexism theory, men and women need each other. To keep women in their place, yet available to men, women are expected to take on roles and possess traits that complement men and their roles and traits. Women who adhere to expectations would pose no threat, but women who do not adhere would pose a threat and therefore would be subject to
backlash (possibly in the form of rape myth acceptance). But how does this work at the individual level to explain rape myth acceptance?

**Terror Management Theory**

The goal of the present study is to use Terror Management Theory (TMT) as a vehicle for understanding rape myth acceptance at an individual and societal level. Terror management theory was inspired by the question of why humans strive for self-esteem and why hostility between groups exists. While searching for the answer to these questions Greenberg, Pyszczynski, and Solomon (1986) developed terror management theory based primarily on the writings of Ernest Becker, a cultural anthropologist. TMT posits that humans have the intellectual capability to be aware of their own mortality- that someday they will cease to exist. This knowledge creates the potential for overwhelming terror. Fortunately, humans have the intellectual capability to protect themselves from this terror. This protection is referred to as the anxiety buffer, which consists of three components: cultural worldviews, self-esteem, and close personal relationships (Pyszczynski & Kesebir, 2011).

The first line of defense is our cultural worldviews. Our cultural worldviews are the assumptions and beliefs we hold about the world we live in. These worldviews provide meaning and standards to our lives. We learn cultural standards throughout our development, starting when we are our most vulnerable, as infants. As infants we rely on our parents or guardians to provide us the means to survival. It is from them that we first learn how our needs will be met, and as we grow how we must behave to continue meeting these needs. As we continue to develop we are exposed to more beliefs and
standards by other members of our culture. These beliefs and standards are dependent on the culture we are born into and the culture to which we are exposed.

We learn to attain a sense of self-worth and value by living up to these cultural standards. By living up to the culture’s standards, we can attain self-esteem, another line of defense against death anxiety. Self-esteem strivings are motivated by an attempt to achieve immortality, either symbolically or literally. For example, one may attempt to live on through their offspring or some other mark they leave on the world for others to remember them by (symbolically) or one may believe in an afterlife such as heaven or reincarnation (literal). Self-esteem allows people to feel that they are living up to their cultural standards and thus offers a buffer against anxiety. We believe that if we live up to these standards that we will achieve immortality, figuratively or literally.

In order for worldviews and self-esteem to be effective buffers against anxiety, it is important that other people share one’s worldviews and believe that one is indeed living up to cultural standards. People who have similar cultural worldviews help to maintain the validity and accuracy of a worldview. We tend to develop close relationships with other people who share our views and beliefs. Our close relationships help us to obtain self-esteem by making us feel valued, loved, protected, and affirming the validity of our worldviews.

When individuals are exposed to a death reminder they activate their anxiety buffer for protection against death anxiety. For example, when individuals are presented with a mortality salience prime (MS) they tend to cling to their cultural worldviews, strive for self-esteem, or clinging to their close relationships. More specifically, studies have shown that when individuals are presented with an individual who deviates from one’s
cultural worldview they are responded to with disdain, but if they uphold cultural standards they are admired (Rosenblatt, Greenberg, Solomon, Pyszczynski, & Lyon, 1989). The fact that these reactions are much harsher when people are presented with a MS prime supports the claim that these worldview standards function, at least in part, to protect people from death anxiety. Ben-Ari, Florian, & Mikulincer (1999) found that MS led individuals to engage in riskier driving when driving ability was perceived to be relevant to their self-esteem; however, for individuals who did not perceive driving ability to be relevant to their self-esteem there was no effect, even with MS. This shows that death anxiety motivates people to boost their self-esteem by adhering to their own cultural values. Finally, MS has been found to heighten the motivation and desire for close interpersonal relationships (Mikulincer, Florian, & Hirschberger, 2003).

In this study I am proposing that gender, and our beliefs and expectations about gender, make up some of our society’s worldviews. While our society is moving towards being more egalitarian, gender roles and stereotypes still exist, as does backlash against individuals who violate gender roles and stereotypes. People may also derive self-esteem by conforming to expected gender roles, or accepting individuals who conform. Thus, people should feel threatened by individuals who violate gender roles under conditions when death is made salient.

TMT has been tested extensively – it has been supported by over 500 studies (Greenberg, Vail, Pyszczynski, 2014) conducted in diverse countries and cultures. Death fears have been found to underlie diverse aspects of human behavior including politics, health, sex, and aggression to name a few. However, TMT has never been utilized in research aimed at increasing understanding of attitudes regarding sexual assault, and
more specifically, victim blaming or rape myth acceptance. The goal of the present study is to understand this process using TMT.

TMT is relevant to the question of rape myth acceptance because it provides a possible explanation for why people are troubled by violations of gender roles in a way that leads them to be more accepting of rape. Gendered expectations are part of the cultural worldview that protects people; individuals who do not conform may threaten that worldview. In the present study I argue specifically that powerful women threaten cultural worldviews, and this threat sometimes makes people more accepting of rape and other forms of violence against women. TMT would provide an explanation for why individuals would be motivated to accept rape myths.

**Individual and personality variables.** As stated above, this study will use TMT to understand motivation to accept rape myths. As previous TMT research has found, when making one’s mortality salient (MS), people will cling to their worldviews and tend to become more hostile to those who oppose or challenge such worldviews. In the present study the goal is to prime participants with women who threaten or violate gender expectations. Thus, variables that would influence adherence or belief in gender norms must be examined as well. Specifically, this study will examine a participant’s gender and their level of right wing authoritarianism.

Gender will be examined because previous research has found that men have higher rape myth acceptance than women (Aronowitz, Lambert, & Davidoff, 2012; Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994). By utilizing TMT when examining rape myth acceptance, we may be able to understand the motivation for men to accept rape myths. Perhaps when men are made to be aware of their own mortality, they will become hostile when women
do not adhere to gender norms. Given that men benefit from gender roles as it keeps them in a superior position relative to women, they may become threatened by a woman who violates her expected role. There may also be a motivation for men to react harshly due to precarious manhood, or the feeling that manhood is an impermanent state due to gender role violation (Kroeper, Sanchez, & Himmelstein, 2014).

Right wing authoritarianism will also be examined as a moderator in this study. People with high right wing authoritarianism are defined as wanting to uphold and adhere to traditional norms and displaying prejudice and even aggression toward those who threaten traditional norms (Christopher & Wojda, 2008). Research has found that individuals with high right wing authoritarianism are more likely to hold benevolent sexist beliefs and values (Christopher, Zable, & Miller, 2013). Research also has found a correlation between men with high right wing authoritarianism and their likelihood to be sexually aggressive (Walker, Rowe, & Quinsey, 1993). It is expected that levels of right wing authoritarianism will moderate a participant’s reaction to a woman who violates traditional gender norms. Specifically, people with high right wing authoritarianism should have a greater want to adhere to traditional gender norms and display hostility to those who defy such norms. This tendency should be strengthened in conjunction to mortality salience; those with high RWA have been found to express greater hostility when reminded of their mortality (Motyl, Hart, & Pyszczynski, 2010).

The Present Study

The purpose of the present study is to use TMT to address the question of how and why people accept rape myths. From the perspective of TMT, women who violate traditional gender roles, such as taking on roles that violate traits of communality or
niceness, would be a direct threat to our cultural worldview. When mortality is made salient, people have a greater need for their cultural worldviews to be upheld and exemplified in other people’s behavior. Therefore, exposure to a woman who violates gender roles should threaten the anxiety buffer and increase the need for women in general to conform to the culture’s gender roles. This would lead to especially negative reactions toward other women who violate cultural gender norms when mortality is salient. Importantly, unlike other research on victim blaming and rape myth acceptance, this study will be looking at how the threat of women in general violating gender norms affects victim blaming and rape myth acceptance in the context of an unrelated occurrence of sexual assault against a different woman.

As stated previously, research has focused on women who violate gender norms either by taking on occupational roles that violate norms, or by violating norms of female sexuality. Therefore, this study will utilize a control woman prime and two experimental women primes, a sexual woman and a career woman. Both types of the threatening woman are being included so as to determine if there is increased rape myth acceptance when primed with a woman who violates gender norms in general, or whether priming with a woman who violates norms of sexuality will specifically have an effect.

