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The Domestic Violence Myth Acceptance Scale: Development and Psychometric Testing of a New Instrument

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THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE MYTH ACCEPTANCE SCALE: DEVELOPMENT AND PSYCHOMETRIC TESTING OF A NEW INSTRUMENT

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An Abstract of the Thesis Presented
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Since 1980, researchers and practitioners have had access to valid and reliable measures of myths about rape (Burt, 1980) and child sexual abuse (Collings, 1997). Despite the utility of such measures in research and program evaluation, no such measure of domestic violence myths currently exists. The present study was undertaken to fill this gap.

In this study, domestic violence myths were defined as stereotypical attitudes and beliefs that are generally false but are widely and persistently held, and which serve to minimize, deny, or justify physical aggression against intimate partners. Based on defensive attribution and radical feminist theories, these myths were conceptualized as serving both an individual function of defending individuals from psychological threat and a wider social function of supporting patriarchy.

The psychometric properties of an initial pool of 80 items was tested with a systematic random sample (N = 351) of university students and employees. Based on item contributions to scale reliability and validity, 18 of the 80 items were selected to form the Domestic Violence Myth Acceptance Scale (DVMAS).

The scale had an internal consistency reliability (alpha) of .81, and good construct validity as evidenced by confirmatory factor analysis which perfectly fit the theory of four factors relating to character and behavioral victim blame, exoneration of the perpetrator, and minimization.

A second study of the reliability and validity of the DVMAS was conducted with a similar sample (N = 284). The instrument exhibited excellent reliability (α = .88), good convergent validity (r = .37 to .65 with measures of rape myths, attitudes toward women, sex role stereotypes, and attitudes toward wife abuse), and good construct validity (the data fit the theoretical four factor solution). However the DVMAS correlated significantly with a measure of social desirability (r = -0.19) and a measure of attitudes toward use of force by governments (r = .34) and thus lacked divergent validity.

Males scored significantly higher on the DVMAS than did females as did younger compared to older women; known groups validity was thus also supported.

Limitations of the research, implications for policy and practice, as well as extensive future research suggestions are discussed.

Dedication

This research is dedicated first to the many victim/survivors who educated me and the rest of the professional community about the reality of their experience. I am daily humbled, inspired, and educated. Thank you.

Second, this research is dedicated to the many professional women who took the time and the risks to educate me, a member of the dominant group. I say *risks* because knowledge can always be used to help or to harm and the women who taught me knew well the risks involved. In particular, I wish to thank Lydia Egan, who gently opened the door to a feminist analysis of domestic violence and invited me in. I also want to thank all of the battered women's advocates with whom I have worked and talked including Ronelda Whitmore, Sue Bradford, Lyn Carter, Francine Stark, Alberta Wilson, & Lisa Goodman, to name just a few.

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I am also deeply grateful to my entire committee for their intellectual and practical encouragement throughout this long process of study, research, and writing. I am especially indebted to Elizabeth DePoy, chair of my committee, for her commitment to me, the process, and to intellectual rigor. Without her support, encouragement, and guidance I would never have undertaken or completed this project. I would also like to thank Win Turner for his enormous investment in bringing clarity to the world of statistics and research methodology. While I have singled out Win and Liz, I am indebted to the entire committee including Jim Acheson, Sandy Butler, and Joy Silberg for their time, expertise, and advice as I set about learning about scholarship and research.

Finally I would like to thank the University of Maine which supported this project indirectly through faculty tuition wavers and directly through a Distance Education Advisory Committee grant (1999-2000) which supported my learning about on-line survey techniques and database construction.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Statement of the Problem

In this introduction, I begin by establishing the importance of and rationale for the development of a measure of domestic violence myths. After examining the prevalence and seriousness of the problem of domestic violence, I then turn briefly to consideration of the ways in which domestic violence myths may support that prevalence. Because of the scarce literature on domestic violence myths, much of this introduction focuses on the related construct of rape myths, which has been extensively studied over the past twenty years. While there are important differences between rape and domestic violence (and consequently likely differences between rape myths and domestic violence myths), I believe that an examination of rape myths will help build an understanding of the importance of increasing our ability to measure—and ultimately alter—domestic violence myths.

Extent of the Problem of Domestic Violence

Research on domestic violence since the late 1970s has documented the extent and seriousness of this social problem. Official statistics, compiled from police reports, indicate that 864,420 to 1 million people are battered every year (Rennison & Welchans, 2000, p. 2). These official reports may, however, significantly underrepresent the problem. For example, self-report surveys consistently show annual rates of 6.4% (Kennedy, Forde, Smith, & Dutton, 1991, p. 309) to 10% (Petersen & Weissert, 1982, p. 189) of rural women, 13.9% of urban woman (Kennedy, Forde, Smith, & Dutton, 1991, p. 309) and 15.8% (Thompson, Saltzman, & Johnson, 2001) to 16% of national samples of married or cohabiting women (Williams & Hawkins, 1989) who reported being the victim of at least

one domestic violence incident in the prior year. Similarly, approximately 1 of 26 or 1.8 million American wives report being victims of serious abuse (kicking, broken bones, & etc) every year (Straus, Gelles, Steinmetz, 1980, p. 40). Survey data also indicate that the official statistics may significantly underrepresent violence against women of color. For example, a recent study found that while 74.7% of Anglo women who had been assaulted by an intimate partner reported incidents of domestic violence to police, only 58.7% of Hispanic women who had been similarly victimized made such reports (Krishnan, Hilbert, VanLeeuwen, & Kolia, 1997, p. 38). In an effort to summarize these various and diverse figures, Richard Gelles compiled the reported rates of domestic violence in all self-report surveys conducted during the 1990s. In his meta-analysis, Gelles found the average annual rate of severe domestic violence was 19.3 per 1,000 women (Gelles, 2000, p. 800).

While these estimates of domestic violence incidents per year are high, lifetime prevalence rates tend to be higher. Lenore Walker, a pioneer in the field of domestic violence research (Walker, 1979), estimated "that one out of two women will be abused at some point in her life" (Walker, 1994, p. 62). A more conservative figure is reported by Smith who found that 27.4% of women in a national probability sample reported at least one incident of domestic violence in their current or past relationships (Smith, 1991, p. 515). This figure is in line with estimates that 27% (Randall & Haskell, 1995, p. 24) to 30% (Williams & Hawkins, 1989, p. 168) of married or cohabiting individuals have experienced domestic violence at some time in their adult life.

Among specific populations, the rates of domestic violence may be significantly higher. For example, 70% of divorcing women reported violence

during their marriages (Kurz, 1996, p. 67), while 57% of women involved in child welfare cases reported they had been beaten or physically assaulted as adults (Tyler, Howard, Espinosa, & Doakes, 1997, p. 340), and almost 30% of AFDC recipients reported lifetime domestic violence assaults (Sable, Libbus, Huneke, & Anger, 1999, pp. 206-207). Estimates of physical violence in lesbian relationships "vary widely" from 17% in one survey to 33% to 46% in others (West, 1998, p. 166). Among gay male couples rates of domestic violence are virtually unknown (Renzetti, 1977); in one available study with a small sample (n = 34), 44% of the participants reported they were victimized in a prior relationship (West, 1998, p. 167).

From all these figures and recent population estimates (Famighetti, 1994) we can conclude that domestic violence is widespread in this country, affecting roughly 1 to 12.6 million women annually, 25% or 21.3 million women sometime during their lifetimes, and an unknown number of men.

While some reports of domestic violence may involve trivial altercations, there are many indications that domestic violence often involves serious physical assaults, frequently involving a weapon (Krishnan, Hilbert, VanLeeuwen, & Kolia, 1997, p. 38). For example, of incidents reported to police in 1998, 50% of female domestic violence victims were physically injured though only 5% received serious injuries requiring hospitalization (Rennison & Welchans, 2000, p. 6). In large national random sample of women in Canada, 43% of battered women reported being physically injured with 76% of this group reporting minor injuries and 24% reporting severe injuries which included fractures, broken bones, miscarriages, or internal injuries (Thompson, Saltzman, & Johnson, 2001, p. 890). In addition to direct physical injuries, domestic violence

victims frequently suffer from stress-related health problems including chronic joint, back, and neck pain (Walsh, 2002). For example, one study of battered women seen in an emergency room found they were significantly more depressed ($p < .001$) and also had significantly more pronounced symptoms of "muscular tension, autonomic disturbances, and aches and pain" than did women in the control group (Bergman, Larson, Brismar, & Klang, 1987, p. 680).

While physical violence is often considered the defining characteristic of domestic violence, other forms of physical and psychological abuse are used in an effort to terrorize and control the victim. For example, 34% (Frieze, 1983, p. 541) to 50% (Websdale, 1995, p. 324) of battered women report being forcibly raped by their partner. Thus, for a significant proportion of domestic violence victims, the effects of the physical violence are likely to be augmented by the psychological after effects of rape which include anxiety, fear, and depression (Burgess & Holmstrom, 1974). In addition to the psychological and direct physical effects of the abuse, battered women have a 50% to 70% higher rate of "gynecological, central nervous system, and stress-related problems, with women who were both sexually and physically abused most likely to report these problems" (Campbell, Jones, Dienemann, Kub, Schollenberger, O'Campo, & Gielen, 2002, p. 1157).

Finally, a substantial number of battered women are killed by their partners. Between 1976 and 1996, approximately a third of all women murdered in the United States were killed by current or former intimate partners (Frye & Wilt, 2001, p. 335). In this country, 8.8% of all reported homicides involve killing by a spouse. Registered and defacto wives are at 1.3 times the risk of murder as are their male partners (Mercy & Saltzman, 1989, p. 595).

Taken together, these figures indicate that domestic violence is widespread and has serious consequences for a significant segment of the population of this country. Given the prevalence and seriousness of domestic violence, development of adequate explanatory theoretical frameworks is crucial. In the next section, I introduce some of the better-established theories of domestic violence.

Theoretical Frameworks

Theoretically, there are a number of competing explanatory frameworks for understanding violence against women. These frameworks include (but are not limited to) sociological, evolutionary, pathological, and radical feminist models (Dwyer, Smokowski, Bricout, & Wodarski, 1996). In the sociological model, violence (especially domestic violence) is seen as related to sociological factors such as social stress and frustration resulting from high unemployment, poverty, family dissolution, change in sex-roles, and the like (Gelles, 1987; Gelles, 1993; Straus, 1980a; Straus, 1980b; Straus & Gelles, 1990). In contrast, evolutionary theories, arising out of evolutionary psychology, postulate that domestic violence is a technique proximally motivated by jealousy (Daly & Wilson, 1982; Daly & Wilson, 1993; Geary, Rumsey, Bow-Thomas, & Hoard, 1995) but with an ultimate aim of controlling female sexual behavior in an effort to reduce paternity uncertainty (Peters, Shackelford, & Buss, 2002; Wilson & Daly, 1992). In the pathological model, the violence is seen as resulting from individual psychopathology such as borderline personality disorder (Dutton, 1998; 2002) or ego deficits related to impulse control and communication difficulties (Geller, 1992; Neidig & Friedman, 1984). Pathological theories of domestic violence frequently invoke social learning theory (Bandura, 1977) in

order to explain common patterns of intergenerational transmission of domestic violence (Crowell & Burgess, 1996; Dwyer, Smokowski, Bricout, & Wodarski, 1996; Egeland, Jacobivtz, & Sroufe, 1988; Makepeace, 1997; Mihalic, & Elliot, 1997). The radical feminist model, in contrast, contends that the violence supports and is supported by patriarchal oppression of women (Adams, 1988; 1990; Bograd, 1990; Dobash, Dobash, Wilson, & Daly, 1992; Koss, Goodman, Browne, Fitzgerald, Keita, 1994; Walker, 1979) or sexism (hooks, 2000). This model of violence resulting from patriarchal socialization implies that rape, domestic violence, and other forms of violence against woman are part of broader social attitudes toward women.

The Role of Myths

In 1980, Martha Burt developed a measure of myths about rape in order to assess the role of attitudinal correlates in sexual violence against women. Burt defined these myths as "prejudicial, stereotyped, or false beliefs about rape, rape victims, and rapists" (Burt, 1980, p. 217). Twenty years later Aberle and Littelfield noted that Burt's work "represents one of the most insightful contributions to the [feminist] socialization model" of rape (2001, p. 567). Using regression analysis, Burt showed that "acceptance of rape myths could be predicted by acceptance of interpersonal violence, adversarial sexual beliefs, and sex role stereotyping" (Aberle & Littlefield, 2001, p. 567). Subsequent research has confirmed and expanded Burt's original work, showing that hostility toward women increases with increased acceptance of myths about violence toward women (Briere, 1987; Hall, Howard, & Boezio, 1986; Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1995; Monto & Hotaling, 2001) and that these myths, in turn, predict actual sexual violence against women (Lanier, 2001). From their review of the rape myth literature, Hinck and Thomas

conclude that rape myths are "a crucial factor in explanatory models of rape behavior" (Hinck & Thomas, 1999, p. 1).

As suggested by Aberle and Littelfield (2001), research on rape myths is theoretically important because it supports greater understanding of the role of socialization in sexual violence against women. This understanding, in turn, fosters social change through implementation of a range of interventions to change the social climate that supports and is supported by violence against women. In addition, research on all myths about crimes against women has important implications for our understanding of social responses once violence has been perpetrated.

In general, rape myths, domestic violence myths, and myths about sexual abuse of children (Collings, 1997), all share three common underlying features. These myths tend to minimize the crime, blame the victim, and exonerate or at least excuse the perpetrator. In the case of rape myths, denying the reality and seriousness of rape is accomplished by redefining rape as desired sex ("Many women have an unconscious wish to be raped...") or as false accusations ("What percentage of women who report a rape would you say are lying because they are angry and want to get back at the man they accuse?" Burt, 1980, p. 223). By redefining rape as willing (or at least legitimate) sex, rape myths also redefine victims as willing (or at least consenting) participants. As a result, rape myths have the effect of saying that the rape victim is not really a victim and therefore does not deserve whatever sympathy and care we normally extend to crime victims. In fact, if (according to the dominant myths) the "victim" actually engaged willingly in consensual sex and is now falsely accusing an innocent

male, then the "victim" deserves not sympathy and care but rather scorn and perhaps even censure.

From this brief analysis of the content of rape myths it is not difficult to see how such myths might make individuals and groups within our society less likely to respond positively to rape victims. Like Holocaust deniers who decry "the hoax of the Holocaust" (Lipstadt, 1994, p. 70), those who endorse rape myths may decry the "hoax" of rape allegations. Rather than seeing rape victims as victims of a what has been widely considered a devastating interpersonal crime (Brownmiller, 1974/1993; Palmer, 1989; Randall & Haskell, 1995; Softas-Nall, Bardos, & Fakinos, 1995; Thornhill & Thornhill, 1990a; Thornhill & Thornhill, 1990b), those who endorse rape myths may see the victims as deserving of their bad fortune – if, in fact, it was that bad. This attitude is thought to contribute to a lack of support of rape victims by their partners (Davis, Taylor, & Bench, 1995), by hospital personnel (Heinzer & Krimm, 2002), and the entire criminal justice system (Hart, 1993; Saunders, 1995). In fact, Muehlenhard and colleagues go so far as to contend that widespread endorsement of rape myths makes rape almost impossible to prosecute (Muehlenhard, Danoff-Burg, & Powch, 1996). As a result women are encouraged to forgo judicial and social remedies to prevent rape and instead to adopt rape prevention strategies which limit their individual and collective freedom of movement, employment, and social advancement (Calhoun & Atkinson, 1991; Muehlenhard, Danoff-Burg, & Powch, 1996; Randall & Haskell, 1995). If rape myths thus serve as agents of social control over women then the myths, like rape itself, are integral in what Brownmiller famously described as the "process of intimidation by which *all men*

keep *all women* [italics original] in a state of fear" (Brownmiller, 1974/1993, pp. 14-15).

Radical feminists as well as evolutionary psychologists have similarly argued that domestic violence is a socially sanctioned technique by which men seek to control the (sexual) behavior of their intimate partners (Bograd, 1990; Buss & Malamuth, 1996; Peters, Shackelford, & Buss, 2002). Given the extent and seriousness of domestic violence, it is likely that domestic violence myths exist and, like other crime myths, serve to blame the victim, minimize the seriousness of the abuse, and exonerate the perpetrator. If domestic violence myths exist and share with rape myths some of the features and effects outlined above, the importance of an adequate measure of domestic violence myths in fostering social change is immediately apparent. In general terms, based on theorizing that domestic violence myths may be an integral component of the phenomenon of domestic violence, unmasking and changing domestic violence myths should result in change in the cultural support for domestic violence and ultimately domestic violence behavior.

Predicated on the likely existence of domestic violence myths, examples of particular uses for a measure of domestic violence myth acceptance are many. We might, for example, assess the prevalence of domestic violence myths among hospital emergency room personnel as these individuals are often the first and only professionals to interact with battered women (Walker, 1994; Websdale, 1995). Similarly, while women report generally positive experiences obtaining protection from abuse orders (Keilitz, Hannaford, & Efkeman, 1995), Keilitz et al. found that police who held more stereotypical attitudes toward domestic violence and domestic violence victims were more likely to arrest the *victim* of

domestic violence than were policemen who scored lower on such attitudes. A measure of domestic violence myths could serve both as a screening instrument and as a measure of attitude change following sensitivity training related to domestic violence myths for the professionals who are likely to have contact with domestic violence victims.

