

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY

JUST WORLD OR JUST RAPE?
OBSERVER ASSIGNMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY
TO INNOCENT VICTIMS OF CRIME

BY
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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate studies for acceptance, a thesis entitled "Just World or Just Rape?: Observer Assignment of Responsibility to Innocent Victims of Crime," submitted by Diana Hartel in partial fulfillment for the degree of Master of Science.



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ABSTRACT

The present study attempted to address several conceptual and methodological problems associated with Lerner's just world hypothesis.

Factorial manipulations of:

- (a) the degree to which a victim's attack involves sexual abuse,
- (b) the severity of harm received by the victim, and
- (c) victim respectability,

were included to permit an unambiguous examination of their influences upon the victim derogation effect proposed by the theory. In addition, beliefs in a just world and cross-cultural influences were examined as they relate to this phenomenon. The competing hypothesis that negative attitudes toward women are responsible for the victim derogation effects was also tested. Finally, a more specific and multi-faceted examination of perceived responsibility, including observer estimates of victim carelessness and provocativeness was undertaken.

Results based on the responses of two samples of undergraduate university students (120 at the University of Calgary and 120 at the University of Reading, England) directly addressed the following research questions:

- (1) the external validity of the just world hypothesis was examined across situational (degree of sexual involvement, respectability of the victim), outcome (degree of physical harm), personality (beliefs in a just world, attitudes toward women), and cultural (Canadian vs. British participants) factors.

- (2) the proposed inverse relation between the degree of injustice associated with an outcome and observer evaluations of the victim's attractiveness was examined. The contribution of responsibility to this relationship was also assessed.

The overall findings concerning outcome aversiveness, dually conceptualized by the degree of sexual abuse to a victim and the amount of physical harm inflicted during an attack, provided little support for the just world hypothesis. While there appeared to be some increases in negative evaluations of a victim when comparisons were made between a nonsexual offense and an indecent assault, there was little evidence of increasing devaluation or assignment of blame to a victim who was seriously injured or forcibly raped. Experimental manipulations of a victim's perceived respectability revealed that while respondents assigned significantly more characterological blame to a less respectable victim for her attack, the associated just world prediction of elevated assignment of behavioral blame to a respectable victim was not supported. Implications of these results in terms of their relevance to social issues surrounding the treatment of victims of crime are discussed and potential avenues for further research are presented.

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to all victims of injustice.

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THE JUST WORLD HYPOTHESIS

The tendency of people to blame victims of negative events for their own misfortunes has been documented through the years by various authors. In his discussion of physically disabled individuals, Goffman (1961) noted that such stigmas are often viewed by others as indicative of moral deficits, as if these misfortunes were bestowed on people somehow as a retribution for their unsavoury characters. Attributions of this nature can be traced back historically as far as the Biblical account of Job, who was the victim of a series of plagues sent by God as a test of his faith. Repeatedly those around him tried to convince Job that his suffering was a Divine punishment for a sinful life.

On the other hand, success and attractiveness have often been viewed as signs of virtue. This tendency was noted by Berscheid and Walster (1974) who found that physically attractive people were perceived as kinder, more sensitive, and as better citizens than their less attractive counterparts. Lerner (1965) also investigated this phenomenon. He found that students who had been awarded a cash prize in a random draw were perceived by their fellow students as more hard-working than those who were not rewarded, even though there was no difference in the amount of effort expended by either of these two groups.

Such observations are consistent with Heider's (1958) principle of cognitive balance. In this view justice is construed as an "ought

force," inherent in the environment, and is characterized by "the coexistence of happiness and goodness on the one hand, and of unhappiness and wickedness on the other." (Heider, 1958, p. 235). Justice is said to exist when goodness and happiness coexist, i.e., when persons of good character are appropriately rewarded. Conversely, the pairing of wickedness and happiness--e.g., when evil persons are undeservingly rewarded or are left unpunished--serves to upset the balance. It is postulated that the occurrence of such developments inevitably leads to a state of discord, i.e., a situation in which individuals are unable to provide an explanation for the occurrence of events on the basis of their value judgments. When "good" things happen to "bad" people, while "good" people receive negative outcomes, the fundamental belief that "bad" outcomes can be prevented by "good" behavior is contradicted. This can be quite disconcerting to an individual who requires a high degree of certainty and, in effect, may leave him or her without a suitable guideline for future behavior. Without an assumed causal link between character and outcomes, individuals are effectively prevented from predicting the outcomes of their actions on the basis of character, a development which may preclude the pursuit of long-range plans and activities for fear of unforeseen impediments. To circumvent such a state of affairs, balance theory has suggested that people will restructure these discordant cognitions so that misfortune, sickness, accidents, and other negative life events are taken as signs of badness and guilt. Thus, if an individual is plagued by misfortune, it is believed that

he or she has received such a fate as retribution for past transgressions so that the link between character and outcomes is restored. In other words, we are inclined to attribute negative characteristics to victims of misfortune in order to make negative outcomes appear less irrational or threatening.

It was not until the mid-1960s that the relationship between a person's fate and his or her perceived character, as proposed by balance theory, began to receive empirical attention. Building upon Lerner's (1965) study of outcome effects on observer attributions, Walster (1966) proposed that observers tend to consider the severity of an action's outcome when formulating attributions of responsibility for the event. It was hypothesized, for example, that the more harm caused by an accident associated with an unattended vehicle, the greater would be the responsibility assigned to the owner of that vehicle. This proposition was based on the rationale that individuals would find it easier to protect themselves from the possibility of being the recipients of a similar fate if they could conceptualize the occurrence of the accident as the fault of the victim.

The experimenters manipulated the severity of the consequences of an automobile accident while asking respondents to indicate the level of responsibility they would assign for this incident to the owner of the vehicle. Responsibility scores obtained from 98 subjects of both sexes supported the hypothesis. Owners of vehicles in serious outcome conditions were assigned significantly more responsibility than were owners of vehicles in mild outcome conditions. In addition, owners of vehicles in the former condition were charged by respondents with greater moral obligations for the safe upkeep of their vehicles.

Despite these interesting results, however, this study portrayed the owner of the vehicle as both perpetrator and victim of the accident (in light of the presumable damage to the vehicle itself). As a result, it is impossible to generalize these results to situations involving purely innocent victims of negative consequences. This work did indicate, however, that the severity of an event appears to be a crucial determinant of the types of evaluations observers make concerning victims of misfortune.

On the basis of these early investigations, Lerner hypothesized that observers of an injustice will look to the characteristics of a victim of misfortune in order to explain the occurrence of such events. Like balance theory, this perspective, entitled the "just world hypothesis" (Lerner, 1970; 1971; 1980; Lerner & Matthews, 1967; Lerner & Simmons, 1966) specified "justice" in terms of the fit between one's character or actions and the outcomes he or she receives. Thus, in a "just" world, good, deserving people are rewarded for their actions while the evil and the wicked are devalued or punished (Lerner, 1971, p. 127). Beliefs such as these, it has been suggested, are invoked to prevent the state of discord identified by Heider and thus allow individuals to conduct their daily routines without concerning themselves unduly over the possibility of disruptions that may be imposed by unforeseen or unexplainable misfortunes (Lerner & Miller, 1978). Following this logic, only those people who are found deserving of negative outcomes by way of character or actions fall victim to such developments. Those who are perceived to be characterologically or behaviorally above reproach, on the other hand, can continue to proceed in daily activities free from the concern that untoward events will interfere. The individual's need to

believe in such a cognitively balanced world was seen by Lerner, therefore, to determine the attributions he or she would make given a situation in which harmful life events threaten the well-being of others.

Early Experimental Studies

Based upon early references to victim derogation responses, (e.g., Davis & Jones, 1960; Glass, 1964) the first empirical test of the just world hypothesis concentrated on one corollary of the premise, the evaluations one forms of victims of negative life events. The investigators predicted that observers of unexplainable injustices who were unable to alter the fate of the victim would attempt to rationalize the occurrence of the negative outcome by devaluing the victim's character (Lerner & Simmons, 1966). In this study 72 female undergraduate students observed a fellow student (actually an experimental confederate) suffering through a series of painful electric shocks as part of a "learning task." In one condition, entitled "reward," subjects were given an opportunity to compensate the shock victim by voting to reassign her to a reward condition in which she would receive a small amount of money instead of further shocks. In another condition, entitled "mid-point," subjects were unable to compensate the victim and were informed by the experimenter that shocks would continue to be administered after a short break. The investigators reasoned that subjects in the "reward" condition

would be given an opportunity to restore justice to the situation by voting to compensate the victim for her suffering. In the "mid-point" condition, however, they were assumed to be powerless in terms of the restoration of justice, (several other conditions were also included but these have not been detailed here because they do not relate directly to the focus of the present research). As a result, "mid-point" subjects would thus be forced to resort to other explanations for the occurrence of the negative outcome. Following the manipulation, all subjects were asked to rate the individual they had observed on two measures of attractiveness. The first of these consisted of summed ratings of the victim along fifteen evaluative bipolar adjective scales (e.g., "likeable-unlikeable"), yielding an overall index of attractiveness. A second measure of attractiveness consisted of subjects' ratings of the victim on five questions designed to assess her Social Stimulus Value (e.g., "How easily can this person gain admiration from others?"). As with the first measure, responses to these questions were combined to yield a composite index of victim attractiveness.

Lerner and Simmons predicted that observers would devalue the personal characteristics of an unjustly suffering victim (i.e., one that was not compensated for her suffering) in order to preserve their belief in a just world. As hypothesized, the results indicated that subjects in the mid-point condition rated the victim as significantly less attractive on both of the dependent measures than did subjects in the reward condition. These results led Lerner and Simmons to postulate that the greater the perceived injustice to the victim, the

greater was the need of subjects to devalue her in order to maintain their beliefs in a just world. If the victim in an irreversibly unjust situation were viewed as a "bad" or unattractive person, subjects could then minimize the perceived wrongfulness of the situation to a greater extent than if a "good" or attractive person were made to suffer since "goodness" and positive outcomes (and "badness" and negative outcomes) are assumed to covary.

Despite the appeal of this experiment, which was the first to demonstrate observer derogation of victims in a controlled setting, a number of criticisms arose which led to subsequent reformulations of the hypothesis. For example, it was argued that the victim devaluation effect observed in this study may have occurred due to undesirable qualities observed in the victims themselves (cf. Godfrey and Lowe, 1975 for example, who have pointed out that some of the shock victims may have been perceived as cowardly or lacking in self-respect because they allowed themselves to be treated in such a manner). Secondly, the absence of both male and female victim-confederates introduced the possibility that the results occurred because of some unspecified sex-related influence. Thirdly, the authors neglected to provide an operational definition of justice vs. injustice in the experimental paradigm (e.g., via an independent manipulation check).

In addition to these problems, Lerner and Simmons (1966) did not examine the actual relationship between aversive outcomes and observer assignment of responsibility to victims for the consequences that befell them. The nature of this relation was pursued subsequently by Lerner

and Matthews (1967) who reasoned that people are biased to believe that the fates of individuals are determined by their actions. When observers are presented with a situation in which a suffering victim cannot be held responsible for placing herself in unfortunate circumstances, it was predicted that they will attempt to preserve their beliefs in a just world by persuading themselves that the victim deserved to suffer because of her unattractive character.

This experiment was similar in procedure to the Lerner and Simmons (1966) study. However, it was conducted as a 2(observer outcome) X 3(locus of outcome decision) factorial design. All subjects were tested in pairs, one "victim" and one "control" observer. Unknown to subjects, the person with whom they were to be paired was a confederate of the experimenters and it had been arranged for all subjects to escape the shock outcome. Thus the two levels of observer outcome consisted of a condition in which the subject was informed that he or she would serve as an observer of a Lerner and Simmons (1966) "learning task" experiment in exchange for experimental credit and a condition in which he or she was to perform a similar "control" role but would receive a small monetary reward in addition to experimental credit. The three levels of outcome decision consisted of a condition in which subjects ostensibly decided the shock vs. control outcome themselves by choosing a slip of paper from a bowl ("subject chooses first" condition), a condition in which the confederate had the first choice of the two slips and decided her own assignment to the shock condition ("victim chooses first" condition), and an independent outcome decision

in which the choice of the experimenter determined the selection of shock vs. control ("fates independent" condition). After discovering their assignments, subjects were asked to complete a series of questionnaires which included the two attractiveness measures used by Lerner and Simmons (1966). In addition, subjects' perceptions of responsibility for the situation were assessed by having them designate one of three choices (experimenter, other, or self) as being primarily responsible for their own as well as the other's fates.

The researchers formulated two hypotheses. First, they posited that the victim would be rated as more attractive when she selected the aversive outcome slip herself than in the condition in which the choice of the subject determined outcome. This is because, by picking her slip first, the victim would have chosen her own fate and would, therefore, not be seen as an innocent victim of injustice. There would thus be no need to derogate her. However, when the subject's choice determined the outcome, the victim would be perceived as having to suffer through no fault of her own. This was proposed to lead subjects to devalue the victim because of the threat it posed to their beliefs in a just world. The second hypothesis was that the victim would be rated as less attractive when the outcome was determined by the subject as compared to when the experimenter's choice determined the outcomes for the pair.

Both hypotheses were supported by the data. The victim was described as significantly more attractive when she determined her own fate than when the subject's choice determined the fates of the pair

or when the outcomes were determined independently. In addition, when the subjects believed that they were responsible for the other's suffering they rated her as less attractive than when the victim determined her own fate. Finally, these results were similar across the shock vs. control and shock vs. monetary reward slip conditions, indicating that the addition of a small reward had little effect on a subject's ratings of victim attractiveness. Thus it may be that even the presence of reward is not sufficient to dispel the threats posed to an individual's just world beliefs when he or she is faced with an unjust situation.

This study demonstrated that an observer need not be witness to a victim's suffering in order to devalue the personal characteristics of that individual (no observers actually saw the confederate receiving electric shocks). What appears to be essential rather, is the observer's knowledge that another has been (or will be) the recipient of an unjust outcome over which he or she has no control. Further support for this hypothesis has come from a number of subsequent investigations which have collectively demonstrated that an observer's inability to restore justice to the situation (either in terms of a reward to the sufferer or by changing his or her ultimate fate) appears to be a crucial determinant of negative evaluations of victims of misfortune (Lerner, 1971; Lincoln & Levinger, 1972). In summary, these early studies indicated that at least two crucial factors appear to be necessary for victim derogation effects to occur. First, the presence of an unjust situation in which the victim is

portrayed as having to suffer through no fault of her own, and, secondly, an inability on the part of the observer to alter the circumstances to save the victim from further suffering.

Later Analogue Studies

Later analogue research concerning the just world hypothesis has again been largely devoted to the evaluations of forms of victims of negative events. Typically, respondents have received written descriptions of hypothetical aversive events which are analogous to "real life" situations, and have been asked to assign ratings of attractiveness and/or responsibility to the victim. The majority of research, however, has focused on observer evaluations of female victims of sexual abuse and has, in effect, indicated that a victim's perceived character (in terms of observer assigned respectability) plays an important role in the determination of observer attributions of responsibility for negative outcomes. A written or videotaped account of an hypothetical sexual assault has been provided and respondents have been asked to evaluate the victim's attractiveness and/or degree of responsibility for her fate. Like the early experimental studies, these accounts have been structured to depict irreversibly "unjust" situations in which observers are powerless to alter the fates of the individuals concerned.

In a written account of a sexual assault presented to 234 male and female undergraduate subjects, for example, Jones and Aronson (1973)

manipulated the respectability of the victim while measuring her degree of perceived responsibility for the crime. This study was conducted as a 2(type of crime) x 3(victim respectability) factorial design. The crime conditions presented to respondents were rape vs. attempted rape. Victim respectability was manipulated through a mock "police description" of the victim who was characterized as either a married woman, a divorcée, or a virgin prior to the incident (as indicated by medical examination). Respondents also received a mock "police description" of the defendant which remained constant across all conditions, presumably to control for any discrepancy across subjects' victim ratings arising as a function of the characteristics of the attacker. There were two dependent measures. On the first, subjects were asked to indicate the number of years of imprisonment the defendant should receive (on a scale ranging from "less than 1" to "more than 40"). The second measure focused on victim responsibility for the attack. Respondents were asked "How much do you consider the crime to be the victim's fault?" Responses ranged from -10 (high responsibility) to +10 (low responsibility).

Jones and Aronson predicted that a victim who was described as either married or a virgin would be assigned greater responsibility for her misfortune than would a victim who was described as divorced because the former victim's higher level of perceived respectability would result in higher levels of perceived injustice under circumstances of sexual assault.

The data supported this contention. When the victim was

portrayed as a divorcée, she was assigned significantly less responsibility than when she was either a married woman or a virgin. The evaluations of the virgin and the married woman did not differ significantly. Moreover, no sex differences emerged when the responses of male vs. female respondents were compared. The length of sentence assigned by subjects to the defendant in the attack followed the same pattern. Finally, the comparison between actual and attempted rape produced equivalent attributions of fault to the victim.

The results of this study supported just world reasoning, in that observers assigned greater amounts of behavioral blame to a victim who could not be devalued characterologically. However, there appeared to be a slight discrepancy between the order of respectability ratings assigned to victims and the rankings of victim responsibility and defendant sentencing. On the basis of prior pilot data, the virgin was assigned the highest respectability rating, yet it was the married woman to whom subjects ascribed the most responsibility and whose attacker was assigned the longest prison term. This discrepancy may be attributable to a potential confound in this study. The perceived severity of the outcome, in addition to victim respectability, may have been different across the three victim conditions. A married woman, as compared to a virgin or a divorcée, may have been perceived as having a spouse and family whose well-being would also be affected adversely as a result of her being raped. This alternative is consistent with the findings of Walster (1966) who demonstrated that a person is rated more harshly to the extent that the severity of the consequences

he or she receives increases. Because of the grief and suffering experienced by a woman's family as a result of her victimization, subjects may have experienced a greater threat to their own well-being and thus may have assigned higher levels of responsibility to such victims in order to "protect" themselves and their own families from a similar outcome. Data regarding observer estimates of the severity of harm inflicted in the rape of each of the three victims could have provided useful information concerning additional influences which were not accounted for in the design of the experiment. The present investigation will deal directly with this question by varying the severity of the outcome endured by a victim and examining whether the pattern of attributions predicted by Lerner occurs uniformly across this dimension. The logic of just world theory might predict that the victim derogation effect is positively related to the severity of harm to the victim. Lerner (1980) has said, for example, that " . . . innocent and 'helpless' observers who are confronted with prima facie evidence of someone's undeserved suffering will be increasingly likely to reject that victim as a function of the degree of injustice associated with the victim's fate" (Lerner, 1980, p. 56). One might therefore expect that observers should find the occurrence of a highly aversive outcome to an innocent individual as a much greater threat to their sense of justice than when the outcome has less severe consequences. Observers would, therefore, need to devalue a victim of severe consequences even more than the victim of a milder misfortune. If, on the other hand, there are no differences in the derogation

effect across a manipulation of severity, then it would seem that observers' evaluations are affected only by the fact that the consequences of an event are negative, rather than by the magnitude of those consequences. The present study will, therefore, compare observer ratings of a victim of severe consequences with those of a victim of a less aversive misfortune.

Lerner and Miller (1978) have stated that the results of Jones and Aronson (1973) and similar studies (e.g., Alexander, 1980; Stokols & Schopler, 1973; Welsh, 1977) suggest that the knowledge that persons of good character can be made to suffer unjustly undermines one's beliefs in the order and justice existing in the environment. To offset this process, alternative explanations must be sought for unjust conditions. In the case of a respectable victim, respondents find it difficult to identify a characterological explanation and so they are motivated to seek an explanation for the incident in a victim's behavior, resulting in the assignment of elevated levels of responsibility. The injustice is thus corrected by concluding that the victim must have done something to determine her fate.

A study by Smith, Keating, Hester, and Mitchell (1976) attempted to test this assertion via a similar format to that of Jones and Aronson (1973), i.e., by varying the respectability of innocent victims of sexual attacks. In this investigation, however, the victim's respectability was defined by her occupational role. The victim was described as either a Catholic nun (high respectability), a social worker (medium respectability), or an exotic dancer (low respectability). In

addition, the victim's previous acquaintance with her attacker was also manipulated to vary the perceived randomness of the assault. Smith et al. predicted a similar pattern of results on the responsibility variable as had Jones and Aronson (i.e., a respectable victim would be rated as more responsible for her victimization than would a less respectable victim), adding that increased responsibility would be attributed to a victim who was unacquainted with her attacker due to the increased randomness of such an outcome.

A 3(victim occupation) x 2(victim-attacker-acquaintanceship) x 2(sex of subject) factorial analysis of variance was applied to the data obtained from 477 undergraduate psychology students. Results indicated that subjects assigned significantly less responsibility to the nun for the attack than to either the dancer or the social worker when the victim was acquainted with her attacker. Subjects attributed more responsibility to a victim who was unacquainted with her assailant than to a victim in the acquainted condition across all victim categories but this effect only reached significance when the victim was portrayed as a nun. The authors attempted to explain this result as a function of observers' identification with the victim within the Just World framework. According to such reasoning, there is an attenuation in observers' tendencies toward just world rationalizing with increased liking and respect for the victim (Lerner, 1974). Given that subjects' responses to a victim identification measure indicated that they identified most highly with the nun, the investigators, surmized that the results did, indeed, conform to Lerner's prediction. However, when the victim was unacquainted with her attacker, the authors

reasoned that observers' perceptions of the random and arbitrary nature of such assaults increased their need to formulate an explanation for the event; particularly when the victim was portrayed as performing a highly respectable social role. Thus, they were led to propose that something in the behavior of these individuals must have precipitated their victimization. Additional support for this counterintuitive finding has been reported by Calhoun, Selby and Warring (1976) who investigated evaluations assigned to hypothetical rape victims and found the same result.