The hypotheses for this study are as follows:

**Gender**

1. There should be a main effect for gender. It is predicted that men will have greater rape myth acceptance than women.
2. It is predicted that there will be a main effect for mortality salience. Mortality salience (MS) should increase rape myth acceptance compared to the dental pain prime.

3. It is predicted that there will be a main effect for woman prime. Being exposed to one of the threatening woman primes, either the sexual woman or the career woman, should result in greater rape myth acceptance than when exposed to the neutral woman prime.

4. It is predicted that there will be a two-way interaction for MS x woman prime. There should be a significant interaction between MS and the sexual woman prime, and MS and the business woman prime.

5. There should be a three-way interaction for gender x MS prime x woman condition. Specifically, men primed with MS and exposed to a threatening woman (sexual or business condition), should have the greatest rape myth acceptance.

**Right Wing Authoritarianism**

6. It is predicted that there will be a main effect for right wing authoritarianism. Specifically, participants with high right wing authoritarianism should have greater rape myth acceptance than participants with low right wing authoritarianism.

7. It is predicted that there will be a main effect for mortality salience. Mortality salience (MS) should increase rape myth acceptance compared to the dental pain prime.
8. It is predicted that there will be a main effect for woman prime. Being exposed to one of the threatening woman primes, either the sexual woman or the career woman, should result in greater rape myth acceptance than when exposed to the neutral woman prime.

9. It is predicted that there will be a two-way interaction for MS x woman prime. There should be a significant interaction between MS and the sexual woman prime, and MS and the business woman prime.

10. There should be a significant three-way interaction for right wing authoritarianism x MS prime x woman condition. Specifically, those with high right wing authoritarianism when primed with MS and exposed to a threatening woman (sexual or business), should have the greatest rape myth acceptance.

To test these hypotheses, the experiment was conducted with a 2 (male vs. female) x 2 (MS vs dental pain) x 3 (sexually powerful vs economically powerful vs neutral woman) factorial design. Right wing authoritarianism (RWA) was also assessed as a possible moderator of these effects, because previous research has found that people high RWA are especially prone to holding benevolent sexist beliefs and to be sexually aggressive (Christopher, Zabel, & Miller, 2013; Walker, Rowe, & Quinsey, 1993). All participants read a rape script and responded to a measure of rape myth acceptance after they had been exposed to and responded to each of the conditions (MS and the woman prime). The dependent variable is the level of rape myth acceptance/victim blaming.
CHAPTER 2

METHODS

Participants

One hundred forty participants were recruited. Participants ranged in age from 18 to 54 years old with a mean age of 23. Participants were comprised of mostly female participants (97 women, 42 men, and one identified as “Other”). Most participants identified as heterosexual (115 participants), with 25 participants identifying as a sexual minority. The participants self-reported their ethnicity; 79 Caucasian/White, 34 Hispanic, 7 as Black/African American, 5 Asian, and 15 as “mix” or other. Participants included students at the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs and students at the University of Colorado, Denver. All participants were given the option to be entered into a raffle drawing to win one of two gift cards of $50, or if they were psychology students, they could elect to receive extra credit points.

Cover Story

The study was described as examining personality traits and how they influence reactions to social media. The description also included instructions asking participants to complete the materials in an envelope that contains materials for a pilot study. This pilot study was described as a potential study in which the researchers were studying student reactions to an interpersonal encounter. This pilot study was actually a cover for the rape
script that was used in the present study. It is important that the participants thought the rape script was unrelated to the present study so as to not influence the results in any way.

Materials and Procedure

Participants completed a series of measures after signing the informed consent. Participants were randomly assigned to one of six groups in a 2 (MS) x 3 (power woman prime) factorial design. The primes for each condition are described below. Assignment occurred by random distribution of the test packets containing the test materials. Accompanying each test packet was an envelope described to the participants as the pilot study test material. The envelope actually contained the rape script, rape myth acceptance scale, and a measure to assess social desirability.

Participants met in a classroom at a chosen time slot to complete the study. All participants were provided with an informed consent form which was verbally explained to them as well. After the participants had been given an opportunity to ask questions about the informed consent and had signed it, packets containing all the relevant measures were randomly distributed. All participants completed the same measures in the same order. First, the participants completed two personality surveys (the Right Wing Authoritarianism Scale and the Eysenck’s Personality Inventory). These scales functioned as filler items. Next, participants completed either a mortality salience prime or a dental pain prime (to serve as a control), followed by a word search and Sudoku delay task, which was meant to enhance the effects of MS. Participants also completed a demographics measure and the PANAS at that time. These measures acted as delay tasks, which were used to enhance the effects of MS. Then the participants viewed one of the three primes for the second independent variable: a sexually powerful woman prime, an
economically powerful woman prime, or a neutral woman prime (to serve as a control). These primes consisted of a Facebook profile page. Following the prime of the woman, participants were asked to briefly respond about the thoughts that they have about the woman they viewed on the Facebook profile. Finally, all participants were told to read a description of an interpersonal encounter and respond to the questionnaire following it for a pilot study. This was in fact a cover story for the rape script. All participants read the same rape script and were asked to answer a series of questions aimed at their judgments regarding the woman and the rape. The participants also completed a measure to assess the motivation to appear socially desirable. After the participants have completed all measures they were debriefed and thanked for their time.

**Right Wing Authoritarianism Scale.** Participants completed this measure of right wing authoritarianism, which is described as “[wishing] to preserve norms that apply to their in groups and express prejudice toward in-group members who threaten these norms” (Christopher & Wojda, 2008). Examples of items from this scale include “Women should have to promise to obey their husbands when they get married”, “God's laws about abortion, pornography and marriage must be strictly followed before it is too late, and those who break them must be strongly punished”, and “this country would work a lot better if certain groups of troublemakers would just shut up and accept their group's traditional place in society”. This scale consists of 22 items in which participants will respond on a 9-point Likert scale from -4(*Very strongly disagree*) to 4(*very strongly agree*). See Appendix A.

**Eysenck’s Personality Inventory (EPI).** The EPI is a 57 item scale in which participants responded *yes* or *no* to statements about their thoughts or behaviors. This
scale measures three different constructs which include extraversion, neuroticism, and a lie scale. Examples of items that measure extraversion include “Do you often need understanding friends to cheer you up?” and “Do you like talking to people so much that you never miss a chance of talking to a stranger?”. Examples of items that assess neuroticism include “Would you call yourself tense or ‘highly strung’?” and “Would you call yourself a nervous person?”. Items on the lie scale include “Have you ever been late for an appointment or work?” and “Do you occasionally have thoughts and ideas that you would not like other people to know about?”. See Appendix B.

**Mortality salience.** The mortality salience prime consists of two items: “Please briefly describe the emotions that the thought of your own death arouses in you” and “Jot down, as specifically as you can, what you think will happen to you as you physically die and when you are physically dead”. This prime has been used extensively and found to have significant effects on death thought accessibility and worldview defense (Greenberg, Vail, & Pyszczynski, 2014). This prime was followed by a word search and Sudoku puzzle to allow for a delay. See Appendix C.

**Dental pain prime.** The dental pain prime was identical to the mortality salience prime except that the items replaced the words “death” and “die” with dental pain: “Please briefly describe the emotions that the thought of dental pain arouses in you” and “Jot down, as specifically as you can, what you think will happen to you as you experience dental pain”. This prime served as a control and was followed by a word search and Sudoku puzzle. See Appendix D.

**Demographic measure.** Participants were asked to complete the demographic measure following completion of the word search task. This measure asked participants
to identity their gender, age, and race/ethnicity. Participants were also asked to identify if they are religious or spiritual, and if so, how they identify. They were also asked to identify their political orientation. See Appendix E.

**PANAS.** After completing the demographic measure, participants responded to the Positive and Negative Affect Scale (PANAS; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988). This is a 20 item measure used to assess affect. For the purpose of this study, it was used simply as a delay task to enhance the effects of MS. Participants responded to items on a 5-point Likert scale from 1(*Very slightly or not at all*) to 5(*Extremely*). Items include emotions that are being felt in the present moment and include “interested”, “alert”, and “jittery”. See Appendix F.

**Word search.** Participants completed a word search following the first level of treatment (either a mortality salience prime or a dental pain prime). The word search was easy and contained neutral words such as “book”, “paper”, and “train”. The word search served as a delay following the MS. Previous research has found that MS effects are clearest when death-related thoughts are highly accessible but out of focal awareness (Greenberg, Pyszczynski, Solomon, Simon, & Breus, 1994). See Appendix G.