Before concluding this analysis of the importance of being able to assess and ultimately alter domestic violence myths, it is important to clarify that myths about violence against women are not endorsed by an insignificant, deviant, or marginal portion of American society. In her original measure, Burt's Rape Myth Acceptance scale was a simple, 19-item measure asking people how much they believe that rape victims cause, or enjoy being raped or maliciously make up reports of rape. Sadly, studies consistently find that despite the obvious socially desirable response of "not at all," people usually indicate some agreement with several of the 19 items. In her original study, for example, Burt (1980) found that with a possible minimum score of 19 and a possible maximum score of 109, the mean endorsement of rape myths was 49.4 or 45.3% of the total possible score. While Burt's sample included both men and women, separate means are not presented. College males in one subsequent study had a slightly higher (M = 51.4 or 47.1% of total) mean rape myth acceptance score (Aberle & Littlefield, 2001) while men in fraternities had a mean score of 46.05 or 42.2% of the possible total score (Foubert, 2000).

Though not directly comparable for reasons elaborated below, responses to Briere's Attitudes Toward Wife Abuse scale by a sample of males (1987) show a similar pattern with a mean of 23.8 or 42.5% of the maximum possible score of 55. Similarly, the mean score on the Domestic Violence Blame Scale (Petretic-

Jackson, Sandberg, & Jackson, 1982) was 3.45 of a possible 6 or 57.5% of the total among physicians psychologists, and mental health professionals. These authors report that men had significantly higher mean scores than did women but they do not present numerical data to support the claim. Other studies also found significant gender differences in rape myth acceptance, with men consistently showing greater endorsement of rape myths than women (Ellis, O'Sullivan, & Sowards, 1992, p. 892).

These studies indicate that rather than flatly rejecting "prejudicial, stereotyped, or false beliefs" concerning the victims and crimes of rape or domestic violence, a significant number of individuals actually agree with or only disagree mildly with these beliefs. If domestic violence myths are empirically found to exist, a reliable and valid measure of those myths will help assess who does and does not endorse such myths. In addition, the measure may help us understand the effect that domestic violence myth endorsement has on the incidence and prevalence of domestic violence, on domestic violence victims' self-perceptions, and on the treatment afforded those victims by professionals who come in contact with them. To the degree that such information can then be used to design and deliver programs that create a more "victim-friendly" social environment, the instrument will make an important contribution to social change.

One indication of the possible importance and utility of such a measure is that in the last ten years alone Burt's article on rape myths (1980) has been cited over 320 times. Numerous studies have used her instrument as an evaluative measure of rape prevention programs (Black, Weisz, Coats, & Patterson, 2000; Foubert, 2000; Gidycz, Layman, Rich, Crothers, Gylys, Matorin, & Jacobs, 2001;

Lanier, 2001) or as a measure of the impact of media depictions of rape (Burt, 1980; Check & Malamuth, 1985). Other studies have examined the mediating effects of rape myths, finding, for example, that women who endorse more of the myths are less effected by reading an account of rape (Bohner & Schwarz, 1996; Bohner, Weisbrod, Raymond, Barzvi, & Schwarz, 1993; Schwarz & Brand, 1983) but generally have lower self-esteem. From these and many more studies, "the study of rape myths has provided important understandings about sexual aggression" (Crowell & Burgess, 1996, p. 6). One part of the rationale for the current study is that development of a measure of domestic violence myths will make possible the replication of these studies and the resulting "important understandings" in the field of domestic violence.

The problem addressed in the current study is that despite the social importance and utility of Burt's rape myth acceptance scale (1980), no psychometrically valid measure of domestic violence myths currently exists. In 1987, John Briere developed an Attitudes Toward Wife Abuse (AWA) scale. His goal was to develop a measure of self-reported likelihood of battering like the highly successful self-reported likelihood of raping developed by Malamuth (1981). While Briere's eight item measure taps into the prejudices and stereotypes of domestic violence, domestic violence victims, and domestic violence perpetrators (e.g., "A man's home is his castle."), it does not systematically assess the range of "false beliefs" (Burt, 1980) which tend to blame victims, exonerate perpetrators, and minimize the seriousness of domestic violence. In addition, Briere's scale had an internal reliability coefficient alpha of only .63, somewhat below the .70 usually considered the lower bound of acceptable (DeVellis, 1991).

Also in 1987, Saunders Lynch, Grayson, and Linz published their Inventory of Beliefs about Wife Beating (IBWB). As a measure of both attitudes and beliefs about domestic violence, this instrument was more closely analogous to Burt's Rape Myth Acceptance scale (1980). The measure was, however, intentionally limited to violence "against married rather than unmarried women because if a term covering both were used, responses could be confounded by any differences that may exist in reactions to married and unmarried victims" (Saunders et al., p. 41). In addition, the instrument measures beliefs and attitudes about the punishment of batterers and the responsibilities of individuals to intervene in domestic violence relationships. While the authors present extensive information about the reliability of the factors and sub-scales created from the factors of their instrument, they do not present overall reliability data. Factor and sub-scale reliabilities measured with Cronbach's coefficient alpha range from .86 to .77 down to .61 to .62. Reliabilities thus ranged from good for two of the sub-scales to "undesirable" for three of the sub-scales (DeVellis, 1991, p. 85). Construct validity as assessed through convergent and divergent validity as well as known-groups validity was supported.

The Domestic Violence Blame Scale (DVBS) developed by Petretic-Jackson, Sandberg, and Jackson, (1982) is conceptually even more remote from Burt's Rape Myth Acceptance scale. For example, the DVBS assesses the degree to which respondents blame domestic violence on the media, social isolation, and "the rise of the 'women's movement'" (1982, pp. 272-275). Despite the authors' claim that the DVBS had, in 1982, been used in clinical settings for 7 years, no psychometric data have been published on the reliability or validity of the instrument.

A number of other measures of domestic violence attitudes and beliefs have also been developed though all of them suffer from severe limitations. Finn, for example, developed a five-item Attitudes Toward Force in Marriage scale (1986) but did not assess the reliability or validity of the instrument. Even more limited were a number of studies between 1983 and 1985 which used single items to measure domestic violence attitudes (Greenblat, 1985; Powers, Schlesinger, & Benson, 1983; Stringer-Moore, Pepitone-Arreola-Rockwell, & Rozee-Koker, 1984).

Viewed as a whole, the existing measures of domestic violence myths are either psychometrically inadequate (or untested), too limited in their application to various populations (e.g., Saunders et al., 1987), or are too broad or vague in their theoretical and operational definition of the construct of domestic violence myths. Therefore the current study was undertaken with the goals of producing an instrument, analogous to Burt's (1980) Rape Myth Acceptance Scale, which would (1) be based on a clear and complete articulation of the construct being assessed, (2) have good measurement reliability, and (3) demonstrate preliminary indications of both construct and criterion validity.

Definition of Terms

Domestic Violence

Domestic violence, spouse abuse, battering, common couples violence, patriarchal violence, family violence, and wife abuse are all terms used by different researchers and theorists to refer to violence between intimate partners. Each term carries with it certain assumptions, limitations, biases, and implications. Each term also arises out of slightly different theoretical traditions. In this section I will briefly review the backgrounds of the different terms for

violence between intimate partners in order to explain my choice of the term, *domestic violence.*

Two of the major theoretical traditions related to domestic violence are the radical feminist perspective (Adams, 1988; Bograd, 1990; Yilo, 1993) and the family violence or sociological tradition (Gelles, 1987; Straus, 1980; Straus & Gelles, 1990). Radical feminist writers generally prefer terms such as woman battering or patriarchal violence which maintain a focus on power, control, sexism, and patriarchy—the root causes of domestic violence according to radical feminist theorists (Adams, 1986). For better or for worse (hooks, 2001), these terms generally connote a male perpetrator and a female victim, as is the situation in the vast majority of cases reported to law enforcement, medical settings, or shelter and hotline services (Johnson, 1995). For example, in an analysis of New York City records, 88% of batterers were men, 7% were women, and 5% were unknown (New York City Department of Health, 1996).

In contrast, family violence and sociological theorists prefer terms such as mutual combat, family conflict, spouse abuse, or family violence (Gelles, 1993; Neidig & Friedman, 1984; Straus, 1980b). These terms reflect a non-gendered, non-directional view of intimate partner violence which is consistent with findings of roughly equal prevalence of male and female perpetrated violence in a number of national probability samples in the United States (Gelles, 1987; Straus, 1980b).

Recently Michael Johnson (1995) has argued that despite years of rancorous debate, the radical feminist and family violence views of domestic violence are actually compatible because they are using different, non-overlapping samples and therefore looking at different forms of family violence.

Johnson's terms for these forms of violence are *common couple violence* and *patriarchal terrorism* (Johnson, 1995, p. 284). The primary difference between these types of violence revolves around control. While the goal of the violence in common couples violence may be "to get one's way in a particular conflict situation," there is not the "general pattern of power and control" which is the key defining characteristic of patriarchal terrorism (Johnson, 2001, p. 97; see also Johnson & Ferraro, 2000). Of these two types of battering, common couples violence is relatively easily addressed with a high likelihood of success while interventions to stop patriarchal terrorism, by history, have "a dismal record of success" (Johnson, 2001, p. 103). Patriarchal terrorism therefore tends to be chronic, frequently becoming more severe and more frequent over time (Walker, 1979; 1994).

In the present study I am primarily concerned with Johnson's second type of violence: Violence between intimate partners which has as its goal establishing and maintaining a culturally sanctioned pattern of power and control by men over women within the context of an intimate relationship. While terms such as *battering*, and *patriarchal terrorism* are technically accurate for this type of abuse, I use the more common term, *domestic violence*, simply because it is more common and because it is inclusive of a wide range of violence and different configurations of sex and gender of perpetrators and victims. In part, my choice is pragmatic in that I hope the measure of domestic violence myths developed in this study will be used by a researchers from diverse backgrounds and perspectives. In particular I hope the instrument will be used to explore the fit (or lack of fit) between gender neutral theories of domestic violence and domestic violence myth endorsement. Consequently I define domestic violence to include

any act between romantic partners which "causes the victim to do something she [or he] does not want to do, forces her [or him] to do something she [or he] does not want to do, or causes her [or him] to be afraid" (Adams, 1988, p. 1). The term domestic violence thus includes not just physical violence but also all forms of psychological, emotional, financial, or sexual abuse between intimate partners.

Myths and Domestic Violence Myths

I begin Chapter 3 with an in-depth analysis of the construct of domestic violence myths in order to delineate the boundaries and content of the construct. For the present, *myths* signify false beliefs that persist despite ample evidence to indicate their falseness. Lonsway and Fitzgerald (1994) note that there are three characteristics of myths which are commonly proposed in the disciplines of psychology, anthropology, philosophy, and sociology: Myths are "false or apocryphal beliefs that are widely held; they explain some important cultural phenomenon; and they serve to justify existing cultural arrangements" (p. 134). Based on this understanding they define myths concerning violence against women as "attitudes and beliefs that are generally false but are widely and persistently held, and that serve to deny and justify male...aggression against women" (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994, p. 134). In Chapter 2, I will show that domestic violence myths, in addition to the cultural functions specified in the Lonsway and Fitzgerald's definition, also serve an individual, psychologically defensive function. As a result, I define domestic violence myths as stereotypical attitudes and beliefs that are generally false but are widely and persistently held, and which serve to minimize, deny, or justify physical aggression against intimate partners.

Prejudice and Stereotypes

In this study I define prejudice as the "holding of irrational negative views" (Baron & Byrne, 2000, p. 219). In contrast, stereotypes are "beliefs that all members of a specific social group share certain traits or characteristics" (Baron & Byrne, 2000, p. 226). The link between stereotype and prejudice has been both conceptually and experimentally demonstrated in that prejudices activate stereotypes which then "tilt our processing of new information toward confirming the stereotypes" (Baron & Byrne, 2000, p. 229). For example, when a stereotype is activated people interpret frankly ambiguous behavior as if it confirmed the (negative) stereotype (Devine, 1989, pp. 11-12). As a result, prejudices and stereotypes fit together in a true viscous cycle in which holding an "irrational negative view" (prejudice) triggers stereotypical thinking which alters our perceptions in ways that confirm the underlying prejudice.

Validity Terms

The terminology applied to different types of validity in empirical research is confusing, defined differently by different authors, and often used inconsistently within a single source. For example, while we may use *discriminant analysis* to predict membership in mutually exclusive groups (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001), *discriminant validity* is present when a measure of construct X does not correlate well with measures of different constructs (Rubin & Babbie, 1997). Worse yet, assessment of the ability of a measure to *discriminate* between groups of individuals (for example, to discriminate between batterers and battered women's advocates) is usually referred to as an indicator of criterion, not discriminant validity.

In order to avoid some of this confusion I will adopt the following terms and definitions in this study. Construct validity will be assessed by both *convergent validity* or the degree to which the measure developed in this study correlates with other, theoretically related measures, and *divergent validity* or the degree to which this measure does not correlate with measures of other, theoretically unrelated constructs (Saunders, et al., 1987). Assessment of criterion validity will utilize the "known groups" method (DeVellis, 1991; Saunders, Lynch, Grayson, & Linz, 1987) in which predictions are made that individuals will have significantly different scores depending on their membership in known groups such as male or female.

Overview of the Dissertation

This dissertation is conventionally arranged with a review of the literature in Chapter 2. This review focuses on two complementary theoretical frameworks for understanding the individual and collective functions of domestic violence myths. The first framework involves the branch of attribution theory dealing with defensive attributions by which individuals, groups, and societies reduce the threat arising from empathic understanding of the victimization of people for whom we care. The second explanatory framework comes from radical feminists who, through viewing the effects of domestic violence as intentional (if unconscious) outcomes of the behavior, articulated the view that domestic violence is primarily concerned with power and control. From this viewpoint the power and control exerted in the individual relationship is supported by and supportive of the efforts of the entire patriarchal culture to exert power and control over women.

After clearly delineating the construct of domestic violence myths, Chapter 3 focuses on the methodology used in the development and testing of an instrument to measure domestic violence myths. In particular, the chapter details the methodology for item selection, initial reliability assessment, and preliminary assessment of content, construct, and known groups validity.

Chapter 4 contains the results of all three phases of the study, from initial assessment by experts through the final study of validity and reliability. Results are presented chronologically by phase of study.

A summary of findings followed by a discussion of the results are presented in Chapter 5. This final chapter will also include discussion of the limitations of the study, practice and policy implications, areas for further research, as well as conclusions that can be drawn from the present study.

The first appendix contains all the forms such as Informed Consent forms used in the study. The second appendix contains the full text of all instruments used in the study while the third appendix contains the entire list of domestic violence myth items used in the pilot study. Further appendices contain extensive tables and statistical output created during Phase II and Phase III of the study.

Introduction Conclusion

Domestic violence is a widespread social problem effecting a significant portion of the United States population and having an often serious and long-lasting impact on victims. While domestic violence is viewed by some authors as a dyadic problem (Geller, 1992; Neidig & Friedman, 1984), research indicates that it is a widespread social problem that is supported by a number of myths and attitudes toward women, victims, and perpetrators. These myths "create a

climate that is hostile to ... victims through (a) the mitigation of offender blame, (b) the denial of the abusiveness of ...[the violence], and/or (c) the denial of the reality of most abuse incidents" (Collings, 1997, p. 672).

The rationale of the proposed study is that development and use of a valid and reliable instrument to measure individual, group, and community attitudes toward domestic violence may help change the very attitudes which it measures and which support the continued prevalence and seriousness of domestic violence. In addition, a measure of domestic violence myths, like Burt's rape myth measure (1980), will help counteract the recent trend (Davis & Hagen, 1992) to see domestic violence as arising out of individual psychopathology, dyadic problems, or family dysfunction. In so doing, the scale will help maintain focus on the social aspects of domestic violence in social work interventions, including advocacy, coalition building, and formation of social policy (Hagen & Davis, 1992).

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

> As a nation, we have the money and technology to virtually eliminate poverty and to provide the kind of professional facilities and services that would dramatically enhance the life chances of a parentless child or the emotionally ill person. Yet . . . we seem not to care enough, possibly we do not care at all . . . we tend to assume that the other man' s suffering is probably a result of his own failures (Lerner, 1970, pp. 205-206).

In this chapter I review the current theory and research from areas that inform the development of a measure of domestic violence myths which, in turn, help explain why "we seem not to care enough" and "assume that the other man's [sic] suffering is probably a result of his [sic] own failures." This review focuses on two overarching theoretical perspectives including a radical feminist theory of domestic violence and the social psychological theory of attribution and specifically defensive attributions. Defensive attribution theory was chosen because of its ability to elucidate underlying, individual, cognitive functions of myths about crimes. Radical feminist theory was chosen because it then links the personal to the political (or social) aspects and functions of the myths. Together these theories provide a diverse, rich, and complementary theoretical understanding of the attributions, prejudices, and stereotypes that are included in the construct of domestic violence myths.