One strength of this study was that it attempted to probe in greater detail the types of behaviors victims may have been believed to have engaged in and their relationship to perceived responsibility. In previous work, respondents were merely asked to assign a rating of responsibility for the event to the victim (and/or attacker and the experimenter) but were never asked to indicate the basis on which the rating was made. By contrast, Smith et al. inquired about the victim's degree of provocation and carelessness as causes for the attack. However, a complicated pattern of results emerged such that estimates of victim carelessness and provocation, each, yielded a different pattern of results. In addition, a different pattern was observed within each measure for male and female respondents. Moreover, the experimenters were unable to account for this outcome within their experimental design. In concluding, they called for increased research into the bases of observer-generated attributions of responsibility. Unfortunately, however, no new data appear yet to have been published.

In summary, it seems that in both experimental and analogue presentations, situations in which innocent people are portrayed as having to suffer unjustly, without reward or compensation, do lead observers to devalue the personal attributes of the victim in order to achieve a balance between character and fate. However, the literature has also served to identify some delimiting conditions concerning this phenomenon. First, when the victim is perceived as behaviorally responsible for her suffering, the victim derogation effect does not occur (presumably because observers do not feel that an injustice has occurred). This attribution of behavioral responsibility is not always as straight forward as it seems, however. Often observers will infer, in the absence of any objective evidence, that the victim was responsible for the outcome she received (as demonstrated by the slip-choosing experiment of Lerner and Matthews, 1967). This effect is also observed when victims are respectable in character or enjoy high status (i.e., when characterological derogation is precluded). Thus, in the absence of a logical characterological explanation for an unjust event, the theory posits that the strenuous need to believe in a just world leads an observer to search for patterns of behavior as explanations for aversive events, even where they may not exist! Additional research within this paradigm has demonstrated that the just world effect also fails to occur when the observer has been (or expects to be) in a similar position to that of the victim. High situational similarity seems to elicit responses of sympathy or empathy for the victim rather than derogation (Chaikin & Darley, 1973; Adelman,

Brehm & Katz, 1974; Sorrentino & Boutilier, 1974).

Limitations of Current Research and Needed Extensions

While the research thus far has been intriguing, a number of problems have arisen which the present investigation will attempt to resolve. These include the limited settings in which the hypothesis has been tested and the need for a test of the competing hypothesis that victim derogation effects may arise from negative attitudes toward women rather than needs to believe in a just world. A final problem focuses on the dearth of information regarding the effects of severity of harm to a victim on attributions of responsibility within the just world framework.

Why Just Rape?

Perhaps the most glaring limitation in the analogue literature has been its exclusive reliance on accounts involving sexual abuse of women as the situation in which victim derogation effects are examined. The omission of a comparison group of victims of other (nonsexual) crimes introduces the competing hypothesis that the tendency of observers to assign heightened levels of responsibility to victims of crime is unique to crimes in which there is a high level of sexual involvement.

Alexander (1980) attempted to address this problem by comparing observers' evaluations of a victim of a nonsexual assault with their evaluations of a rape victim. A sample of 312 nurses provided

evaluations of the two types of victims. Results indicated that while victims of both categories of crimes were attributed minimal levels of responsibility relative to their attackers, a rape victim was assigned slightly higher levels of blame than was an assault victim (these differences did not reach statistical significance, however). Moreover, in contrast to the findings of Jones and Aronson (1973) and Smith et al. (1976), a less respectable victim (i.e., one who was divorced, dressed provocatively, offered little physical resistance, and who received minor injuries) was assigned significantly more responsibility for her attack in the rape conditions than was a victim who was highly respectable. This result was not replicated however in the assault condition, suggesting that some victim characteristics (e.g., victim respectability) may only be taken into consideration by observers for certain crimes and not for others. It was concluded that nurses' judgments of rape victims appeared to be influenced primarily by their perceptions of the victim's character (as implied by her dress or marital status) whereas their judgments of assault victims were based to a greater extent on their perceptions of the victim's behavior at the time of the incident (e.g., degree of resistance to the attacker).

Observers may look to different aspects of the situation when assigning responsibility to the victims of sexual vs. nonsexual offenses. However, Alexander looked only at global measures of responsibility. The present investigation will attempt to extend this research (by experimentally manipulating the degree of sexual

involvement in a crime and the respectability of the victim).

Moreover, an effort will be made to improve upon Alexander's contribution by separating respondents' perceptions of the victim's character as compared to her behavior as indices of her responsibility for the offense. Observers will also be asked to indicate why the victim may have been responsible for her attack to uncover any other possible factors which may be involved.

The Influence of Severity

Walster (1966) first proposed that observer devaluation of victims of misfortune may occur as a function of the severity of the consequences to the individual. However subsequent research has failed to provide clear-cut support for this claim (e.g., Walster, 1967; Shaver, 1970). Shaw and Skolnick (1971), for example, found that subjects assigned more responsibility to the victim of a mild accident than to the victim of a severe accident. They also reported that subjects perceived accidents having severe consequences as more likely to have occurred by chance than those which had milder consequences. This finding appears to be in complete contradiction to what just world reasoning would predict (i.e., that individuals would see severe outcomes as more of a threat to their beliefs in a just world and would have a greater need to identify a logical explanation for their occurrence). Yet Walster failed to explain it. Thus, there appears to be a need for further research concerning outcome severity to determine if it, indeed, places a constraint on the validity of the

just world hypothesis.

Stokols and Schopler (1973) attempted to examine the role played by outcome severity in observers' evaluations of victims. They predicted that the victim of a severe outcome would be rated more negatively by observers than would one who received a relatively milder misfortune. This hypothesis was based on the rationale that very severe outcomes would increase observers' tendencies to view the victim as the cause of the misfortune (in order to protect themselves from the possibility of a similar outcome) and to evaluate him or her unfavorably as a result. The data supported this prediction, i.e., a victim was rated as significantly more attractive when her misfortune had been mild than when it had been severe. Also, the perceived probabilities that subjects would like the victim were greater for victims in low-severity conditions than for victims in high severity conditions.

Following this logic, would it not be possible to assume that observers' estimates of responsibility would also increase with increased outcome severity if characterological devaluation of a victim was precluded by descriptions of the victim which emphasized "good" character? The present study will attempt to do this by the manipulation of a victim's character in conjunction with escalating levels of outcome severity. If negative evaluations of victims occur as a result of respondents' desires to preserve their beliefs in a just world, then increased devaluation of victims, either by characterological derogation (of "bad" individuals) or by behavioral

blame of individuals perceived to be of "good" character would be expected to accompany increased aversiveness of outcome. Moreover, because of the previously discussed problems associated with the predominance of scenarios involving sexual abuse of the victim in previous research, outcome severity will be dually conceptualized by this investigation, i.e., by the degree of sexual involvement in a crime (ranging from a nonsexual offense to forcible rape) in order to test the competing hypothesis introduced in the previous section, and also by the amount of physical harm to the victim (consisting of a condition in which the victim is physically unharmed and a condition in which the victim receives extensive injuries as a result of the attack). Thus, a clear-cut explanation will be sought for the influence of outcome severity on observer evaluations of both victim attractiveness and responsibility.

Incongruencies in the Effects of Victim Respectability

The just world hypothesis stresses that observers will look to the behavior of victims with whom they cannot find characterological fault in order to explain the occurrence of injustices. Yet, some of the previously-cited studies which have supported this relation have since come to be questioned. Subsequent investigations have reported no relation between victim respectability and attribution of responsibility (e.g., Fulero & Delara, 1976; Kahn, Gilbert, Latta, Deutsch, Hagen, Hill, McGaughey, Ryan & Wilson, 1977; Kanekar & Kolswalla, 1977) while others (e.g., Feldman-Summers & Lindner, 1976) have found a

negative relation between increased respectability and decreased assignment of fault. Kahn et al., for example, attempted to replicate the Jones and Aronson (1973) experiment, while at the same time examining the influence of an added variable, observer identification with the victim and attacker. The investigators sampled 252 male and 311 female introductory psychology students and employed the Jones and Aronson procedure (with the addition of one victim and one defendant condition). For the identification variable, it was predicted that female respondents would identify more with the rape victim and would thus assign less fault to her than would male subjects, who were predicted to identify more with the defendant. Results indicated that this prediction was only partially confirmed. While females did identify more with the victim and males did identify more with the attacker, there were no significant sex differences observed in attributions of responsibility to the victim. Furthermore, the manipulations of respectability did not appear to produce the same effects as those reported by the Jones and Aronson (1973) and Smith et al. (1976) studies. Mean attributions of responsibility to the virgin, married woman, and divorcée did not differ for either of the two defendants (math teacher and auto mechanic) on any of the three dependent measures. Similar results were reported for the years of imprisonment subjects would assign to the defendant.

On the basis of these findings, Kahn et al. concluded that the manipulation of victim respectability did not have any effect on respondents' attributions of fault. The contrasting results in this

area lead to a number of questions concerning the role of victim respectability in a crime. Perhaps the differences in results across these investigations are a function of sampling variation or perhaps it is the case that the relationship between victim respectability and attribution of blame to her is changing as university students' attitudes become more liberal. The present investigation will again manipulate victim respectability in a crime of rape, but in addition will also look at other crimes including indecent assault and nonsexual offenses. The purpose of this is to investigate whether victim respectability plays a role only in crimes in which there is a strong sexual component. Furthermore, as the evidence for the Jones and Aronson relation between victim respectability and attributed responsibility seems equivocal, added measures of responsibility will be included. For example, respondents' attributions to chance for the attack will be examined in order to test the just world prediction that observers of an attack upon an individual of good character will feel more threatened by this outcome and will, consequently, search for concrete explanations for the injustice elsewhere. As suggested by Stokols and Schopler (1973) and Smith et al. (1976), multiple measures of responsibility, such as provocation and carelessness, will also be included in an effort to resolve previous incongruencies in the literature. A subdivision of global responsibility into more specific aspects of behavior may reveal, for example, that respondents in those studies which found no relation between victim respectability and attributions of blame may have found it difficult to find a

respectable woman "responsible" for the rape. However, if they were asked if the rape occurred because of carelessness on her part, subjects may have been more inclined to respond in the manner predicted by the theory. The present investigation will, therefore, reexamine the effects of a manipulation of a victim's perceived respectability on observer evaluations of her on a larger scale than previous work. Not only will the role of respectability be examined in a crime of rape, but also for a number of comparable nonsexual offenses. Moreover, an expanded set of dependent measures will be employed in an attempt to uncover previously unexamined aspects of responsibility as they relate to a victim's perceived respectability.

The Question of Attitudes Toward Women

The great majority of Just World research, to date, has included only females in the role of victim. It may be, therefore, that the findings reported thus far are attributable to a negative attitude toward women rather than to an hypothetical need to believe in a just world. This competing hypothesis has received support from a number of sources in the victimology literature. Feild (1978), for example, found a significant relationship between high scores on the Attitudes Toward Women Scale (Spence, Helmreich, & Stapp, 1973), a measure of attitudes concerning the role of women in society, and negative attitudes toward rape. Adherents of a bias toward traditional roles for women were more likely to consider the occurrence of rape as being the fault of the woman involved than were more liberally minded

individuals. A similar result was reported in Britain by Howells, Shaw, Greasley, Robertson, Gloster, and Metcalfe (1981) who found that relatively liberal males (i.e., high scorers on the Attitudes Toward Women Scale) were more likely to view a rape victim as less responsible and a defendant as more responsible for the attack than were males who were more traditionally oriented. Finally, sex differences in the assignment of responsibility to victims have been consistently reported in the rape literature (e.g., Calhoun, Selby, & Warring, 1976; Kanekar & Kolswalla, 1977; Thornton, Ryckman & Robbins, 1982; Rapaport & Burkhart, 1984).

Acock and Ireland (1983) attempted to probe this hypothesis further by concerning themselves with behavior that violated traditional female sex-role expectations. They hypothesized that a woman's violation of certain behavioral norms could have a crucial influence on observers' attributions of blame to both her and her attacker. Results obtained from 389 subjects of both sexes indicated that a victim who had committed a sex-role norm violation (e.g., by offering a stranger a ride) was perceived by others to deserve significantly less respect and as being more to blame for her rape than was a victim who adhered to socially accepted sex-role behavior. Moreover, observers' sex-role attitudes emerged as an important determinant of their attributions of responsibility for an attack. Subjects with relatively traditional sex-role attitudes perceived the victim as less respectable and blamed her more (and her attacker less) for the rape than did subjects with more liberal attitudes, regardless of her

actions prior to the incident. The authors proposed that, for traditional respondents, it may simply have been the occurrence of rape that prompted devaluation of the victim, regardless of whether she had committed a norm violation or not. In light of this finding, it would be worthwhile to examine the effects of sex-role attitudes on observers' ratings of victim attractiveness and attributions of blame. It would be unnecessary to invoke an hypothetical need to preserve justice if victim derogation effects are attributable simply to traditional sex-role attitudes. An index of observers' attitudes toward women will be included in the present study, therefore, to test this competing hypothesis.

Individual Differences in Just World Beliefs

A final focus of concern regards the intensity of one's just world beliefs in relation to derogation and blame of innocent victims. Approximately 33% of the participants in the original Lerner and Simmons (1966) study did not demonstrate the reported victim derogation effect. This indication of individual differences in just world beliefs (Lerner, 1980, p. 12) led Rubin and Peplau (1973; 1975) to the development of the Just World Scale which assesses the degree to which an individual perceives others as deserving of their fates. The resulting instrument is a 20-point paper-and-pencil measure with responses which are intermixed with just and unjust-scored items answered along a 6-point continuum of agreement/disagreement. Items

on the scale were taken from a variety of domains, including political beliefs, treatment of criminals, economic concerns, and child-rearing. As there have been relatively few indices of the validity of this instrument published in the literature (see Rubin & Peplau, 1975 for a review), the present investigation will employ the Just World Scale in order to determine the relation between scale scores and observer evaluations of innocent victims. As the just world hypothesis has established that it is an individual's need to believe in an orderly and stable environment which governs his or her reactions to victims of misfortune, it is expected that high scorers on the scale (indicative of strong beliefs in a just world) would be more likely to assign elevated levels of derogation and responsibility to victims than would individuals with lower scores on the measure. The present study will therefore include an examination of the construct validity of the Just World Scale in this situation.

Cross-Cultural Considerations

Before concluding this section, it appears necessary to mention that while the just world hypothesis has been used to corroborate victim derogation effects in North America, there is a dearth of research concerning the possibility of cross-cultural differences in just world beliefs. In Britain, Wagstaff (1982; 1983) surveyed 39 individuals in Liverpool, England and found that those who had relatively strong just world beliefs were more likely to attribute higher levels of responsibility to victims of crime than were those with less

strong beliefs. However, while these results were in the expected direction, and are intuitively appealing, the use of very small sample sizes by the author limits the generalizability of the results.

Another non-North American study in this vein was an investigation conducted in India by Kanekar and Kolswalla (1977) which attempted to replicate the Jones and Aronson (1973) study. As already indicated, these authors failed to replicate the Jones and Aronson results. There were no differences in the responsibility assigned to victims who differed in perceived respectability. On the basis of these findings, further research of the cross-cultural validity of the just world hypothesis is, thus, clearly warranted.

Research Questions to be Addressed in Present Experiment

The previous review has discussed a number of problems associated with just world research, to date. These have included an overabundance of studies involving sexual abuse as the situation in which the just world effect has been tested along with an over-reliance of females in the role of victim. Incongruencies in the effects of victim respectability on attributions of blame have been noted, as have differences in observer estimates of varying aspects of responsibility (i.e., in ascriptions of carelessness vs. provocation to victims of an attack). The literature has also failed to provide a definite statement on the relationship between the estimated severity of an outcome and an observer's assessment of responsibility for the

event. Finally, the generalizability of the just world hypothesis across cultures has only begun to be examined. The present study will attempt to address these problems through factorial manipulations of: (a) the degree to which a victim's attack involves sexual abuse, (b) the degree of physical harm received by a victim, and (c) victim respectability. The experimental manipulation of these factors will permit an unambiguous examination of their influences upon the victim derogation effect proposed by the just world hypothesis. In addition, beliefs in a just world and cultural influences will be examined as they relate to this phenomenon. The competing hypothesis that negative attitudes toward women are responsible for the victim derogation effect will also be tested. Finally, a more specific and multifaceted examination of perceived responsibility will be included. Specifically, according to just world reasoning, it is hypothesized that respondents' estimates of negative character and victim blame will increase as the amount of sexual abuse or physical harm to a victim of crime increases, due to the greater threat that such outcomes pose to the belief in a just world. It is predicted that respectable victims will be assigned higher levels of behavioral responsibility for their attacks, while respondents will be more inclined to devalue the attractiveness and assign greater levels of characterological blame to victims who are less respectable.

Thus, in summary, the present investigation will examine the effects of outcome severity on observers' evaluations of victims of crime. This will be done by the inclusion of escalating levels of

both sexual involvement in a crime and physical harm to a victim. The effects of a victim's perceived respectability on observer attributions of her attractiveness and responsibility for a crime will be investigated by the inclusion of multiple measures of these attributes. Moreover, the contribution of attitudinal variables such as respondents' attitudes toward women and beliefs in a just world will be measured in order to determine their impact on the victim derogation effect proposed by just world theory. Finally, the cross-cultural validity of the just world hypothesis will be assessed by comparing the evaluations of victims made by observers in different countries. Furthermore, reactions of characterological devaluation and assignment of heightened levels of responsibility to victims should be more pronounced for respondents who receive high scores on the Just World Scale. It is also predicted that individuals with strong beliefs in a just world should display similar reactions to victims across both cultures.

The proposed inverse relation between the severity of harm experienced by a victim and an observer's evaluations of her attractiveness will be investigated in greater detail through a dual conceptualization, in terms of sexual abuse and physical injury. Furthermore the relationship between outcome severity and observer assignment of responsibility will be assessed. Here it is predicted that estimates of a victim's behavioral responsibility for an attack (specifically for individuals of "good" character) will increase with levels of sexual abuse and physical harm, as a result of the threat that such outcomes pose to observers' just world beliefs.

METHOD

Participants

A sample of 240 undergraduate university students from two different countries participated. This included 120 undergraduate psychology students at the University of Calgary and 120 undergraduate social sciences students at the University of Reading, England.

Materials

All subjects were given a packet of questionnaires containing the following measures (copies of each of these have been included in Appendix A):

Background Information Questionnaire

This obtained information concerning respondents' sex, age, socioeconomic status, religious practices, belief in God, ethnic background, and degree program (i.e., B.A., B.Sc., etc.).

Experimental Vignettes

Each packet contained one of twelve vignettes describing an hypothetical incident (see Appendix B for complete set). The twelve vignettes entailed descriptions of a crime in which the three independent variables were crossed factorially: i.e., Degree of

Sexual involvement (high, medium, low) x Severity of Physical Harm to the Victim (injury, no injury) x Victim Respectability (high, low). Degree of Sexual Involvement in the crime was manipulated by having the victim entirely unaffected sexually (no sex), indecently assaulted by having her breasts fondled by her assailant (medium sex), or forcibly raped (high sex). Severity of Physical Harm to the Victim was manipulated by having her receive either no physical injury as a result of her victimization or by having her sustain injuries (cuts, bruises, a broken arm and internal injuries) which required hospitalization for one week. Victim respectability was manipulated by having the character in the vignette (Susan D.) working part-time as either a cashier in her father's store (high respect) or as an exotic dancer in a nightclub (low respect). All other aspects of the vignettes were kept uniform. Each of these outcomes occurred in a situation in which the victim was abducted on her way home from her job and forcibly confined. These accounts were rated along 3 dimensions (i.e., sexual nature of the crime, degree of physical harm to the victim, and respectability of the victim) in a pilot study by 240 undergraduate university students at the University of Calgary and were found to differ significantly across all levels of each of the independent variables (a summary of the pilot study is presented in Appendix C).

Attractiveness Measures

The two indices of victim attractiveness used in the original Lerner and Simmons (1966) study were included (see Appendix A). These

consisted of summed ratings along fifteen bipolar adjective scales (the Bipolar Attractiveness Index), as well as a summed rating of five questions designed to assess a victim's "Social Stimulus Value" (e.g., "How easily can Susan D. gain admiration and liking from others?").

Responsibility Measures

Responsibility measures consisted of six questions specifically designed for this study (see Appendix A). These included global estimates of responsibility for the incident for both the victim and her attacker, as well as questions designed to examine the degree to which a victim's attack was perceived to be attributable to: (a) chance, (b) her actions at the time of the incident (the Index of Victim Provocation), and (c) carelessness. A question was also designed to address respondents' characterological blame of the victim (i.e., blame for the incident as a function of the victim's character). Finally, an open-ended question asked respondents to explain in greater detail why they may have believed that the victim was responsible for what happened to her.

Beliefs in a Just World

The 20-item form of the Just World Scale (Rubin & Peplau, 1975) was employed (see Appendix A). The scale was slightly modified in this study so that it could be administered to both Canadian and British samples. Some scale items designed for use by American samples were altered to a more general context. For example, the item

"It is often impossible for a person to receive a fair trial in the U.S.A." was changed to "It is often impossible for a person to receive a fair trial in this country."