**Sudoku.** Following the word search, participants were asked to complete a modified Sudoku puzzle that provided additional delay and distraction between the MS manipulation and assessment of dependent measure. For this task, participants were presented with a 6 x 6 grid. The objective is to fill a grid with digits so that each column, each row, and each of the six 2 × 3 sub-grids that compose the grid (also called "boxes", "blocks", "regions", or "sub-squares") contains all of the digits from 1 to 6. See Appendix H.
**Sexually powerful woman prime.** Participants were asked to view a print out of a Facebook profile that included pictures, posts, and comments from friends. If participants were randomly assigned to the sexually powerful condition, they viewed a woman who by societal standards could be considered to be objectified. There were several images of this woman in low cut shirts and shorts. The posts on her profile contained material that referenced her excessive drinking, going home with men from the bar, and labeling herself as a slut. All of her personal information was identical to the other Facebook profiles used in the other two conditions; her name, age, general appearance, and location remained the same. See Appendix I.

**Economically powerful woman prime.** Participants were asked to view a print out of a Facebook profile that included pictures, posts, and comments from friends. If participants were randomly assigned to the economically powerful condition, they viewed a woman who would be considered professional by societal standards. There were several images of this woman wearing business attire such as dress pants and a blouse, or a modest dress with a cardigan. The posts on her profile contained material that referenced a recent promotion, a male assistant, and her power to hire and terminate employees. All of her personal information was identical to the other Facebook profiles used in the other two conditions; her name, age, general appearance, and location remained the same. See Appendix J.

**Neutral woman prime.** Participants were asked to view a print out of a Facebook profile that included pictures, posts, and comments from friends. If participants were randomly assigned to the neutral condition, they viewed a woman who appeared very average by societal standards. There were several images of this woman wearing casual
attire such as a sweater paired with a scarf, or leggings and a sweater. The posts on her profile contained material that referenced her daily activities such as hiking, her thoughts about school, and conversations pertaining to homework assignments. All of her personal information was identical to the other Facebook profiles used in the other two conditions; her name, age, general appearance, and location remained the same. See Appendix K.

**Thoughts regarding the Facebook profile.** Following the woman prime, participants were asked to answer an open-ended prompt about their thoughts about the woman they viewed from the Facebook profile. See Appendix L.

**Social media use survey.** The last page of the test packet contained a survey assessing the types of social media used, the purposes for their use, the amount of time using social media, followed by a prompt asking for perceptions of social media. This survey was created by this author for the purpose of supporting the cover story that this research study was examining student’s formation of impressions of others through social media. See Appendix M.

**Rape script.** After participants responded to the prompt of thoughts of the woman in the Facebook profile, they were presented with a rape vignette. The vignette was presented as a pilot item for an upcoming study to disguise the true purpose of the present study. The rape vignette was meant to be ambiguous yet without consent from the victim, indicating that this encounter could be legally defined as rape. The rape vignette is as follows:

Josh picked up Katie at 9pm on Saturday. They had met last weekend at his fraternity and hit it off. They agreed to go to a party at his fraternity house together that Saturday night. Katie walked downstairs
wearing a black miniskirt, white tank top, and black high heels. Josh told her she looked hot and she smiled and thanked him.

They drove together to his frat house. On their way they chatted about class, work, and people they both knew. Katie had hooked up with a few of the guys in Josh’s fraternity. They joked about that for a bit. They were both having a good time talking and were excited for the party.

When they arrived at the party they grabbed drinks and headed to the dance floor. They danced for a while and when a slow song came on they started to kiss. Josh invited Katie upstairs to his room for another drink. She agreed and they headed up the stairs.

In Josh’s room they both did shots and grabbed another beer. Josh invited Katie to sit on his bed so they could talk. They sat on the bed and talked about how much fun they were having. Josh told Katie how pretty she was and she smiled. He leaned in and kissed her. She put her arms around him and kissed him back. After a few minutes Josh slid his hands to the inside of Katie’s shirt. She continued to kiss him. Josh reached to the bottom of her shirt and when she didn’t hesitate he pulled it over her head. Katie continued to kiss Josh and he undid her bra. She helped him take it off and he began to fondle her. When he reached between her legs she said “I’m not sure I want to do this”. He responded, “it’s ok, I’ll go slow”, and continued to touch her. Katie laughed nervously and said, “I don’t want to do this when we are both drunk”. Josh reassured her that he would be gentle and started to remove her skirt. Katie said “no” and
started to struggle. Josh held Katie down on the bed and inserted himself inside of her.

The next morning Katie decided to report the encounter with Josh to campus police as rape.

**Rape myth acceptance.** After reading the rape vignette, participants were asked to complete a measure assessing rape myth acceptance. The items were based on the Updated Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (IRMA; McMahon & Farmer, 2011; Payne, Lonsway, & Fitzgerald, 1999) and modified to fit the rape vignette above. Examples of items include “Katie went to the party wearing slutty clothes, and was asking for trouble” and “Both Katie and Josh were drunk, it can’t be rape”. Participants responded on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (*strongly agree*) to 5 (*strongly disagree*). Thus low scores on this scale reflect high levels of RMA. See Appendix N.

**Social desirability scale.** Participants completed the Social Desirability Scale (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960). This is a 33-item scale that assesses a participant’s desire to distort beliefs or perceptions to appear in a socially desirable manner. Participants responded either *true or false* to the items. Examples of items on this scale include “I have never intensely dislike someone”, “I’m always willing to admit it when I make a mistake”, and “I have almost never felt the urge to tell someone off”. See Appendix O.
Preliminary Analysis with Gender

My dependent variable was the mean score of a questionnaire to measure the construct of rape myth acceptance. For this scale I modified the Updated Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (IRMA; McMahon & Farmer, 2011; Payne, Lonsway, & Fitzgerald, 1999) to fit the rape script that I used for the present study. This scale consisted of 20 items and was found to have a high level of internal consistency, as determined by Cronbach’s Alpha of 0.93.

A three-way ANOVA was conducted to determine the effects of gender, MS, and woman prime on rape myth acceptance. Data are mean ± standard deviation, unless otherwise stated. There were 6 outliers identified and removed as a value greater than 2 standard deviations away from the mean, (all points lesser than 2.59). Rape myth acceptance levels were normally distributed ($p > 0.05$) except for two groups, (females primed with dental pain and exposed to a sexual woman, $p = 0.001$; females primed with dental pain and exposed to a career woman, $p = 0.03$) as assessed by Shapiro-Wilk's test of normality. The assumption of homogeneity of variances was violated, as assessed by Levene's test for equality of variances, $p = 0.03$. The ANOVA was carried out as it is a fairly robust test. There was no statistically significant three-way interaction between gender, MS or dental, and woman prime, $F (2, 121) = 1.63, p = 0.20$, $\eta^2 = 0.03$. There
were no statistically significant two-way interactions: MS and woman prime, $F(2, 121) = 1.40, p = 0.25, \eta^2 = 0.02$; gender and woman prime, $F(2, 121) = 1.36, p = 0.26, \eta^2 = 0.02$; gender and MS, $F(1, 121) = 0.88, p = 0.35, \eta^2 = 0.01$. There was a main effect for gender, $F(2, 121) = 3.22, p = 0.04, \eta^2 = 0.05$; but not for MS $F(1, 121) = 0.05, p = 0.82, \eta^2 = 0.00$; or woman prime, $F(2, 121) = 0.47, p = 0.63, \eta^2 = 0.01$. Because there was only a main effect for gender, but unequal cell sizes by gender, this analysis will not be explored further. Findings from this ANOVA can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1.