Attribution Theory

According to social psychologists, human beings have "a basic desire to understand cause-and-effect relationships in the social world" (Baron & Byrne, 2000, p. 49). This desire leads us to want to know not just *what* happened but also *why* it happened. In terms of human actions (as opposed to "acts of God"), we

seek to understand why people act as they do. Attributions are simply statements of causal relationships which result from this desire to understand why people act as they do. They can therefore be defined as "our efforts to understand the causes behind other's behavior" (Baron & Byrne, 2000, p. 49).

Basic Attribution Theory

In the evolution of attribution theory one of the first steps was the development of an understanding of the process of correspondence inferences in which we use other people's behavior as a basis for inferring personality traits (Jones & Davis, 1965). Put more succinctly, we infer disposition from behavior (McGaha, 1998). For example, if a woman stays in a battering relationship some people may infer she has a masochistic disposition (Koss, Goodman, Browne, Fitzgerald, Keita, & Russo, 1994).

Of course the woman may also stay because of external, situational, constraints such as a combination of isolation from social supports and a lack of concrete resources (and hence alternatives to staying). According to Jones and Davis' theory of correspondent inferences (1965), we shift our attributions along a continuum between dispositional causes and situational constraints based on the following factors: (1) did the person have free choice; (2) how socially desirable or undesirable are their actions; and (3) are the effects we witness produced by a particular cause (and could not be produced by other apparent causes)? Specifically, we make more dispositional (characterological) attributions when actions are freely chosen, when the action is low in social desirability, and when the effects produced are unique to a particular cause. Returning to attributions about battered women, Jones and Davis' (1965) theory would lead us to predict that people would attribute the cause of her staying in the relationship

to her personality when it appeared the woman had choices (a car, plenty of money, and family to stay with), when she publicly defends the man who seriously injured her, and when her actions cannot be better explained by other factors.

There are a number of additional factors that influence the nature of the attributions we make. One of the most important of these is hedonic relevance or the degree to which the behavior of others is relevant to ourselves (McGaha, 1998) due to similarities in age, gender, race, or circumstance (e.g. college student or professor). In early work on attribution theory, researchers found that as hedonic relevance increases we make increasingly dispositional attributions (Jones & Davis, 1965). However subsequent work (Shaver, 1970a; 1970b; Thornton, 1982; 1984) has found that the exact opposite is true of attributions people make about crime victims: When hedonic relevance increases through increasing similarity between the witness and the victim, people tend to make more situational dispositions. Thus, for example, when victims were portrayed as having similar attitudes to those endorsed by experimental subjects, the subjects assigned less characterological blame and more situational blame (Thornton, 1984). Before turning to the literature specific to attributions related to crime victims, however, I want to examine a number of common "errors" that appear regularly in the attributions we make about other people.

Errors in Our Attributions

While human beings may want to understand why other people in their social world act as they do, our ability to accurately understand the balance between situational and personality factors is limited by several regularly occurring sources of error. The most pernicious of these errors is correspondence

bias or what many social psychologists refer to as the fundamental attribution error in which we make dispositional attributions for other people's actions even in the face of clear situational constraints (Baron & Byrne, 2000). Thus, even when the situational constraints preventing a battered woman from leaving her partner are evident, people will, because of correspondence bias, continue to attribute her remaining in the relationship to her flawed or abnormal character (see Bodenhausen & Wyer, 1985 and Meyer-Emerick, 2001, for examples of this attributional error, even among professionals). Correspondence bias may thus be one factor in the persistence of the question "Why does she [a battered woman] stay" even when numerous situational constraints are evident.

Until the mid-1960s, attribution theory focused almost exclusively on attributions as a way of trying to understand our social world. Beginning with Walster's (1966) work on the attributions we make when someone causes an accident, this focus began to shift to attributions which also serve to defend us against psychologically threatening thoughts and feelings—defensive attributions. It is this shift which I now wish to trace.

Defensive Attributions

Responsibility for an Accident

Walster (1966) and then Shaver (1970a; 1970b) explored the variables related to types of attributions people make toward a person who causes or is the victim of an accident. At first the results were simple: as the consequences of the accident became more serious, people made significantly more dispositional rather than situational attributions (Walster, 1966, p. 77). It thus appears that at low seriousness we sympathize with person causing the accident; saying in effect, "that could happen to anyone." However as the "magnitude of misfortune

increases" (Walster, 1966, p. 74), we increasingly do not want to think "it could happen to anyone" because that implicitly means that we too could be the cause or victim of such a calamity. As a result, we attribute the accident to flaws in the other person's character, flaws that we obviously do not posses. Walster's findings (1966) support the idea of a motivational (defensive) basis for the types of attributions we make toward people who cause accidents. Defensive attributions can therefore be seen as a subtype of the fundamental attribution error in that we attribute something bad befalling the person as a consequence of their character so that they were somehow deserving of their misfortune (see Thornton, 1982) while we, because we are different, might escape a similar fate.

Later studies (Shaver, 1970a; 1970b) both complicated and supported Walster's early findings. In particular, Shaver found no relationship between the seriousness of an accident and the attributions made despite "impressive differences" in the subjects' perception of the severity of the outcomes (1970, p. 108). More importantly, however, Shaver found that while situational relevance was a necessary prerequisite for any form of defensive attribution, when situational relevance is present, subjects made significantly *less* dispositional attributions as personal similarity was increased (Shaver, 1970a, p. 107). At the same time subjects indicated that the accident was more foreseeable (and therefore avoidable) as the seriousness of the accident increased (Shaver, 1970a, p. 109).

The above results contain an interesting apparent contradiction: When personal similarity was high and consequences were severe, people tended to blame the accident on "unfortunate, but unavoidable circumstances" (Shaver, 1970a, p. 108) yet at the same time saw the accident as foreseeable and therefore

preventable. Shaver concluded that this apparent contradiction actually represents "an attempt to hedge against every conceivable danger—to provide himself an 'out' no matter what might happen" (p. 111). Thus the apparent contradiction is resolved "because each statement seems to serve the same overall purpose or to stem from the same underlying motive" (p. 111) which is to defend the individual from threatening cognition's and affects.

At the same time, Shaver (1970a) also found that while some people may use attributions as part of a psychological defense against the threatening prospect of misfortune befalling them (harm avoidance), others may use defensive attributions to defend against the threat of being held personally responsible (blame avoidance). As a result writers predict the presence of similar yet distinctly different motivations for using defensive attributions for women who imagine themselves the potential victims of domestic violence and for men who imagine being held responsible for battering their partner (Finke, 1995; Lerner & Matthews, 1967; Shaver, 1970a; Thornton, 1984).

Whatever the underlying fear, Shaver's finding of a motivational basis for defensive attributions was supported by Burger's (1981) meta-analysis of the literature on defensive attributions. In this review, Burger found support for Walster's original relationship between the severity of the accident and the types of dispositions made ($p < .001$). Even more importantly, Burger found that among those studies which controlled for or manipulated personal and situational similarity, there was "nearly unanimous support for the defensive-attribution hypotheses" (Burger, 1981, p. 504) as formulated by Shaver (1970a). This finding implies that it is only when situations have personal relevance for us that we make attributions, which defend against cognitive and affective threat.

In his meta-analysis of the defensive attribution literature, Burger also noted that different methodologies involved differences in "experimental realism" of the stimulus material ranging from simple vignettes to purported newspaper accounts of accidents or even tape recordings of purported friends of the accident victims describing the accident and its consequence (1981, p. 504). Burger speculated that differences in affective arousal caused by differences in stimuli might contribute to differences in the type and strength of defensive attributions. This question of the role of affective arousal was explored by Thornton and colleagues in a series of experiments (Thornton, 1982; 1984; Thornton, Hogate, Moirs, Pinette, & Presby, 1986). In addition, Thornton et al. turned from exploring defensive attributions related to accidents to defensive attributions related to deliberate interpersonal crimes such as rape. Because Thornton's work has the most direct bearing on the construct of domestic violence myths, I will discuss this work in some detail.

Responsibility for Victimization: Blaming the Victim

The notion of a motivational basis for blaming crime victims rests on the previously discussed hypothesis that people become "negatively aroused as a result of the cognitive threat experienced when they are confronted with the undeserved suffering or victimization of another person which could conceivably occur in their own lives" (Thornton, 1982, p. 3). Through defensive attributions which say, in effect, that the victim is responsible for his or her own victimization, the victimization no longer appears undeserved or unpredictable. For example, by asking "Why does she stay?" bystanders may be reassuring themselves that (1) because there was prior violence then subsequent violence is

likely, (2) they would never stay in a violent relationship, and (3) that they are therefore unlikely to be a domestic violence victim.

Defensive attributions toward crime victims therefore may help individuals restore a temporarily shaken sense of order, logic, and control. Defensive attributions can therefore be seen as yet another manifestation of our need to preserve the 'just world hypothesis' (Lerner, 1980) in which good things happen to good people, bad things happen to bad people, and people get what they deserve (see Janoff-Bulman, 1979 and 1985 for a discussion of trauma victims and the just world hypothesis). As a result of this need, people appear to be cognitively motivated to blame victims in order to defend themselves against the idea of causing or enduring harm (Thornton, 1982).

Thornton (1984) noted, however, that this theoretically postulated link between arousal of threat and activation of defensive attributions had not been experimentally demonstrated. He therefore posed the following question: Is there evidence that defensive attribution is a "motivationally based concept in which attributions of responsibility are made in a self-protective manner as a cognitive defense against the threat aroused by another's relevant victimization" (Thornton, 1984, p. 722)? Using a rape vignette and a factorial design with two experimental manipulations, Thornton systematically varied personal similarity to the victim and level of affective arousal. As expected, he found that subjects attributed less responsibility to a victim with personality traits similar to their own than to a victim with dissimilar personality. This main effect, however, was qualified by a significant interaction between *type* of blame and similarity with the victim (Thornton, 1983). In this interaction, subjects attributed more

characterological than situational blame for dissimilar victims and more situational than characterological blame for similar victims.

When, in a later experiment (Thornton, 1984), arousal was experimentally manipulated through either increasing or decreasing subjects' internal self-awareness, subjects attributed greater responsibility to the victim when arousal was increased than when arousal was not increased. This main effect was independent of victim similarity. These findings of the role of hedonic relevance and affective arousal lend experimental support to the hypothesis that defensive attributions function as a motivated "cognitive defense against the threat of apparently capricious, unwarranted misfortune by distorting the perception of an other's responsibility" (Thornton, 1984, p. 723).

In later studies in which affective arousal was measured autonomically through galvanic skin potential rather than indirectly, Thornton and his colleagues found the same patterns of arousal, similarity, and attribution. The greater the affective arousal experienced "the more the victim was perceived as responsible for her own victimization" (Thornton, Hogate, Moirs, Pinette, & Presby, 1986, p. 159).

They Deserve What They Get

In both of Thornton's 1984 experiments there was also a non-significant trend ($p = .06$) in which subjects rated dissimilar victims as "having had a relatively greater likelihood of being sexually assaulted in the first place than did a similar victim" (p. 731). This finding may represent another aspect of the "just world" hypothesis in which people think that "bad things will not happen to people like me." This supposition is supported by findings from the evaluation of a university-based rape prevention program (Gidycz, Layman, Rich, Crothers,

Gylys, 2001). While program participants rated the training as very effective, helpful, and informative they also said the information did not apply to them personally: Women retained a myth of invulnerability, while men denied their sexually aggressive impulses.

Attribution Conclusion

Taken together, the studies on attribution of responsibility for accidents and attributions made toward crime victims appear to indicate that when confronted by a crime victim, most people make attributions of responsibility if they are affectively or cognitively aroused by the confrontation. These attributions appear to have as their source either a blame avoidance motivation or a threat avoidance motivation. Based on (1) the seriousness of the victimization, (2) the degree of personal similarities between the individual and the crime victim, and (3) the degree of affective arousal, the exact nature of the attribution varies in terms of *amount* of responsibility attributed to the victim and *type* of responsibility (situational or characterological). Within these boundaries, however, the theory of defensive attributions, when applied to domestic violence victims, indicates that despite repeated empirical failures in attempts to "identify specific characteristics of women that may contribute to their victimization" (Aldarondo & Sugarman, 1996, p. 1012), people are likely to attribute the victimization either to unavoidable circumstances or to the victim's personality characteristics. In addition, in an effort to avoid blame, some people may minimize the seriousness of the violence in an effort to reduce affective arousal.

A Radical Feminist View

In contrast to the primarily individual and psychological focus promoted by the social psychological theory of defensive attributions toward crime victims,

radical feminist theory connects the negative, prejudicial, and stereotypical thoughts that people have about domestic violence victims with the larger social structure of patriarchy and patriarchal control over women. In this section I will begin with a radical feminist view of domestic violence generally and then shift to domestic violence myths.

Historical Development of a Functional View

Our entire modern awareness of domestic violence is attributed by some authors to the feminist consciousness raising and speak-out movements that began in the late 1960s and continued through the 1970s (Herman, 1992; hooks, 2000; Ooms, 2001). In these contexts, in which women could collectively name and describe their experience, they frequently described attempts by their romantic partners to dominate and control their lives. This domination and control was exercised not simply through physical violence but also through a coherent (if unconscious) set of behaviors which include repeated efforts to lower the self-esteem of the victim (often but not exclusively through psychological abuse), isolation from sources of information and support, financial control, threats of death, and sexual abuse or humiliation (Adams, 1988). From this perspective, domestic violence "is more than seemingly disconnected violent or frightening acts. It is a coherent pattern of coercive controls ... with a distinct meaning and purpose. Its purposes are to intimidate and undermine the victim" (Adams, 1988, p. 1). In fact many authors go much further, saying that the goal (and effect) is nothing less than to terrorize the victim (Dobash, Dobash, Wilson, & Daly, 1992; Herman, 1992; Johnson, 1995; 2001; Johnson & Ferraro, 2000; Kelly, 1990; Saunders, 1992; Walker, 1979; 1994) in order to control her thoughts, feelings, and behavior.

Defining domestic violence as domestic terrorism provided a context for understanding the diverse acts that make up domestic violence. At the same time, however, radical feminist theorists saw domestic violence in a larger political context of patriarchal control over women (Davis & Hagen, 1992). Seeing current Western culture as "built on the control of females" (Alcoff, 1997, p. 330) helps radical feminists see domestic violence as supported by and supportive of patriarchal control of women by men (Koss, Goodman, Browne, Fitzgerald, Keita, & Russo, 1994). Put most simply, "men as a class wield power over women" (Bograd, 1990, p. 14) so that domestic violence in the home "is seen as a manifestation of gender inequality and as a mechanism for the subordination of women" (Koss, et al., 1994, p. 4). In fact "domestic violence cannot be adequately understood unless gender and power are taken into account" (Yilo, 1993, p. 47).

Looked at in this way, we can see the effects of domestic violence as being similar in function and effect across scales -- dyad, family, community, county, state, and nation (Koss, et al., 1994). On each of these scales, radical feminist use the same technique of focusing on the effects of violence in order to understand the intent of the perpetrator. Using this analytic strategy, radical feminists saw clearly that "men as a class benefit from how women's lives are restricted and limited because of their fear of violence by husbands and lovers as well as by strangers" (Bograd, 1990, p. 14). This theoretical formulation of domestic violence bears a striking resemblance to Brownmiller's previously quoted statement that rape "is nothing more or less than a conscious process of intimidation by which *all men* keep *all women* [italics original] in a state of fear" (Brownmiller, 1974/1993, pp. 14-15).

While Richard Felson (2002) argues against this kind of directional (male over female) control motive (and effect) in domestic violence, his argument is internally inconsistent in terms of both statistics and substance. First, the numerical data he presents often contradict his conclusions. For example, Felson states that "women are just as likely as men to be the victims of violence from their partners, at least in Western Countries." This statement directly contradicts his own research findings (p. 37) and Bureau of Justice Statistics (Craven, 1997) which show that 20.7% of women are victimized by intimates compared to only 2.8% of males (Felson, 2002, p. 49; see also page 111 for another example). On a substantive level, Felson frequently conflates the trivial with the traumatic. For example, Felson argues that women's greater use of complaining and anger in relationships "casts doubt on the idea that men's violence against their wives reflects a greater desire to control them" (Felson, 2002, p. 104). Felson thus compares complaining with a "tooth loosening assault intended to punish, humiliate, and terrorize" (Dobash, Dobash, Wilson, & Daly, 1992, p. 75). Note also that the radical feminist theory of domestic violence which Felson purports to critique never states that men have "a greater desire to control" their wives than do their wives but rather contends that battering is a technique by which men control women. Felson thus fails to address the central feminist proposition that battering results in increased power and control for men.