Attitudes Toward Women

A short form of the Attitudes Toward Women Scale (Spence, Helmreich, & Stapp, 1973) was completed by all subjects (see Appendix A).

Procedure

Participants were randomly assigned to one of twelve groups formed by the factorial crossing of the three independent variables, i.e., 3 levels of Sexual Involvement (high, medium, low) x 2 levels of Physical Harm to the Victim (injury, no injury) x 2 levels of Victim Respectability (high, low). The test packets containing one of the experimental vignettes and all of the questionnaires described above were distributed within a group setting for both Canadian and British samples. Subjects were asked to read the stories and to complete the questionnaires within the packets. All materials were collected at the end of the test period at which time subjects were debriefed as to the nature of the experiment. Completion of all materials required approximately 25 minutes.

RESULTS

Multiple Regression-Correlation Analyses

The research questions examined by this study permitted the use of hierarchical multiple regression analyses (Pedhazur, 1982) in which the unique contribution of both categorical and continuous variables could be assessed. As there were no demographic variables with correlations with any dependent variables greater than .3, these were not retained for further analyses (Pedhazur, 1982). (See Appendix D for these correlations). Statistics descriptive of the 8 dependent measures and 2 continuous variables are presented in Tables 1 and 2 for Canadian and British samples, respectively. Mean demographic statistics for the two samples are summarized in Table 3.

Separate regression analyses were performed for each of the eight dependent variables. Predictor variables were entered into the regression equation in a predetermined forward stepwise fashion as follows. In the first step, measures of Beliefs in a Just World and Attitudes Toward Women were entered (results have been reported in terms of partial correlations). The three categorical variables (i.e., Degree of Sexual Involvement, Level of Physical Harm, and Victim Respectability) were entered in step 2. In a third step, the two-way interactions between continuous and categorical variables were entered (as defined by the partialled products of the individual predictor variables). This step was included at this point in the

Table 1

Canadian Sample: Descriptive Statistics for 8 Observer Evaluation
Measures and 2 Attitude Measures

Variable	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	Observed range
Bipolar attractiveness			
index	70.6	9.7	47 - 99
Social stimulus value	17.8	4.4	9 - 30
Victim responsibility	3.1	1.7	1 - 6
Attacker responsibility	5.6	1.1	1 - 6
Victim provocation	3.3	1.6	1 - 6
Victim carelessness	3.9	1.6	1 - 6
Characterological blame	2.7	1.5	1 - 6
Attributions to chance	3.3	1.7	1 - 6
Just world scale	74.6	9.4	51 - 98
Attitudes toward women			
scale	55.7	10.9	18 - 75

Table 2

British Sample: Descriptive Statistics for 8 Observer Evaluation Measures
and 2 Attitude Measures

Variable	<u>M</u>	<u>SD</u>	Observed range
Bipolar attractiveness index	68.4	9.1	40 - 91
Social stimulus value	18.6	3.5	5 - 26
Victim responsibility	3.3	1.6	1 - 6
Attacker responsibility	5.7	0.9	1 - 6
Victim provocation	3.6	1.8	1 - 6
Victim carelessness	4.0	1.6	1 - 6
Characterological blame	2.7	1.5	1 - 6
Attributions to chance	3.6	1.8	1 - 6
Just world scale	67.0	10.0	39 - 97
Attitudes toward women scale	61.9	10.8	28 - 75

Table 3

Mean Demographic Statistics

Variable	Sample	
	Canada	Britain
Female (<u>n</u>)	62	89
Male (<u>n</u>)	58	31
Age in years	20.7	21.4
SES index ^a	3.0	2.2
Practise of religion ^b	50	47
Belief in God ^c	4.8	4.1

^aSocioeconomic status was represented by Blishen Scale values for Canadian respondents (range = 1 - 6) and by Hall-Jones Scale Values (Oppenheim, 1966) for British respondents (range = 1 - 7). In both cases lower values indicate higher socioeconomic status.

^bIn both cases the value indicated represents number of individuals who report actively practising their religion.

^cBelief in God was rated along a 7-point scale ranging from 1(no belief) to 7 (strong belief).

hierarchy in order to test for homogeneity of regression coefficients (Pedhazur, 1982). Finally, in steps 4 and 5 the two-way, and the three-way interaction terms between categorical variables were entered into the equation. Categorical variables were represented by effects-coded variables and results have been reported in terms of the F ratios derived from their associated increments in R^2 .

The purpose of the study was to examine fundamental research questions concerning the validity of the just world hypothesis. Thus, results will be presented separately for factors associated with outcome aversiveness, victim respectability, and finally, for personality factors. Any observed interaction will be discussed after main effects. Given that the scope of the differences between Canadian and British respondents extended to six of the eight dependent variables, results will be presented separately for the two samples. Overall multiple regression analyses results for the two samples are reported in Tables 4 and 6 and 8 and 9, respectively for Canada and Britain.

Canada

A. Factors Associated with Outcome Aversiveness

1. Sexual Involvement in a Crime

(a) Attractiveness measures. The first issue addressed by this study was the effect of increasing levels of sexual abuse to a victim on respondents' evaluations of her attractiveness. Of the two

attractiveness measures (the bipolar attractiveness index and the measure of a victim's perceived Social Stimulus Value), the victim derogation effect proposed by the theory was only partially witnessed (see Table 4). Bipolar attractiveness estimates differed significantly as a function of the sexual involvement in a crime, $F(2,107) = 3.92$, $p < .05$ (see Table 5). A posteriori adjusted means tests, adjusted for respondents' attitudes toward women (Pedhazur, 1982) indicated that a victim of indecent assault (adjusted $M = 67.8$) was perceived as significantly less attractive than a victim of a similar nonsexual offense (adjusted $M = 73.6$).

However, there were no significant differences in levels of attractiveness assigned to a victim of rape as opposed to a similar victim of an indecent assault or a nonsexual crime.

Sexual involvement in a crime was also significantly related to observer estimates of a victim's Social Stimulus Value, $F(2,107) = 3.97$, $p < .05$ (see Table 5). A victim of an indecent assault ($M = 17.1$) and a victim of rape ($M = 17.0$) were perceived as significantly less attractive than a victim of a nonsexual crime ($M = 19.4$) according to a posteriori Newman-Keuls tests (Kirk, 1982). However, here again, as on the bipolar attractiveness index, there were no significant differences in the amount of Social Stimulus Value assigned to a victim of rape as opposed to a victim of an indecent assault.

(b) Responsibility measures. Sexual involvement in a crime was not significantly related to any of the six measures of

Table 4

Multiple Regression-Correlation Analysis Results for AttractivenessMeasures for Canadian Sample

Predictor	Bipolar attractiveness index			Social stimulus value		
	ΔR^2	df	\underline{F}	ΔR^2	df	\underline{F}
Just world beliefs ^a (A)						
Attitudes toward women ^a (B)	.09	2,109	5.40**	.01	2,107	<1.0
Sexual involvement ^{b,g} (C)	.06	4,107	3.92*	.08	4,105	4.42*
Physical harm ^c (D)						
Victim respectability ^c (E)	.04	6,105	2.37	.16	6,103	11.03**
Interactions						
A x B ^d	.06	15,96	< 1.0	.07	15,94	1.10
A x C ^d						
A x D ^d						
A x E ^d						
B x C ^d						
B x D ^d						
B x E ^d						
C x D ^e	.05	20,91	< 1.0	.04	19,90	1.43
C x E ^e						
D x E ^e						
C x D x E ^f	.00	22,89	< 1.0	.02	21,88	1.10

(table continues)

Table 4 (continued)

Note.

^{a-f}Signify that predictor variables sharing the same letter were entered as a set into the regression equation. The alphabetical order of the letters indicates the order in which sets of variables were entered.

^gSexual involvement in a crime was entered before the remaining two categorical variables for reasons of ease in interpretation.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Table 5

Mean Attractiveness Scores for Canadian Sample

Condition	<u>n</u>	Attractiveness measure	
		Bipolar attractiveness ^a	Social stimulus value
No sex	39		
<u>M</u>		73.6	19.4
<u>SD</u>		9.3	4.3
Medium sex	39		
<u>M</u>		67.8	17.1
<u>SD</u>		9.1	5.1
High sex	39		
<u>M</u>		70.8	17.0
<u>SD</u>		10.2	3.5

Note. The higher the score, the greater the level of attractiveness assigned.

^aThe means along this measure have been adjusted for Attitudes Toward Women.

responsibility as a main effect (see Table 5). Therefore, no tables of means have been presented for responsibility measures. However there were significant interactions observed between sexual involvement and other variables for two of these measures, i.e., victim responsibility (in which respondents were asked to indicate in global terms how responsible was the victim for what happened to her) and attributions to chance for the event. As both of these results took the form of interactions, they will be discussed later in a section devoted exclusively to interactions.

2. Severity of Physical Harm to the Victim

(a) Attractiveness measures. The hypothesis that a victim's perceived attractiveness will decrease with increasing levels of outcome severity (as operationalized by physical injury) was not supported by this study. There were no significant differences in levels of attractiveness assigned to a victim who received extensive injuries as compared to one who received no injuries on either of the two attractiveness measures.

(b) Responsibility measures. The manipulation of severity of physical harm to the victim produced no significant differences in the amount of fault assigned to victims on any of the responsibility measures (with the exception of a three-way interaction between Sexual Involvement x Physical Harm x Victim Respectability on respondents' attributions to chance which will be discussed below). Thus, the

Table 6

Multiple Regression-Correlation Analyses Results for Responsibility
Measures for Canadian Sample

Predictor	Global victim responsibility			Attacker responsibility		
	ΔR^2	df	F	ΔR^2	df	F
Just world beliefs ^a (A)						
Attitudes toward women ^a (B)	.03	2,110	1.91	.00	2,110	< 1.0
Sexual involvement ^{b,g} (C)	.02	4,108	1.09	.02	4,108	< 1.0
Physical harm ^c (D)						
Victim respectability ^c (E)	.04	6,106	2.26	.01	6,106	< 1.0
Interactions						
A x B ^d	.18	15,97	2.60*	.05	15,97	< 1.0
A x C ^d						
A x D ^d						
A x E ^d						
B x C ^d						
B x D ^d						
B x E ^d						
C x D ^e						
C x E ^e	.08	20,92	2.16	.04	20,92	< 1.0
D x E ^e						
C x D x E ^f	.00	22,90	< 1.0	.01	22,90	< 1.0

(table continues)

Table 6 (continued)

Multiple Regression-Correlation Analyses Results for Responsibility
Measures for Canadian Sample

Predictor	Victim provocation			Victim carelessness		
	ΔR^2	df	F	ΔR^2	df	F
Just world beliefs ^a (A)						
Attitudes toward women ^a (B)	.01	2,110	< 1.0	.05	2,110	3.07*
Sexual involvement ^{b,g} (C)	.02	4,108	1.04	.03	4,108	1.64
Physical harm ^c (D)						
Victim respectability ^d (E)	.00	6,106	< 1.0	.01	6,106	< 1.0
Interactions						
A x B ^d	.13	15,97	1.70	.09	15,97	1.15
A x C ^d						
A x D ^d						
A x E ^d						
B x C ^d						
B x D ^d						
B x E ^d						
C x D ^e	.02	20,92	< 1.0	.03	20,92	4.0
C x E ^e						
D x E ^e						
C x D x E ^f	.01	22,90	< 1.0	.01	22,90	< 1.0

(table continues)

Table 6 (continued)

Multiple Regression-Correlation Analyses Results for Responsibility
Measures for Canadian Sample

Predictor	Character blame			Attributions to chance		
	ΔR^2	df	\underline{F}	ΔR^2	df	\underline{F}
Just world beliefs ^a (A)						
Attitudes toward women ^a (B)	.14	2,110	8.80**	.14	2,109	8.92**
Sexual involvement ^{b,g} (C)	.02	4,108	1.17	.02	4,107	1.15
Physical harm ^c (D)						
Victim respectability ^c (E)	.05	6,106	2.98	.01	6,105	<1.0
Interactions						
A x B ^d	.03	15,97	0.44	.03	15,96	<1.0
A x C ^d						
A x D ^d						
A x E ^d						
B x C ^d						
B x D ^d						
B x E ^d						
C x D ^e	.02	20,92	<1.0	.08	20,91	2.12
C x E ^e						
D x E ^e						
C x D x E ^f	.08	22,90	1.63	.05	22,89	3.32*

(table continues)

Table 5 (continued)

Note.

^{a-f}Signify that predictor variables sharing the same letter were entered as a set into the regression equation. The alphabetical order of the letters indicates the order in which sets of variables were entered.

^gSexual involvement in a crime was entered before the remaining two categorical variables for reasons of ease in interpretation.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

hypothesis that individuals are assigned more responsibility for the events that befall them as a function of the consequences of those events (cf. Walster, 1966) was not supported in this sample.

As a final note to this section, no significant relationships were observed between any of the manipulated independent variables and respondents' estimates of attacker responsibility. Regardless of the degree of sexual involvement in a crime, the amount of physical harm to the victim, and the victim's perceived respectability, all respondents assigned very high levels of responsibility to attackers ($M = 5.6$ on a 6-point scale).

B. Victim Respectability

(a) Attractiveness measures. The second factor examined by the research questions concerned the role of a victim's perceived respectability on observer evaluations of her attractiveness and responsibility. Of the two attractiveness measures, a victim's respectability was significantly related only to her perceived Social Stimulus Value ($\beta = -0.36$, $p < .01$). A less respectable victim (i.e., an exotic dancer) was rated as having significantly less Social Stimulus Value ($M = 16.3$) than was a highly respectable victim (i.e., a cashier) ($M = 19.4$). However, there was no such difference observed on the bipolar attractiveness index.

(b) Responsibility measures. There was no support among any of the behavioral responsibility measures for the hypothesis that highly

respectable victims are assigned higher levels of behavioral blame for their attacks than their less respectable counterparts. However, when means adjusted for the influence of attitudes toward women were compared, the exotic dancer was rated as more responsible (adjusted $M = 3.1$) than was the cashier (adjusted $M = 2.5$) on the measure of characterological blame, ($\beta = 0.21$, $p < .05$) consistent with the theory's prediction of elevated character blame in the former category. In addition, a significant relationship was observed between victim respectability and observers' attributions to chance for the attack. However, given that this effect was part of a 3-way interaction, it will be discussed in a separate section.

C. Personality Factors

The competing hypothesis that negative attitudes toward women are responsible for victim derogation and blame fared slightly better than Just World Scale scores in accounting for variance among the dependent measures (see Table 7). Attitudes Toward Women scores were significantly related to a victim's Bipolar Attractiveness rating, indicating that respondents with more liberal attitudes toward women's roles in society assigned higher levels of attractiveness to victims. This effect was not replicated however for their perceptions of a victim's Social Stimulus Value.

On the responsibility measures, Attitudes Toward Women were significantly related to estimates of victim carelessness. Once again,

Table 7

Partial Correlations Between Personality Variables and Dependent Measures for the Canadian Sample

Dependent measure	df	Personality variable	
		Attitudes toward women scale	Just world scale
Bipolar attractiveness index	109	.27**	.12
Social stimulus value score	107	.09	-.06
Absolute victim responsibility	110	-.18	.06
Attacker responsibility	110	.02	-.06
Victim provocation	110	-.09	.09
Victim carelessness	110	-.20*	.13
Characterological blame	110	-.37**	.06
Attributions to chance	107	.35**	-.19*

Note. *p < .05. **p < .01.

the direction of these correlations indicated that respondents with more liberal attitudes assigned less carelessness to a victim and blamed the occurrence of the crime to personal character less than did more traditionally-oriented respondents. As a final note, Attitudes Toward Women were also significantly related to respondents' attributions to chance for the incident. This indicates that individuals with relatively liberal attitudes toward women were more likely to perceive the occurrence of an attack upon a female victim as a chance outcome than were more traditional respondents.

By contrast, Just World Scale scores were not significantly related to any dependent measures, with the exception of attributions to chance for the event. Respondents with strong beliefs in a just world were less likely to perceive a victim's attack as a chance outcome than were individuals with little belief in such notions. This effect is consistent with prediction, as strong believers would feel more threatened by the occurrence of an unjust event and would strive to obtain a concrete explanation for it to a greater degree than individuals with little belief.

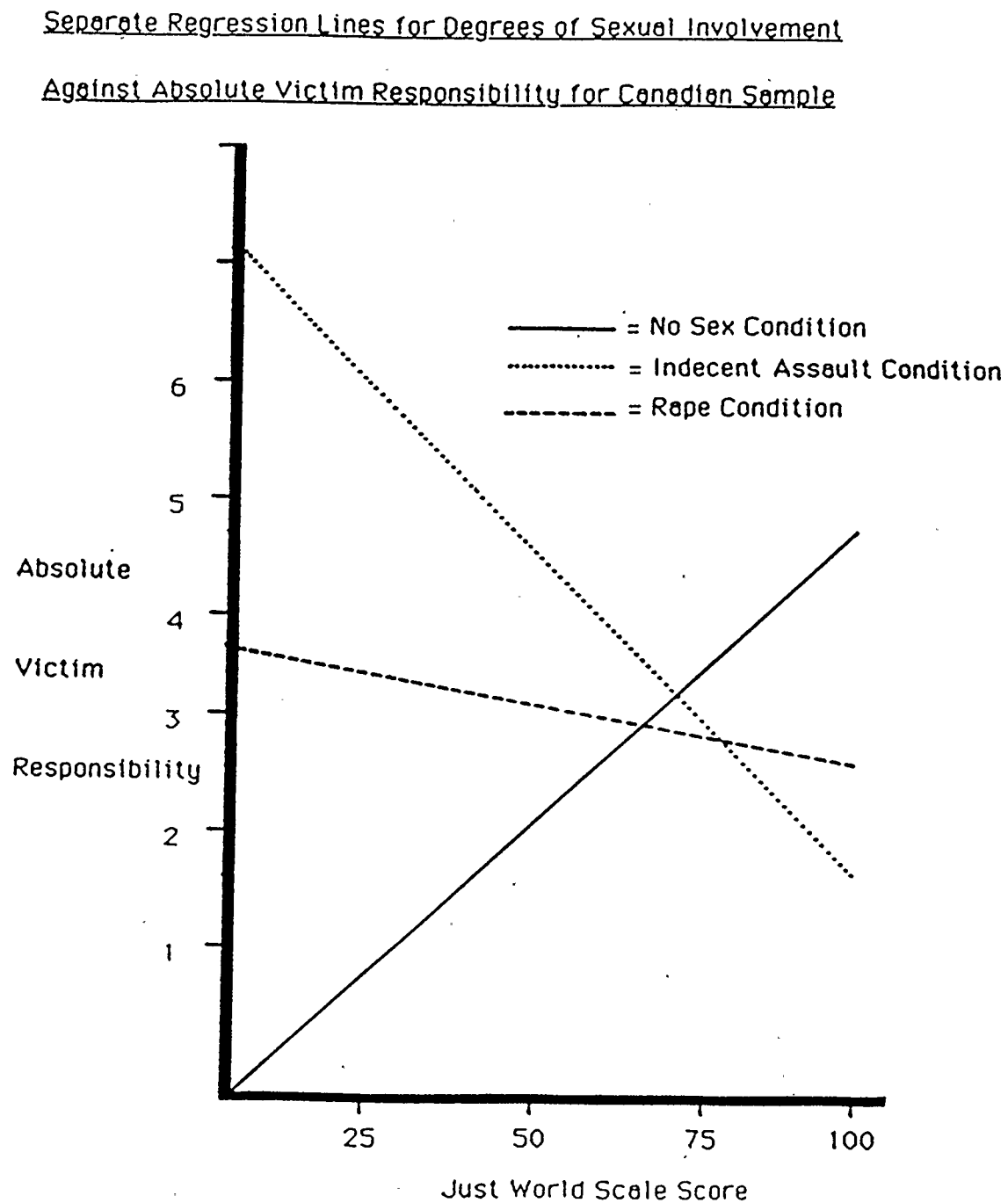
D. Interactions

Two interactions between both continuous and manipulated variables were observed in the results of the Canadian sample. The first of these was an interaction between sexual involvement in a crime and respondents' beliefs in a just world on their estimates of global

victim responsibility, $F(9,97) = 2.59, p < .05.$, (this interaction was the only one between a continuous and a categorical variable in both Canadian and British samples. For all other variables the assumption of homogeneity of regression coefficients was unviolated). As a result, separate regression lines were plotted for each of the three levels of sexual involvement (see Figure 1). The Johnson-Neyman technique of determining regions of significant differences between levels of a categorical variable across scores on the continuous variable was then applied to the data (Pedhazur, 1982). When comparisons were made between no sex vs. indecent assault (i.e., medium sex) conditions, the region of nonsignificance extended from scores of 70.29 to 70.30 on the Just World Scale. Specifically, individuals with scores less than 70.29 (indicative of little belief in a just world) assigned significantly more responsibility to an individual who was indecently assaulted than to a victim of a nonsexual offense. On the other hand, individuals with scores greater than 70.30 (indicative of strong beliefs in a just world) assigned significantly more responsibility to a victim of a nonsexual offense than to one who was indecently assaulted. This effect is in direct opposition to the predictions based on just world theory (i.e., that individuals with strong beliefs in a just world would feel more threatened by the occurrence of an indecent assault than by a nonsexual offense, and would consequently assign more responsibility to a victim of the former offense).