Rape Myth Acceptance by Gender, MS, and Woman Prime

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>(\eta^2)</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.271</td>
<td>0.051</td>
<td>0.041</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MS</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.054</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.817</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woman Prime</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.466</td>
<td>0.008</td>
<td>0.628</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender x MS</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.878</td>
<td>0.007</td>
<td>0.351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender x Woman Prime</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.364</td>
<td>0.022</td>
<td>0.260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MS x Woman Prime</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.404</td>
<td>0.023</td>
<td>0.249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender x MS x Woman Prime</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.627</td>
<td>0.026</td>
<td>0.201</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Primary Analysis with RWA

An analysis was conducted to analyze Right Wing Authoritarianism (RWA) as a moderator, rather than gender. A multiple regression was conducted to determine the effects of RWA, MS, and woman prime on levels of rape myth acceptance. RWA was mean centered for this analysis. The MS/Dental pain and woman prime conditions were contrast coded so that comparisons could be easily made. Specifically, the first contrast examined the effect of the sexual woman prime against the control (neutral woman
prime), while the second contrast examined the effect of the career woman prime against the control. Data were analyzed with hierarchical regression, with the main effects entered on the first step, the two-way interactions entered on the second step, and the three-way interaction entered on the third step. The full model of RWA, MS, and woman prime was statistically significant across all steps \((p<0.01\), with the last step as \(F(11, 122) = 2.52, p=0.01\), adj. \(R^2 = 0.11\). There was a main effect for RWA, \(\beta = -0.33, t = -3.95, p < 0.001\), but there was no main effect for the sexual woman prime, \(\beta = -0.03, t = -0.32, p = 0.75\), or the career woman prime, \(\beta = 0.14, t = 1.44, p = 0.15\), or MS, \(\beta = 0.15, t = -1.75, p = 0.08\). None of the two-way interactions were significant: RWA x Sexual woman prime, \(\beta = 0.06, t = 0.64, p = 0.52\); RWA x Career woman prime, \(\beta = -0.17, t = -1.56, p = 0.12\); RWA*MS, \(\beta = -0.11, t = -1.17, p = 0.25\); MS x Sexual woman prime, \(\beta = 0.15, t = 1.52, p = 0.13\); and MS x Career woman prime, \(\beta = -0.10, t = -1.01, p = 0.31\). Both of the three-way interactions were non-significant; RWA x MS x Career woman prime, \(\beta = -0.15, t = -1.30, p = 0.20\), although RWA x MS x Sexual woman prime, \(\beta = 0.17, t = 1.60, p = 0.11\) approached significance. Regression coefficients and standard errors can be found in Table 2 (below).

RWA was further explored by looking at the simple MS x sexual woman prime effects of RWA at 1 standard deviation above and below the mean (see Figure 1). For low RWA, there was a statistically significant main effect of MS, \(F(1, 122) = 4.19, p = 0.04, \eta^2 = 0.03\). MS led low RWA participants to blame the victim less \((M = 4.46, SD = 0.06)\) than dental pain control participants \((M = 4.261, SD = 0.07)\), (with greater rape
Table 2.

*Rape Myth Acceptance by Right Wing Authoritarianism, MS, and Woman Prime*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
<th>$t$</th>
<th>$p$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RWA</td>
<td>-0.333</td>
<td>-3.953</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MS</td>
<td>0.148</td>
<td>1.754</td>
<td>0.082</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woman 1 contrast</td>
<td>-0.030</td>
<td>-0.315</td>
<td>0.753</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woman 2 Contrast</td>
<td>0.141</td>
<td>1.436</td>
<td>0.153</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RWA x Woman 1</td>
<td>0.064</td>
<td>0.644</td>
<td>0.521</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RWA x Woman 2</td>
<td>-0.171</td>
<td>-1.563</td>
<td>0.120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RWA x MS</td>
<td>-0.107</td>
<td>-1.166</td>
<td>0.246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MS x Woman 1</td>
<td>0.148</td>
<td>1.515</td>
<td>0.132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MS x Woman 2</td>
<td>-0.102</td>
<td>-1.012</td>
<td>0.314</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RWA x MS x Woman 1</td>
<td>0.171</td>
<td>1.601</td>
<td>0.112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RWA x MS x Woman 2</td>
<td>-0.154</td>
<td>-1.302</td>
<td>0.195</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Woman 1 refers to the contrast code comparing the sexual woman to neutral woman. Woman 2 refers to the contrast code comparing the business woman to the neutral woman.

myth acceptance expressing by lower means). For high RWA, neither main effect was significant, $MS$ $F(1, 122) = 1.15, p = 0.29, \eta^2 = 0.01$, and Woman prime $F(2, 122) = 0.14, p = 0.87, \eta^2 = 0.00$ but there was a marginal effect for MS x Woman prime, $F(2, 122) = 2.61, p = 0.08, \eta^2 = 0.01$. Specifically, analysis show that for high RWA, there is a significant effect in the MS x Sexual woman prime condition. To explore the nature of this marginal two-way interaction, tests for simple main effects were performed. Specifically, a simple slopes analysis was used to assess MS x Woman Prime at a specific
Figure 1. The multiple regression of Right Wing Authoritarianism (RWA), MS, and Woman prime found a significant main effect of RWA and a marginal interaction for RWA x MS x Woman prime. Note that lower scores on the scale indicate higher levels of rape myth acceptance.

conditional value; this analysis looked at the conditional values when right wing authoritarianism was examined at 1 standard deviation above the mean. When MS was the moderator, there was no significant effect on woman prime, $b = 0.06, t = 0.55, p = 0.59$. When dental pain was the moderator, there was no significant effect on woman prime, $b = -0.03, t = -0.22, p = 0.83$. Looked at differently, when the sexual woman was the moderator, there was no significant effect on MS condition, $b = 0.03, t = 0.20, p = 0.84$. And when the neutral woman condition was the moderator, there was no significant effect on MS condition, $b = -0.04, t = -0.29, p = 0.77$. These interactions were not significant, but were explored as the multiple regression resulted in a marginal effect for RWA x MS x Woman prime when comparing the sexual and neutral woman primes.

When examining the means for each condition, the MS condition led to the greater rape myth acceptance for the sexual woman ($M = 4.18$) compared to the dental pain condition for the sexual woman ($M = 4.21$). However, in the neutral woman condition this pattern
was reversed; MS led to less rape myth acceptance \( (M = 4.23) \) than the dental pain condition \( (M = 4.19) \). See Figure 2.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Figure 2.} & \quad \text{There appears to be a marginal effect for the three-way interaction of right wing authoritarianism x MS prime x woman condition. Specifically, participants with high RWA when primed with MS and exposed to the sexual woman prime appear to have the greatest rape myth acceptance. Note that lower scores on the scale indicate higher levels of rape myth acceptance.}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\text{Analysis of Affect}
\]

Other analyses were conducted to determine if the manipulations influenced subjective affect. An ANOVA was conducted to examine the effect of RWA, MS, and woman prime on negative and positive affect. There were no statistically significant effects, suggesting that negative or positive affect did not influence the results; therefore, the death prime (MS) should have worked as it was meant to. An ANOVA was also conducted to examine the effect of gender, MS, and woman prime on social desirability. There were no statistically significant results, suggesting that desire to present as socially desirable probably did not affect the way that participants responded to the study.
CHAPTER 4
DISCUSSION

The goal of this study was to examine how and why individuals accept rape myths. This study utilized TMT to examine underlying motivations for people to victim blame. Specifically, it was hypothesized that participants exposed to mortality salience and a threatening woman prime would have the greatest rape myth acceptance. This effect was expected to be exacerbated when the participant was male or had high right wing authoritarianism. However, I only found a significant main effect for gender, with men endorsing greater rape myth acceptance than women. I did not find the expected effect for MS or woman prime when gender was examined. I also found a significant main effect for right wing authoritarianism. As expected those with high levels of right wing authoritarianism had greater rape myth acceptance than those with low right wing authoritarianism. There was a main effect for MS for low right wing authoritarianism. There was also a marginal effect for participants with high right wing authoritarianism exposed to MS and the sexual woman prime having the greatest rape myth acceptance.

Gender

As predicted (hypothesis 1), there was a main effect for gender. Across the MS and woman prime conditions, men had significantly higher rates of rape myth acceptance than women. This finding is consistent with findings of higher rape myth acceptance among men than women (Aronowitz, Lambert, & Davidoff, 2012; Lonsway &
Fitzgerald, 1994). Men may have greater motivation than women to adhere to and enforce gender roles because they benefit more than women from these sanctions. It is also possible that there was an effect for men due to precarious manhood, or the feeling that manhood is an impermanent state due to gender role violation (Kroeper, Sanchez, & Himmelstein, 2014).

While there was a main effect for gender as predicted, none of the other hypotheses regarding gender were found (hypotheses 2-5). There was no effect for MS or the woman prime as expected, and there were no interactions. Although this was unexpected, it makes sense given that for MS to work, there must be a specific belief or cultural worldview being targeted. Males have been found to have greater rape myth acceptance, but this does not necessarily equate with worldviews regarding traditional gender roles. For mortality salience to work in the intended manner (in this case greater rape myth acceptance when exposed to non-conforming women), a variable associated with adherence to traditional gender roles must be examined.