In summary, according to the radical feminist theoretical formulation, domestic violence is a technique by which all men keep all women in a state of subjugation (Bograd, 1990) through the deliberate (if unconscious) lowering of the victim's self-esteem and increasing of her fear–through terrorizing women while blaming them for their terror. In order to maintain these effects, however,

the batterer usually isolates the victim from sources of social, emotional, and intellectual support. In the next section I will show that domestic violence myths also contribute to this reduction of social support for battered women. Unfortunately, without a measure of domestic violence myth acceptance, we are unable to systematically test this theoretical premise. Understanding the effects and functions of domestic violence myths therefore requires an examination of related but diverse literature examining social support for crime victims and the ways in which that support is attacked.

Domestic Violence Myths: Supporting Patriarchy

Analysis of cross-cultural ethnographic studies shows that active social support of victims (such as is offered by a woman's natal family among Cheyenne, Burmese, and Mundurucu families) reduces the risk of domestic violence and, if violence does occur, reduces the severity of the violence inflicted (Baumgartner, 1995). The reverse (increased violence and severity of violence) is also found among women who lack such support because they live with their husband's family, as is usually the case among the Samburu of Kenya, or the Ojibwa Indians of Canada (Baumgartner, 1995). Studies of Indian (Dasgupta & Warrier, 1996) and Asian American (Huisman, 1996) women in the United States show similar elevated rates and seriousness of domestic violence among women without familial support. However it is not just support from family but also support from neighbors which reduces the incidence of domestic violence as is evident from ethnographic studies of Korean, Sarakatsani, the Cheyenne, Tikopian, and Pokot cultures (Baumgartner, 1995; see also Smuts, 1996, for five hypotheses regarding social support and resulting culture to culture and within culture variations in the extent of domestic violence).

Empirical studies tend to support these ethnographic findings, showing that when men are attached to and surrounded by family and friends who the men perceive would not tolerate their violence, then men are significantly less violent (Lackey & Williams, 1995, p. 294). In contrast, Smith (1991) found that men with friends who supported their use of violence were "significantly more likely than were husbands without such friends to have physically abused their wives at least once during the marriage" (Smith, 1991, p. 514).

Taken together, this literature seems to indicate that when victims receive strong social support then their batterers are less able to control them through the range of behaviors we label domestic violence. Conversely, if social support can be removed (for example through increased acceptance of victim-blaming beliefs) then domestic violence is more likely to be tolerated or even encouraged.

This removal of social support happens on both the individual level and on larger social levels. At the individual level the process of diminishing social support for the victim is eloquently outlined by Judith Herman:

> In order to escape accountability for his crimes, the perpetrator does everything in his power to promote forgetting. Secrecy and silence are the perpetrator's first line of defense. If secrecy fails, the perpetrator attacks the credibility of his victim. If he cannot silence her absolutely, he tires to make sure that no one listens. To this end, he marshals an impressive array of arguments, from the most blatant denial to the most sophisticated and elegant rationalization. After every atrocity one can expect to hear the same predictable apologies: It never happened; the victim lies; the victim exaggerates; the victim brought it upon herself; and in any case it is time to forget the past and move on. The more powerful the perpetrator, the

> greater is his prerogative to name and define reality, and the more completely his arguments prevail (Herman, 1992, p. 8.).

The perpetrator "escapes accountability" by systematically undermining the credibility and therefore the social support for the victim. What individual perpetrators do to individual victims, myths about domestic violence or rape do to victims generally by substituting plural forms for the singular: Victims lie, victims exaggerate, victims bring the violence on themselves, and it any case it is no big deal so let's talk about something else.

In essence, myths about crime minimize the damage done to and impugn the character of victims so that crime victims who once deserved our sympathy are no longer seen as deserving. The rationale and necessity for this shift from deserving to undeserving is nicely laid out by Deborah Lipstadt who contends that victims (as a class such as victims of the holocaust) have moral authority (1994). Because of that moral authority, victims command public attention, garner support and sympathy, and can even shape social policy (Ooms, 2001; see also Jensen, 1984; Meyer-Emerick, 2001 for specific examples related to domestic violence). Undermining those strengths therefore requires that victims be seen not as undeserving innocents but rather as culpable individuals. It is precisely toward this end that domestic violence or rape myths systematically imply that the victim caused her own victimization, freely put herself in harm's way, and probably desired the treatment she received. By garnering social support for these three statements, myths convince bystanders that the woman is no longer truly a victim, does not deserve the moral authority of that group, and therefore is undeserving of either our sympathy or support.

Returning to the cross-cultural data with which I began, it can be argued that by reducing support for victims, domestic violence myths indirectly contribute to a greater incidence of more severe violence against romantic partners. According to the radical feminist analysis, domestic violence is a coherent (if unconscious) set of behaviors and beliefs that reflect, support, and are supported by the system of patriarchy. Similarly, domestic violence myths can be seen as a set of false beliefs that reflect, support, and are supported by the system of patriarchy. There is extensive correlational support for this view (with regard to rape and rape myths) including not only the original work by Burt (1980), but also later studies which show the same interpenetrating of myth, attitude, and action or propensity toward action (Aberle & Littlefield, 2001; Lanier, 2001; Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1995; Monto & Hotaling, 2001; Newman & Colon, 1994; see also Crowell & Burgess, 1996). At present there is some experimental support for the feminist proposition that rape and rape myths impact all women, not just rape victims (Bohner & Schwarz, 1996; Bohner, Weisbrod, Raymond, Barzvi, & Schwarz, 1993; Schwarz & Brand, 1983). Similar experimental support for feminist theories of the impact of domestic violence and domestic violence femicide require a way to experimentally control for endorsement of domestic violence myths and therefore may be possible if the present study produces a reliable and valid measure which reveals the presence of such myths in the population.

Literature Review Conclusion

In this literature review I have examined two theories which attempt to explain the existence, nature, and prevalence of domestic violence myths. While I have considered the social psychological literature on defensive attributions and

the radical feminist theoretical writings on domestic violence and domestic violence myths separately, they actually fit together well. The feminist literature provides a theoretical view of the source of the prejudices and stereotypes regarding women and battered women in particular. The social psychological literature, in turn, helps us understand the individual psychological functions of the prejudices and stereotypes. Together the two bodies of literature help us understand the individual and social sources of and persistence of domestic violence myths.

As mentioned in the introduction, there are numerous other theories of domestic violence including theories derived from evolutionary psychology, learning theory, and individual psychopathology. I have focused on attribution theory and radical feminist theories because they highlight the role of socially supported beliefs in domestic violence, because such beliefs are amenable to change, and because behavior is shaped in part by underlying beliefs such that changing beliefs should, over time, change behavior.

In the next chapter I discuss the development of an instrument (the Domestic Violence Myth Acceptance Scale [DVMAS]) to measure these theoretically postulated domestic violence myths. My goal in this development is to produce an instrument which can and will be used in research on and interventions with individuals, groups, and whole communities. As noted by Aberle and Littlefield (2001) regarding Burt's measure of rape myth, the DVMAS will help test the defensive attribution and radical feminist theories outlined above as they relate to domestic violence. Specifically, if domestic violence myths are found to exist as expected, the DVMAS will permit testing the radical feminist socialization theory of domestic violence by testing first for expected

correlations (between DVMAS and other negative attitudes toward women) and later for causal relationships between domestic violence myths and perpetration of domestic violence. In addition to theory testing, the DVMAS may also fill important practical functions. In particular the instrument could help researchers, administrators, and program evaluators assess the extent and pervasiveness of domestic violence myths among groups who have personal or professional contact with domestic violence victims. The DVMAS could then also be incorporated in evaluation of programs designed to decrease domestic violence myths among these groups. Taken together, the DVMAS may thus help in our efforts to alter the prejudicial, stereotypical, and false beliefs that tend to undermine domestic violence victims personally and collectively.

Chapter 3: Methods and Procedures

Because this methodology describes three sequential steps in the development of the Domestic Violence Myth Acceptance Scale (DVMAS), I discuss the data analytic techniques for each of the steps along with the description of that step rather than in a separate, final section of the chapter as is more usual. All data was collected, reviewed, organized, and analyzed using SPSS Base 10 for Macintosh Statistical Software.

Definition of Construct

Development of the Domestic Violence Myth Acceptance Scale (DVMAS) and enhancement of its content validity actually began with the lexical definition of the construct contained in the literature review above. The next step in this definitional process was the elaboration of the construct of domestic violence myths. Using the principles of language analysis (Wilson, 1963), domestic violence myths were conceptualized as statements of belief concerning the motivations and attributes of the victims, the perpetrators, or the violence itself. In contrast to beliefs, which may be idiosyncratic, domestic violence myths are thought to fit within a larger conceptual framework. In fact, domestic violence myths relate to a coherent *system* of beliefs about women and violence against women. Within this framework, domestic violence myths usually include characterological attributions of responsibility to the victim as in the example of "Battered women must like the beatings they get or else they would leave." At the same time, domestic violence myths discount or ignore situational constraints as alternative explanations. Such myths also hold the victim responsible for the abuse while rendering the perpetrator curiously invisible. Finally, domestic

violence myths usually involve stereotypical thinking that ignores differences between individual battered women.

Examination of "non-examples" of domestic violence myths such as "Battered women are extraordinarily resourceful in getting the violence to stop" revealed that statements which may be widely supported in the empirical literature (Fleury, Sullivan, Bybee, & Davidson, 1998; Gondolf, 1998; Hutchison & Hirschel, 1998; Petersen & Weissert, 1982; Whist & McFarlane, 1998) are not necessarily part of the cultural myths about domestic violence. This gap indicates that domestic violence myths are generally false and fail to note strengths and abilities among battered women but instead denigrate or put down the victim.

Domestic violence myths may, however, include empirically supported statements ("Alcohol is a big factor in domestic violence") but do so in ways that conflate correlation with causality (see, for an example, Tanner, 2001) when doing so results in an external attribution of responsibility for the batterer ("he was drunk") or a characterological attribution to the victim ("she invites the abuse by staying"). As such, domestic violence myths usually involve the assertion that the violence is caused by the character or behavior of the victim or by some social or genetic defect in the batterer.

To summarize, domestic violence myths are made up of stereotypical beliefs that fit within a larger system of negative beliefs about women, violence toward women, and sex-role stereotypes. The myths are usually largely false yet held to be true, ignore clear and present evidence of situational constraints which keep the victim in the relationship, and blame the victim for the violence through making characterological and behavioral attributions of responsibility to the victim. In contrast, the person actually responsible for the violence, the batterer,

is either rendered invisible by the myths or excused through reference to situational and environmental causes such as alcohol or childhood maltreatment. For this study, domestic violence myths were therefore defined as statements about domestic violence which invoke either character blame of the victim, behavioral blame of the victim, exoneration of the perpetrator, or minimization of the seriousness or extent of the problem.

Initial Item Pool Development

Development of the DVMAS instrument began with the creation of a large pool of items (see Appendix B). The items were designed to tap into thoughts and beliefs which (1) are indicative of endorsement of the construct or of not endorsing the construct of domestic violence myths, (2) reflect the strength of the construct, (3) exhaust the possibilities of the construct, and (4) use alternate wordings to articulate the construct in order to create an intentional redundancy among items (DeVellis, 1991). Items which contradict the myths ("Domestic violence victims are very resourceful in stopping or getting away from the abuse.") were also included and were reverse scored.

Using the methodology suggested by experts in the field (Briere 1987; Burt, 1980; Saunders, Lynch, Grayson, & Linz, 1987), specific DVMAS items were developed based on (1) the theoretical literature reviewed in Chapter 2, (2) existing rape and domestic violence attitude scales, (3) clinical experience, and (4) a review of popular culture. See Appendix B for item examples.

Initial Scale Construction

In this section I discuss the factors which influenced the scale construction.

Intended Instrument Uses

Following the example of Burt's Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (1980), the DVMAS is intended to be used (if the construct is empirically supported) in a variety of contexts ranging from the assessment of individuals to the assessment of programs. For example, the DVMAS may be a useful measure of individual attitudes and their changes within psychoeducational programs for batterers. Similarly, the DVMAS could be used as a pre-post evaluative measure for the overall effectiveness of a batterers program or for community education programs such as domestic violence prevention programs on college campuses. Because such programs are often of short duration and may exert a relatively weak influence (Foubert, 2000), the instrument must be sensitive to change and have a low test-retest bias due to subjects' accurate recall of previous answers.

Instrument Format

In addition to the desire to reduce test-retest bias and increase sensitivity, factors that influenced the physical construction of the DVMAS included the intention to produce interval-level data in order to increase future data analytic options. At the same time, the instrument should maximize variability. These objectives can be met, in part, by increasing the number of possible response categories (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). Simply increasing the number of response options, however, does not optimize the scale if respondents cannot meaningfully discriminate between values (DeVellis, 1991). For example, the difference between "some" and "a few" may be ambiguous or meaningless.

Among the important elements of item response formats which have experimentally been shown to affect the variability and sensitivity of an instrument are the strength of item wording, the strength of scale anchors, and the response format (number of points between anchors) (Lam & Stevens, 1994). In general, to maximize variability with controversial topics it is suggested that the researcher use strongly worded anchors (*Strongly Agree* to *Strongly Disagree*, for example) and less strongly worded items (Lam & Stevens, 1994). With non-controversial topics, greater scale variability is obtained with more strongly worded items and less strongly worded anchors because participants then use the endpoints more frequently (Lam & Stevens, 1994).

In a test of a preliminary version of the DVMAS using weakly worded items, strongly worded anchors, and a response set from 1 to 7, the instrument mean scores showed surprising variability (range = 3.33, minimum = 1.60, maximum = 4.93, M = 2.95, SD = .58) with frequent endorsement of strongly worded endpoints (Peters, unpublished data). Despite the obvious political correctness of responses coded at the lowest level, the scale produced acceptably normal (SPSS, 2001) distributions of mean scores with skewness of .58 and kurtosis of .89.

Given these considerations and preliminary findings, the DVMAS was constructed using a seven point Likert type scale with strongly worded anchors, an indicator of a mid-point, but no (possibly ambiguous) titles for intermediate points. Items were weakly worded with strongly worded polar endpoints of *Strongly Disagree* or *Strongly Agree*.

Items which were theoretically associated with different factors (see below) were randomly distributed throughout the instrument. A more important

consideration, however, relates to what Cronbach termed acquiescence response set bias which he defined as "any tendency causing a person consistently to give different responses to test items than he would when the same content is presented in a different form" (1946, p. 479; see also Carmines & Zeller, 1979). Given the strong social desirability of the DVMAS and studies which indicate that response set bias is increased when social desirability is a factor (Helmstadter, 1964, p. 153), negatively and positively worded items were deliberately intermixed.

Initial Assessment of Validity

With the DVMAS initial item pool selected and laid out, initial assessment of the validity of the instrument began.

Content validity refers to "the adequacy with which a specified domain of content is sampled" (Nunnally, 1970, p. 135). To increase the content validity of the DVMAS, I asked a snowball sample of experts in the fields of domestic violence and social psychology to review the preliminary item pool. This sample of experts included persons known to me with more than ten years of experience in their respective areas of expertise or practice, including domestic violence advocates, facilitators of batterers groups, and academics who are expert in the fields of domestic violence and social psychology. To assess content validity I asked the experts to determine if anything was missing from the scale or if anything was included which should not have been (Fink, 1995b). To facilitate their analysis I presented DVMAS items clustered by content area, not dispersed as they were in the administered version. Given the variety of backgrounds of my expert panel I did not ask the experts to judge the lexical definition of

domestic violence myths and I retained and exercised final control over item inclusion or exclusion (DeVellis, 1991).

Pre-test

DeVellis (1991) and others strongly recommend pre-testing a new instrument with a small sample in order to look for errors, omissions, and other easily corrected flaws in the instrument construction. Following University of Maine Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, the DVMAS was pre-tested with a small convenience sample of volunteers of graduate students and faculty at the University of Maine. In addition to the completing the DVMAS instrument, participants were also asked to comment on any items that they found unclear, errors they detected, and any other comments about the instrument.

Based on responses from pre-test participants, the DVMAS scale was revised for clarity (see Chapter 4) and a pilot test version of the instrument was constructed.

Pilot Test for Reliability and Validity

The primary goals of pilot testing the instrument were elimination of psychometrically weak items, initial assessment of instrument reliability, and preliminary exploration of construct validity and reliability through examination of the underlying factor structure of the instrument. Specific information about statistical techniques used in this process as well as item elimination guidelines are addressed in this section.

Pilot Test Sample

DeVellis (1991) recommends pilot testing a new instrument with a moderately large sample of around 300 participants to assure that pilot test data

reflect true item variance, not sampling error. Because of the expectation of a different motivational basis and consequently different factor structure of responses for men and women (Thornton, 1984), I required 300 male and 300 female participants for the pilot test sample. The population parameters from which the sample was selected included all registered students, faculty, staff, and retired faculty at The University of Maine. The sampling frame employed was the e-mail directory for The University of Maine intranet which contained over 14,000 names. In anticipation of a 50% rate of return, I used a systematic random sampling strategy to randomly selected 1,200 participants for the pilot test. . This sampling strategy was selected because it is convenient (but not a convenience sample) and readily accessible. Given the likely differences between a University population and other diverse populations in terms of education and income, I make no claims or generalizations beyond a university population.