Results of comparisons between indecent assault and rape conditions

Figure 1.



indicated a region of nonsignificance extending from scores of 61.15 to 95.59 on the Just World Scale. Individuals with scores below 61.15 (which is a distance of 1.4 standard deviations below the mean) assigned significantly more responsibility to the victim of an indecent assault as compared to a victim of rape while individuals with Just World Scale scores greater than 95.59 (a distance of 2.3 standard deviations above the mean) assigned significantly more responsibility to a victim of rape than to a victim of an indecent assault. Thus, in this comparison, the results adhered to prediction, but only for extreme scores on the measure. No comparisons could be made for the no sex vs. rape conditions, because the region of nonsignificance extended across the entire observed range of Just World Scale scores.

The other significant interaction in the Canadian data was that of Sexual Involvement x Physical Harm x Victim Respectability on respondents' attributions to chance for the attack, $F(2,89) = 3.32$, $p < .05$. A posteriori adjusted means tests (adjusted for the effects of both beliefs in a just world and attitudes toward women) revealed that respondents attributed the indecent assault of a highly respectable victim who was physically unharmed (adjusted $M = 4.3$), significantly more to chance than the rape of a similar victim (adjusted $M = 2.3$), $F(1,89) = 5.16$, $p < .05$. This pattern is consistent with the hypothesis the observers are more motivated to seek explanations for an event when it involves an increasingly aversive outcome.

There were also significantly more attributions to chance made by respondents for the attack of a less respectable victim who

received serious injury but was not sexually abused (adjusted $\bar{M} = 4.2$) than for the attack of a highly respectable victim who received a similar outcome (adjusted $\bar{M} = 2.4$), $F(1,89) = 5.81$, $p < .05$. This result was also consistent with prediction. On the basis of just world beliefs, observers may have been more inclined to see the occurrence of a negative outcome to a person who is perceived to be immoral in character as a plausible happening than if the same event occurred to a person of good character.

Britain

Cross-Cultural Factors

The final issue addressed by this investigation concerned the cross-cultural validity of the pattern of victim derogation effects proposed by the just world hypothesis. A complex pattern of differences emerged when data from British respondents was compared to those of the Canadian sample. Of the eight dependent variables, comparable results were observed for only one: attacker responsibility. Respondents in both Britain ($\bar{M} = 5.6$) and Canada ($\bar{M} = 5.6$) assigned very high levels of responsibility to the attacker, regardless of the type of crime committed or the character of the victim. A complete summary of the multiple regression analyses results for the British sample is presented in Tables 8 and 9.

A. Factors Associated with Outcome Aversiveness

1. Sexual Involvement in a Crime

(a) Attractiveness measures. While there was no main effect for sexual involvement in a crime for either of the two measures of victim attractiveness, sexual involvement did interact with other variables in the design (see Table 8). These interactions will therefore be reported below.

(b) Responsibility measures. A relatively consistent pattern of results was observed along the responsibility measures for the British sample (see Table 9). Sexual involvement in a crime was significantly related to global estimates of a victim's responsibility for the attack, $F(2,107) = 11.45, p < .01$. However, the results adhered to the predictions of just world theory only for comparisons of nonsexual offenses vs. indecent assaults. Significantly more responsibility was assigned to the victim of an indecent assault ($M = 4.1$) than to the victim of a nonsexual offense ($M = 3.5$). Yet, when comparisons were made with a victim of rape, this effect was reversed. Respondents assigned significantly more responsibility to a victim of a nonsexual offense or an indecent assault than they did to a victim of rape ($M = 2.5$).

A similar pattern was observed on other measures of responsibility, such as estimates of victim provocation and carelessness. While there was no significant main effect for sexual involvement in a crime on the measure of victim provocation, significant interactions were

Table 8

Multiple Regression-Correlation Analysis Results for Attractiveness
Measures for British Sample

Predictor	Bipolar attractiveness index			Social stimulus value		
	ΔR^2	df	F	ΔR^2	df	F
Just world beliefs ^a (A)						
Attitudes toward women ^a (B)	.04	2,104	2.25	.07	2,102	3.60*
Sexual involvement ^{b,g} (C)	.01	4,102	0.63	.01	4,100	0.70
Physical harm ^c (D)						
Victim respectability ^c (E)	.10	6,100	5.99**	.06	6,98	3.11*
Interactions						
A x B ^d	.07	13,93	1.18	.05	14,90	0.70
A x C ^d						
A x D ^d						
A x E ^d						
B x C ^d						
B x D ^d						
B x E ^d						
C x D ^e	.10	18,88	2.50*	.11	17,87	4.54**
C x E ^e						
D x E ^e						
C x D x E ^f	.04	20,86	2.86	---	19,85	----

(table continues)

Table 8 (continued)

Note.

^{a-f}Signify that predictor variables sharing the same letter were entered as a set into the regression equation. The alphabetical order of the letters indicates the order in which sets of variables were entered.

^gSexual involvement in a crime was entered before the remaining two categorical variables for reasons of ease in interpretation.

*p < .05. **p < .01.

Table 9

Multiple Regression-Correlation Analyses Results for Responsibility
Measures for British Sample

Predictor	Global victim responsibility			Attacker responsibility		
	ΔR^2	df	F	ΔR^2	df	F
Just world beliefs ^a (A)						
Attitudes toward women ^a (B)	.06	2,107	3.58*	.05	2,107	2.85
Sexual involvement ^{b,g} (C)	.16	4,105	10.85**	.02	4,105	1.37
Physical harm ^c (D)						
Victim respectability ^c (E)	.02	6,103	1.68	.01	6,103	0.63
Interactions						
A x B ^d	.11	14,95	1.96	.13	14,95	1.88
A x C ^d						
A x D ^d						
A x E ^d						
B x C ^d						
B x D ^d						
B x E ^d						
C x D ^e	.07	18,91	0.04	.06	18,91	1.77
C x E ^e						
D x E ^e						
C x D x E ^f	---	----	----	---	----	----

(table continues)

Table 9 (continued)

Multiple Regression-Correlation Analyses Results for ResponsibilityMeasures for British Sample

Predictor	Victim provocation			Victim carelessness		
	ΔR^2	df	F	ΔR^2	df	F
Just world beliefs ^a (A)						
Attitudes toward women ^a (B)	.10	2,107	6.25**	.06	2,107	3.47*
Sexual involvement ^{b,g} (C)	.04	4,105	2.73	.09	4,105	5.47**
Physical harm ^c (D)						
Victim respectability ^c (E)	.05	6,103	3.15*	.00	6,103	0.08
Interactions						
A x B ^d	.07	14,95	1.20	.09	14,95	1.37
A x C ^d						
A x D ^d						
A x E ^d						
B x C ^d						
B x D ^d						
B x E ^d						
C x D ^e	.12	18,91	4.30**	.09	18,91	3.04*
C x E ^e						
D x E ^e						
C x D x E ^f	---	----	----	---	----	----

(table continues)

Table 9 (continued)

Multiple Regression-Correlation Analyses Results for ResponsibilityMeasures for British Sample

	Character blame			Attributions to chance		
	ΔR^2	df	F	ΔR^2	df	F
Just world beliefs ^a (A)						
Attitudes toward women ^a (B)	.10	2,107	6.01**	.05	2,105	2.55
Sexual Involvement ^{b,g} (C)	.10	4,105	6.62**	.03	4,103	1.82
Physical Harm ^c (D)						
Victim responsibility ^c (E)	.07	6,103	4.69*	.01	6,101	0.48
Interactions						
A x B ^d	.03	14,95	0.50	.09	14,93	1.27
A x C ^d						
A x D ^d						
A x E ^d						
B x C ^d						
B x D ^d						
B x E ^d						
C x D ^e	.07	18,91	2.37	.05	16,91	3.10*
C x E ^e						
D x E ^e						
C x D x E ^f	---	-----	---	.06	18,89	3.79

(table continues)

Table 9 (continued)

Note.

^{a-f}Signify that predictor variables sharing the same letter were entered as a set into the regression equation. The alphabetical order of the letters indicates the order in which sets of variables were entered.

^gSexual involvement in a crime was entered before the remaining two categorical variables for reasons of ease in interpretation.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

observed between Sexual Involvement x Victim Respectability, $F(2,89) = 3.29, p < .05$ and Sexual Involvement x Physical Harm, $F(2,88) = 6.06, p < .01$. These will be described in detail in a later section. On the measure of victim carelessness, the pattern of results for sexual involvement in a crime was almost identical to that observed for global victim responsibility, $F(2,107) = 6.55, p < .01$. A victim of a nonsexual offense ($M = 4.3$) and a victim of an indecent assault ($M = 4.4$) were perceived as significantly more careless by respondents than was a victim of forcible rape ($M = 3.3$). However, on this measure, there were no increases in perceived carelessness attributed to victims when comparisons were made between nonsexual offenses and indecent assaults. Thus, the proposed increase in perceived responsibility with increased levels of sexual involvement in a crime was entirely unsupported in British respondents' attributions of carelessness to victims.

Finally, sexual involvement in a crime was significantly related to respondents' estimates of characterological blame of the victim, $F(4,105) = 6.64, p < .01$. Here again, a victim of an indecent assault (adjusted $M = 3.3$) was assigned a significantly higher level of characterological blame for the incident than was a victim of rape (adjusted $M = 2.0$) (means in these comparisons were adjusted for a significant relationship between respondents' attitudes toward women and their ratings of character blame). However, there were no differences in observed levels of characterological blame assigned to the victim of an indecent assault as compared to the victim of a nonsexual offense

(adjusted \bar{M} = 2.6).

2. Severity of Physical Harm to the Victim

(a) Attractiveness measures. Severity of physical harm to a victim was significantly related to respondents' ratings of victims on Bipolar Attractiveness Index, $\beta = 0.27$, $p < .05$. This result conformed to the prediction offered by just world theory. A victim was perceived as significantly less attractive when she received extensive physical injuries (adjusted \bar{M} = 65.8) than when she was physically unharmed (adjusted \bar{M} = 70.8). On the measure of a victim's Social Stimulus Value there were no significant main effects for physical harm to the victim, however, there was a significant interaction observed for Sexual Involvement x Physical Harm. This effect will be reported in a later section.

(b) Responsibility measures. The hypothesis that a victim who receives severe consequences is rated as more responsible for her misfortunes received meager support from the British data. There were no significant relationships observed between the level of physical harm received by the victim and respondents' estimates of global responsibility, victim carelessness or characterological blame. Physical Harm did interact, however, with Sexual Involvement in a Crime on respondents' assignments of provocation to a victim. This interaction will be described later in the text.

B. Victim Respectability

(a) Attractiveness measures. Significant main effects of victim respectability on both the bipolar attractiveness index ($\beta = -0.21$, $p < .05$) and the measure of Social Stimulus Value ($\beta = -.24$, $p < .05$) were qualified by the presence of significant interactions involving other variables. These involved interactions between Sexual Involvement x Victim Respectability on the bipolar attractiveness index and Physical Harm x Victim Respectability on the measure of Social Stimulus Value. Further discussion of these will be included in the section titled Interactions.

(b) Responsibility measures. There were no significant main effects for victim respectability on respondents' attributions of global responsibility to victims or victim carelessness. The relationship between victim respectability and assignments of provocation was near significance ($\beta = .17$, $p < .06$), yet as the interaction between Victim Respectability x Sexual Involvement was significant for the measure of victim provocation, $F(2,89) = 3.29$, $p < .05$, the relationship will be discussed below in terms of the interaction.

The prediction that a less respectable victim is assigned significantly more characterological blame for her attack was supported in Britain ($\beta = 0.22$, $p < .05$). When comparisons were made between means adjusted for differential levels of attitudes toward women, respondents' estimates of characterological blame to an exotic dancer (adjusted $M = 2.9$) were significantly greater than their

estimates for a cashier (adjusted $M = 2.4$). Yet the prediction that respectable victims would be assigned higher levels of behavioral blame for their attacks was unsupported (see Interactions section, below).

C. Personality Factors

As in the Canadian sample, the competing hypothesis that negative attitudes toward women are responsible for victim derogation effects accounted for greater amounts of variance among the dependent measures than did just world beliefs (see Table 10). Attitudes Toward Women were significantly related to both measures of victim attractiveness, indicating that respondents with relatively liberal attitudes toward women's roles in society were more likely to evaluate a victim positively than were more traditionally-oriented individuals. Of the responsibility measures, significant correlations between attitudes toward women and observer estimates of both victim provocation and characterological blame, indicated that traditional respondents were more likely to believe that a victim's actions may have precipitated her attack and were also more inclined to attribute the occurrence of an attack to her character. Finally, a positive correlation between attitudes toward women and attributions to chance for the event demonstrated that relatively liberal respondents were more likely to attribute the attack of a victim to chance factors than were respondents with a more traditional view of women's status in society. Thus, as in the Canadian sample, the results generally

Table 10

Partial Correlations Between Personality Variables and Dependent
Measures for the British Sample

Dependent measure	Personality variable		
	<u>df</u>	Attitudes toward women scale	Just world scale
Bipolar attractiveness			
index	104	.20*	.02
Social stimulus			
value score	102	.19*	-.15
Absolute victim			
responsibility	107	-.15	.19*
Attacker responsibility	107	-.19	.11
Victim provocation	107	-.23*	.21*
Victim carelessness	107	-.04	.24*
Characterological blame	107	-.29**	.10
Attributions to chance	105	.21*	.06

Note. *p < .05. **p < .01.

supported the hypothesis that individuals with less favorable attitudes toward women were more likely to perceive victims as less attractive and to assign them greater levels of responsibility for the outcomes they receive.

The Just World Scale received more support from the results of British respondents than it did from those in Canada. High scores on the scale (indicative of strong beliefs in a just world) were significantly related to elevated assignments of both global responsibility to a victim for the attack and to increased attributions of both carelessness and provocation to victims. However, the related prediction between strong beliefs in a just world and increased devaluation of a victim's character was unsupported for both measures of attractiveness.

D. Interactions

(a) Attractiveness measures. On the bipolar attractiveness index, the Sexual Involvement x Victim Respectability interaction was significant, $F(2,86) = 3.37, p < .05$ (see Table 11). While a highly respectable victim was perceived as consistently attractive across increasing levels of sexual involvement, a less respectable victim was perceived as significantly more attractive when she was raped (adjusted $M = 70.1$) than when she was the victim of a nonsexual offense (adjusted $M = 64.0$). All means in this comparison were adjusted for attitudes toward women.

On the Social Stimulus Value measure, a significant Physical Harm x Victim Respectability interaction was observed, $\beta = 0.29, p < .01$

(see Table 12). A less respectable victim was rated as having significantly less Social Stimulus Value when she sustained extensive physical injuries as a result of her attack ($\underline{M} = 16.6$) than when she was physically unharmed ($\underline{M} = 18.6$). By contrast, a highly respectable victim who was seriously injured was assigned significantly more Social Stimulus Value ($\underline{M} = 20.5$) than when she was unharmed ($\underline{M} = 18.5$).

(b) Responsibility measures. On the victim provocation measure, interactions between Sexual Involvement x Victim Respectability, $\underline{F}(2,89) = 3.29, p < .05$, and Sexual Involvement x Physical Harm, $\underline{F}(2,88) = 6.06, p < .01$ were both significant (see tables 13 and 14). Post hoc adjusted means tests revealed that a highly respectable individual was perceived as significantly more provocative when she was indecently assaulted (adjusted $\underline{M} = 4.0$) than when she was the victim of a nonsexual offense (adjusted $\underline{M} = 2.9$), $\underline{F}(1,91) = 4.50, p < .05$. This result was consistent with the just world prediction that an individual who was indecently assaulted should have been perceived as engaging in some behaviors that would provoke her attacker to molest her sexually than a similar individual who was not sexually abused, especially when the individual was of respectable character. However, when comparisons were made between victims of indecent assault and forcible rape, a highly respectable victim who was raped (adjusted $\underline{M} = 2.3$) was assigned significantly lower levels of provocation than was an indecent assault victim, $\underline{F}(1,91) = 10.16, p < .01$.

A similar pattern of results prevailed for the Sexual Involvement x Physical Harm interaction (see Table 14). When no physical harm

Table 11

Table of Bipolar Attractiveness Means of British Sample

Condition	<u>n</u>	Bipolar attractiveness index ^a
no sex/low respect	19	
<u>M</u>		64.0
<u>SD</u>		10.5
no sex/high respect	20	
<u>M</u>		71.1
<u>SD</u>		9.5
medium sex/low respect	20	
<u>M</u>		65.8
<u>SD</u>		4.6
medium sex/high respect	19	
<u>M</u>		70.9
<u>SD</u>		8.8
high sex/low respect	19	
<u>M</u>		70.1
<u>SD</u>		9.7
high sex/high respect	20	
<u>M</u>		68.4
<u>SD</u>		9.7

Note. The higher the score, the greater the level of attractiveness assigned.

^aThe means along this measure have been adjusted for Attitudes Toward Women.

Table 12

Table of Social Stimulus Value Means of British Sample

Condition	<u>n</u>	Social stimulus value index
no harm/low respect	29	
<u>M</u>		18.6
<u>SD</u>		4.0
no harm/high respect	26	
<u>M</u>		18.5
<u>SD</u>		3.3
high harm/low respect	27	
<u>M</u>		16.6
<u>SD</u>		3.4
high harm/high respect	29	
<u>M</u>		20.5
<u>SD</u>		3.4

Note. The higher the score, the greater the level of attractiveness assigned.

Table 13

Table of Adjusted Means of Sex x Respectability Conditions of BritishSample

Condition	<u>n</u>	Victim provocation score ^a
no sex/low respect	20	
<u>M</u>		4.5
<u>SD</u>		1.7
no sex/high respect	20	
<u>M</u>		2.9
<u>SD</u>		1.7
medium sex/low respect	20	
<u>M</u>		4.3
<u>SD</u>		1.5
medium sex/high respect	20	
<u>M</u>		4.0
<u>SD</u>		1.8
high sex/low respect	20	
<u>M</u>		3.8
<u>SD</u>		2.0
high sex/high respect	20	
<u>M</u>		2.3
<u>SD</u>		1.4

Note. The higher the score, the greater the amount of victim provocation assigned.

^aThe means along this measure have been adjusted for Just World and Attitude Toward Women scores.

Table 14

Table of Adjusted Means of Sex x. Physical Harm Conditions of BritishSample

Condition	<u>n</u>	Victim provocation score
no sex/no harm	20	
<u>M</u>		2.8
<u>SD</u>		1.6
no sex/high harm	20	
<u>M</u>		4.7
<u>SD</u>		1.5
medium sex/no harm	20	
<u>M</u>		4.1
<u>SD</u>		1.7
medium sex/high harm	20	
<u>M</u>		4.2
<u>SD</u>		1.5
high sex/no harm	20	
<u>M</u>		3.5
<u>SD</u>		1.9
high sex/high harm	20	
<u>M</u>		2.5
<u>SD</u>		1.7

Note. The higher the score, the greater the amount of victim provocation assigned.

^aThe means along this measure have been adjusted for Just World and Attitude Toward Women Scores.

was involved, a victim who was indecently assaulted (adjusted \bar{M} = 4.1) was assigned significantly higher levels of provocation than was an individual who was the victim of a nonsexual offense (adjusted \bar{M} = 2.8), $F(1,91) = 6.66$, $p < .05$. Yet again, there were no significant differences observed when comparisons of provocation levels were made between a victim of rape and a victim of an indecent assault. Furthermore, there were no significant increases in provocation for a rape victim as opposed to the victim of a nonsexual offense.

When comparisons were made for the influence of victim respectability on respondents' estimates of her provocation of an attack, a less respectable victim was assigned significantly higher levels of provocation than was a highly respectable victim for both nonsexual offenses and forcible rape (see Table 14), yet there were no differences between these two categories in the indecent assault condition.

Finally, when victim provocation estimates for a victim who was physically injured were compared with ratings of a victim who was physically unharmed, it was observed that respondents assigned greater levels of provocation to the victim in the former case (adjusted \bar{M} = 4.7 as opposed to 2.8). However, this effect was only present for comparisons of nonsexual offenses. (All means for the comparisons on this variable were adjusted for both beliefs in a just world and attitudes toward women).

The final interaction observed in the British results was a three-way Sexual Involvement x Physical Harm x Victim Respectability interaction on observers' attributions to chance for the attack, $F(2,89) = 3.79$, $p < .05$. Simple main effects tests (Kirk, 1982) revealed that

the just world prediction concerning this variable was not supported. When all victims were highly respectable and there was no physical harm involved, there were significantly more attributions to chance for the attack of a victim who was raped ($\bar{M} = 4.7$) than for the victim of a nonsexual offense ($\bar{M} = 2.7$). This result is contrary to the hypothesis which holds that observers would be motivated to a greater degree to seek explanations for increasingly aversive outcomes in the behavior of a highly respectable victim. Moreover, there were also significantly more attributions to chance for an indecent assault victim who received severe injuries ($\bar{M} = 4.2$) than for an indecent assault victim who was physically unharmed ($\bar{M} = 2.0$) when these victims were of respectable character. Thus the prediction that individuals strive to formulate concrete explanations for the occurrence of negative outcomes to good individuals in order to protect themselves from the knowledge that such outcomes can occur by chance was unsupported by the British data.