**Right Wing Authoritarianism**

Because the sample was heavily weighted toward women, primary analyses were focused on RWA as a possible moderator of the effects of the manipulated variables. This analysis found a significant main effect for RWA, with participants higher in RWA showing higher levels of RMA (hypothesis 6). People high in RWA can be defined as “[wishing] to preserve norms that apply to their in groups and express prejudice toward in-group members who threaten these norms” (Christopher & Wojda, 2008). Previous research had found a link between RWA and sexism, specifically that RWA moderates the relationship between certain personality variables (e.g., trust) and benevolent sexism
Research has also found a link between RWA and sexual aggression in which men with higher RWA were more likely to have been in the past or to be in the future, more sexually aggressive (Walker, Rowe, & Quinsey, 1993). Our finding for a main effect of right wing authoritarianism was as predicted. Participants with high right wing authoritarianism would be expected to have greater rape myth acceptance as they tend to adhere to and uphold traditional roles. Research has also found that those with high rape myth acceptance tend to be more sexually aggressive, which could be expressed as rape myth acceptance/victim blaming.

Although not explicitly hypothesized, there was also a significant finding for MS in participants with low right wing authoritarianism. These individuals had less rape myth acceptance when reminded of death. However, there was no effect for the woman prime. This may suggest that when people low in RWA are primed with death, they are actually less judgmental of a victim of sexual assault, regardless of being primed with a threatening woman. Although this was not predicted, this finding seems to support the underlying hypotheses and theory of this research study. Since MS has consistently been found to encourage behavior in line with one’s values, it seems like that this effect reflect a shift in the direction of more benevolent attitudes toward rape victims. In this case, participants with low right wing authoritarianism are likely to have worldviews that would not include or support rape myth acceptance/victim blaming. When these individuals are reminded of death, they would probably react by rejecting victim blaming/rape myth acceptance. The woman prime would have no effect because they would also be more likely to reject traditional gender roles.
The data also showed a non-significant trend toward a three-way interaction of RWA, MS, and sexual woman prime approaching significance (hypothesis 10). When the data were split by high and low RWA (1 standard deviation above and below the mean), there was a trend toward a significant two-way interaction of MS x sexual woman prime for high RWA (hypothesis 9). Specifically, participants high in RWA had greater RMA when death was made salient (MS), and they were primed with a sexual woman. This seems to suggest that individuals high in RWA (therefore more conservative and adhering to traditional roles), respond to death anxiety in the way predicted; they seem to react harsher to a victim of sexual assault when they were presented with a woman who violated the gender norm for sexuality. While there was no effect for increased rape myth acceptance when exposed to the career woman, there may be a reason for this. Perhaps participants respond with greater rape myth acceptance when they are primed with gender roles related to sexuality, and not occupational expectations. However, perhaps we did not see an effect for the career woman due to a shift in attitudes regarding working women. This study was conducted with college students, who tend to be more liberal than their community counterparts.

**Conclusion of Findings**

As predicted, there was a significant main effect for men to have greater rape myth acceptance than women. However, we did not see main effects for MS or woman prime when examining gender. This is probably because beliefs regarding traditional gender roles need to be examined. Right wing authoritarianism was explored as a possible moderator because those with high right wing authoritarianism tend to adhere to traditional roles. There was a significant main effect for right wing authoritarianism
found. Specifically, those with high right wing authoritarianism have greater rape myth acceptance than those with low right wing authoritarianism.

When examining low v. high right wing authoritarianism, an effect for MS was found with participants with low right wing authoritarianism. In this case, MS actually led to less rape myth acceptance. This suggests that people with low right wing authoritarianism endorse less rape myth acceptance when reminded of death because their worldviews and beliefs do not support rape myths or victim blaming. There would be no effect for woman prime because they would be unlikely to strictly adhere to traditional gender roles, and thus would not be threatened by a woman who violated them.

On the other hand, those with high right wing authoritarianism express greater rape myth acceptance when reminded of death and exposed to a woman who violates gender norms. This seems to suggest that these individuals hold strict beliefs regarding traditional gender roles, and when reminded of death when adhere to traditional gender roles. Thus when exposed to a woman who violateth gender norms, they may react with increased hostility, in this case, rape myth acceptance.

Limitations and Future Directions

There were a few limitations to this study that may have minimized or affected the results obtained. First, it should be noted that the sample size may be a limitation in this study. 140 participants were recruited, with 6 outliers omitted, leaving only 134 data points. A larger sample size may have been able to detect effects that existed. In addition, the sizes of the groups were not equal in the gender and high/low RWA IV’s. Equal groups may have provided a truer representation of real world effects.
Second, it appears that the career woman prime did not have the desired effect on participants. This could be because the prime itself was not reliable in representing a true career woman, or it could be that career woman do not threaten or violate gender norms in this population or in our current society. I would suggest that career woman do violate gender norms given the recent research surrounding this topic (Christopher & Wojda, 2008), as well as the remaining discrimination against women in the workplace. Also, participants were asked to respond to an opened ended prompt asking them to state the “thoughts you have about the woman shown in the Facebook profile”. Informal inspection of these responses suggest that participants had positive feelings about this woman, and that they were not perceiving her in the intended way. One explanation may be that college students in general found this woman to be inspiring; indeed, several participants labeled this woman in positive terms such as “hard-working”, “successful”, “intelligent”, and “mature”. Perhaps there was some identification with the woman and their own desires to graduate and get a job. The participant’s positive evaluations of the career woman may reflect a uniquely college student attitude, but this finding could also reflect a shift in mainstream America’s attitudes toward working women.

It should also be noted that there appeared to be some confusion with the modified Rape Myth Acceptance Scale. Several participants noted during the debriefing that they were initially confused by the numbering of the scale; from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree). Also, a few participants responded to the scale as if they were endorsing high levels of rape myth acceptance, but wrote on the survey packet that they considered the encounter as rape. This seems to suggest that a number of participants may have responded to the scale in a way that was not reflective of their true feelings. If
this study were to be replicated, it would be recommended to clarify the scale in some way.

Finally, the use of the terms “hook-up culture” and “ambiguous” in the cover story may have influenced the participant’s perception of the rape script. These terms may have implied to the participants that the researcher felt that the sexual encounter was ambiguous, priming the participants to respond as if the encounter were ambiguous, or not a clear cut rape or consensual sexual encounter.

For future directions, I would suggest that the survey packet by updated so that it is easier for participants to understand and complete. Primarily, I would suggest clarifying the Rape Myth Scale and perhaps finding an updated measure of social desirability. Also, I would suggest modifying or omitting the career woman prime. It would be interesting to modify the prime to see if an effect does exist when participants are primed with a career woman who more blatantly deviates from gender norms by emphasizing her power over men and adopting a more aggressive approach to her career. A reworded version of the cover story should be utilized, specifically the removal of the words “hook-up culture” and “ambiguous” should be excluded. Perhaps the cover story could simply be described as an examination of perception of a sexual encounter. Several participants also expressed dislike, frustration, or confusion of the Sudoku puzzle during the debriefing. While this did not appear to impact the results, it would be prudent to substitute a different delay task to avoid participation frustration.

Perhaps future studies could more clearly examine the role that political or religious orientation may have on RMA. Several participants disclosed during the debriefing that they were irritated or confused by the apparent focus on religious/political
attitudes (RWA Scale), and that they felt it did not adequately portray their true feelings. I would suggest the potential use of scales that would examine political and religious/spiritual leanings. It may also be useful to include a measure of Social Dominance Orientation (SDO), because this has been found to be correlated with hostile sexism rather than benevolent sexism (Christopher, Zabel, & Miller, 2013).

It is also recommended that this study have a larger sample size. More men should be recruited so that gender could be equal across all conditions. Also, a community sample rather than a purely college sample may increase the generalizability of the findings.