Pilot Test Methods

Following IRB approval, I sent an individually addressed e-mail to each randomly selected participant, requesting their participation in the study and directing them to an informed consent form on the World Wide Web. This web site informed participants that the study was anonymous and assured them that they were under no obligation to participate, could decline to participate at all, and could cease their participation at any time with no adverse consequences. Consent to participate was implied by clicking on a button which was linked to the study instrument.

For the pilot test, participants were asked to complete the DVMAS and three demographic questions concerning sex, age, and status at the University.

No identifying information was collected in order to assure anonymity of responses.

Pilot Test Initial Data Analysis

Data analysis proceeded in several steps including analysis of missing data, examination of outliers, analysis of descriptive data, reliability analysis, and analysis of the factor structure. In this section I outline each of these data analytic techniques.

First, however, in deciding on the level of measurement of the instrument, I used the guidelines developed by DePoy and Gilson (2003) and by Tabachnick and Fidell (2001). DePoy and Gilson argue that the level of measurement derived from Likert-type scales should be determined by the anticipated data analytic techniques to be employed (2003). Data analysis for this study includes computation of correlations and differences between groups in mean scores indicating that the data should be regarded as interval level. Tabachnick and Fidell (2001) note that they "often treat variables as if they are continuous when the underlying scale is thought to be continuous, ...the number of categories is large—say seven or more—and the data meet other assumptions of the analysis" (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001, p. 7). In this pilot test, I assumed that endorsement of the construct of domestic violence myths, if the construct is empirically supported, would be continuous in the population. Because the measurement scale uses seven categories, I consequently treated both the scores of individual items and scale totals as interval level data.

Appropriate data cleaning techniques were employed for handling missing data and outliers. After data cleaning, I then examined the frequencies, variance, skewness, and kurtosis of each item. For items with non-normal

distributions (defined as skewness > 1.00) I used a log transformation. Items which remain skewed after transformation were then examined by gender. Items which are skewed for both males and females were eliminated, while items that were skewed for one but not the other sex were retained for further analysis.

Initial Reliability Analysis

Once the data were screened and normalized, I conducted an initial test of reliability using Cronbach's coefficient alpha as a measure of internal consistency (DeVellis, 1991). I used coefficient alpha rather than split-half reliability because when data may have distinct factors, split-half reliabilities may yield inconsistent results (Carmines & Zeller, 1979). Cronbach's coefficient alpha, which calculates the mean of all possible split-half reliabilities (Hudson & McIntosh, 1981), avoids this problem. Cronbach's coefficient alpha can also be thought of as the mean of all the correlations between each item and the total (Fink, 1995b, p. 48). I used just this (corrected) item-total correlation to assess the contribution of each item to the entire instrument.

While later deletion of items from the DVMAS would alter the final Cronbach's coefficient alpha, this initial reliability analysis was conducted to assure that the instrument was performing adequately. Cronbach's coefficient alpha in the range of .70 to .80 is considered adequate and .80 to .90 is considered very good (DeVellis, 1991). A range of .80 to .90 or over is recommended by some authors for instruments that may be widely used (Carmines & Zeller, 1979). At this stage of development, reliability of .80 to .85 for the DVMAS was desired.

In addition to the initial reliability analysis, I also examined the correlation matrices (computed using Pearson's *r*) to find items which correlated only

weakly or infrequently with other items. Such items were marked for possible elimination after consideration of the factor structure of the DVMAS.

Factor Analysis

Factor analysis is a method of statistically examining the correlation matrix in search of clusters of items which correlate more highly with each other than with other items or clusters of items (Carmines & Zeller, 1979, p. 59). Conceptually, factor analysis is a way of isolating or identifying specific traits or characteristics that are measured by items in a scale (Litwin, 1995, p. 47). Factor analysis can thus be used in analysis of the validity of an instrument (i.e., are the predicted factors present, are other, unpredicted factors also present, & etc.) and, if factors are present, the reliability of those factors can be assessed. I used factor analysis in this study in both of these ways.

As indicated in Chapter 2, radical feminist theory indicates the likely presence of three factors in the data: (1) blaming the victim; (2) exonerating the perpetrator, and (3) minimizing the seriousness of the abuse. Defensive attribution theory, in contrast, indicates the likely presence of four factors with the victim blaming factor divided into characterological blame and situational (behavioral) blame. Analysis of rape myth acceptance data, however, has produced less clear-cut results (for a review see Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994).

Statistical factor analysis

The first step in this analysis was a series of examinations of the suitability of the data for factor analysis. Statistical analysis of the factor structure of the DVMAS pilot data was then conducted for the entire sample and then separately for male and female participants. This analysis used an exploratory factor analysis with varimax rotation. Because previous analysis of rape myth

instruments (Newman & Colon, 1994) have found moderate intercorrelaitons between factors (r = .419 to .542) I also used an oblique rotation with Delta set at zero to assess the relationship among factors.

With the initial large item pool, factor analysis was used first to identify items which did and did not load on factors for men and for women as well as items which loaded on multiple factors. Separate factor analyses were run for items related to each of the four theoretical factors (character blame, behavioral blame, exoneration, and minimization). Again, items were identified which did and did not load on the theoretical factors or which loaded on sub factors within the larger theoretical factor.

Analysis of the factorial results was expected to reveal the presence (after rotation) of three or four factors which explained the majority of the variation while remaining factors would be statistically insignificant and uninterpretable (Carmines & Zeller, 1979, pp. 60-61). In addition, specific items were expected to load on the factors I predicted they would load on. With multiple factors, there is a risk that one factor may simply represent an acquiescent response set bias (Carmines & Zeller, 1979). Therefore, factors were checked for their relationship to the theoretical construct of domestic violence myths and to the factor itself.

Reliability analysis of factors

Because interpretable factors emerged from the above analysis, I then analyzed the reliability of each of the factors using Cronbach's coefficient alpha. As in the overall reliability analysis discussed previously, results in the range of .70 to .90 were desired. But, given the exploratory nature of this study and because Cronbach's coefficient alpha is quite sensitive to the number of items

(Helmstadter, 1964), factors with few items and a coefficient alpha of .60 to .70 were considered as having adequate reliability (Briere, 1987).

Item Elimination

In addition to an initial examination of the possible factor structure and reliability of the scales and factors of the DVMAS, another purpose of the pilot testing was to identify items which should be eliminated from the final instrument. Through each of the decisions described above, items were scored positively, negatively, or not at all depending on their performance in that particular test. Thus an item which made a particularly strong contribution to the reliability of a factor was scored plus one or two while an item which detracted from the reliability was scored minus one or two.

Because of the large number of items and number of steps in the analysis, item elimination was done in two stages, first from the total item pool to a smaller pool of 30 items and then, after repeating all the analytical steps described above with those 30 items, to the final item selection.

Final Testing: Reliability and Validity

The purpose of the final phase of the research was to assess the reliability of the revised DVMAS scale and to continue preliminary evaluation of construct validity.

Given the lack of other measures of domestic violence myths with established psychometric properties, measuring criterion validity of the DVMAS was problematic. Lee Cronbach notes that "when an investigator believes that no criterion available to him is fully valid, he perforce becomes interested in construct validity" (1955, p. 282). As a result, both convergent and divergent aspects of construct validity were assessed by measuring correlations between

the DVMAS and other measures of attitudes which the literature indicated are theoretically and experimentally related or not related to domestic violence myth acceptance (DeVellis, 1991; Hendrix & Schumm, 1990; Rubin & Babbie, 1997). Specific measures used in this preliminary construct validation are discussed below in the section on instruments following details of participant selection.

Participants

For this final phase of psychometric testing of the DVMAS, I administered the instrument to a cross-section of graduate and undergraduate students as well as current and retired faculty, administrators, and staff at the University of Maine. The population parameters, sampling frame and sampling technique were all identical to those used in the pilot study. Because of an anticipated above average level of education and family income, the results can be generalized only to similar populations.

To determine the required minimum sample size needed to detect the presence of meaningful correlations between DVMAS mean scores and other measures convergent and divergent validity, I began by reviewing the literature to determine effect sizes present in the population. Correlations between the related construct of rape myth acceptance and other measures of attitudes toward women range from $r = .40$ to $r = .50$ (Burt, 1980). Correlations between domestic violence attitudes and a measure of sex-role conservatism ranged from $r = .59$ to $r = .23$ for the five subscales of the domestic violence attitudes measure with a mean correlation of $r = .41$ (Finke, 1995). In a study of Palestinian women, correlations between domestic violence blame and other attitudes toward women and sex-roles ranged from $r = .63$ to $r = .33$ with a mean correlation of $r = .51$. Based on these studies I concluded that the effect size in the population is $r =$

.40 to r = .50 or large (Cohen, 1988). In order to detect an effect of this size, the desired power according to Cohen is .80 and the resulting minimum sample size is 37 (Minium, Clarke, & Coladarci, 1999).

To determine sample sizes needed for the analysis of differences in mean DVMAS scores for males and females, I again consulted the literature to determine effect sizes found in previous studies. These effect sizes were large, ranging from .92 (Payne, Lonsway, & Fitzgerald, 1999) to 1.04 (Bohner, Weisbrod, Raymond, Barzvi, & Schwarz, 1993). To detect effect sizes of this magnitude with a desired power of .80 the resulting minimum sample size is 17 per group or 34 for a sample with equal numbers of males and females (Minium, Clarke, & Coladarci, 1999).

Recommendations for the minimum sample size for factor analysis vary widely according to different authors. Some authors maintain that a 20:1 ratio of subjects to variables is required. In contrast, Arrindell and van der Ende argue that "the credibility of factor analytic results is dependent upon the stability of the correlations rather than their statistical significance (quoted in Glencross & Cherian, 1995, p. 316). Darlington (2002) similarly notes that sample size is dependent on the clarity of the factor structure rather than an arbitrary ratio. While the theories reviewed in Chapter 2 indicate the likely presence of three or four principle factors, empirical studies have produced contradictory results with three to nine factors and sometimes ambiguous item loadings (for domestic violence related examples, see Petretic-Jackson, Sandberg, & Jackson, 1982; Saunders, Lynch, Grayson, & Linz, 1987 or Velicer, Huckel, & Hansen, 1989; for rape myth examples see Feld, 1978, or Newman & Çolon, 1994). In order to detect a complex factor structure, a sample size of 100 or more is recommended

(Darlington, 2002). I therefore selected a sample size of 150. Because I needed to factor analyze male and female responses separately, I therefore needed a sample of 150 males and 150 females. With an anticipated response rate of 55% (Dillman, 2000) I therefore randomly selected 560 names from the sampling frame discussed above.

Data Collection Procedures

Data were collected via the University of Maine intranet. I used a modified form of Dillman's Tailored Design Method (Dillman, 2000). This method involves sending a pre-notification letter, a letter with the survey instrument, a reminder card, plus two follow-up letters.

The specific procedure was as follows. Each randomly selected participant was sent a "pre-notice letter" telling him/her that the survey would arrive (electronically) in a couple of days. Participants could elect to drop out at this time and were removed from further mailings if they so desired. Two days after the pre-notice, participants received a request to participate letter that contained a URL link to a World Wide Web site containing a welcome page, the informed consent form, and the survey. Submission of the completed survey implied consent to participate.

When participants submitted their survey they were presented with a debriefing page. In addition to general study information, this page informed participants that if they sent me an e-mail message saying they had completed the survey, I would remove their name from the master list so they would not receive follow-up mailings. A link that they could click on to send e-mail was provided.

Two follow-up reminders were sent at six day intervals to non-respondents (Dillman, 2000). All correspondence, from initial pre-notice to final reminders, was sent to individual e-mail addresses rather than as a "bulk mailing" to the entire group as the latter method would reveal the names of other study participants and thus violate participant confidentiality. These individual mailings were sent using a specially designed computer program which I wrote.

Instruments

In this section I discuss each of the instruments used in this final phase of the study, their psychometric properties, and (where appropriate) special data analytic considerations.

Convergent validity

Radical feminist theory postulates that domestic violence is a dyadic expression of patriarchal culture that promotes violence against women, rigid sex-role stereotypes, and generally negative views of women. As a result, the DVMAS was expected to correlate highly with Burt's (1980) Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (Cronbach's internal reliability coefficient alpha = .86), Briere's (1987) Attitudes Towards Wife Abuse (AWA) scale (α = .63), Burt's (1980) Sex-Role Stereotype scale (α = .80) which assesses sex-role conservatism, and the Attitudes Toward Women Scale (ATW; Spence, Helmreich, & Stapp, 1974). As previously discussed, Burt's Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (1980) is a widely used and validated measure of rape myths. Briere's Attitudes Towards Wife Abuse was found to be a significant predictor of self-reported likelihood of battering (Briere, 1987). Burt's Sex-Role Stereotype scale is a well-validated measure of

sexual conservatism which has been shown to be highly correlated with rape myths (Burt, 1980) and with negative attitudes toward domestic violence victims (Briere, 1987; Koss, Goodman, Browne, Fitzgerald, Keita, 1994). The Attitudes Toward Woman Scale is a unifactorial measure of both sex-role conservatism and general attitudes toward women (Spence, Helmreich, & Stapp, 1974).

Divergent validity

While findings supporting convergent validity for the DVMAS would be encouraging, the possibility remained that the instrument was simply measuring myths or attitudes toward violence in general, not specifically violence against intimate partners. Consequently, a preliminary test of divergent validity was conducted. Lonsway and Fitzgerald (1994; 1995), in their examination of the construct of rape myths, found that Burt's measure of rape myth acceptance correlated most strongly (r = .70 to .66) with measures of misogyny (including violence against women) and most weakly (r = .47) with a measure of attitudes toward use of violence (1) in war, (2) in the criminal justice system, and (3) in child rearing (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1995). However the research from which they derived their measure of attitudes toward violence indicated that items related to physical abuse of children loaded equally on the two second-order factors of Institutional Violence and Interpersonal Violence (Velicer, Huckel, & Hansen, 1989). In contrast, items related to violence in war and the criminal justice system loaded strongly on the Institutional Violence factor while items related to violence against women loaded exclusively on the Interpersonal Violence factor. Because Lonsway and Fitzgerald's (1995) measure of divergent validity contained the child abuse items that loaded on both the Institutional and

Interpersonal Violence factors, it is likely that their measure lacked adequate construct validity. In order to measure divergent validity in the current study, I therefore used only those items from Velicer et al.'s Attitudes Toward Violence (ATV) which those authors found loaded clearly on the Institutional Violence factor (1989).

Social desirability

Because of the strong social desirability bias of the DVMAS, I used a ten-item short form of the Marlow-Crown Social Desirability Scale (SDS; Greenwald, & Satow, 1970). Through use of a Likert scale response format rather than the dichotomous, "True" or "False" format of the original, this short form has a Cronbach's coefficient alpha of .90 compared to .70 for the True/False short form of Ballard (1992) or .73 to .83 for the original full 33-item Marlowe-Crowne scale (Crowne, & Marlowe, 1960). In addition, use of a Likert scale should lessen social desirability responding on the social desirability scale itself (Lorr, 1989). Using Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient to assess the correlation between the Greenwald and Satow (1970) short form of the SDS and the mean DVMAS scores provided an indication of the degree of participant "faking good" on the DVMAS. A significant correlation would indicate possible contamination of DVMAS scores with social desirability.

Demographic variables

Demographic information on age, sex, gender, sexual orientation, undergraduate major, and student/occupational status were gathered and used in a number of separate analyses. For example, previous research has shown that risk of domestic violence decreases abruptly around age 45 (Peters, Shackelford, & Buss, 2002; Wilson, Johnson, & Daly, 1995). To the extent that defensive

attributions are related to actual risk of crime (Bilsky & Wetzels, 1997), DVMAS mean scores may decrease among individuals aged 45 and over. Consequently, I examined the correlation between age and DVMAS, looking specifically for a negative correlation. Similarly sex, gender, and sexual orientation were expected to influence the hedonic relevance of domestic violence for participants and hence the degree of defensive attribution they use (Shaver, 1970a). In addition, studies of rape myth acceptance have consistently shown significantly higher mean scores for men than women (Bohner & Schwarz, 1996; Burt, 1980; Ellis, O'Sullivan, & Sowards, 1992; Hinck & Thomas, 1999; Schwarz & Brand, 1983).

In light of previous research, data on participants' history of witnessing or experiencing domestic violence was not gathered. In assessing the construct validity of her Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (1980), Burt evaluated a complex path diagram that included participant background, direct and indirect experiences of rape, attitudes towards women, and personality variables. Contrary to her expectations, none of the direct or indirect experiences of rape such as knowing rape victims or being sexually assaulted contributed significantly to rape myth acceptance. This finding was replicated in several subsequent studies (Carmody & Washington, 2001; Jenkins, & Dambrot, 1987; Lefley, Scott, Llabre, & Hicks, 1993) in which no significant differences between victims and non-victims in their beliefs about rape was found. Finally, even when knowing rape victims was found to have a main effect on rape myth acceptance (Ellis, O'Sullivan, & Sowards, 1992), this main effect became insignificant in subsequent regression analysis. Consequently, personal history of domestic violence was not assessed as part of the current study.