As a final note to this section, tables have been included in order to present the scope of the cross-cultural differences in the results, variable by variable (see Tables 15 and 16 for attractiveness and responsibility measures respectively). Upon inspection of these tables, it can be seen that there were few similarities in the results obtained from the two countries. Of the eight dependent measures, comparable results were observed for only two of these, attacker responsibility and characterological blame. In both Canada and in Britain, respondents assigned very high levels of blame to the attacker, regardless of the experimental manipulations. Secondly, the just world prediction of elevated characterological blame for less respectable victims was

supported in both countries. While there was some indication of a trend towards less devaluation of a rape victim (as compared to the victim of an indecent assault) on the attractiveness measures for the Canadian sample, it was only in the British sample that this pattern generalized to responsibility measures as well. In Britain, but not in Canada, there was a clear pattern of increased blame for a victim of indecent assault as compared to a nonsexual offense, but attenuated blame for a rape victim. Furthermore, only in Britain was there support for the hypothesis of increased characterological devaluation as a function of the severity of physical harm to a victim. By contrast, Canadian respondents assigned less attractiveness to the victim of an indecent assault or rape than they did to a victim of a nonsexual offense, yet they did not respond this way to increased physical harm. Finally, while there were significant three-way interactions between the manipulated variables observed in both Canadian and British samples on the measure of respondents' attributions to chance, the nature of this interaction differed greatly in the two countries. In Canada, the results for this measure adhered largely to the predictions offered by just world theory, i.e., that respondents will seek less chance explanations for the attacks of respectable individuals who receive severe injustices. However, in Britain, this prediction was unsupported as respondents invoked significantly more attributions to chance for attacks involving the forcible rape of a respectable individual.

Table 15

Comparison of Results of Just World Study for Canadian and British
Participants on 2 Attractiveness Measures

Independent variable	Attractiveness measure			
	Bipolar attractiveness index		Social stimulus value	
	Canada	Britain	Canada	Britain
Sexual involvement (A)	+	-	+	-
Physical harm (B)	-	+	-	-
Victim respectability (C)	-	-	+	-
A x B interaction	-	-	-	-
A x C interaction	-	+	-	-
B x C interaction	-	-	-	+
A x B x C interaction	-	-	-	-

Note.

+Indicates that the F value associated with the relation of the independent variable with the dependent measure was statistically significant.

-Indicates a non-significant F value.

Table 16

Comparison of Results of Just World Study for Canadian and British
Participants on 6 Responsibility Measures

Independent variable	Responsibility measure			
	Global victim responsibility		Victim provocation	
	Canada	Britain	Canada	Britain
Sexual involvement (A)	-	+	-	-
Physical harm (B)	-	-	-	-
Victim respectability (C)	-	-	-	-
A x B interaction	-	-	-	+
A x C interaction	-	-	-	+
B x C interaction	-	-	-	-
A x B x C interaction	-	-	-	-
Interactions involving categorical and continuous variables ^a	+	-	-	-

Note.

+Indicates that the F value associated with the relation of the independent variable with the dependent measure was statistically significant.

-Indicates a non-significant F value.

^aIndicates a significant interaction between sexual involvement in a crime and beliefs in a just world.

(table continues)

Table 16 (continued)

Comparison of Results of Just World Study for Canadian and British
Participants on 6 Responsibility Measures

Independent variable	Responsibility measure			
	Victim carelessness		Character Blame	
	Canada	Britain	Canada	Britain
Sexual involvement (A)	-	+	-	+
Physical harm (B)	-	-	-	-
Victim respectability (C)	-	-	+	+
A x B interaction	-	-	-	-
A x C interaction	-	-	-	-
B x C interaction	-	-	-	-
A x B x C interaction	-	-	-	-

Note.

+Indicates that the F value associated with the relation of the independent variable with the dependent measure was statistically significant.

-Indicates a non-significant F value.

(table continues)

Table 16 (continued)

Comparison of Results of Just World Study for Canadian and British
Participants on 6 Responsibility Measures

Independent variable	Responsibility measure			
	Attacker responsibility		Attribution to chance	
	Canada	Britain	Canada	Britain
Sexual involvement (A)	-	-	-	-
Physical harm (B)	-	-	-	-
Victim respectability (C)	-	-	-	-
A x B interaction	-	-	-	-
A x C interaction	-	-	-	-
B x C interaction	-	-	-	-
A x B x C interaction	-	-	+	+

Note.

+Indicates that the F value associated with the relation of the independent variable with the dependent measure was statistically significant.

-Indicates a non-significant F value.

DISCUSSION

This study has tested the victim derogation effect proposed by just world theory across several relevant dimensions. The importance of the aversiveness of an outcome was investigated by varying both the degree of sexual abuse involved in an attack on an innocent victim and the amount of physical harm inflicted. The character (respectability) of the victim was also varied. In addition, attitudinal variables such as beliefs in a just world and attitudes toward women were taken into account as possible determinants of the evaluations one forms of suffering others. Finally, data were gathered in two countries in order to investigate the possibility of cross-cultural differences in observer reactions to victims of misfortune. As a whole, these data offered little support for the set of hypotheses proposed by just world theory.

Supportive Evidence for the Just World Hypothesis

Sexual Involvement

The present results suggested only partial confirmation of the predictions offered by just world theory regarding the effects of increasing levels of sexual involvement in a crime on observers' estimates of the victim's attractiveness and responsibility. In general, the findings revealed a trend toward increasing devaluation

of a victim's attractiveness, as well as increased attribution of responsibility to her for the attack in an indecent assault as compared to a nonsexual offense. This effect is consistent with the prediction of just world theory that the occurrence of an indecent assault is perceived as a greater threat to one's sense of justice as compared to a similar nonsexual offense. To dispel this threat, individuals therefore are hypothesized to restore their perceptions of justice by assigning increasingly negative qualities to the victim. However, this increase did not extend to include reactions to a victim of forcible rape, despite the increased injustice associated with it. A rape victim was ascribed no more characterological devaluation, nor was she perceived as more responsible for her misfortune, than was a victim of either an indecent assault or a nonsexual offense. Thus it appears that the just world predictions that increased character devaluation and blame of a victim accompany increases in an observer's perceived injustice were supported only for comparisons of a nonsexual offense versus an indecent assault. Upon inspection of the data from both samples, measure by measure, it was revealed, moreover, that there was only one exception to this general pattern. In the Canadian sample, low scorers on the Just World Scale assigned significantly more responsibility to the victim of an indecent assault as opposed to the victim of a rape. The reverse of this relationship held for high scorers on the scale (i.e., more responsibility was assigned to a rape victim as compared to the victim of an indecent assault). Closer scrutiny of these data did indicate, however, that this effect was evidenced only for individuals with scores at least one standard

deviation above or below the sample mean on the Just World Scale. Therefore, in summary, it seems that the predictions of just world theory concerning increases in sexual involvement in a crime were supported only for comparisons of indecent assault versus a nonsexual offense. Furthermore, when comparisons of indecent assault versus forcible rape were introduced, the predicted effects were limited to a small segment of the Canadian sample represented by the extreme ends of the distribution of just world beliefs.

By contrast, the results on the measure of observers' attributions to chance for a negative event appeared to be largely consistent with just world theory, but only for the Canadian sample. The hypothesis that observers are motivated to a greater degree to seek an explanation for the rape of a respectable individual than for the indecent assault of such a victim was supported by the Canadian data. Following the reasoning of just world theory, it can be argued that the possibility that an individual of good character could be raped by chance may pose a greater threat to observer's beliefs in a just world. This perceived threat, in turn, motivates them to seek more concrete explanations for the incident. However, judging from the results on the remaining dependent measures, it appears that only a small proportion of individuals resort to assigning greater levels of blame to a rape victim in order to dispel the threat to their just world beliefs.

Physical Harm

The study also examined the effect of another aspect of outcome

aversiveness -- physical harm sustained by a victim -- on observer evaluations of victim character and responsibility for the event. The hypothesis that a victim's perceived attractiveness decreases with increasing levels of injustice (here conceptualized by the degree of physical harm inflicted during an attack) was supported on the measure of a victim's bipolar attractiveness in the British sample. Here respondents devalued the character of a severely injured victim to a significantly greater degree than that of a victim who was physically unharmed. This effect is consistent with the work of Lerner (1971) and Stokols and Schopler (1973) who reported a positive relation between outcome severity and characterological devaluation of a victim, however, this result did not generalize to the measure of a victim's Social Stimulus Value, nor was it observed on either of the two attractiveness measures in the Canadian sample. Thus the support generated for this hypothesis appeared to be relatively meager in proportion to the amount of disconfirming evidence. The related hypothesis that observers will feel a greater need to assign responsibility to a victim as outcome severity increases in order to maintain their beliefs in a just world was also supported on only one measure in the British sample. Increased attributions of victim provocation were observed in Britain for a victim who was severely injured during the attack as compared to a victim who was physically unharmed. Here again, however, this confirming result was confined to only one of the four measures of a victim's perceived responsibility and did not generalize to the Canadian sample. Thus, in summary, there

was little support generated from these data for the just world prediction that individuals will characterologically devalue or hold a victim behaviorally responsible for her misfortune as the threat to their own just world beliefs increases.

Victim Respectability

There were two specific just world predictions tested by this study concerning the impact of a victim's perceived respectability on observer estimates of her attractiveness and responsibility for the crime. The first of these maintained that observers will devalue the character of a relatively less respectable victim to a greater degree than that of a relatively more respectable victim because "bad" things should happen only to "bad" people within the just world framework. The present investigation also sought to replicate the finding of Jones and Aronson (1973) and Smith et al. (1976) that observers will assign a greater degree of behavioral blame to a respectable victim for her attack than to a less respectable victim in order to preserve their beliefs in a just world. The results supported the former prediction in both samples, i.e., an exotic dancer was devalued significantly more on the measure of Social Stimulus Value than was a cashier in most crime conditions and was also assigned significantly more characterological blame for the attack. However, the second prediction, that of greater behavioral blame for a respectable victim received no support at all. The implications of this latter finding will be discussed below in a section devoted to disconfirming evidence

of the just world hypothesis.

Concerning the relationship between a victim's perceived respectability and observer estimates of her attractiveness, in Canada, a respectable victim was assigned significantly more Social Stimulus Value than was a less respectable victim. Thus it appears that observers were inclined to assign greater social desirability to a university student who worked part-time as a cashier as opposed to one who was an exotic dancer, regardless of the outcome each received. This finding is not surprising, yet it did not fully generalize to the British sample. In Britain, when there was no physical harm involved, respondents' ratings revealed no significant differences in the amount of Social Stimulus Value assigned to a respectable versus a less respectable victim. However, when both victims received extensive physical injuries as a result of being attacked, respondents assigned significantly more Social Stimulus Value to a cashier than to an exotic dancer. Thus, it appears in England, that an individual of seemingly questionable character may only be devalued when she receives a negative outcome. Unfortunately, it was impossible to collect pretest data on any of the experimental manipulations for British respondents. It can only be assumed, therefore, that if there were, indeed, no differences in the baseline attractiveness levels of the two categories of victim, the differences in Social Stimulus Value observed between the cashier and exotic dancer in the severe physical harm condition occurred as a result of just world attributions. In effect, while respondents did not devalue the

character of a "good" victim who received a negative outcome (as, according to theory, they would find it difficult or impossible to do), they did devalue the character of a less reputable individual, possibly by reasoning "she must have been a bad person to begin with to have such a bad thing happen to her." If this assumption can be made, the results across both cultures did show support for just world theory in that the character of a less respectable victim was devalued by observers to a greater degree than that of a respectable victim when both were recipients of a similar misfortune. However, for both samples, in Canada these results were not replicated on the bipolar attractiveness index.

This finding appears to indicate that people respond differently to these two measures of attractiveness. This is not entirely surprising in that the first, the semantic differential bipolar adjective index, appears to tap a largely evaluative dimension (Osgood, Suci, & Tannenbaum, 1975), while the second, Social Stimulus Value, was designed to assess a victim's "Social Personality" (i.e., the impression she gives to other people after a brief acquaintance) (Lerner, 1980, p. 46). Under these definitions, it could be possible for some individuals to evaluate a victim positively on the semantic differential, while not necessarily choosing to affiliate with her socially, as the questions comprising the index of Social Stimulus Value imply (e.g., "How easily would _____ fit in with your friends?"). Support for this contention comes from a post hoc examination of the correlations of the two attractiveness measures with the remainder of the dependent

measures included within the design (Anastasi, 1982). In neither of the two samples was a similar pattern of correlations observed between the bipolar attractiveness index and the measure of Social Stimulus Value and the remaining measures of responsibility. Moreover, in Canada, the difference between the correlation coefficients of the two attractiveness measures under conditions of high ($r = .47$) and low victim respectability ($r = .20$) was significant at the 1% level. Thus, while it seems that the two attractiveness measures may address different aspects of the construct of "attractiveness," Lerner and his colleagues have made no provisions for these differences in their predictions. In fact, Lerner has made no mention of any possible differences between the bipolar attractiveness measure and the index of a victim's Social Stimulus Value in observers' reactions to victims as they relate to the just world hypothesis in his 1980 review of the research. In light of the discrepant findings of the present study, it is strongly suggested that further research is required to evaluate whether the two attractiveness measures are, indeed, interchangeable. If not, some of the previous findings may require replication.

Greater consistency was observed in the results concerning a victim's perceived respectability and observers' assignments of characterological blame for the attack. Of eight dependent measures included within the present study, it was only on this one that the just world hypothesis received unequivocal support. Respondents in both Canada and in Britain assigned significantly more characterological blame for the attack when the victim was an exotic dancer as opposed to a cashier. This finding is consistent with the hypothesis that

observers will blame the character of a disreputable victim when presented with a negative outcome, as "bad" things should happen to "bad" people in a just world. With regard to the remaining responsibility measures, however, the associated hypothesis that observers will look to the behavior of a highly respectable victim when formulating explanations for a negative outcome was not supported in either of the two samples. Further discussion of this finding, and its implications will be presented in a later section concerning disconfirming evidence.

Personality Factors

There was limited support for the construct validity of the Just World Scale in relation to observers' reactions to victims of misfortune. In Canada, high scores on the Just World Scale (indicative of relatively strong beliefs in a just world) were significantly related only to lower attributions to chance for a negative event. This finding is consistent with the hypothesis that individuals who have a strong need to believe that they live in an orderly and predictable environment will seek to formulate concrete explanations for the occurrence of an undesirable event in order to protect themselves from the possibility of a similar outcome in the future. However, at the same time, these individuals did not appear to resort to the explanations of characterological devaluation or elevated victim responsibility proposed by the theory. In Britain, the scale received slightly more support. Individuals with strong beliefs in a just world (as measured by the scale) were more likely to attribute greater responsibility to the victim for an attack. High scores on the scale were also significantly related to higher

estimates of both provocation and carelessness to a victim. These findings are consistent with previous work in Britain by Wagstaff (1982), who found positive correlations between beliefs in a just world and assignment of responsibility to a victim of rape in a small sample of Liverpool residents. However, given its larger sample, the relatively small magnitude observed for these correlations in the present study must be considered (the largest partial correlation observed in the two samples was .24).

At least two explanations may be valid. The first of these concerns the possibility that the attribution measures employed in the study lacked construct validity. For example, instead of addressing responsibility for the attack, they may have elicited observer judgments of causation (see Fincham & Roberts, 1984, for a detailed discussion of the problems associated with the interchangeable usage of these concepts). However, as the responsibility measures employed here were highly similar in content to those used in previous studies (e.g., Smith et al., 1976) which supported the predictions of just world theory, this argument may equally be applied to the entire just world literature, as none of the previously cited studies employed validity checks of their dependent measures. While such an assertion remains purely post hoc, future investigations could avoid this short-coming by establishing the psychometric adequacy of their dependent measures through the use of independent samples (for example, respondents could be presented with vignettes portraying victims as ranging from highly responsible to not at all responsible for

their misfortunes and be asked to indicate on what basis did the victims differ). Ratings obtained from these data could then be used as dependent measures in the experiment proper). Notwithstanding this problem, a second alternative explanation for the findings is that beliefs in a just world, as measured by this instrument, seem to account for little in the way of an explanation for observers' responses to an innocent victim. Given the relatively poor showing of the Just World Scale in accounting for variance among the dependent measures, a serious question can be posed as to the construct validity of the instrument in this context. Support for this argument from other empirical examinations of the just world hypothesis has been documented by more recent investigations (e.g., Kerr & Kurtz, 1977; Thornton, Ryckman, & Robbins, 1982) and will be presented later in the text. A third explanation will also be considered. This involves the proposition that strong beliefs in a just world do not necessarily lead to victim derogation effects, as hypothesized, but rather to elevated attributions of blame to attackers (e.g., Wyer et al., 1985).

Cross-Cultural Factors

Cross-cultural generalizability of the predictions offered by just world theory was observed for only one of the seven victim evaluation measures included within the present study. The only consistent result observed in both countries entailed a trend toward increased estimates of characterological blame of a less respectable victim. Aside from this, the only similarities observed consisted of

of a trend towards greater devaluation of a less respectable victim of a severe outcome on the measure of social stimulus value as well as a trend toward greater characterological devaluation (in Canada) and elevated blame of (in Britain) a victim of an indecent assault as compared to a victim of a nonsexual offense. Given the remaining differences between the two data sets, it can be concluded from this investigation that the only just world predictions which were supported across cultures consisted of the hypothesized relationship between the presence of a negative outcome and observers' tendencies to blame the character of a relatively disreputable victim for its occurrence. This replication appears to offer the strongest support for any of the just world predictions examined by this study. It seems that, overall, when a person who is perceived as being "bad" receives a negative outcome, observers will attribute the occurrence of that outcome to their character, implying that those who are evil do get what they deserve and deserve what they get. Regarding the other instances of confirming evidence highlighted in this section, their support for the just world hypothesis must be qualified by the results which will now be discussed.

Disconfirming Evidence for the Just World Hypothesis

Sexual Involvement

In the previous section it was reported that respondents increasingly devalued the character of a victim of an indecent assault as opposed

to a victim of a nonsexual offense. This evidence was considered as support for the predictions offered by the just world hypothesis (i.e., greater characterological devaluation of a victim will occur as the perceived threat to the observer's just world beliefs increases). However, this increase did not continue when comparisons were made between the two former crimes and an act of forcible rape, despite the increased injustice associated with the latter. For example, Canadian respondents devalued the attractiveness of a rape victim no more than they devalued the character of a victim of indecent assault. In fact, on the bipolar attractiveness index, there were no significant differences observed in the amount of attractiveness assigned to a victim of rape as compared to a victim of a nonsexual offense. Similar support for this finding was revealed in Britain. Here, respectable victims remained consistently attractive to observers despite increased sexual involvement in a crime. This result appears to be consistent with just world theory, observers would presumably find it difficult to devalue the character of a respectable victim, even when she received an aversive outcome, such as rape. On the other hand, though, less respectable victims were also not devalued as a function of increased sexual abuse, on the measure of a victim's bipolar attractiveness rating, contrary to the theory's prediction that "bad" people are perceived as deserving of "bad" outcomes. Instead it seems that observers appeared to respond with equal compassion to both "good" and "bad" victims on this measure when they were forcibly raped. Furthermore, there were no effects observed from the manipulation

of sexual involvement on the measure of a victim's Social Stimulus Value. Thus it seems that in the case of a very extreme outcome on the continuum of sexual involvement, increased injustice did not lead to increased derogation of the victim.

A similar pattern emerged from the data concerning the effects of sexual involvement in a crime on observers' estimates of a victim's responsibility for the attack. In Canada, sexual involvement was related only to global estimates of a victim's responsibility for the attack. On this measure, an interaction between respondents' Just World Scale scores and their ratings of a victim's perceived responsibility revealed that respondents with high scores on the Just World Scale assigned significantly more responsibility to the victim of a nonsexual offense than to the victim of an indecent assault. This effect is in direct opposition to the prediction offered by the theory, (i.e., those with strong beliefs in a just world should presumably feel more threatened by the occurrence of an indecent assault, as opposed to a nonsexual offense, and should thus act to diminish such threats by assigning greater levels of responsibility to the victim). However, this finding is consistent with the previous findings of Kerr & Kurtz (1977), who found that experimentally manipulated increases in a victim's suffering led to increased attributions of responsibility to the victim only for females who scored low on the Just World Scale (as indicated by a median split). Regarding comparisons of the remaining conditions, as previously mentioned, there was some support generated for the just world hypothesis when

comparisons were made between a victim of indecent assault and a victim of rape (with high scorers on the scale assigning significantly more responsibility to the latter victim), yet these differences were observed only for scores representing extreme values on the continuum of just world beliefs. Therefore, it may be most reasonable to conclude on the basis of the Canadian data, that the validity of the just world hypothesis is constrained with regard to the relationship between sexual involvement in a crime and a victim's perceived responsibility, first, only to comparisons of crimes of a sexual nature, and secondly, to a small segment of the sample characterized by extreme scores on the Just World Scale.

In Britain, a relatively consistent pattern of results emerged concerning the hypothesis of increased sexual involvement in a crime. Results on multiple measures of victim responsibility revealed that the proposed increase in observer assignment of blame to victims of increasing levels of injustice forecast by the theory was limited to comparisons of crimes which ranged from low (e.g., a nonsexual offense) to moderate (e.g., an indecent assault) in their degree of sexual content. While a victim who was indecently assaulted was perceived as more responsible for her misfortune as compared to a victim of a similar nonsexual offense, there were no increases in responsibility attributed to a victim of rape. In fact, the rape victim was often assigned significantly less responsibility for her attack than was the victim of either an indecent assault or a nonsexual offense! Thus, in spite of an increased threat to just world beliefs in the form of

severe sexual abuse, British participants did not protect themselves from the possibility of a similar event occurring in their lives or those of their loved ones by assigning heightened responsibility to the victim of such an attack. Moreover, this finding was robust across ratings of both behavioral (e.g., victim carelessness and provocation) as well as characterological blame for the attack.