In this study the goal was to increase our understanding of why people may be motivated to accept rape myths and victim blame. This study was unique in that its aim was to understand what it is about the individual making the judgment, rather than the target of the judgment (sexual assault victim), that leads to greater rape myth acceptance and victim blaming. This study relied on TMT with the hypothesis that reminding people of death would make them more likely to feel threatened by a woman who violates gender expectations. The results indicated a significant effect for gender, that is, men have a greater tendency to victim blame than women. There was also a significant finding for RWA. Specifically, people low in RWA tend to have less rape myth acceptance when primed with MS. This may suggest that many people are adopting values antithetical to victim blaming. Perhaps this is due in part to changing attitudes in our society, but this may also reflect attitudes on a college campus (as that is where the present study took place). For people with high RWA, it appears that there is a trend for higher rape myth acceptance when primed with MS and a sexual woman. This suggests that for these
participants, MS may create a greater need to adhere to gender expectations, and when
presented with violations of these expectations, these individuals may respond with
backlash (in this case rape myth acceptance and victim blaming). Research that examines
sexual assault and the attitudes surrounding victims of it is of the utmost importance.
Given that sexual assault is so pervasive and so debilitating, continuing efforts should be
made to understand it. Research could aid in the prevention, treatment, and education of
sexual assault.
REFERENCES


Prentice, D. A., & Carranza, E. (2002). What women should be, shouldn't be, are allowed to be, and don't have to be: The contents of prescriptive gender stereotypes. Psychology of Women Quarterly, 26(4), 269-281. doi:10.1111/1471-6402.t01-1-00066


APPENDIX A

Please read each statement and indicate to what extent you agree with it on the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>-4</th>
<th>-3</th>
<th>-2</th>
<th>-1</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Moderately Disagree</td>
<td>Slightly Disagree</td>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>Slightly Agree</td>
<td>Moderately Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>Very Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

_____ 1. The established authorities generally turn out to be right about things, while the radicals and protestors are usually just "loud mouths" showing off their ignorance.

_____ 2. Women should have to promise to obey their husbands when they get married.

_____ 3. Our country desperately needs a mighty leader who will do what has to be done to destroy the radical new ways and sinfulness that are ruining us.

_____ 4. Gays and lesbians are just as healthy and moral as anybody else.

_____ 5. It is always better to trust the judgement of the proper authorities in government and religion than to listen to the noisy rabble-rousers in our society who are trying to create doubt in people's minds.

_____ 6. Atheists and others who have rebelled against the established religions are no doubt every bit as good and virtuous as those who attend church regularly.

_____ 7. The only way our country can get through the crisis ahead is to get back to our traditional values, put some tough leaders in power, and silence the troublemakers spreading bad ideas.

_____ 8. There is absolutely nothing wrong with nudist camps.

_____ 9. Our country needs free thinkers who have the courage to defy traditional ways, even if this upsets many people.

_____ 10. Our country will be destroyed someday if we do not smash the perversions eating away at our moral fiber and traditional beliefs.
11. Everyone should have their own lifestyle, religious beliefs, and sexual preferences, even if it makes them different from everyone else.

12. The "old-fashioned ways" and the "old-fashioned values" still show the best way to live.

13. You have to admire those who challenged the law and the majority's view by protesting for women's abortion rights, for animal rights, or to abolish school prayer.

14. What our country really needs is a strong, determined leader who will crush evil, and take us back to our true path.

15. Some of the best people in our country are those who are challenging our government, criticizing religion, and ignoring the "normal way things are supposed to be done."

16. God's laws about abortion, pornography and marriage must be strictly followed before it is too late, and those who break them must be strongly punished.

17. There are many radical, immoral people in our country today, who are trying to ruin it for their own godless purposes, whom the authorities should put out of action.

18. A "woman's place" should be wherever she wants to be. The days when women are submissive to their husbands and social conventions belong strictly in the past.

19. Our country will be great if we honor the ways of our forefathers, do what the authorities tell us to do, and get rid of the "rotten apples" who are ruining everything.

20. There is no "one right way" to live life; everybody has to create their own way.

21. Homosexuals and feminists should be praised for being brave enough to defy "traditional family values."

22. This country would work a lot better if certain groups of troublemakers would just shut up and accept their group's traditional place in society.
Here are some questions regarding the way you behave, feel and act. Each question should be answered with a “yes” or “no”. Work quickly, and don’t spend too much time over any question, we want your first reaction, not a long drawn-out thought process. The whole questionnaire shouldn’t take more than a few minutes. Be sure not to omit any questions. Start now, work quickly and remember to answer every question. There are no right or wrong answers, and this isn’t a test of intelligence or ability, but simply a measure of the way you behave.

YES or NO 1. Do you often long for excitement?
YES or NO 2. Do you often need understanding friends to cheer you up?
YES or NO 3. Are you usually carefree?
YES or NO 4. Do you find it very hard to take no for an answer?
YES or NO 5. Do you stop and think things over before doing anything?
YES or NO 6. If you say you will do something do you always keep your promise, no matter how inconvenient it might be to do so?
YES or NO 7. Do your moods go up and down?
YES or NO 8. Do you generally do and say things quickly without stopping to think?
YES or NO 9. Do you ever feel ‘just miserable’ for no good reason?
YES or NO 10. Would you do almost anything for a dare?
YES or NO 11. Do you suddenly feel shy when you want to talk to an attractive stranger?
YES or NO 12. Once in a while do you lose your temper and get angry?
YES or NO 13. Do you often do things on the spur of the moment?
YES or NO 14. Do you often worry about things you should have done or said?
YES or NO 15. Generally do you prefer reading to meeting people?
YES or NO 16. Are your feelings rather easily hurt?
YES or NO 17. Do you like going out a lot?
YES or NO 18. Do you occasionally have thoughts and ideas that you would not like other people to know about?
YES or NO 19. Are you sometimes bubbling over with energy and sometimes very sluggish?
YES or NO 20. Do you prefer to have few but special friends?
YES or NO 21. Do you daydream a lot?
YES or NO 22. When people shout at you do you shout back?
YES or NO 23. Are you often troubled about feelings of guilt?
YES or NO 24. Are all your habits good and desirable ones?
YES or NO 25. Can you usually let yourself go and enjoy yourself a lot at a lively party?
YES or NO 26. Would you call yourself tense or ‘highly strung’?
YES or NO 27. Do other people think of you as being very lively?
YES or NO 28. After you have done something important, do you come away feeling you could have done better?
YES or NO 29. Are you mostly quiet when you are with other people?
YES or NO 30. Do you sometimes gossip?
YES or NO 31. Do ideas run through your head so that you cannot sleep?
YES or NO 32. If there is something you want to know about, would you rather look it up in a book than talk to someone about it?
YES or NO 33. Do you get palpitations or thumping in your heart?
YES or NO 34. Do you like the kind of work that you need to pay close attention to?
YES or NO 35. Do you get attacks of shaking or trembling?
YES or NO 36. Would you always declare everything at customs, even if you knew you could never be found out?
YES or NO 37. Do you hate being with a crowd who play jokes on one another?
YES or NO 38. Are you an irritable person?
YES or NO 39. Do you like doing things in which you have to act quickly?
YES or NO 40. Do you worry about awful things that might happen?
YES or NO 41. Are you slow and unhurried in the way you move?
YES or NO 42. Have you ever been late for an appointment or work?
YES or NO 43. Do you have many nightmares?
YES or NO 44. Do you like talking to people so much that you never miss a chance of talking to a stranger?
YES or NO 45. Are you troubled by aches and pains?
YES or NO 46. Would you be very unhappy if you could not see lots of people most of the time?
YES or NO 47. Would you call yourself a nervous person?
YES or NO 48. Of all the people you know, are there some whom you definitely do not like?
YES or NO 49. Would you say that you were fairly self-confident?
YES or NO 50. Are you easily hurt when people find fault with you or your work?
YES or NO 51. Do you find it hard to really enjoy yourself at a lively party?
YES or NO 52. Are you troubled by feelings of inferiority?
YES or NO 53. Can you easily get some life into a dull party?
YES or NO 54. Do you sometimes talk about things you know nothing about?
YES or NO 55. Do you worry about your health?
YES or NO 56. Do you like playing pranks on others?
YES or NO 57. Do you suffer from sleeplessness?
APPENDIX C

The Projective Life Attitudes Assessment

This assessment is a recently developed, innovative personality assessment. Recent research suggests that feelings and attitudes about significant aspects of life tell us a considerable amount about the individual’s personality. Your responses to this survey will be content-analyzed in order to assess certain dimensions of your personality. Your honest responses to the following questions will be appreciated.

On the following page are two open-ended questions, please respond to them with your first, natural response.

We are looking for peoples’ gut-level reactions to these questions.