Data Analysis

Analysis of the final study data included examination of descriptive statistics, factor analysis of the DVMAS, and correlational analysis. Specific data analytic techniques are discussed next.

Initial data inspection

Initial data inspection and cleaning followed the procedures detailed for the pilot test data. The possibility of miscoding was greatly reduced by virtue of administration via the World Wide Web. I still examined the frequencies (to make sure they were in the expected range) as well as skewness and kurtosis of scale means to assure that data were suitable for correlational and factor analyses.

Descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics included means and standard deviations for interval level variables such as age, and frequencies (with percentages) for categorical variables such as sex, gender, and relational status.

Factor analysis

As in the pilot test, I first used an exploratory factor analysis with varimax rotation followed by and exploratory analysis with oblique rotation and a final confirmatory factor analysis.

Correlational analysis

Correlations were computed for mean scores of the DVMAS, the Attitudes Toward Violence scale (including the two subscales of items related to warfare and to crime; Velicer, Huckel, & Hansen, 1989) the Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (Burt, 1980), the Attitudes Towards Wife Abuse (AWA) scale (Briere, 1987), the

Sex-Role Stereotype scale (Burt, 1980), the Attitudes Toward Women Scale (Spence, Helmreich, & Stapp, 1974), and Social Desirability Scale (Ballard, 1992).

Research Questions and Hypotheses

In summary, based on theory and the empirical literature, the specific research questions and hypotheses addressed in this initial testing of the Domestic Violence Myth Acceptance Scale included the following:

A. Did the instrument demonstrate adequate reliability?

B. Preliminary indicators of instrument validity were assessed through testing the following hypotheses:

1. Convergent construct validity. The DVMAS will correlate positively and significantly with the Attitudes Toward Women scale, Rape Myth Scale, Sex Role Stereotyping, and the Attitudes Towards Wife Abuse scale.
2. Divergent construct validity.
    2.1 . The DVMAS will correlate weakly and non-significantly with a measure of attitudes toward violence by governing agencies such as nations, universities, and prisons.
    2.2. The DVMAS will correlate weakly and non-significantly with a measure of social desirability.
3. Criterion or known group differences.
    3.1. Men will have significantly higher mean DVMAS scores than women.
    3.2. There will be a negative correlation between DVMAS scores and age of female participants.
4. The factor structure of the instrument.
    4.1. Consistent with the lexical definition of domestic violence myths used in this study, four interpretable factors will emerge related to

character blame of the victim, behavioral blame of the victim, minimization, and excusing the perpetrator.

4.2 Based on defensive attribution theory, the factor structure and loading of items is expected to vary by sex. Thus more easily interpretable factors with higher factor loadings are expected to emerge when factors are analyzed by sex while less interpretable factors with lower factor loadings will be present when the entire dataset is factor analyzed together.

4.3 When analyzed by sex, the dominant factor for men will involve blame avoidance while for women the dominant factor will involve threat avoidance.

Chapter 4: Results

This chapter presents the results of the data analysis for all three stages of the development of the Domestic Violence Myth Acceptance Scale (DVMAS): The preliminary evaluation by experts, the pilot study, and the final reliability and validity study The analysis of data from each stage is presented in separate sections of the chapter. For the results from the pilot and final studies, the following results are presented: characteristics of the sample, descriptive statistics for the study measures, factor analytic results, descriptive statistics for retained factors, and reliability data for the retained factors and for the entire scale. In the section presenting results of the final study, additional results related to the study questions and hypotheses are presented including reliabilities of all measures, correlations between measures, comparisons of mean scores by gender, and a summary of results for each hypothesis and research question of the study. By convention, an alpha level of .05 was used for all statistical analyses.

Preliminary Evaluation by Experts

Eight experts evaluated the face and content validity of the instrument. These individuals were selected for their expertise in social psychology, direct service with batterers and battered women, or their academic expertise in the area of violence against women. Suggestions incorporated from those experts included doubling the size of the initial item pool to 80 items, inclusion of specific items (e.g. "God wants men to be in control of their families"), and rewording of other items. After making these revisions the experts agreed the scale had good face validity and excellent content validity.

Finally, a pretest of the entire item pool was conducted in a focus group with ten undergraduate and graduate students as well as two faculty members at The University of Maine. This group completed a pencil-and-paper version of the full, 80-item, DVMAS and made notes of any items they though were confusing, poorly worded, or contained clerical errors. In a guided discussion following completion of the scales, participants discussed the items they had noted previously. Based on participant suggestions, the layout of the scale was revised by putting all items formed of questions at the end of the scale. In addition, the word "Neutral" was eliminated from the middle of the scale response set based on participant feedback that they were using that point to indicate that they did not know the answer or were unsure. Finally, seven items were reworded or recast for clarity while editorial mistakes were corrected in three items.

Pilot Study

Because the item pool was increased from 40 to 80 items, I increased the size of the initial sample to offset an anticipated lower rate of return of the longer (80-item) instrument (see Appendix C for the complete item pool). Requests to participate in a study of domestic violence attitudes were sent via the University intranet e-mail system to a systematic random sample of 1,994 students, staff, faculty, and retired faculty at The University of Maine. Of these, 263 addresses were no longer in service and 14 letters were returned as undeliverable, resulting in 1,731 letters which were successfully sent out to study participants. Of the letters successfully sent, only 253 participants submitted completed surveys within 7 days of the initial mailing. This 14.6% rate of response was unacceptably low so a reminder letter was drafted and sent (following IRB approval) to the same list of participants. In all, 1,707 reminder letters were sent out to

individuals who remained on the FirstClass list. Of these, 32 were undeliverable. Within 5 days an additional 100 individuals had responded, yielding a total sample size of 353 and an overall return rate of 20.4%.

In order to avoid multiple responses by the same individual, the computer "name" (e.g. 111.123.32.11) and time of submission were examined. Responses were considered multiple submissions if they originated from the same computer and were submitted within ten minutes of each other as this indicated a strong likelihood that the submissions were from the same individual who had filled out and submitted the survey and then returned to the survey and again pressed the "Submit" button. Two pairs of submissions met this criteria. Examination of the data in those submissions revealed that each pair contained identical submissions from the same computer submitted within three to five minutes of each other. In each case, one of the duplicate submissions was removed resulting in 351 usable responses.

Missing Data

Responses with missing data for sex or more than four missing DVMAS items by a respondent were deleted, resulting in an six additional deletions. In all, 345 usable surveys were returned for an adjusted return rate of 19.9%.

Next, patterns of missing data were evaluated. In all, no items had more than six missing data, one question had five missing data, three items had four missing data, and six items had more than three missing data. Items with more than three missing data were marked for possible elimination (see Appendix D, Item Survival Map). Imputed values were substituted for missing data using the mean value by sex. Mean substitutions (by sex) for the ten non-example items were substituted separately as these items had higher means (3.0 for males and

3.43 for females, compared to 2.5 and 2.91 for females and males respectively on normal myth items.

Descriptive Statistics

Sample

Table 1 presents demographic data for the sample. The majority of respondents were age 18 to 25 (n = 199) and were undergraduate students (n = 195). The mean age for men (M = 29.47, SD = 12.72) compared to women (M = 30.04, SD = 13.71) was not significantly different (t (337) = .382, p = NS). Similarly, a 2 X 5 Chi-square test indicated that there was no significant relationship (χ^2 (4, N = 345) = 6.32, p = NS) between gender and University status (undergraduate or graduate student, faculty, staff, or "other"). The males and females in this sample were therefore comparable in terms of age and University status.

DVMAS descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics for the 80 individual DVMAS items are presented in Appendix E. A total of 36 items displayed non-normal distributions as indicated by skewness greater than 1.00. This absolute rather than statistical critical value of skewness was chosen because of the large sample size which increases the risk of rejecting the null hypothesis when, in fact, existing departures from normality would have no substantive effect on the analysis (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001, p. 74). Log transformations of the non-normally distributed items resulted in acceptably normal distributions for 13 of the 36 items. However, substantial differences in skewness for males and females were observed. For females, 24 of the 36 items remained skewed after transformation while only 7 items showed skewness greater than 1.0 for males after log transformation. A total of five items

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of Participants (N = 345)

Characteristics	n	%
Age		
18 - 25	199	57.7
26 - 35	50	14.5
36 - 45	34	9.9
46 - 55	34	9.9
> 55	28	8.1
Gender		
Female	213	61.7
Male	132	38.3
Status at The University of Maine		
Undergraduate	195	56.5
Graduate	40	11.6
Staff	55	15.9
Faculty	28	8.1
Other	26	7.5
Missing	1	0.3

were skewed for both males and females and were deleted from further consideration while items that were skewed for one but not the other sex were marked for possible elimination in the Item Survival Map (see Appendix D).

Item Analysis and Elimination

After deletion of items skewed for both males and females, the psychometric properties of the remaining 75 items were assessed through the following criteria:

- Contribution to overall scale variance (+ or -)
- Corrected item-total correlation <.30 or > .567 (- or +)
- Correlates with < 6 other items (- only)
- Correlates with < 10 or > 19 other items (- or +)
- Loads on initial factors (- or +, by sex)
- Loads on multiple factors (- only, by sex)
- Contributes to overall scale reliability (+ or -)
- Contributes to theoretically derived factor reliability (+ or -)
- Strong loading on theoretical factors (+ only, by sex)
- Loads on more than one theoretical factor (- only, by sex)
- Corrected item-total correlation for theoretical factors (+ or -)

Specifically, a spreadsheet was constructed and all items were graded positively or negatively (usually +1 or –1) depending on their psychometric performance. In this way a total score for each item could be calculated. This analysis was conducted first with the pool of 75 remaining items and then repeated with the 30 highest scoring of the 75 items.

For example, the correlation between each item and the corrected total score was computed. While correlations of above $r = .20$ between items and the

corrected total score are considered good (Nunnally, 1970), only 15 items in this scale fell below a more rigorous cut-off of $r = .30$. These items were marked (-1) for possible elimination while 10 items with corrected item-total correlations above r = .58 were marked (+1) for possible retention (see Appendix D).

In order to eliminate items which did not "play well with others," a standard bivariate correlation matrix was computed so that items identified as having few significant correlations with other items could be eliminated. No items met the original criteria for elimination which was set as failing to correlate with at least two other items. In fact, only 8 items correlated with fewer than 6 other items. This result, in combination with the high overall level of intercorrelaitons noted above, indicates that most items in the scale appear to be inter-related. With this large a sample, however, even relatively weak correlation's (e.g. r = 0.184) were statistically significant. Consequently, 20 items that correlated with fewer than 10 other items were marked for possible elimination. Conversely, 20 items which correlated with more than 19 other items were marked for possible retention.

Factor Analysis

Before describing the factor analyses used in this study I wish to clarify some terminology. In general, confirmatory factor analysis is used to confirm the existence within the data of theoretically derived factors. For a confirmatory factor analysis, the researcher instructs the statistical software to load items on a specified number of factors. Goodness of fit between the theory and data is judged by the loading of items on the factors: Do they make sense, are they interpretable, and are they consonant with theory? With exploratory factor analysis, in contrast, the researcher essentially asks "What are the factors present

in this data?" and allows whatever factors that exist within the data to emerge regardless of their number. I performed all factor analysis with clearly articulated expectations and therefore was confirming the fit of the data to the theory. Practically, however, I used the exploratory techniques. In this way I allowed the data to assume the factor structure dictated by the patterns of inter-correlations so that I could observe, without coercion, if the data naturally fell into the expected factors or not.

For the pilot study, factor analysis of the data was used first to determine which items did and did not load on or contribute to reliable factors and secondly to make an initial assessment of the construct validity of the DVMAS after many items had been eliminated. According to theory and prior research, four factors were expected.

Prior to conducting the factor analysis, the suitability of the data for factor analysis was evaluated. This evaluation included assessment of possible curvilinearity for some pairs of variables. Examination of all pairwise scatterplots for 80 variables was impractical. Instead a spot check was conducted of item pairs with strong positive and negative skewness (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001) such as items 74 and 40 or items 58 and 68. Visual examination of the scatterplots with a superimposed Lowess fit line (an iterated locally weighted regression line) revealed no evidence of curvilinearity for these variables.

Suitability of the data

The suitability or factorability of the data was evaluated further by examination of the correlation matrix of variables. This analysis revealed 1,524 correlations between items which exceeded the $r = .30$ minimum recommended by Tabachnick and Fidell (2001). Numerous correlations do not assure

factorability, however, because they could indicate only the presence of many pairs of correlations, not clusters of items which correlate more strongly with each other than with other clusters of items. Examination of the anti-image correlation matrix revealed mostly small values (e.g. -.02 to .23) among the off-diagonal elements, indicating likely presence of clusters of correlations (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). In fact, the average off-diagonal correlation was .01. Kaiser's measure of sampling adequacy similarly tests the presence of clusters of intercorrelated items. This test, with a value of 0.91 substantially exceeded the suggested cutoff of 0.60 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001) and further indicated that the data were appropriate for factor analysis. The results of all tests of factorability were satisfactory, indicating that factor analysis of the data was appropriate. Therefore, a number of separate factor analyses were conducted, first with the entire set of items, then for a reduced set of 30 items, and finally for the final selection of 20 items. In line with hypothesis 4.2 which states that the factor structure will be different for men than for women, separate factor analyses for men and women were performed. All factor analyses were conducted using varimax rotation with the minimum factor loading set to .35 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). After final selection of items, an additional factor analysis was conducted using an oblique rotation of the axis with Delta set at 0 to allow the factors to correlate with each other. This final analysis was again conducted separately by sex and was used to further understand the relationship of the theoretically and statistically derived factors.

Use of factor results

Based on the initial factor analysis (by sex) for all 80 items, items were marked (+1 or -1) if they did or did not load on any of the retained factors. In

addition, items were marked -1 if they loaded on more than one factor. Results of the factor analysis of each of the theoretical factors of characterological blame, behavioral blame, minimization, and exoneration were weighted more heavily. Specifically, items which loaded heavily on the theoretically derived factors were assigned a +2 while items which loaded weakly or not at all were assigned a 0. In addition, items which loaded on more than 1 factor were marked -1 for possible elimination. This greater weighting of factorial loading within each of the theoretical factors increased the importance of scale validity compared to reliability which, because it is so easily computed, threatened to assert undue influence in item selection (Anastasi, 1968).

Reliability Analysis

The final step in the analysis of the entire pool of items was an analysis of the reliability of the factors and the overall scale. Reliability data for the entire item pool is presented in Appendix F. Reliability for the entire 75 item scale was .91 which, given the size of the item pool, was expected. Individual items were then evaluated on the basis of their contribution to or detraction from scale reliability and their contribution to or detraction from overall scale variance. The reliability of each theoretical factor, in addition to the total scale, was also assessed and items were marked (+1 or –1) based on their contribution to the reliability of theoretical factors. Finally, the correlation of each item to the corrected item-total for each of the factors was explored and items which correlated most and least were marked for possible retention and exclusion.

Preliminary Item Elimination

Based exclusively on the scores of the 11 different analyses described above, 30 items with the highest scores were selected. The number of items

retained per factor and the average score of each of the theoretical factors is presented in Table 2. As can be seen, characterological blame accounted for the majority of items with a relatively high score. In contrast to the 10 characterological blame items, only five behavioral blame items were included in the top-ranked 30 items and these items had the lowest average score.

Table 2

Distribution of Retained Items and Mean Factor Scores

Factor	Count	Mean Score
Character Blame	10	7
Behavioral Blame	5	4
Exoneration	8	6
Minimization	7	7

The pool of 30 items was then subjected to the same analytic techniques as was used with the 80-item pool. Positive and negative scores were assigned to items which performed best and worst in each of the 11 tests (see Item Survival Map 2, Appendix G).

Final Item Elimination

Because internet-based surveys have been shown to have higher reliability than pencil-and-paper versions (Buchanan & Smith, 1999), and because pilot tests of instruments also tend to have higher reliability (by approximately .05) than in actual usage (Nunnally, 1970), a target reliability of .85 was selected for the entire

scale. At the same time, I wanted to maintain a focus on the validity of the scale as evidence by clear and interpretable factors with few if any items loading on multiple factors. Selection of the twenty best-scoring items from the pool of 30 items produced a scale with a disappointing Cronbach's reliability coefficient of .80. Therefore a trial-and-error approach was used in which random groups of items were selected. One of these trials yielded 20 items with a reliability coefficient of $\alpha = .84$. This reliability was increased very slightly through removing item # 31, "Alcohol or drug abuse causes domestic violence." Examination of successive factor analyses showed first that item # 33, "Women frequently fabricate allegations of abuse to hurt..." was loading on three factors for men and loading on an uninterpretable factor for women. Consequently this item was removed and item # 28, "Domestic violence does not effect many people" was added to increase items related to minimization. The resulting reliability coefficient was $\alpha = .82$.

Examination of the remaining items revealed that the character blame factor was almost entirely made up of items related to the woman staying or returning to the batterer. Therefore analysis of the alternative wordings of items # 79 and 80 was examined and the weaker one, item #80, was eliminated. The reliability coefficient of the remaining 19-item scale was $\alpha = .81$.