In summary, these data appear to illustrate that British respondents may be inclined to assign increased responsibility to a victim who receives a moderate degree of misfortune (at least in terms of sexual abuse), yet when the outcome is extremely aversive (as in an act of forcible rape), the response is one of compassion or sympathy for the victim as opposed to blame. This finding is consistent with the results of Deitz, Littman, and Bentley (1984), who manipulated both victim attractiveness and resistance to the attacker in an hypothetical case of rape and found that, in general, respondents expressed considerable sympathy toward a rape victim regardless of the experimental manipulations.

In conclusion, the findings of the present study regarding the effects of increasing sexual involvement in a crime appear to suggest that observers may form just world attributions when presented with moderate escalations in sexual abuse of a victim. When the incident involves an extreme level of sexual abuse, such as the forcible rape of an innocent individual, however, these tendencies may be inhibited. While evidence of such a response was observed only for the characterological devaluation of a victim in the Canadian sample, in Britain, the effect was manifested on all measures of responsibility,

suggesting a relatively consistent pattern of response. One possible explanation for this result is that the perceived aversiveness associated with an act of rape may be so severe that it overrides any "just world" tendencies on the part of observers. Instead of devaluing or blaming the victim for her misfortune, observers may be inclined to sympathize with her, even though she may be of "disreputable" character. This response is consistent with the recent hypothesis of gradual change in observers' perceptions of rape victims as a function of attitudinal changes concerning rape in the general population. It has been proposed, for example, that increased public education and media exposure of the plight of rape victims (Gilmartin-Zena, 1983) has softened the public's perceptions of a rape victim's responsibility for the act. While there has not been much research, to date, to support this claim (in fact, Feild (1978) reported that both police and citizens perceived a victim as significantly less attractive after being raped), there have been a few studies which have found minimal levels of assigned responsibility to a rape victim, regardless of the situation in which the incident occurred (Krulowitz, 1982) or her perceived character. For example, Gilmartin-Zena (1983) administered vignettes describing the rape of either an "ideal" victim (i.e., a married woman, dressed respectably, who was raped by a total stranger while offering physical resistance, and who received severe injuries as a result of the attack) or a "nonideal" victim (i.e., a divorced woman, dressed provocatively, who was raped by a casual acquaintance while offering no physical resistance

and who sustained minor scratches and bruises) to a sample of 150 medical students. Results revealed that respondents assigned minimal levels of responsibility to either category of victim for the rape (0.3 and 0.9 on a 0 - 9 rating scale for the ideal and nonideal victims, respectively). As indicated previously, the investigator concluded that the low levels of responsibility attributed to victims in the study occurred as a result of attitudinal changes in perceptions of rape among the population fostered by the efforts of feminist groups and rape crisis centers. Further support for a perceived aversiveness hypothesis comes from a study by Vogelmann-Sine, Ervin, Christenson, Warmsun, and Ullman (1979) who attempted to classify rape as representing the extreme end of a continuum of situations which combined varying degrees of violence and sexual intimacy. The investigators found that, for undergraduate females, intense feelings of aversiveness concerning male-female interactions were only elicited by scenes which dealt with both sexual aggressiveness and coercive violence (the distinguishing feature between the forcible rape vignette and the other two sexual involvement conditions employed within the present study). Extending this logic to the present investigation, it may have been that extreme feelings of aversiveness were only elicited among observers through the presentation of a vignette which involved violence and sexual intimacy. Perhaps respondents did not perceive the victim in the indecent assault condition as the recipient of a truly violent outcome according to these guidelines. They were thus able to invoke just world attributions when formulating

evaluations of her. While a test of this hypothesis is not possible from the present data, it is suggested that further investigations using hypothetical accounts of crimes pretest vignettes for these essential components to determine if, indeed, observers discriminate between situations involving sexual intimacy, coercion, or both in order to determine if the combination of these two is a factor in distinguishing their responses to depictions of forcible rape from their reactions to presentations of other instances of victimization.

Another factor which must be considered within an explanation of a trend toward lower assignment of responsibility to a victim of rape consists of an examination of observers' reactions to the attacker. The finding that respondents in all conditions, and in both samples of the present study ascribed very high levels of blame to the attacker, regardless of the character of the victim, suggests the possibility that lower assignment of responsibility to a victim of rape may be associated with an increased tendency among observers to blame the assailant. This is consistent with the work of Nagao and Davis (1980) who reviewed a number of studies, ranging over the course of five years, which involved mock jury verdicts for defendants accused of rape. All of these investigations featured the same prerecorded mock trial, experimental procedure, subject population and surroundings. On the basis of their usage of several very large samples (Ns ranged from 66 to 870), the investigators alluded to a trend toward increasingly harsher attributions of guilt to defendants over the years (for example, the authors noted an increase of 16% in the proportion of

mock jurors favoring a guilty verdict prior to deliberation over a period of three years). While there are many factors which may have been responsible for such an effect which the authors were unable to control for in their design, it was concluded, that, in general, the results were representative of social changes in norms which occurred over this interval of time.

Alternatively, a recent study by Wyer, Galen and Gorman (1985) has presented a possible reformulation of the just world hypothesis as an explanation for minimal victim derogation effects. The investigators suggest that individuals may reaffirm their concepts of a just world by assigning greater punishment to attackers. Furthermore, respondents who assign high levels of blame to defendants may not necessarily feel the need to assign heightened responsibility to the victim at the same time. Unfortunately, however, they were unable to provide a test of this hypothesis within their investigation. Therefore, in summary, while such conclusions remain tenuous in the absence of direct empirical investigations of the premises involved, they do provide meaningful directions for further research. Future studies could, for example, examine the effects of experimental manipulations of observer awareness of the emotional and legal consequences faced by rape victims on their evaluations of such individuals. Secondly, observers' existing knowledge of recent changes in legislation involving sexual assault could be measured to determine any contributing influence it may have on their reactions to victims. Finally, the responses of individuals previously matched for beliefs in a just world could be systematically compared in order to determine if

strong beliefs regarding this concept could be alternately expressed in reactions to attackers as opposed to victims. Only then could it be declared that, indeed, societal attitudes toward victims of sexual abuse are responsible for a shift in the responsibility attributions of observers, or conversely, whether just world considerations are still applicable, but in need of essential reformulation.

Physical Harm

The just world prediction that a victim's perceived attractiveness decreases with increasing levels of injustice (in terms of physical harm) received equivocal support. In Canada, there were no indications of greater characterological devaluation of a victim who was harmed severely as opposed to a victim who was physically uninjured. This result is contrary to the theory's prediction that observers would be more inclined to derogate the innocent victim of a severe injustice as a result of the threat that such an outcome poses to their own well-being. However, there were indications of support observed for this prediction in England. On the measure of bipolar attractiveness, a severely injured victim was perceived as less attractive by observers than a victim who was physically unharmed. Moreover, on the measure of a victim's perceived Social Stimulus Value, a significant Physical Harm x Victim Respectability interaction revealed that only a less respectable victim who received serious injuries was devalued characterologically. In the terms of just world theory, it is possible that observers were able to rationalize the occurrence of a severe

outcome to a person of disreputable character as a punishment for their misdeeds. On the contrary, however, a respectable victim was actually evaluated as significantly more attractive when she sustained severe physical injuries compared to a similar victim who was left unharmed! According to just world theory, respondents may have found it difficult to devalue the character of such an individual in order to provide an explanation for the event, and, instead, reacted to her with compassion. However, the theory also states that when characterological devaluation of a victim is difficult or impossible, individuals will resort to identifying the behavior of that individual as responsible for the event. This corollary was unsupported in either of the two samples. Moreover, in neither country did respondents assign heightened levels of responsibility to a victim as a function of increased outcome severity. In Canada there were no differences observed in levels of responsibility assigned to a victim who received extensive physical injuries and a victim who sustained no harm on any of the four measures of perceived victim responsibility. In England, there was but one exception to this pattern of results. On the measure of victim provocation for the attack, there was some evidence of increased attributions of provocation to a victim who was seriously injured during the attack as opposed to a victim who was physically unharmed. However, this effect was limited to comparisons of nonsexual offenses. It seems that given an offense lacking sexual abuse, observers may have been inclined to believe that a victim must have engaged in some behavior to provoke her attacker to physically

assault her. Interestingly, this effect was observed only on this measure, and was confined to the British sample. Thus, it appears, on the whole, that there was greater support evidenced for the just world predictions of increasingly negative evaluations of a victim of increased physical harm in Britain as compared to Canada. It must be cautioned, however, that these results should be interpreted in the absence of manipulation checks of the independent variables in Britain and that these effects were limited to a small subset of the total comparisons made among the twelve conditions.

By contrast, the just world prediction of less attributions to chance for severe outcomes to individuals of good character failed to receive support from the British data. There were significantly more attributions to chance for attacks which involved rape than for attacks in which there was no sexual abuse. Results of comparisons within the indecent assault condition further revealed that there were more attributions to chance for a victim who was physically harmed. This result is inconsistent with the theory's position that individuals attempt to rationalize the occurrence of severe injustices involving victims of good character by providing concrete explanations in order to preserve their beliefs in a just world. This pattern was, however, not replicated by the Canadian findings, where, as previously mentioned, the results demonstrated greater support for the predictions of just world theory.

In summary, the results concerning the manipulation of severity of physical harm on observers' evaluations of a victim offer little

support for the just world hypothesis. While the results of the British data concerning the relationship between physical harm and victim attractiveness do coincide with the results of Stokols and Schopler's (1973) manipulation of outcome severity (in that there was evidence of decreases in observer assigned attractiveness to a victim with escalations in the severity of the consequences she received), these results did not generalize to the Canadian sample. Furthermore, the data revealed no support for the hypothesis that a respectable victim is assigned greater responsibility for a negative outcome as a function of the degree of injustice associated with the incident. Thus, the overall findings concerning outcome aversiveness, dually conceptualized in this investigation by the degree of sexual abuse to a victim, and the amount of physical harm inflicted during an attack, provide little support for the just world hypothesis. While there appeared to be some increase in negative evaluations of a victim when comparisons were made between a nonsexual crime and an indecent assault, at absolute ends of the continuum of outcome aversiveness, there was little evidence of increasing devaluation or assignment of blame to a victim, particularly when the victim was sexually violated. Individuals may be inclined to evaluate a victim negatively to a degree when she is the recipient of a moderate degree of misfortune, but it seems that when the outcome is extremely severe, this tendency is inhibited. The previously-cited study by Vogelmann-Sine et al. (1979) provided some support for this claim. The investigators found, for example, that observers reported more intense

feelings involving aversiveness, threat, and helplessness when presented with an attempted rape scenario as opposed to a vignette where a woman was robbed at gunpoint. These results led to the conclusion that intended rape was perceived by observers as a significantly more serious crime than intended assault. A similar finding was reported by Feldman-Summers and Lindner (1976) who revealed that observers of both sexes perceived rape as having a significantly greater impact on the victim than physical assault. Extending this logic to the present study, while it may be possible for respondents to invoke just world attributions when they are faced with the victim of a nonsexual offense, a physical assault, or an offense involving a moderate level of sexual abuse, the severity of the impact of the crime of rape on the victim (particularly when she is of respectable character) may set off a divergent pattern of cognitions among observers. This pattern may include an estimate on the part of the observer concerning the seriousness of the outcome involved and its impact upon the victim. This, in turn, leads to the formulation of a differential pattern of attributions concerning her character and role in the attack. In the case of forcible rape, where the estimate of seriousness is presumably very high, it may be difficult, or even impossible, for observers to denigrate the victim even further by assigning negative qualities to her. Rather, respondents may unconsciously feel that "she has suffered enough already," and respond to her with sympathy and compassion, hence the low levels of characterological devaluation and blame assigned to rape victims in

this study. While this explanation does not rule out the previous findings of other researchers (e.g., Jones & Aronson, 1973; Smith et al., 1976) who found elevated blame of victims of rape, neither of these studies compared observers' responsibility ratings of victims of other types of crimes (which may have been even higher than those observed for victims of rape), therefore comparisons of the sort implied by this explanation of the present results could not be offered.

Prior to concluding this section, a final alternative explanation for the lack of support for just world predictions must be mentioned. In their review of the just world literature, Lerner and Miller (1978) cautioned that the pattern of predictions proposed by the theory is only observed when the victim's suffering in the experimental presentation actually threatens the well-being of the subject. Since no direct assessment was undertaken of the perceived threat to observers implied in the vignettes chosen for the present study, this explanation for the present disconfirmation of just world predictions cannot be ruled out entirely. It appears however, that respondents would be threatened by the instances of innocent victimization portrayed in the accounts which were employed, given that the situational circumstances of the crimes (female university student returning home from a part-time job) are ones which respondents could themselves encounter. Again, in order to rule out such possibilities, it would be wise for future investigations to pretest the experimental vignettes for such concepts as the perceived severity associated with an outcome, and the perceived

threat to observers entailed in that outcome. This way, specific hypotheses concerning explanations such as the ones presented here could be put to test empirically.

Victim Respectability

While the results of the present study showed clear-cut support, across cultures, for the just world prediction of increased characterological blame of a disreputable individual for a negative outcome, the associated prediction of greater behavioral blame of a respectable individual was unsupported in all instances. A cashier was found to be no more responsible by way of her actions (i.e., victim provocation) nor by her negligence (i.e., victim carelessness) than was an exotic dancer, even though the theory would predict that observers resort to blaming the behavior of a victim of misfortune when they are unable to ascribe characterological fault. This finding, thus, appears to be consistent with the previously-cited works of Kahn et al., 1977; Kanekar and Kolswalla, 1977; and Gilmartin-Zena, 1983, who found no relation between victim respectability and observer attribution of responsibility. Moreover, in Britain, a significant interaction between Sexual Involvement and Victim Respectability revealed that when observers were asked to assign ratings of provocation to a victim for her attack, they attributed significantly more provocation to a less respectable victim (i.e., an exotic dancer) than to a respectable victim (i.e., a cashier). This finding, which is in direct opposition to the prediction of just world theory, is

consistent with previous findings from Feldman-Summers and Lindner (1976) who also found an inverse relation between victim respectability and observer attribution of responsibility to a victim.

As previously discussed, in Canada, the manipulation of a victim's perceived respectability proved to be more supportive of the just world hypothesis, but only for those predictions concerning observers' attributions to chance for a negative event. For example, the finding that respondents were more inclined to attribute the attack of a less respectable victim who received a high degree of physical harm but who was not sexually abused to chance factors than the attack of a more respectable victim who received a similar outcome seems to be partially in line with an explanation based on just world considerations. For instance, observers may have been more inclined to attribute the occurrence of a negative outcome, such as a beating, to a person of questionable character as a chance happening, as the theory does state that these things should happen to "bad" people because they deserve them. On the other hand, the occurrence of the same event to a person of good character, may have been perceived as an unjust, wrongful act which presumably prompted respondents to search for other explanations for the incident in order to protect themselves from the possibility of a similar outcome. Yet, upon examination of the results as a whole, even though respondents were inclined to view the attack of a less respectable victim as a form of retribution for her negative character, and (at least in Canada) were also less inclined to perceive the attack of a respectable victim as a chance happening, the

contingent explanations proposed by just world theory (i.e., attributions of behavioral blame in the form of provocation or carelessness) for the attack of a respectable victim were not invoked. Further support for this result lies in the fact that while over 90% of respondents in respectable victim conditions indicated in an open-ended question that the incident occurred largely because the victim had been walking through a park alone at night, these observations were not construed as attributions of blame to her for the attack.

Personality Factors

The present study also sought to test the competing hypothesis that negative attitudes toward women are responsible for victim derogation effects. For this purpose, objective measures of this variable, as well as just world beliefs, were included. On the basis of an examination of the partial correlations between the Just World and Attitudes Toward Women Scales and the dependent measures of observer evaluations of a victim, the hypothesis that negative attitudes toward women are responsible for negative evaluations of victims of misfortune fared better than just world beliefs in accounting for variance among the dependent measures. As indicated above, scores on the Just World Scale were significantly related to only four of a possible sixteen dependent measures across both samples. Moreover, when the small magnitude of these correlations was considered (barring the acknowledged possibility of inadequacies among the dependent measures), it must be concluded that beliefs in a just world, as

measured by this scale, cannot account for observers' responses to an innocent victim. These results are consistent with the previous work of Kerr and Kurtz (1977) who found no difference between high and low scorers on the scale on measures of victim attractiveness and blame for accounts of both rape and armed robbery, and that of Thornton, Ryckman and Robbins (1982) who found no relationship between Just World Scale scores and observer assignment of responsibility to a victim of sexual assault. The poor showing of the scale in these studies raises a serious problem for the construct validity of the instrument, specifically when one considers the similarity of these investigations to the majority of the research used to validate the scale (see Rubin & Peplau, 1975, for a review). Extending this logic, beyond the validity of the test itself, on a larger scale, it seems that the present investigation has offered meager support for the validity of the entire theory, with the exception of its predictions concerning the characterological blame of disreputable victims of unjust outcomes. Further support for this contention will be presented through a discussion of the cross-cultural validity of the hypothesis, to be presented in the following section. Prior to this, however, the competing hypothesis of the effects of negative attitudes toward women on observer evaluations of female victims of crime will be considered insofar as it entails a personality factor.

Respondents' attitudes toward women, as measured by the Attitudes

Toward Women Scale, were significantly related to several dependent variables included within the present study. In both Canada and in Britain, relatively traditional attitudes toward women were significantly related to lower ratings of a victim on the Bipolar Attractiveness Index, higher attributions of characterological blame to a victim for her attack, and less attributions to chance for the event. In Canada alone, more traditional respondents assigned significantly higher levels of carelessness to a victim than their more liberal counterparts. In Britain, traditionally-oriented participants were more likely to assign a victim less Social Stimulus Value and greater provocation for the incident. Yet, the observed magnitude of these correlations (the largest partial r was equal to only .37) suggests that, contrary to the claims of researchers such as Acock and Ireland (1983), the concept of negative attitudes toward women as a determinant of observers' unfavorable reactions to female victims provides us with only part of the answer regarding observers' evaluations of a victim of misfortune. This assertion is supplemented by the absence of any significant interaction between the Attitudes Toward Women Scale and the manipulated variable Sexual Involvement, a result which seems to indicate that an individual's attitude toward women has little moderating impact on his or her attributions involving crimes upon female victims in which the sexual nature of the incident is examined.

Thus, while it appears that an individual's attitude toward women does invariably influence his or her reaction to a victim to

an extent, it does not present a complete explanation of the processes by which observer evaluations of a female victim's character or culpability are formulated. Further research involving other attitudinal determinants of victim evaluations, for example, attitudes toward rape, rape myth acceptance, acceptance of interpersonal violence (Burt, 1981) and rape empathy (Deitz, Littman, & Bentley, 1984) may add useful insights. For example, future investigations could employ attitudinal variables whose effects on observer reactions have been documented by previous research in order to formulate a priori comparisons between crime conditions. For instance, it could be hypothesized that individuals with relatively high scores on measures of acceptance of interpersonal violence would be less affected by rape scenarios involving a high degree of physical coercion than would respondents with relatively lower scores on this measure. These individuals would consequently be expected to assign lower levels of blame to attackers in such situations. Such empirically-controlled, preplanned tests of these hypotheses could greatly add to our knowledge concerning the mechanisms governing observers' reactions to victims of misfortune.

Cross-Cultural Factors

While there were some basic similarities in the overall pattern of results collected from the two samples (e.g., the increases in negative evaluations of a victim of an indecent assault as compared to a victim of a nonsexual offense, but a discontinuation of this trend

for comparisons made with a rape victim), differences observed between Canadian and British respondents on six of the eight dependent measures seem to preclude the generalizability of the results across the two cultures. Given these differences between the two countries, can it really be assumed that all individuals employ the same kinds of attributions when faced with the unjust suffering of others, and that these attributions are invoked because of a similar need? If the desire to believe in a just world is a fundamental and universal need, as Lerner has proposed (Lerner & Miller, 1978), then extensive differences, such as these, should not be expected across relatively similar cultures. When one considers particularly, that the Canadian justice system has largely been modelled after that of Great Britain, it should be expected that "justice," in itself, is understood to be a comparatively similar concept in both countries. Yet, the scope of the differences between the two samples seems to imply that Canadian and British respondents do not react to a victim of injustice in an identical manner. In consideration of this, it must then be concluded that the just world hypothesis has not fulfilled the requirements of external validity across these two samples.

Caveats

Before moving on to a discussion of the implications of the present research with regard to the treatment of victims by society, a number of shortcomings in the present investigation must be acknowledged in

interpreting its findings. First, the study failed to pretest the perceived severity of the offenses included in the vignettes (e.g., by ranking the twelve crimes along a continuum of seriousness through the use of an independent sample of raters). Had such a comparison been undertaken, a priori comparisons of specific crime conditions (e.g. in terms of their perceived aversiveness and degree of threat to respondents) may have been examined. Future studies could perhaps employ a scaling technique to assess the severity of an assault upon a victim (such as that devised by Schultz and DeSavage (1975) who scaled the perceived assaultiveness of an array of physical behaviors) in order to establish a continuum of perceived aversiveness. This would enable researchers to compare directly, for example, whether sexual coercion (as in rape) is perceived as more severe by observers than nonsexual physical harm. Thus, conclusions regarding the effects of the absolute impact of an attack upon an innocent victim on observer evaluations of such an individual could be made with greater confidence.