1) Please briefly describe the emotions that the thought of your own death arouses in you

2) Jot down, as specifically as you can, what you think will happen to you as you physically die and once you are physically dead
APPENDIX D

The Projective Life Attitudes Assessment

This assessment is a recently developed, innovative personality assessment. Recent research suggests that feelings and attitudes about significant aspects of life tell us a considerable amount about the individual’s personality. Your responses to this survey will be content-analyzed in order to assess certain dimensions of your personality. Your honest responses to the following questions will be appreciated.

On the following page are two open-ended questions, please respond to them with your first, natural response.

We are looking for peoples’ gut-level reactions to these questions.

1) Please briefly describe the emotions that the thought of dental pain arouses in you

2) Jot down, as specifically as you can, what you think will happen to you as you experience dental pain
APPENDIX E

What is your age? _____

What grade are you currently in?
Freshman___ Sophomore____ Junior____ Senior____ Graduate Level____

What is your gender?
Male___ Female___ Other___

What is your race/ethnicity? ____________

What is your sexual orientation?

How do you identify religiously/spiritually?

How do you identify politically?
APPENDIX F

This scale consists of a number of words that describe different feelings and emotions. Read each item and then list the number from the scale below next to each word. **Indicate to what extent you feel this way right now, that is, at the present moment OR indicate the extent you have felt this way over the past week (circle the instructions you followed when taking this measure)**.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very Slightly or Not at All</td>
<td>A Little</td>
<td>Moderately</td>
<td>Quite a Bit</td>
<td>Extremely</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

_________ 1. Interested _________ 11. Irritable
_________ 2. Distressed _________ 12. Alert
_________ 3. Excited _________ 13. Ashamed
_________ 5. Strong _________ 15. Nervous
_________ 7. Scared _________ 17. Attentive
_________ 8. Hostile _________ 18. Jittery
_________ 9. Enthusiastic _________ 19. Active
_________ 10. Proud _________ 20. Afraid
APPENDIX G

Word Search Puzzle

Circle as many words as you can in the puzzle below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book</th>
<th>Computer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Desk</td>
<td>Phone</td>
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<tr>
<td>Movie</td>
<td>Train</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper</td>
<td>School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grass</td>
<td>Beer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>Actor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

S       R       E       T       U       P       M       O       C       O
W       P       H       O       N       E       R       E       E       B
A       M       U       S       I       C       P       Z       S       N
B       T       N       R       O       T       C       A       S       K
B       M       R       K       S       E       D       E       A       O
R       F       O       A       G       O       L       B       R       O
E       L       G       V       I       Z       B       O       G       B
P       A       N       U       I       N       E       L       W       Q
A       G       T       A       B       E       T       G       D       O
P       S       C       H       O       O       L       N       I       T
APPENDIX H

Sudoku
The objective is to fill a grid with digits so that each column, each row, and each of the six 2x3 sub-grids that compose the grid (also called "boxes", "blocks", "regions", or "sub-squares") contains all of the digits from 1 to 6.
APPENDIX I

Facebook Profile

Social media is becoming increasingly popular in the way in which we interact with and perceive others. This study is exploring how personality and cognitive style affects how people make impressions of others. We will be using Facebook pages as it is one of the more popular and widely used social media platforms. We received permission from 10 people in the local area to use their profiles in this study. Each participant in this study will view one of the 10 profiles. Please view the following Facebook profile carefully.
Amy Schumer- so true! lol

IN EVERY GROUP OF GIRLFRIENDS, THERE'S THAT ONE WHO IS THE SLUTTIEST IF YOU DON'T HAVE THAT FRIEND. YOU'RE THAT FRIEND.

LET'S BE REAL.

Danielle Krennka and Courtney Marie like this.

Lauren Lo Sco Scott Lol!!! I think we all know who this is!!! 😂

Like · Reply · Yesterday at 11:25am

Abby Nelson replied · 1 Reply

Jamie Johnson You dirty slut!! 😜 jealous

Like · Reply · Yesterday at 5:32pm

Courtney Marie → Abby Nelson

Oh shit girl. Just got home from last night downtown. Had so much fun bff!!! That tower of tequila rocked my shit. And I lost a sock. Any ideas? Text me when you're up. Let's meet the guys at Rhino's for the game!!! Hugz!!! 😍

#stuckdrunk

You like this:

Alex Hernandez You ladies are crazy, see you later for the game.)

Like · Reply · 1 · Yesterday at 11:30am

Jamie Johnson NEVER messing with that tequila again! PS. thanks for having my back (or my hair) what are besties for, right???
OMG! I woke up this morning and had no idea how I got home! The last thing I remember is tearing up that dance floor with you! Woot woot! And those boys we were dancing with were sooo cute! Hope you made it home OK and that one of those cuties followed you! love you!

Last night was crazy! Somebody needs to fill me on the details... Did I leave with some guy?! lol

Courtney Marie likes this.

Danielle Krenelka — Abby Nelson
Yesterday at 11:06am · A
Hey Abi! Who was that guy you left with last night?! 😊

Ryan Taylor Rodriguez — Abby Nelson
January 23 at 8:07pm · A
Hey girl! It was nice seeing you last night! You were looking fine as Hell in that sexy little dress! Shame I couldn’t have seen more! 😊

Amanda Devane — Abby Nelson
Yesterday at 1:04am · A
Girl, that was a damn crazy night last night. You and that guy were getting crazy on that dance floor! I ate rice again next weekend.
APPENDIX J

Facebook Profile

Social media is becoming increasingly popular in the way in which we interact with and perceive others. This study is exploring how personality and cognitive style affects how people make impressions of others. We will be using Facebook pages as it is one of the more popular and widely used social media platforms. We received permission from 10 people in the local area to use their profiles in this study. Each participant in this study will view one of the 10 profiles. Please view the following Facebook profile carefully.
Abby Nelson
Yesterday at 11:31am

Words to live by-
Marissa Mayer, CEO of Yahoo

"If you push through that feeling of being scared, that feeling of taking risk, really amazing things can happen."

Marissa Ann Mayer

Amanda Devane likes this.

Danielle Krenelka: Love thee! We all know this will be you someday! 😊
Like · Reply · Yesterday at 12:25pm

Jacob Mallow: Liv yo lyr girl!
Like · Reply · Yesterday at 5:51pm

Abby Nelson
Yesterday at 12:27pm

What a crazy-good week! I found out I got my promotion AND I get my own assistant! (he seems really nice). Can't wait to start my new position this week 😊

Kerley Feist, Jamie Johnson, Jessica Lynn and 9 others like this.

View 1 more comment

Amanda Devane: Getting fancy girl!
Like · Reply · Yesterday at 1:00pm

Jamie Johnson: I knew you had it in you! I'm so proud of you!!
Like · Reply · 1 · Yesterday at 9:33pm

Jacob Mallow: I think we need to celebrate!
Like · Reply · Yesterday at 5:49pm

Kerley Feist: Celebrations for getting your own assistant 😊
Like · Reply · 22 hrs.

Write a comment...
Danielle Kremelka → Abby Nelson
Yesterday at 12:25pm
Congratulations on the promotion!!! I’m so proud of you 😊 Maybe you can hire my brother?!

Like, Comment

Courtney Marie → Abby Nelson
Yesterday at 11:52am · Colorado Springs
Hey girl! Congrats on getting account manager!! I know you invested a ton of yourself into your job and I’m proud of your hard work! Let’s have a wine and cheese night with the girls to celebrate this achievement!!

Like, Comment

You and Ryan Taylor Rodriguez like this.

Ryan Taylor Rodriguez I’m sooo happy for you and proud of you!! I’ll meet you ladies out to celebrate! My treat!
Like, Reply · Yesterday at 12:33pm

Alex Hernandez → Abby Nelson
Yesterday at 11:42am ·
Congrats on the promotion!!! Just don’t fire too many people!)

Like, Comment

Amanda Devane → Abby Nelson
Yesterday at 1:57pm
BTW congrats on the promotion! You totally deserve it!

Like, Comment

Danielle Kremelka likes this.

JoAnn Dzieki Congrats Abby!
Like, Reply · Yesterday at 5:55pm

Todd Halvorson → Abby Nelson
1 hr · Moorhead, MN
Thank you so much for getting us such a nice, secluded table tonight...it’s nice to have friends in high places. Keep up the great work Abby!!