Factor analysis of the resulting items revealed that item # 39, "After a relationship ends, many women make up or exaggerate stories of abuse," was loading on multiple factors for both men and women. Cutting this item yielded a reliability of $\alpha = .81$ for the now 18-item scale. When a factor analysis of the remaining 18 items was conducted, clear, easily interpretable factors emerged

which proved an almost perfect fit with theory. This analysis is discussed in some detail following a brief discussion of an analysis of possible collinearity among the variables.

Collinearity Diagnostics

While moderate to strong correlations among items may be a positive feature of a scale, collinearity is problematic especially when any kind of multivariate analysis such as multiple regression is anticipated (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). In contrast to highly correlated items in which an increase in one variable is usually accompanied by an increase in another variable, with collinearity, an increase in one variable is accompanied by an almost unvarying increase in another. A common example involves two variables measuring temperature, one in Fahrenheit and one in Centigrade. In the present study, variables in the original item pool displayed generally moderate to strong correlations with a number of other items. Hence, an analysis of possible collinearity was undertaken in case future multivariate analysis is desired using this instrument. First a correlation matrix of the 18 items was computed (see Appendix H). As can be seen in Table 3 below, all items correlated with at least one other item at the $r = .20$ level. Eight items, or almost half the scale, had correlations with other items exceeding .50. However only two items had correlations with other items exceeding .70 and no correlations exceeded .90. These correlations therefore indicate that collinearity is unlikely to be a problem because of the absence of correlations greater than $r = .90$.

To further rule out collinearity problems, I next systematically selected each of the 18 DVMAS items, regressed the remaining items on it, and examined

Table 3

Strength of Correlations Among Final DVMAS Items

Pearson's r	Number	Percent
> .70	2	11.1
> .60	3	16.7
> .50	8	44.4
> .40	13	72.2
> .30	17	94.4
> .20	18	100.0

the resulting the collinearity diagnostic tables. Results of one of these tests is presented in Table 4. These results presented are typical of the 18 separate analyses conducted.

If values in the Tolerance column approach 0.0 then collinearity is a strong possibility and concern. As can be seen in Table 4, the lowest value in this column is .353, with most values are in the range of .40 to .60. Overall range for the regression analysis of all 18 items was .35 to .82. Based on this analysis, collinearity appears not to be a feature of the final set of DVMAS items.

Final Pilot Sample Factor Analysis

Consistent with the hypothesis 4, factor analyses were conducted first for the entire sample of men and women together and then separately by sex. Based on hypothesis 4.2, I expected that less interpretable factors with lower factor loadings would be present when the entire dataset was factor analyzed together than when it was analyzed separately by sex.

Table 4

Collinearity Diagnostics Statistics

Item	Collinearity Statistics	
	Tolerance	VIF
21 Beh: Make Jealous = ask for it	.485	2.063
28 Min: Not effect many	.644	1.554
32 Min: Mutual violence	.747	1.338
37 Char: No sympathy if go back	.444	2.254
43 Beh: Women instigate	.509	1.966
44 Exon: Man lost control temper	.683	1.465
45 Char: Women wish dominated	.411	2.433
48 Min: Rare in neighborhood	.713	1.402
50 Char: If stay, deserves	.419	2.389
52 Char: Woman want controlled	.464	2.157
55 Beh: Flirt	.615	1.626
56 Exon: Men don't know what	.756	1.323
65 Beh: Should give in	.595	1.679
68 Char: if stay, own fault	.353	2.834
72 Exon: momentary loss temper	.631	1.586
73 Char: Not like it, leave	.614	1.630
79 Char: If return, due char?	.684	1.462

a Dependent Variable: Item # 49, Beh: Women keep arguing

When analyzed together there were four factors with eigenvalues over 1.00 (the usual cut-off for retaining a factor) which together account for 59.3% of the variation in the data. Examination of the scree plot (eigenvalues plotted on factors) shown in Figure 1, revealed that the slope of the line connecting the factors (represented by the boxes) changes abruptly at factor two. The scree plot therefore indicates the likely presence of one or two factors. Together, the examination of the eigenvalues and scree plot indicate the presence of between one and four independent factors in the responses of all participants.

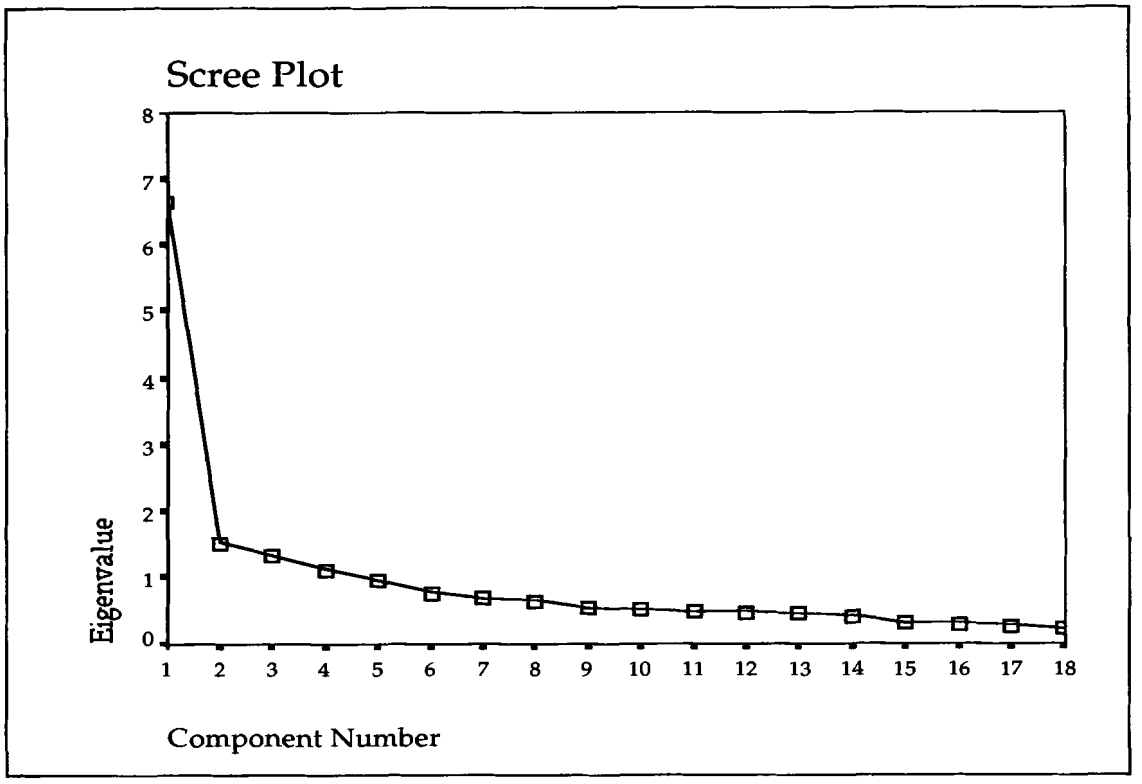

Figure 1. Scree plot of eigenvalues over factors for entire sample.

The rotated factor loadings for all participants are presented in Table 5 below. Interpretation and naming of the first factor was not possible due to the admixture of items relating to both characterological and behavioral blame.

Table 5

Factor Loading for Males and Females Combined (a, b)

Item	Factor			
	1	Char	Exon	4
43 Beh: Women instigate	.721			
45 Char: Women wish dominated	.680			
49 Beh: Women keep arguing	.667			
21 Beh: Make jealous = ask for it	.662			.414
55 Beh: Flirt	.654			
65 Beh: Should give in	.615			
52 Char: Woman want controlled	.563		.392	
32 Min: Mutual violence	.508			
37 Char: No sympathy; go back		.804		
73 Char: Not like it, leave		.751		
68 Char: if stay, own fault	.410	.734		
50 Char: If stay, deserves	.358	.730		
79 Char: If return, due char?		.599		
44 Exon: Man lost control temper			.765	
56 Exon: Men don't know what			.727	
72 Exon: momentary loss temper			.568	.369
28 Min: not effect many				.686
48 Min: Rare in neighborhood				.681

a Rotation converged in 8 iterations.

b Sex = Male + Female

Factors two and three were both interpretable with factor two related to character blame and factor three related to exoneration. Factor four contains one item from each of three theoretical factors and was therefore uninterpretable.

Factors for females

Factor analysis of the responses of females revealed five factors with eigenvalues over 1.00 which account for 62.4% of the variation in the data compared to 59.2% when men and women were analyzed together. This finding supports, in part, the hypothesis that analysis by sex would result in higher factor loadings which in turn, indicate a greater "explanation" of the data.

Examination of the scree plot shown in Figure 2, revealed that the slope of the line connecting the factors changes at factor two. The scree plot therefore

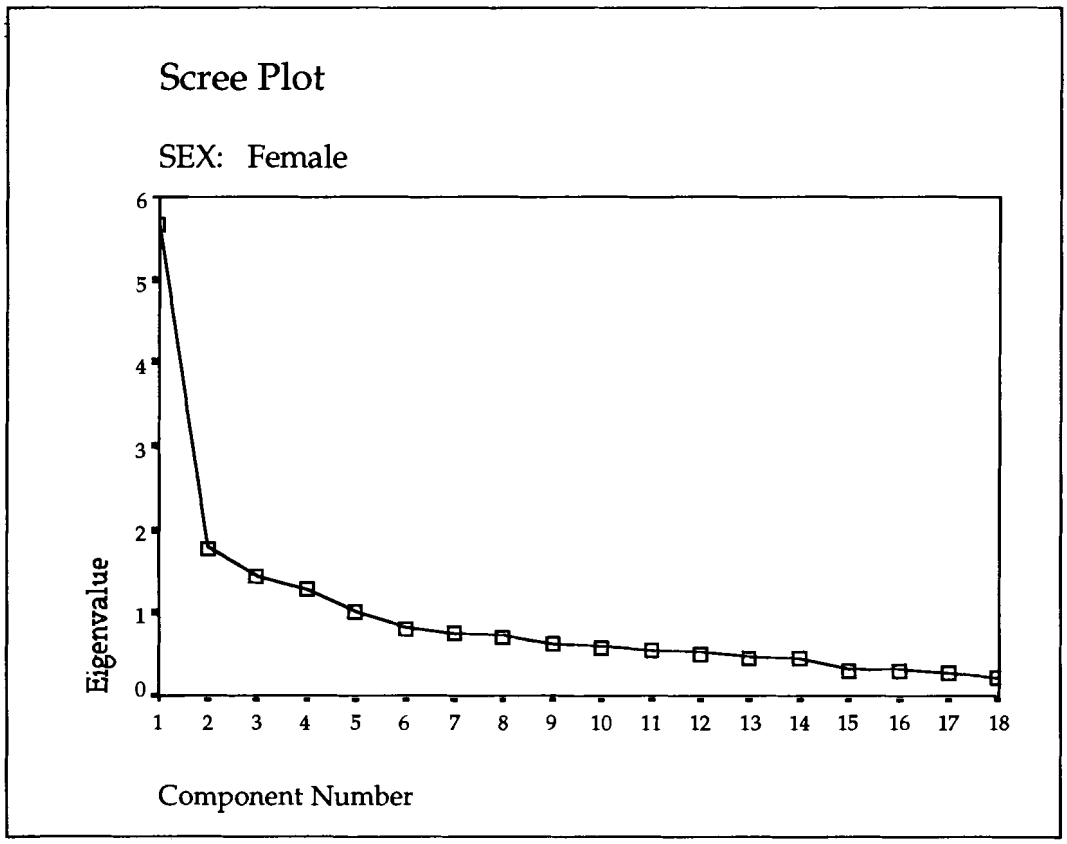

Figure 2. Scree plot of eigenvalues over factors for females.

the likely presence of one or two factors. Together, the examination of the eigenvalues and scree plot indicate the presence of between one and five interpretable factors in the responses of female participants.

The rotated factor loadings for female participants are presented in Table 6 below. Interpretation and naming of the factors was clear and unambiguous. The first factor was comprised of items concerning the woman staying with or returning to the batterer. This factor reflects character blame (Char) and the common question, "Why does she stay?" The second factor contained items stating that flirting, arguing, and not giving in by women causes domestic violence. This factor was labeled Behavioral Blame (Beh). A third factor excused the perpetrator who was seen as losing control of his temper. This factor was labeled Exoneration (Exon). A fourth factor, unique to women, contained two items related to the unconscious motivations of women and was labeled Unconscious Wish (UC). The final factor was made up of two items relating to Minimization (Min).

All five factors were easily interpretable and represent the theoretically predicted elements of character blame, behavioral blame, exoneration of the perpetrator, and minimization. The only deviation from theory is factor four, in which female respondents segregated items which state that women have an unconscious desire to be controlled or dominated from other character blaming items. It is also interesting to note that women include the item stating that most domestic violence involves mutual combat in behavioral blame of the woman. Because this item relates to behavior (mutual combat) by women, inclusion of this item in the behavioral blame factor makes intuitive sense. In all other

Table 6

Rotated Factor Loading for Females

Item	Factor				
	Char	Beh	Exon	UC	Min
37 Char: No sympathy; go back	.812				
50 Char: If stay, deserves	.773				
68 Char: if stay, own fault	.757				
73 Char: Not like it, leave	.739				
79 Char: If return, due char?	.554				
21 Beh: Make Jealous = ask for it		.755			
43 Beh: Women instigate		.718			
55 Beh: Flirting causes		.666			
49 Beh: Women keep arguing		.631			
65 Beh: Should give in		.590			
32 Min: Mutual violence		.501			
44 Exon: Man lost control temper			.785		
72 Exon: Man momentary loss temper			.722		
56 Exon: Men don't know what			.691		
52 Char: Woman want controlled				.864	
45 Char: Women wish dominated				.838	
48 Min: Rare in neighborhood					.814
28 Min: not effect many		.385			.696

a Rotation converged in 8 iterations.

respects the data fit the theory and only one item relating to minimization loaded on more than one factor.

Factors for males

Using exactly the same factor analytic procedure with responses from male participants produced four factors with eigenvalues over 1.00 which, together account for 61.3% of the variation in the data (compared to 59.2% for the combined sample).

Examination of the scree plot shown in Figure 3, showed that the slope of the line connecting the factors changes substantially at factor 2. The scree plot therefore indicates the likely presence of one or two factors. The examination of the eigenvalues and the scree plot when taken together indicate the presence of between one and four factors in the responses of male participants.

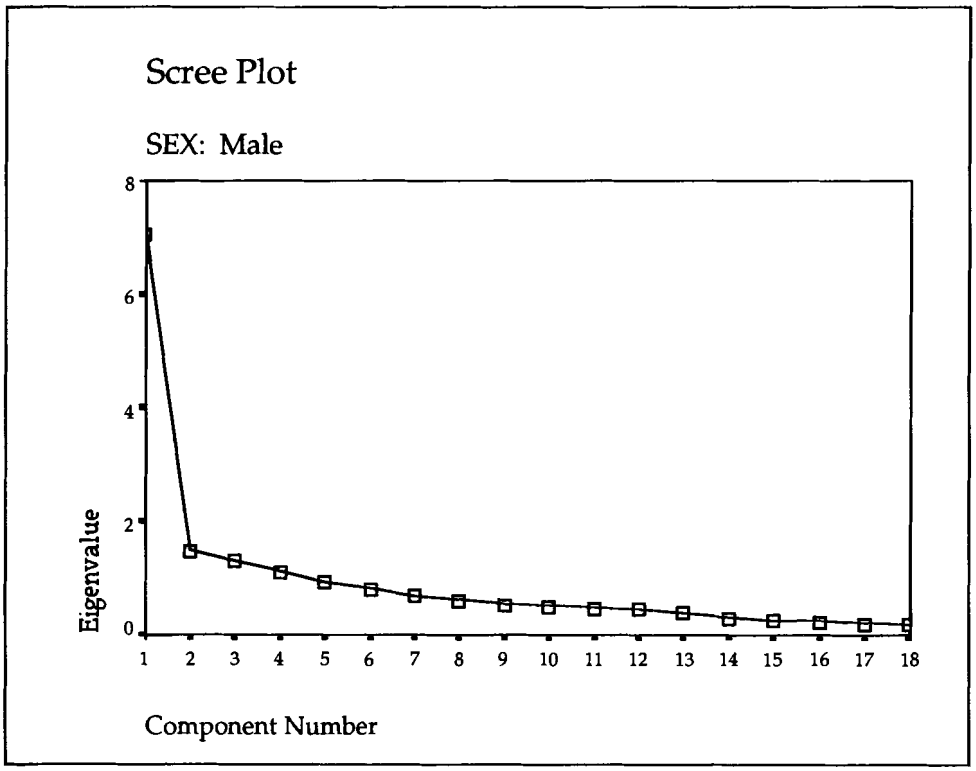

Figure 3. Scree plot of eigenvalues over factors for males.

The rotated factor loadings for male participants are presented in Table 7 below. Compared with women, many more items loaded on multiple factors for men. However, the nature of the factors was again unambiguous with clear factors representing character blame (Char), behavioral blame (Beh), exoneration of the perpetrator (Exon), and minimization (Min).