Secondly, the present study did not include a moderate physical harm condition. Thus, conclusions cannot be made whether the pattern evidenced on the sexual involvement variable (where the greatest negative evaluations of victims were found in the medium sex condition) would be paralleled by a manipulation of physical harm which included a moderate level of assault. The inclusion of such a condition would thus seem warranted for future replications of the present study.

Incorporating many of the solutions discussed earlier for problems associated with the present study, and borrowing largely from the

suggestions of Burt (1981), a future experiment is now presented which might improve upon the contributions of this work. Such an experiment would rely heavily on the use of pilot data in the selection of attitudinal variables, and in the construction of experimental vignettes and dependent measures. For example, the effects of a number of attitudinal and demographic variables on respondents' perceptions of crimes involving violent attacks on victims could first be pretested on an independent sample of respondents similar to the one to be used in the study proper (examples of these could include attitudes toward rape, acceptance of interpersonal violence, rape myth acceptance, and rape empathy). Any of these which were significantly related to respondents' reactions to victims would then be used in the formulation of preplanned comparisons between specific crime conditions in the study itself. Vignettes constructed depicting manipulated variables of interest, for example degree of sexual coercion, severity of impact upon the victim, and perceived threat associated with a given outcome, would also be pretested according to all relevant dimensions to be examined, and would then be scaled along a continuum of the independent variable to be measured. Thus, pre-planned comparisons between crimes could be made as a test of the hypothesis that respondents' attitudes toward victims become more sympathetic as the perceived aversiveness of the consequences they receive increases.

The pilot study would also utilize the technique of asking respondents open-ended questions regarding their perceptions of the situation (for example, observers could be asked what characteristics

of the victim may have influenced their decisions regarding her responsibility for the incident). This technique could uncover a number of new independent variables to be manipulated in the experiment proper which the researcher had not considered on the basis of a literature review. The technique of asking open-ended questions could also serve the dual purpose of providing the researcher with an expanded set of dependent measures. For example, the most commonly chosen answers to such open-ended questions could be used to construct new dependent measures for future investigations. An example of such a measure which could be devised on the basis of the responses to the open-ended question posed in the present investigation would be "thoughtlessness" on the part of the victim (in choosing her route home from work) as an indication of her responsibility for the incident. Adoption of such a technique could greatly refine the current measures of victim attractiveness and responsibility used in current research in this vein, particularly considering the statements made in a previous section concerning problems associated with the lack of validation of dependent measures used in investigations of this nature.

Such use of pilot data in the construction of future studies could greatly enhance the conclusions made by researchers with regards to the populations sampled. For example, if the present study had been developed along such grounds, much more information could have been obtained as to the nature of the results observed. It may have been possible that British respondents' attitudes concerning sexual beliefs and their acceptance of interpersonal violence differed

greatly from participants in the Canadian sample, or that they perceived rape as a much more serious crime in contrast to physical assault given the differing media treatment of such incidents in Britain as compared to Canada. Moreover, it may have been found that the respondents included in this study all scored highly on the Rape Empathy Scale (Deitz, Blackwell, Daley, & Bentley, 1982), which may have been an important factor governing their assignment of responsibility to a victim of a rape as opposed to a victim of a nonsexual crime. It is hoped that future investigations of deviant acts employing techniques such as those outlined above will be able to provide us with valuable answers to these and other questions. This need for further more controlled research is perhaps best phrased by concerns raised by Howells, Shaw, Greasley, Robertson, Gloster, and Metcalfe (1981), who sampled British citizens' attitudes toward rape.

Cognitions about and perceptions of rape offenses may have direct behavioral consequences for the reporting of offenses, the processing of rape cases by the judicial system, jury decision-making, sentencing, and for extralegal social reactions to victims (stigmatization) and offenders (p.35).

Relevant Social Issues

The relatively low levels of observer derogation and blame of victims of rape (as opposed to other criminal offenses) observed in this investigation offer some implications for relevant social issues.

Previous research has revealed that not only a victim's self-image, but also the public's view of her (in terms of tendencies toward victim-blame) invariably influence both the reporting of the assault and subsequent coping behavior (e.g., Burgess & Holmstrom, 1974; Mazelan, 1982). While this literature has historically documented a pervasive trend among police, judges, hospital personnel, and the general public to assign responsibility to victims of sexual offenses (e.g. Sutherland & Sherl, 1970; Burgess & Holmstrom, 1974; Holmstrom & Burgess, 1978; Feild, 1978), more recent investigations, such as this one and the work of Gilmartin-Zena (1983) and Krulewitz (1982), seem to indicate that this tendency may be weakening. The low levels of responsibility accorded to rape victims in these investigations seem to indicate that negative societal attitudes toward victims of forcible rape may be gradually being replaced by harsher judgements of attackers. This viewpoint is consistent with Nagao and Davis' (1980) review of their research concerning mock jury verdicts and is further supported by the present finding of elevated assignments of responsibility to attackers, regardless of the experimental manipulations. While specific conclusions regarding the robustness of these findings await further empirical replication and methodological refinements, the emergence of such a trend in the literature could have far-reaching implications for future victims of sexual assault. These include possible increases in the rate of reporting of offenses and potential reduction of the stressful impact of rape upon victims. For example, while recent investigations have shown that rape remains

a grossly underreported crime (Medea and Thompson, (1974) estimated that 60% to 95% of actual rapes are not reported), a trend toward increased attributions of blame to attackers, along with a more compassionate societal response to the victims of rape could influence more victims to report their attacks to the authorities, free from the fears of being blamed by others for their misfortunes. Prior research has also demonstrated that increased reporting of offenses by victims can also lead to more positive adjustment to the experience of victimization. For example, Sales, Baum, and Shore (1984) have documented that victims who successfully bring charges against their assailants evidence somewhat fewer symptoms of fear, anxiety, and depression (both initially and at 6-month follow-up) than those who refrain from doing so. Similarly, a victim's expectation of a sympathetic response by observers could also decrease the negative emotional consequences that often accompany sexual assault. A study by Norris and Feldman-Summers (1981), for example, revealed that the presence of understanding others (observers) was significantly related to reductions in the stressful impact of rape upon the victim. Thus, it seems that if the present findings are an indication, any emergence of a trend toward decreased observer derogation and assignment of responsibility to victims of sexual assault could generally result in increased reporting of offenses, an increased proportion of valid guilty verdicts, and some alleviation of the negative emotional consequences and perceived stigmatization experienced by rape victims.

Avenues for Further Research

In recent years it has been proposed that some types of blame may represent a form of potentially adaptive coping behavior with regard to the experience of victimization (e.g., Janoff-Bulman, 1982). A number of studies (e.g. Janoff-Bulman, 1979; 1982) have argued that a degree of behavioral self-blame by a victim can aid in the process of recovery by restoring the individual's perception of control over his or her destiny. For example, if a rape victim engages in cognitions such as, "It would not have happened if I hadn't been walking alone at night." she may perceive herself as less vulnerable to future attacks by refraining from such actions. These hypotheses were supported by a study by Janoff-Bulman (1982). For example, it was revealed that such attributions were significantly related to higher levels of self-esteem among respondents, (who were asked to imagine themselves as a rape victim in a vignette) as well as higher ratings of perceived future avoidability of rape. Moreover, these results were similar in those conditions in which respondents were instructed to act like observers. Observers who behaviorally blamed the victim also reported higher levels of self-esteem (a result which is consistent with just world theory) and were also more likely to believe that the victim could avoid the possibility of future attacks. These findings raise some interesting questions regarding the present research. Looking at the responses collected to the open-ended question posed by this investigation, when respondents were asked why

they may have thought the victim was responsible for her attack, an overwhelming majority indicated that "She shouldn't have been walking through a park alone at night." or "She shouldn't have been walking home through a dark area." However, these respondents assigned low levels of responsibility to the victim. Thus, some responses which may be interpreted as instances of victim blame may simply have constituted respondents' perceptions of possible causes of the attack, (as a result of their attempts to minimize their own vulnerability to attacks).

This explanation is consistent with the work of Fincham and Roberts (1985) who surveyed the problems associated with definitions of responsibility in previous research. In effect, the investigators found that there was great diversity in the current research concerning operational definitions of "responsibility," noting that such variables as "... perceived cause, blame, punishment, and compensation have often been used interchangeably as measures of responsibility" (Fincham & Roberts, 1985, p. 181). In light of this view, it may be possible that some of the responses of observers in previous studies which found high levels of responsibility attributed to victims were mistakenly classed as instances of victim blame when they were actually more indicative of their perceptions of causes for the attack. Given Janoff-Bulman's findings concerning behavioral blame as a potential aid in maximizing future avoidability of victimization, further research concerning distinctions between cause and blame is clearly needed. If respondents do indeed assign "responsibility" to a victim

in order to decrease the likelihood of future instances of victimization, then perhaps some forms of observer attributions of responsibility need not be considered as necessarily harmful to victims. Yet, it remains unknown to what degree do such forms of behavioral self blame and observer-generated victim blame represent effective coping strategies for both victims and observers in terms of minimizing their future vulnerability to rape and at what point do they become maladaptive. Furthermore, there has been no documentation, to date, concerning whether victims of other offenses (such as physical assault or robbery) experience the same types of cognitions, and if so, are they also effective in reducing the impact of their victimization? Further research, directly addressing each of these research questions appears to be clearly warranted.

In conclusion while the results of the present investigation do support the hypothesis of a trend toward more humane evaluations of victims of rape, the harsh judgments observed for victims of indecent assault and physical assault (in Britain) seem to reveal that further public education is required. While researchers such as Gilmartin-Zena (1983) maintain that low levels of blame accorded to victims in recent studies may be the result of the gains made by feminist groups and rape crisis centers in educating the public to the plight of the rape victim, further education is clearly warranted before such effects can be demonstrated to generalize to all categories of victims. One potentially effective strategy which could be employed concerns the distinction between "mindless" and "mindful" evaluations of victims

of adversity (Chanowitz & Langer, 1981; Langer, Bashner, & Chanowitz, 1985).

According to this view, victim evaluations such as those proposed by just world reasoning reflect a state of "passive information-processing in which the individual rather relies on distinctions previously drawn, instead of engaging in active categorizing and new decision-making" (Langer, Bashner & Chanowitz, 1985, p. 113). For example, when we are children, we are told that "bad" things only happen to "bad" people. Unless we are instructed explicitly to examine several aspects of a situation involving someone's victimization, and, to provide as many alternative explanations as possible for the occurrence of an incident (mindful information-processing), we will typically respond to that situation with the one explanation we have been taught (i.e., this bad thing happened to her because she is a bad person and deserved it). In the most recent study involving this distinction, the researchers operationalized mindfulness as "the process of providing several alternative answers to one question" (Langer, Basher & Chanowitz, 1985). In this study children were randomly assigned to either mindless or mindful conditions and then presented a set of slides of disabled children. The dependent measure involved the degree of avoidance exhibited by the children when given the opportunity to interact with a disabled child in a variety of games. Results indicated that the mindful group (who were given tasks involving the solving of problem situations, the formulation of several different explanations for an occurrence, and the listing

of several aspects of a given role) showed significantly less avoidance of handicapped individuals than the children who were assigned to the mindless condition. It would be of interest for future research to determine whether these effects generalize to observers of victims of misfortune such as rape, assault, and forcible confinement. If such efforts are indeed proven to be successful, within a laboratory setting, it would be a great asset to the improvement of public education concerning all victims, be they victims of rape, child abuse, poverty, or social injustices. Perhaps only through the encouragement of such decision-making will just world tendencies, such as the characterological devaluation of a victim and elevated assignment of responsibility by observers, one day be declared as invalid explanations for observer reactions to all categories of victims of misfortune.

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APPENDIX A

Study Questionnaires

Background Information

Sex: Male _____ Female _____

Birthdate: _____ Age: _____

Do you have a part-time job? Yes _____ No _____

What is your annual income? _____

What is your father's occupation? _____

What is your mother's occupation? _____

What is your annual family income? _____

What is your religious background? _____

Are you currently practicing your religion? Yes _____ No _____

How strongly would you rate your belief in an active God?

NO

STRONG

BELIEF 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 BELIEF

What is your principal subject of concentration? _____

What is your country of birth? _____

How many years have you lived in this country? _____

Do you belong to an ethnic group? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, which one? _____

Personal Evaluation Questionnaires

Please answer the next few pages of questionnaires about your feelings concerning Susan D. On the next page there will be a set of scales. Each end of the scale is defined by a pair of adjectives which are opposites, e.g., good-bad, tall-short. Your task will be to rate Susan D. by placing a check mark at the appropriate place on the scale.

Here is how you are to use the scales. If you feel Susan is very closely related to one end of the scale, you should place the check mark as follows:

FAIR ✓ : ____ : ____ : OR : ____ : ____ : ____ : UNFAIR
 FAIR ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ✓ : UNFAIR

If you feel that Susan is moderately related to one or the other end of the scale (but not extremely), you should place the check mark as follows:

FAIR ____ : ✓ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : UNFAIR
 FAIR ____ : ____ : ____ : OR : ____ : ✓ : ____ : UNFAIR

If you feel that Susan is slightly related to one or the other end of the scale, you should place your check mark as follows:

FAIR ____ : ____ : ✓ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : UNFAIR
 FAIR ____ : ____ : ____ : OR : ✓ : ____ : ____ : UNFAIR

If you feel that Susan is neither related to one nor the other end of the scale, you should place your check mark as follows:

FAIR ____ : ____ : ____ : ✓ : ____ : ____ : ____ : UNFAIR

The direction toward which you place your check mark, depends upon which of the two ends of the scale seem most characteristic of Susan D.

1. INTELLIGENT ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : UNINTELLIGENT
2. LIKEABLE ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : UNLIKEABLE
3. UNCOOPERATIVE ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : COOPERATIVE
4. BOSSY ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : EASY-GOING
5. IMMATURE ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : MATURE
6. IMAGINATIVE ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : UNIMAGINATIVE
7. IRRESPONSIBLE ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : RESPONSIBLE
8. NERVOUS ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : CALM
9. PATIENT ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : IMPATIENT
10. REASONABLE ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : UNREASONABLE
11. RIGID ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : FLEXIBLE
12. COURTEOUS ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : RUDE
13. SELFISH ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : UNSELFISH
14. WARM ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : COLD
15. SINCERE ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : INSINCERE

Please answer the following questions about Susan D. by circling the number that corresponds to your answer.

1. How would people in general react to Susan D. after a brief acquaintance, in terms of getting to know her better?

WOULD PREFER NOT TO BECOME FURTHER ACQUAINTED	1	2	3	4	5	6	WOULD BE INTENSELY INTERESTED
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	-------------------------------------

2. How easily would Susan D. fit in with your friends?

PROBABLY NOT EASILY	1	2	3	4	5	6	WOULD BE EAGERLY SOUGHT OUT
------------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	--------------------------------

3. Some people are able to gain admiration and respect from others very easily and other people are not. How easily can Susan D. gain admiration from others?

VERY EASILY	1	2	3	4	5	6	VERY DIFFICULT
-------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	----------------

4. Some people are able to gain affection and liking from others very easily and other people are not. How easily can Susan D. gain affection and liking from others?

VERY EASILY	1	2	3	4	5	6	VERY DIFFICULT
-------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	----------------

5. From the impression Susan D. gives, how likely is she to be able to get the things she wants out of life?

WILL HAVE TO STRUGGLE FOR WHAT SHE WANTS	1	2	3	4	5	6	THE THINGS SHE WANTS COME VERY NATURALLY AND EASILY
--	---	---	---	---	---	---	--

6. How responsible was Susan D. for this incident?

NOT VERY RESPONSIBLE	1	2	3	4	5	6	VERY RESPONSIBLE
-------------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---------------------

7. How responsible was Susan's attacker for this incident?

NOT VERY RESPONSIBLE	1	2	3	4	5	6	VERY RESPONSIBLE
-------------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---------------------

8. How much do you think the attacker's choice of Susan D. as the victim was due to chance?

ENTIRELY DUE TO CHANCE	1	2	3	4	5	6	NOT AT ALL DUE TO CHANCE
---------------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	-----------------------------

9. How likely do you feel that Susan's actions at the time of the incident may have encouraged her victimization?

VERY LIKELY	1	2	3	4	5	6	VERY UNLIKELY
----------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	------------------

10. How likely do you feel that this incident may have occurred as the result of carelessness on the part of Susan?

VERY LIKELY	1	2	3	4	5	6	VERY UNLIKELY
----------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	------------------

11. How likely do you feel that this incident happened to Susan because of the kind of person she is?

VERY LIKELY	1	2	3	4	5	6	VERY UNLIKELY
----------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	------------------

12. Why do you think Susan may have been responsible for what happened to her? _____

Personal Opinion Survey

Please indicate your degree of agreement or disagreement with the following statements by circling the number that corresponds to your answer.

1. I've found that a person rarely deserves the reputation he has.

STRONGLY DISAGREE	1	2	3	4	5	6	STRONGLY AGREE
----------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	-------------------

2. Basically the world is a just place.

STRONGLY DISAGREE	1	2	3	4	5	6	STRONGLY AGREE
----------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	-------------------

3. People who get 'lucky breaks' have usually earned their good fortune.

STRONGLY DISAGREE	1	2	3	4	5	6	STRONGLY AGREE
----------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	-------------------

4. Careful drivers are just as likely to get hurt in traffic accidents as careless drivers.

STRONGLY DISAGREE	1	2	3	4	5	6	STRONGLY AGREE
----------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	-------------------

5. It is a common occurrence for a guilty person to get off free in the courtrooms of the nation.

STRONGLY DISAGREE	1	2	3	4	5	6	STRONGLY AGREE
----------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	-------------------

6. Students almost always deserve the grades they receive in school.

STRONGLY DISAGREE	1	2	3	4	5	6	STRONGLY AGREE
----------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	-------------------

7. Men who keep in shape have little chance of suffering a heart attack.

STRONGLY DISAGREE	1	2	3	4	5	6	STRONGLY AGREE
----------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	-------------------

Please go on to next page.

8. The political candidate who sticks up for his principles rarely gets elected.

STRONGLY							STRONGLY
DISAGREE	1	2	3	4	5	6	AGREE

9. It is rare for an innocent man to be wrongly sent to jail.

STRONGLY							STRONGLY
DISAGREE	1	2	3	4	5	6	AGREE

10. In professional sports, many fouls and infractions never get called by the referee.

STRONGLY							STRONGLY
DISAGREE	1	2	3	4	5	6	AGREE

11. By and large, people deserve what they get.

STRONGLY							STRONGLY
DISAGREE	1	2	3	4	5	6	AGREE

12. When parents punish their children, it is almost always for good reasons.

STRONGLY							STRONGLY
DISAGREE	1	2	3	4	5	6	AGREE

13. Good deeds often go unnoticed and unrewarded.

STRONGLY							STRONGLY
DISAGREE	1	2	3	4	5	6	AGREE

14. Although evil men may hold political power for a while, in the general course of history good wins out.

STRONGLY							STRONGLY
DISAGREE	1	2	3	4	5	6	AGREE

15. In almost any business or profession, people who do their job well rise to the top.

STRONGLY							STRONGLY
DISAGREE	1	2	3	4	5	6	AGREE

Please go on to next page.

16. Parents tend to overlook the things most to be admired in their children.

STRONGLY DISAGREE	1	2	3	4	5	6	STRONGLY AGREE
----------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	-------------------

17. It is often impossible for a person to receive a fair trial in this country.

STRONGLY DISAGREE	1	2	3	4	5	6	STRONGLY AGREE
----------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	-------------------

18. People who meet with misfortune have often brought it on themselves.

STRONGLY DISAGREE	1	2	3	4	5	6	STRONGLY AGREE
----------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	-------------------

19. Crime doesn't pay.

STRONGLY DISAGREE	1	2	3	4	5	6	STRONGLY AGREE
----------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	-------------------

20. Many people suffer through absolutely no fault of their own.

STRONGLY DISAGREE	1	2	3	4	5	6	STRONGLY AGREE
----------------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	-------------------

Attitudes Toward Women

The statements listed below describe attitudes toward the role of women in society which different people have. There are no right or wrong answers, only opinions. Please indicate your opinion by circling the number which corresponds to the alternative which best describes your personal attitude.