Like, Comment
APPENDIX K

Facebook Profile

Social media is becoming increasingly popular in the way in which we interact with and perceive others. This study is exploring how personality and cognitive style affects how people make impressions of others. We will be using Facebook pages as it is one of the more popular and widely used social media platforms. We received permission from 10 people in the local area to use their profiles in this study. Each participant in this study will view one of the 10 profiles. Please view the following Facebook profile carefully.
Abby Nelson
Yesterday at 1:41pm

This completely describes grad school lol!

School is easy. It’s like riding a bike.

Except the bike is on fire and you’re on fire and everything is on fire and you’re in hell.

Like · Comment · Share

Danielle Krenelka and Christina Spielman like this.

Amanda Devane Hey, how school been going?
Like · Reply · 1 · Yesterday at 1:50pm

Sharlynn Thompson · Abby Nelson
Yesterday at 2:31pm · Colorado Springs ·

Do you want to get together next weekend for some shopping? I already wore out those running shoes haha.

Like · Comment

You like this.

Abby Nelson Sounds great!
Like · Reply · Yesterday at 2:41pm

Danielle Krenelka · Abby Nelson
Yesterday at 2:45pm

Hey u did you finish that paper yet?? I’m still working on mine 😓

Like · Comment

Alex Hernandez That paper took forever! Had way too much coffee to get it done
Like · Reply · Yesterday at 3:50pm
Hey when's the research paper due? I'm sure you've already got yours done but I'm just starting. Lemme know!

This last week was crazy! 3 papers and an exam? Who else is exhausted?! #gradschool

working on yourself is NOT selfish. DO YOU!

Wow do you see that snow storm coming in tomorrow? Good thing we got to go hiking while the weather was nice this weekend! 🌡️💨
APPENDIX L

Briefly describe thoughts you have about the woman shown in the Facebook profile.
Social Media Use Survey

Please indicate which of the following social media platforms you use:

_____ Facebook   ______ LinkedIn
_____ Twitter   ______ tumblr
_____ Instagram   ______ MeetMe
_____ Tinder   ______ Vine
_____ WhatsApp  ______ snapchat
_____ Others

Please indicate why you use social media:

_____ connection with friends   _____ meet new people
_____ dating   _____ business
_____ entertainment   _____ other

On average, how many hours a day do you use any social media: ______

Do you feel social media is primarily positive or negative in our society? Why?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Instructions: Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements as they apply to Katie and Josh.

Use the following scale and check the number before each statement to indicate your feelings from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscale 1: She asked for it</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Katie is at least somewhat responsible for letting things get out of hand.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Katie went to the party wearing slutty clothes, and was asking for trouble.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Katie went into a room alone with Josh at the party, and it is her own fault if she was raped.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Katie acted like a slut, eventually she is going to get into trouble</td>
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<tr>
<td>Katie initiated kissing or hooking up, so she should not be surprised if Josh assumed she wanted to have sex.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscale 2: He didn’t mean to</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Josh had a strong desire for sex, it was not his fault.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Josh did not intend to force sex on Katie, but got too sexually carried away.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Josh’s sex drive got out of control.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Josh was drunk, and unintentionally forced sex on Katie.</td>
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<tr>
<td>It shouldn’t be considered rape because Josh was drunk and didn’t realize what he was doing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Both Katie and Josh were drunk, it can’t be rape.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Subscale 3: It wasn’t really rape

Katie did not physically resist sex- it can’t be considered rape.

Katie did not physically fight back, so you can’t really say it was rape.

A rape probably didn’t happen because Katie doesn’t have any bruises or marks from the encounter.

Josh didn’t have a weapon, so you really can’t call it rape.

### Subscale 4: She lied

Katie agreed/meant to have sex and then regretted it.

Katie could accuse Josh of rape to get back at him or purposefully get him/the frat in trouble.

Katie led Josh on and then had regrets.

Katie probably has emotional problems.

Katie claimed it was rape because she didn’t want the other guys in the frat to know she agreed to sex with Josh.
APPENDIX O

Directions: Read each item and decide whether it is true (T) or false (F) for you. Try to work rapidly and answer each question by circling the T or the F.

1. T or F Before voting I thoroughly investigate the qualifications of all the candidates.
2. T or F I never hesitate to go out of my way to help someone in trouble.
3. T or F It is sometimes hard for me to go on with my work if I am not encouraged.
4. T or F I have never intensely disliked anyone.
5. T or F On occasions I have had doubts about my ability to succeed in life.
6. T or F I sometimes feel resentful when I don’t get my way.
7. T or F I am always careful about my manner of dress.
8. T or F My table manners at home are as good as when I eat out in a restaurant.
9. T or F If I could get into a movie without paying and be sure I was not seen, I would probably do it.
10. T or F On a few occasions, I have given up something because I thought too little of my ability.
11. T or F I like to gossip at times.
12. T or F There have been times when I felt like rebelling against people in authority even though I knew they were right.
13. T or F No matter who I’m talking to, I’m always a good listener.
14. T or F I can remember “playing sick” to get out of something.
15. T or F There have been occasions when I have taken advantage of someone.
16. T or F I’m always willing to admit it when I make a mistake.
17. T or F I always try to practice what I preach.
18. T or F I don’t find it particularly difficult to get along with loudmouthed, obnoxious people.
19. T or F I sometimes try to get even rather than forgive and forget.
20. T or F When I don’t know something I don’t mind at all admitting it.
21. T or F I am always courteous, even to people who are disagreeable.
22. T or F At times I have really insisted on having things my own way.
23. T or F There have been occasions when I felt like smashing things.
24. T or F I would never think of letting someone else be punished for my wrongdoings.
25. T or F I never resent being asked to return a favor.
26. T or F I have never been irked when people expressed ideas very different from my own.
27. T or F I never make a long trip without checking the safety of my car.
28. T or F  There have been times when I was quite jealous of the good fortune of others.
29. T or F  I have almost never felt the urge to tell someone off.
30. T or F  I am sometimes irritated by people who ask favors of me.
31. T or F  I have never felt that I was punished without cause.
32. T or F  I sometimes think when people have a misfortune they only got what they deserved.
33. T or F  I have never deliberately said something that hurt someone’s feelings.
APPENDIX P

University of Colorado
Colorado Springs
Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the Protection of Human Subjects

Date: 2/24/2016

IRB Review

IRB PROTOCOL NO.: 16-127
Protocol Title: Impressions Based on Facebook
Principal Investigator: Nicolette Halvorson
Faculty Advisor: Tom Fyzycki
Application: Report of Change (1)
Type of Review: Expedited
Risk Level: No more than Minimal Risk
Renewal Review Level (If changed from original approval) if Applicable: N/A No Change
This Protocol involves a Vulnerable Population: N/A (No Vulnerable Population)
Expires: 15 February 2017

*Note, if exempt: If there are no major changes in the research, protocol does not require review on a continuing basis by the IRB. In addition, the protocol may match more than one review category not listed.

Externally funded: ☒ No ☐ Yes
OSP#: Sponsor:

Thank you for submitting your Request for IRB Review of a proposed change to your original IRB protocol. The protocol identified above has been reviewed according to the policies of this institution and the provisions of applicable federal regulations. The review category is noted above, along with the expiration date, if applicable.

Once human participant research has been approved, it is the Principal Investigator's (PI) responsibility to report any changes in research activity related to the project:

- The PI must provide the IRB with all protocol and consent form amendments and revisions.
- The IRB must approve these changes prior to implementation.
- All advertisements recruiting study subjects must also receive prior approval by the IRB.
- The PI must promptly inform the IRB of all unanticipated serious adverse (within 24 hours). All unanticipated adverse events must be reported to the IRB within 1 week (see 45CFR46.103b). Failure to comply with these federally mandated responsibilities may result in suspension or termination of the project.
- Renew study with the IRB prior to expiration.
- Notify the IRB when the study is complete.

If you have any questions, please contact Research Compliance Specialist in the Office of Sponsored Programs at 719-255-3903 or irb@uccs.edu.

Thank you for your concern about human subject protection issues, and good luck with your research.

Sincerely yours,

Zek Cypress Valkyrie

Zek Cypress Valkyrie, PhD
IRB Reviewer

www.uccs.edu/irb/compulsory/
Version 2/12/13
1420 Austin Benfield, Colorado Springs, CO 80918 719-255-3011 phone: 719-255-3706 fax