	<u>STRONGLY AGREE</u>	<u>MILDLY AGREE</u>	<u>MILDLY DISAGREE</u>	<u>STRONGLY DISAGREE</u>
1. Swearing and obscenity are more repulsive in the speech of a woman than of a man.	1	2	3	4
2. Women should take increasing responsibility for leadership in solving the intellectual and social problems of the day.	1	2	3	4
3. Both husband and wife should be allowed the same grounds for divorce.	1	2	3	4
4. Telling dirty jokes should be mostly a masculine prerogative.	1	2	3	4
5. Intoxication among women is worse than intoxication among men.	1	2	3	4
6. Under modern economic conditions with women being active outside the home, men should share in household tasks such as washing dishes and doing the laundry.	1	2	3	4
7. It is insulting to women to have the 'obey' clause remain in the marriage service.	1	2	3	4

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	<u>STRONGLY AGREE</u>	<u>MILDLY AGREE</u>	<u>MILDLY DISAGREE</u>	<u>STRONGLY DISAGREE</u>
8. There should be a strict merit system in job appointment and promotion without regard to sex.	1	2	3	4
9. A woman should be as free as a man to propose marriage.	1	2	3	4
10. Women should worry less about their rights and more about becoming good wives and mothers.	1	2	3	4
11. Women earning as much as their dates should bear equally the expense when they go out together.	1	2	3	4
12. A woman should not expect to go to exactly the same places or to have quite the same freedom of action as a man.	1	2	3	4
13. Women should assume their rightful place in business and all the professions along with men.	1	2	3	4
14. Sons in a family should be given more encouragement to go to college than daughters.	1	2	3	4
15. It is ridiculous for a women to run a locomotive and for a man to darn socks.	1	2	3	4
16. In general, the father should have greater authority than the mother in the bringing up of children.	1	2	3	4

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	<u>STRONGLY AGREE</u>	<u>MILDLY AGREE</u>	<u>MILDLY DISAGREE</u>	<u>STRONGLY DISAGREE</u>
17. Women should be encouraged not to become sexually intimate with anyone before marriage, even their fiances.	1	2	3	4
18. The husband should not be favored by law over the wife in the disposal of family property or income.	1	2	3	4
19. Women should be concerned with their duties of childbearing and house tending, rather than with desires for professional and business careers.	1	2	3	4
20. The intellectual leadership of a community should be largely in the hands of men.	1	2	3	4
21. Economic and social freedom is worth far more to women than acceptance of the ideal of femininity which has been set up by men.	1	2	3	4
22. On the average, women should be regarded as less capable of contributing to economic production than are men.	1	2	3	4
23. There are many jobs in which men should be given preference over women in being hired or promoted.	1	2	3	4
24. Women should be given equal opportunity with men for apprenticeship in the various trades.	1	2	3	4
25. The modern girl is entitled to the same freedom from regulation and control that is given to the modern boy.	1	2	3	4

APPENDIX B

Experimental Vignettes

Vignette 1

Susan D. is a twenty-year old university student. To earn a little extra money she had been working part-time as a cashier in her father's store. On the night in question, she was returning home from her job at approximately 11:30 p.m. As she walked through a small park in the downtown area, she noticed she was being followed. Before she could look around, she was grabbed from behind, blindfolded, and swept into a van. A knife was placed to her throat and a man's voice threatened to kill her if she resisted. She was then taken to a hideout and held for ransom. During the period of her confinement, Susan was kept tied up and blindfolded at all times. She was not, however, physically harmed in any way. Upon payment of the ransom she was released to the same park from which she had been taken. Removing her blindfold, Susan screamed for help and police were summoned to the scene. In her report to the police, Susan indicated that while she had been extremely frightened, she did not suffer any physical pain during the ordeal. Medical examination later revealed that aside from symptoms of shock, Susan sustained no physical injuries as a result of her abduction. She was released from hospital and allowed to go home under the care of her parents.

Vignette 2

Susan D. is a twenty-year old university student. To earn a little extra money she had been working part-time as an exotic dancer in a nightclub. On the night in question, she was returning home from her job at approximately 11:30 p.m. As she walked through a small park in the downtown area, she noticed she was being followed. Before she could look around, she was grabbed from behind, blindfolded, and swept into a van. A knife was placed to her throat and a man's voice threatened to kill her if she resisted. She was then taken to a hideout and held for ransom. During the period of her confinement, Susan was kept tied up and blindfolded at all times. She was not, however, physically harmed in any way. Upon payment of the ransom she was released to the same park from which she had been taken. Removing her blindfold, Susan screamed for help and police were summoned to the scene. In her report to the police, Susan indicated that while she had been extremely frightened, she did not suffer any physical pain during the ordeal. Medical examination later revealed that aside from symptoms of shock, Susan sustained no physical injuries as a result of her abduction. She was released from hospital and allowed to go home under the care of her parents.

Vignette 3

Susan D. is a twenty-year old university student. To earn a little extra money she had been working part-time as a cashier in her father's store. On the night in question, she was returning home from her job at approximately 11:30 p.m. As she walked through a small park in the downtown area, she noticed she was being followed. Before she could look around, she was grabbed from behind, blindfolded, and swept into a van. A knife was placed to her throat and a man's voice threatened to kill her if she resisted. She was then taken to a hideout and held for ransom. During the period of her confinement, Susan was untied from time to time and forced to strip to the waist so that her abductor could fondle her breasts. She was not, however, physically harmed in any way. Upon payment of the ransom she was released to the same park from which she had been taken. Removing her blindfold, Susan screamed for help and police were summoned to the scene. In her report to the police, Susan indicated that while she had been extremely frightened, she did not suffer any physical pain during the ordeal. Medical examination later revealed that aside from symptoms of shock, Susan sustained no physical injuries as a result of her abduction. She was released from hospital and allowed to go home under the care of her parents.

Vignette 4

Susan D. is a twenty-year old university student. To earn a little extra money she had been working part-time as an exotic dancer in a nightclub. On the night in question, she was returning home from her job at approximately 11:30 p.m. As she walked through a small park in the downtown area, she noticed she was being followed. Before she could look around, she was grabbed from behind, blindfolded, and swept into a van. A knife was placed to her throat and a man's voice threatened to kill her if she resisted. She was then taken to a hideout and held for ransom. During the period of her confinement, Susan was untied from time to time and forced to strip to the waist so that her abductor could fondle her breasts. She was not, however, physically harmed in any way. Upon payment of the ransom she was released to the same park from which she had been taken. Removing her blindfold, Susan screamed for help and police were summoned to the scene. In her report to the police, Susan indicated that while she had been extremely frightened, she did not suffer any physical pain during the ordeal. Medical examination later revealed that aside from symptoms of shock, Susan sustained no physical injuries as a result of her abduction. She was released from hospital and allowed to go home under the care of her parents.

Vignette 5

Susan D. is a twenty-year old university student. To earn a little extra money she had been working part-time as a cashier in her father's store. On the night in question, she was returning home from her job at approximately 11:30 p.m. As she walked through a small park in the downtown area, she noticed she was being followed. Before she could look around, she was grabbed from behind, blindfolded, and swept into a van. A knife was placed to her throat and a man's voice threatened to kill her if she resisted. She was then taken to a hideout and held for ransom. During the period of her confinement, Susan was kept tied up and blindfolded at all times. In addition, she was beaten repeatedly. Upon payment of the ransom she was released to the same park from which she had been taken. Removing her blindfold, Susan screamed for help and police were summoned to the scene. In her report to the police, Susan indicated she had been physically abused by her abductor and had suffered much pain during the ordeal. Medical examination latter revealed that aside from symptoms of shock, Susan sustained extensive facial cuts and bruises, a broken arm, and internal injuries as a result of her abduction. Because of the undisclosed nature of these injuries, it was indicated Susan would be required to spend at least a week in the hospital to accurately determine the extent of her injuries.

Vignette 6

Susan D. is a twenty-year old university student. To earn a little extra money she had been working part-time as an exotic dancer in a nightclub. On the night in question, she was returning home from her job at approximately 11:30 p.m. As she walked through a small park in the downtown area, she noticed she was being followed. Before she could look around, she was grabbed from behind, blindfolded, and swept into a van. A knife was placed to her throat and a man's voice threatened to kill her if she resisted. She was then taken to a hideout and held for ransom. During the period of her confinement, Susan was kept tied up and blindfolded at all times. In addition, she was beaten repeatedly. Upon payment of the ransom she was released to the same park from which she had been taken. Removing her blindfold, Susan screamed for help and police were summoned to the scene. In her report to the police, Susan indicated she had been physically abused by her abductor and had suffered much pain during the ordeal. Medical examination later revealed that aside from symptoms of shock, Susan sustained extensive facial cuts and bruises, a broken arm, and internal injuries as a result of her abduction. Because of the undisclosed nature of these injuries, it was indicated Susan would be required to spend at least a week in the hospital to accurately determine the extent of her injuries.

Vignette 7

Susan D. is a twenty-year old university student. To earn a little extra money she had been working part-time as a cashier in her father's store. On the night in question, she was returning home from her job at approximately 11:30 p.m. As she walked through a small park in the downtown area, she noticed she was being followed. Before she could look around, she was grabbed from behind, blindfolded, and swept into a van. A knife was placed to her throat and a man's voice threatened to kill her if she resisted. She was then taken to a hideout and held for ransom. During the period of her confinement, Susan was untied from time to time and forced to strip to the waist so that her abductor could fondle her breasts. In addition, she was beaten repeatedly. Upon payment of the ransom she was released to the same park from which she had been taken. Removing her blindfold, Susan screamed for help and police were summoned to the scene. In her report to the police, Susan indicated she had been physically abused by her abductor and had suffered much pain during the ordeal. Medical examination later revealed that aside from symptoms of shock, Susan sustained extensive facial cuts and bruises, a broken arm, and internal injuries as a result of her abduction. Because of the undisclosed nature of these injuries, it was indicated Susan would be required to spend at least a week in the hospital to accurately determine the extent of her injuries.

Vignette 8

Susan D. is a twenty-year old university student. To earn a little extra money she had been working part-time as an exotic dancer in a nightclub. On the night in question, she was returning home from her job at approximately 11:30 p.m. As she walked through a small park in the downtown area, she noticed she was being followed. Before she could look around, she was grabbed from behind, blindfolded, and swept into a van. A knife was placed to her throat and a man's voice threatened to kill her if she resisted. She was then taken to a hideout and held for ransom. During the period of her confinement, Susan was untied from time to time and forced to strip to the waist so that her abductor could fondle her breasts. In addition, she was beaten repeatedly. Upon payment of the ransom she was released to the same park from which she had been taken. Removing her blindfold, Susan screamed for help and police were summoned to the scene. In her report to the police, Susan indicated she had been physically abused by her abductor and had suffered much pain during the ordeal. Medical examination later revealed that aside from symptoms of shock, Susan sustained extensive facial cuts and bruises, a broken arm, and internal injuries as a result of her abduction. Because of the undisclosed nature of these injuries, it was indicated Susan would be required to spend at least a week in the hospital to accurately determine the extent of her injuries.

Vignette 9

Susan D. is a twenty-year old university student. To earn a little extra money she had been working part-time as a cashier in her father's store. On the night in question, she was returning home from her job at approximately 11:30 p.m. As she walked through a small park in the downtown area, she noticed she was being followed. Before she could look around, she was grabbed from behind, blindfolded, and swept into a van. A knife was placed to her throat and a man's voice threatened to kill her if she resisted. She was then taken to a hideout and held for ransom. During the period of her confinement, Susan was forcibly raped by her abductor. She was not, however, physically harmed in any way. Upon payment of the ransom she was released to the same park from which she had been taken. Removing her blindfold, Susan screamed for help and police were summoned to the scene. In her report to the police, Susan indicated that while she had been extremely frightened, she did not suffer any physical pain during the ordeal. Medical examination later revealed that aside from symptoms of shock, Susan sustained no physical injuries as a result of her abduction. She was released from hospital and allowed to go home under the care of her parents.

Vignette 10

Susan D. is a twenty-year old university student. To earn a little extra money she had been working part-time as an exotic dancer in a nightclub. On the night in question, she was returning home from her job at approximately 11:30 p.m. As she walked through a small park in the downtown area, she noticed she was being followed. Before she could look around, she was grabbed from behind, blindfolded, and swept into a van. A knife was placed to her throat and a man's voice threatened to kill her if she resisted. She was then taken to a hideout and held for ransom. During the period of her confinement, Susan was forcibly raped by her abductor. She was not, however, physically harmed in any way. Upon payment of the ransom she was released to the same park from which she had been taken. Removing her blindfold, Susan screamed for help and police were summoned to the scene. In her report to the police, Susan indicated that while she had been extremely frightened, she did not suffer any physical pain during the ordeal. Medical examination later revealed that aside from symptoms of shock, Susan sustained no physical injuries as a result of her abduction. She was released from hospital and allowed to go home under the care of her parents.

Vignette 11

Susan D. is a twenty-year old university student. To earn a little extra money she had been working part-time as a cashier in her father's store. On the night in question, she was returning home from her job at approximately 11:30 p.m. As she walked through a small park in the downtown area, she noticed she was being followed. Before she could look around, she was grabbed from behind, blindfolded, and swept into a van. A knife was placed to her throat and a man's voice threatened to kill her if she resisted. She was then taken to a hideout and held for ransom. During the period of her confinement, Susan was forcibly raped by her abductor. In addition, she was beaten repeatedly. Upon payment of the ransom she was released to the same park from which she had been taken. Removing her blindfold, Susan screamed for help and police were summoned to the scene. In her report to the police, Susan indicated she had been physically abused by her abductor and had suffered much pain during the ordeal. Medical examination later revealed that aside from symptoms of shock, Susan sustained extensive facial cuts and bruises, a broken arm, and internal injuries as a result of her abduction. Because of the undisclosed nature of these injuries, it was indicated Susan would be required to spend at least a week in the hospital to accurately determine the extent of her injuries.

Vignette 12

Susan D. is a twenty-year old university student. To earn a little extra money she had been working part-time as an exotic dancer in a nightclub. On the night in question, she was returning home from her job at approximately 11:30 p.m. As she walked through a small park in the downtown area, she noticed she was being followed. Before she could look around, she was grabbed from behind, blindfolded, and swept into a van. A knife was placed to her throat and a man's voice threatened to kill her if she resisted. She was then taken to a hideout and held for ransom. During the period of her confinement, Susan was forcibly raped by her abductor. In addition, she was beaten repeatedly. Upon payment of the ransom she was released to the same park from which she had been taken. Removing her blindfold, Susan screamed for help and police were summoned to the scene. In her report to the police, Susan indicated she had been physically abused by her abductor and had suffered much pain during the ordeal. Medical examination later revealed that aside from symptoms of shock, Susan sustained extensive facial cuts and bruises, a broken arm, and internal injuries as a result of her abduction. Because of the undisclosed nature of these injuries, it was indicated Susan would be required to spend at least a week in the hospital to accurately determine the extent of her injuries.

APPENDIX C

Pilot Study

Pilot Study

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the twelve experimental vignettes designed for use in the experiment along three dimensions: respectability of the victim, degree of physical harm to the victim, and the sexual nature of the crime. Results obtained from the responses of 240 undergraduate university students at the University of Calgary are presented in Table 17. Means are based on ratings made on a 9-point scale in response to the following questions:

- (1) To what extent is Susan D. a respectable person? (1 = not very much, 9 = very much)
- (2) Do you think most people would consider Susan a respectable person? (1 = not very much, 9 = very much)
- (3) Was Susan physically harmed? (1 = not very much, 9 = very much)
- (4) Did Susan's abduction involve sex? (1 = not very much, 9 = very much)

A three-way analysis of variance indicated that when the victim was portrayed as a cashier, ($\bar{M} = 8.4$) she was perceived as significantly more respectable by observers than when she was portrayed as an exotic dancer ($\bar{M} = 4.1$), $F(3,234) = 91.3$, $p < .01$. Cashiers ($\bar{M} = 7.9$) were also assigned significantly more respectability "by society" than were exotic dancers ($\bar{M} = 3.0$), $F(3,235) = 117.8$, $p < .01$. Thus, this manipulation of respectability produced significant differences on both measures. The manipulation of physical harm to the victim also produced significant differences among observers. When the victim

Table 17

Mean Attribution Scores for Vignette Pretest

Dependent variable	<u>n</u>	<u>F value</u>
Respectability		<u>F</u> (3, 234) = 91.29**
cashier	60	
<u>M</u>	8.42	
<u>SD</u>	0.83	
exotic dancer	60	
<u>M</u>	4.12	
<u>SD</u>	2.51	
Respectability assigned by Society		<u>F</u> (3, 235) = 117.83**
cashier	60	
<u>M</u>	7.90	
<u>SD</u>	1.17	
exotic dancer	60	
<u>M</u>	3.00	
<u>SD</u>	2.05	
Degree of physical harm		<u>F</u> (1, 238) = 485.13**
injury	60	
<u>M</u>	8.28	
<u>SD</u>	1.17	
no injury	60	
<u>M</u>	2.77	
<u>SD</u>	2.47	

(table continues)

Table 17 (continued)

Mean Attribution Scores for Vignette Pretest

Dependent variable	<u>n</u>	<u>F value</u>
Sexual Involvement		<u>F</u> (2, 236) = 180.07**
high	40	
<u>M</u>		7.76
<u>SD</u>		2.19
medium	40	
<u>M</u>		5.79
<u>SD</u>		1.70
none	40	
<u>M</u>		2.05
<u>SD</u>		1.87

Note. *p < .05. **p < .01.

received extensive injuries as a result of her attack (i.e., a broken arm, cuts, bruises and internal injuries), she was perceived as receiving significantly more physical harm ($M = 8.3$) than when she received no injury ($M = 2.8$), $F(1,238) = 485.1$, $p < .01$. Finally, there were significant differences observed among the three conditions of sexual involvement in a crime. Observers perceived significantly more sexual involvement in a crime in which the victim was forcibly raped ($M = 7.8$) than in crimes in which she was indecently assaulted by having her breasts fondled by her abductor ($M = 5.8$) or in crimes in which there was no sexual abuse ($M = 2.1$), $F(2,237) = 180.1$, $p < .01$. Significant differences were also observed between the indecent assault and no sex conditions for this manipulation. These vignettes were therefore retained for use in the study.

APPENDIX D

Pearson Correlations of Demographic Variables with Dependent Measures

Table 18

Pearson Correlation Matrix: 8 Measures of Observer EvaluationsAgainst Demographic Variables for Canadian Data

Variable	Measure	
	Bipolar attractiveness	Social stimulus value
1. Sex of subject	-00	02
2. Age of subject	04	00
3. Socioeconomic status ^a	18	-09
4. Religion	-03	-08
5. Practise of religion	-09	-00
6. Belief in God	03	-01
7. Subject of concentration	10	04
8. Country of birth	10	02
9. Number of years residing in country	09	-02
10. Ethnic group	-07	02

(table continues)

Table 18 (continued)

Pearson Correlation Matrix: 8 Measures of Observer Evaluations Against
Demographic Variables for Canadian Data

Variable	Measure		
	Victim Responsibility	Attacker Responsibility	Victim Provocation
1. Sex of subject	-11	-03	02
2. Age of subject	-16	-10	-06
3. Socioeconomic status ^a	-09	04	03
4. Religion	-20*	14	-08
5. Practise of religion	15	-05	-06
6. Belief in God	15	04	-14
7. Subject of concentration	-03	-04	-09
8. Country of birth	06	-02	-00
9. Number of years residing in country	-13	11	-12
10. Ethnic group	-06	-17	10

(table continues)

Table 18 (continued)

Pearson Correlation Matrix: 8 Measures of Observer Evaluations Against
Demographic Variables for Canadian Data

Variable	Measure		
	Victim Carelessness	Character Blame	Attributions To Chance
1. Sex of subject	03	-12	17
2. Age of subject	-07	-04	09
3. Socioeconomic status ^a	-16	-15	00
4. Religion	-03	07	-07
5. Practise of religion	-24**	-09	18*
6. Belief in God	10	01	-13
7. Subject of concentration	03	-23*	12
8. Country of birth	13	09	00
9. Number of years residing in country	-11	-12	14
10. Ethnic group	07	14	-07

Note. Decimal points have been omitted. $N = 120$.

^aSocioeconomic status was coded as Blishen Scale Values (Blishen & McRoberts, 1976).

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Table 19

Pearson Correlation: 8 Measures of Observer Evaluations Against
Demographic Variables for British Data

Variable	Measure	
	Bipolar attractiveness	Social stimulus value
1. Sex of subject	-09	04
2. Age of subject	11	15
3. Socioeconomic status ^a	10	00
4. Religion	10	-21*
5. Practise of religion	26**	06
6. Belief in God	-18	-03
7. Subject of concentration	-11	01
8. Country of birth	03	11
9. Number of years residing in country	17	09
10. Ethnic group	08	08

(table continues)

Table 19 (continued)

Pearson Correlation: 8 Measures of Observer Evaluations Against
Demographic Variables for British Data

Variable	Measure		
	Victim Responsibility	Attacker Responsibility	Victim Provocation
1. Sex of subject	-03	-01	01
2. Age of subject	-23*	-10	-22*
3. Socioeconomic status ^a	02	02	-04
4. Religion	-09	-02	-20*
5. Practise of religion	-13	-11	-14
6. Belief in God	11	14	16
7. Subject of concentration	00	01	05
8. Country of birth	-03	10	-07
9. Number of years residing in country	-18*	-18	-17
10. Ethnic group	-00	07	-04

(table continues)

Table 19 (continued)

Pearson Correlation: 8 Measures of Observer Evaluations Against
Demographic Variables for British Data

Variable	Measure		
	Victim Carelessness	Character Blame	Attributions To Chance
1. Sex of subject	10	03	00
2. Age of subject	-24**	-07	14
3. Socioeconomic status ^a	-03	-05	-03
4. Religion	-27**	-24*	04
5. Practise of religion	-03	-17	11
6. Belief in God	13	19*	-07
7. Subject of concentration	-09	-12	-19*
8. Country of birth	-05	-10	05
9. Number of years residing in country	-18*	-11	12
10. Ethnic group	-08	-08	-05

Note. Decimal points have been omitted. N = 120.

^aSocioeconomic status was coded as Hall-Jones Scale Values (Hall & Jones, 1966)

*p < .05. **p < .01.