Except for the two items related to women's purported unconscious wish to be controlled or dominated, the factors for men and women were identical with exactly the same items placed on the same factors. The items relating to women's unconscious motivation loaded first on the character blame factor and secondarily on the exoneration factor. The inclusion of these unconscious wish items in exoneration appears to say, in effect, "Don't blame him, he just lost his temper and she wanted it anyway." The addition of these items therefore did not detract from the interpretability of the exoneration factor.

A further test of the factor structure of the DVMAS was conducted by exploring the degree of correlation between factors. This exploration was conducted through a factor analysis with oblique rotation with Delta set at 0 to allow for a high degree of possible correlation between factors. The results, for the retained factors for both males and females are presented in Table 8.

The results showed moderate correlations between all factors except minimization which was very weakly correlated with the other factors for women and somewhat weakly (.20 to -.32) for men. These results indicate that while distinct factors emerged relating to different types of blame and blame avoidance, all the factors except minimization appear to be moderately inter-related. The negative correlation between exoneration and all other factors for men warrants special attention. As with any correlation, this finding indicates

Table 7

Rotated Factor Loadings for Males

Item	Factor			
	Char	Beh	Exon	Min
37 Char: No sympathy; go back	.798			
50 Char: If stay, deserves	.772			
68 Char: if stay, own fault	.761			
73 Char: Not like it, leave	.678			
79 Char: If return, due char?	.623		.412	
45 Char: Women wish dominated	.546		.390	
55 Beh: Flirting causes		.727		
49 Beh: Women keep arguing		.718		
21 Beh: Make jealous = ask for it		.712		
43 Beh: Women instigate	.384	.709		
32 Min: Mutual violence		.594		
65 Beh: Should give in		.585	.376	
44 Exon: Man lost control temper			.752	
56 Exon: Men don't know what			.705	
52 Char: Woman want controlled	.387		.569	
72 Exon: momentary loss temper	.356		.468	
28 Min: not effect many				.829
48 Min: Rare in neighborhood				.767

a Rotation converged in 7 iterations.

b Sex = Male

Table 8

Correlations Among Factors (a, b)

Factor	1	2	3	4	5
Females					
1 Character Blame	1.000				
2 Behavior Blame	.329	1.000			
3 Exoneration	.325	.206	1.000		
4 Unconscious wish	.335	.325	.245	1.000	
5 Minimization	.09	.168	.117	-.01	1.000
Males					
1 Character Blame	1.000				
2 Behavioral Blame	.275	1.000			
3 Exoneration	-.462	-.280	1.000		
4 Minimization	.276	.202	-.326	1.000	

a Oblique rotation among factors

b Pearson correlation coefficient

that as scores for men increase on other factors, they decrease in exoneration – and visa versa. This finding appears to indicate that men either blame women or exonerate perpetrators, but do not do both simultaneously as women appear to do.

Pilot Study Conclusion

In addition to item elimination, the goals of the pilot study included assessment of DVMAS reliability and preliminary exploration of the validity of the construct of domestic violence myth acceptance through examination of the underlying factor structure of the instrument. The reliability of the entire scale of 18 items was $\alpha = .81$ and was judged to be acceptable (DeVellis, 1991) though lower than the .85 target.

Given the difficulties experienced by other authors examining myth acceptance, the factor structure of the instrument was surprisingly consistent with deductions based on both radical feminist and defensive attribution theories as applied to domestic violence myth acceptance. Consistent with defensive attribution theory , both males and females made clear distinctions between character and behavioral blame, resulting in four principle factors for each sex with an additional character blame factor for women related to unconscious motivations of female victims of domestic violence.

Consistent with hypothesis 4.2, factors were stronger (accounted for greater variance) and were more interpretable when analyzed separately by sex than when responses of men and women were analyzed together.

Also consistent with theory and hypothesis 4.3, for women the dominant factors involved blaming the victim which is seen as a form of threat avoidance. Hypothesis 4.3, which stated that for men the dominant factor would involve

blame avoidance (through exoneration of the perpetrator), was not supported in this pilot data. For men, like women, the dominant factor related to characterological blame of the victim.

The factor analysis of the 18-item DVMAS therefore provided preliminary indications of construct validity through generally good conformance with theoretically derived expectations regarding the underlying structure of domestic violence myths. Given these preliminary positive indicators of reliability and validity, the final study was undertaken to further explore the validity and reliability of the DVMAS scale.

Final Study

Descriptive Statistics

Because of the generally low response rate to the request to participate in the pilot study, I increased the sample size for the final study from 600 to 942. The pre-notice of an up coming study of attitudes toward violence was therefore sent to a systematic random sample of 942 undergraduate and graduate students as well as faculty, retired faculty, and staff. None of the final study sample had been included in the pilot sample. Seven letters were returned as undeliverable and 12 people requested not to participate in the study. These 19 people were removed from the sample. Two days after the pre-notice letter was sent, a request to participate letter was sent to 923 individuals. Three of these letters were undeliverable and an additional 7 people requested not to participate. These names were similarly removed from the list as were names of participants who sent me an e-mail message indicating they had completed the survey.

Six days after the request to participate was mailed the first of two reminders was sent out to 841 individuals. One person indicated he did not wish

to participate and was removed from the list. The final reminder was sent out six days after the first. In all, 290 individuals responded to the four mailings for a return rate of 31.4%. Of these submissions, there were two pairs of identical submissions from the same computer. One of each pair was deleted. Of the remaining surveys, 4 contained extensive missing data (more than 5 items). These cases were removed resulting in a final usable sample of 284 and an adjusted response rate of 30.1%. This response rate is considerably lower than the 55% expected and raised the specter of possible non-response bias. Previous research has shown that scores of individuals who respond only after several reminders are often similar to non-respondents (see Peters & Orme, 2000 for a review of the literature). Therefore the mean scores for all scales for the first 60 respondents were compared with scores for the last 60 respondents. While later respondents generally scored higher on the study means, none of the differences approached significance. In addition, early and late responders were found to be similar in terms of age and percentage of male and female respondents. Thus no differences between early and late responders were found related to the study variables. While use of late responders as a proxy for non-responders is suggestive at best, it indicates that non-response bias may not be a factor in this study.

With the exception of the Attitudes Toward Women scale (ATW), the missing data within items were randomly distributed and no variable had more than five missing data. Within the ATW scale, two items had seven missing data and one, a triple barreled question, had eight. The DVMAS had no items with missing data. With the exception of the factor analysis of the DVMAS, the methodology of this study was designed to use only mean scores, not individual

item scores, from all other scales. Under these circumstances, mean substitution or item elimination are both acceptable options (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001, p. 66). Mean substitution by group (sex) was selected in order to maintain a sufficient number of surveys for later factor analysis. Mean values for each scale, by sex, were therefore inserted for missing values.

Characteristics of the sample

The mean age of the sample was 21.6 with no significant difference (t (282) = 1.652, p = NS) in age for men (M = 25.6, SD = 9.58) and for women (M = 27.7, SD = 11.12).

As can be seen in Table 9, the majority of respondents were undergraduate students (n = 199) with roughly equal proportions of graduate students (n = 34) and staff (n = 31) but only a few faculty (n = 8). The sample was divided roughly 60/40 by sex with 174 females and 110 males.

In addition, the percentages of participants in each of the University status categories (undergraduate student, graduate student, faculty, or staff) closely matched the most recent University census figures (University of Maine, 2003a). Differences between the sample and population varied by as little as 0.5% to only 5.0%. Similarly, while the sex ratio of the study participants was 61 females to 39 males, the sex ratio of the University population is 55 females to 45 males or six percentage points different. These comparisons support previous results indicating that despite the low response rate, the sample may be reasonably representative of the population sampled.

Table 9

Demographic Characteristics of Participants (N = 284)

Characteristics	n	%
Age		
16 - 25	190	66.9
26 - 35	40	14.1
36 - 45	23	8.1
46 - 55	28	9.9
56 & >	3	1.1
Gender		
Female	174	61.3
Male	110	38.7
Status at The University of Maine		
Undergrad	199	70.1
Grad Student	34	12.0
Faculty	8	2.8
Staff	31	10.9
Other	12	4.2

A 2 X 5 chi-square goodness-of fit test revealed that there was no significant relationship between gender and University status (χ^2 (4, N = 284) = 8.6, p = NS). In this sample, therefore, males and females appear comparable in terms of age and University status.

In terms of gender identity, only 15 respondents indicated they were gay, lesbian, or bisexual compared to 266 who identified themselves as heterosexual. This disparity in numbers precluded any meaningful comparisons in terms of endorsement of study variables or demographic characteristics. Such comparisons were therefore dropped from the data analysis.

Descriptive statistics for study variables

Means, standard deviations, skewness, and kurtosis are reported for each of the study scales in Table 10.

Table 10

Means, Modes, Standard Deviations, Skewness, and Kurtosis of Final Study Scales

	Scales						
Measure	ATV	DVMAS	SD	ATW	RMA	SRS	AWA
Mean	3.36	2.30	4.52	1.53	2.00	2.56	1.80
Mode	3	2	4	1	2	1(a)	1
Std. Dev	1.16	.85	.84	.37	.49	.98	.73
Skewness	.15	.63	.17	.99	1.37	.35	1.16
Kurtosis	-.48	-.010	-.03	.80	2.18	-.49	1.55

a Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown

The Rape Myth Acceptance (RMA) scale, and the Attitudes Toward Wife Abuse (AWA) showed non-normal distributions as indicated by skewness and kurtosis of greater than one. The distribution of the DVMAS was well within the range of a normal distribution as can be seen in Figure 4.

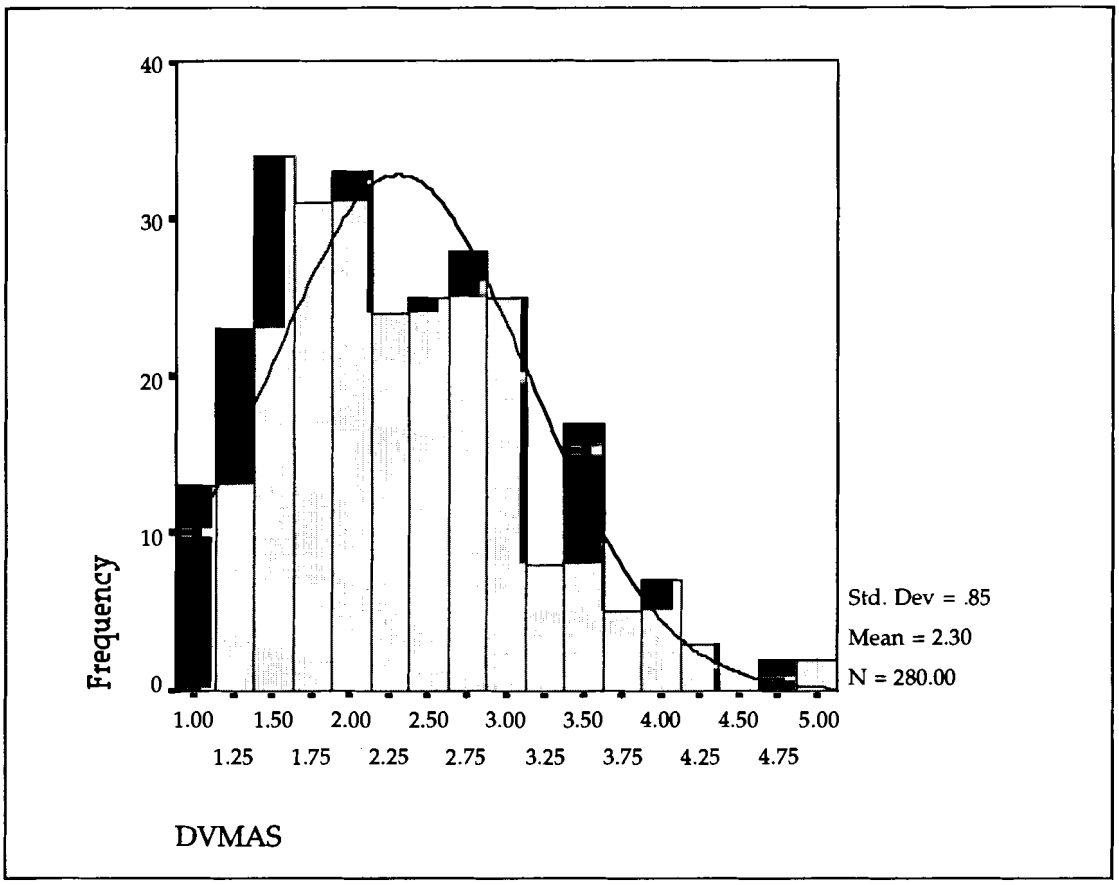

Figure 4. Skewness and kurtosis for DVMAS

Visual inspection of the distribution in Figure 4, however, shows that almost all the variability of the DVMAS occurs between response categories 1 through 3.

In general, mean scores (total score divided by number of items) in the present sample were significantly lower than those reported in the literature (see Table 11).

Table 11

Comparison of Mean Scores in Present and Past Studies

Scale	Present	Past	p*	Citation
RMA	2.0	2.6	.001	(Burt, 1980)
SRS	2.56	4.17	.001	(Burt, 1980)
ATW	1.53	1.76	.001	(Spence et al., 1974)
AWA	1.80	2.38	.001	(Briere, 1987)

* Single-Sample T-Test

Comparisons of the present results for mean Social Desirability (SD) and mean Attitudes Toward Violence (ATV) with previously obtained results were not possible as the available published reports omitted overall scale means or total scores.

The reliability of each instrument was assessed using Cronbach's internal reliability coefficient. Table 12 presents the reliabilities for the current study and, for purposes of comparison, the reliabilities from published reports. As can be seen in that table, with the exception of Briere's brief Attitudes Toward Wife Abuse scale, all scales had good to adequate reliability. Of special note, the revised DVMAS had a reliability of $\alpha = .88$ which is considered very good (DeVellis, 1991).

In general, however, it should be noted that reliabilities in this study were lower than those reported in previous studies using the same scales. Of particular concern is the unacceptably low reliability coefficient for Briere's Attitudes Toward Wife Abuse (AWA) scale (1987). Throughout this study, the AWA has performed poorly. It had extensive missing data with seven or more

Table 12

Current and Past Reliabilities For All Scales in Final Test

Scale Name	Cronbach's Alpha		Citation
	Present	Past	
DVMAS	.88	NA	NA
ATV	.93	.83 to .76.	(Velicer et al. 1989)
SD	.70	.90	(Greenwald & Satow, 1970)
ATW	.85	.81 to .88	(Yoder, et al., 1982; Reitzel-Jaffe & Wolfe, 2001)
RMA	.79	.88	(Burt, 1980)
SRS	.70	.80	(Burt, 1980)
AWA	.59	.63	(Briere, 1987)

responses missing on three of its eight items, had a non-normal distribution (skewness = 1.16 and kurtosis of 1.55). and now an unacceptable reliability of α = .59. In this study the AWA therefore had weak psychometric properties and results of subsequent correlations should be interpreted with caution.

In preparation for that correlational analysis of DVMAS validity, scatterplots with superimposed Lowess fit lines for all combinations of scale means were examined. No evidence of curvilinearity was present in any of the scatterplots. Consequently, analysis of the study hypotheses was undertaken.

Hypotheses Testing

Convergent construct validity: Hypothesis 1

Hypotheses 1 stated that as a measure of convergent validity, the DVMAS would correlate positively and significantly with the Attitudes Toward Women (ATW) scale, the Rape Myth Acceptance scale (RMA), Sex Role Stereotyping (SRS), and the Attitudes Towards Wife Abuse (AWA) scale. As can be seen in Table 13, convergent validity of the DVMAS was moderately to strongly supported with significant correlations between the DVMAS and all related scales.

Table 13

Convergent Validity Correlations (a)

	DVMAS	ATW	RMA	SRS	AWA
DVMAS	1				
ATW	.47(**)	1			
RMA	.65(**)	.57(**)	1		
SRS	.51(**)	.69(**)	.54(**)	1	
AWA	.37(**)	.49(**)	.44(**)	.42(**)	1

a Pearson's correlation coefficient, one-tailed

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

Of special note is the strong correlation between the DVMAS and Burt's Rape Myth Scale (r = .65) which may indicate that the DVMAS is measuring a conceptually similar construct of myths about violence against women. At the other end of the spectrum is the relatively weak correlation (r = .37) between the DVMAS and Briere's Attitudes Toward Wife Abuse (AWA).

Divergent construct validity: Hypothesis 2

In contrast to measures of convergent construct validity, hypotheses 2.1 and 2.2 stated that as an indicator of divergent construct validity, the DVMAS would have very weak and statistically insignificant correlations with a measure of attitudes toward violence outside of intimate relationships (hypothesis 2.1) and with a measure of social desirability (hypothesis 2.2). These correlations are presented in Table 14 along with correlations for the two subscales of the Attitudes Toward Violence (ATV) scale which relate to national warfare (ATVW) and treatment of criminals (ATVC).

Table 14

Divergent Validity Correlations

Scales	DVMAS	ATV	ATVW	ATVC	SD
DVMAS	1				
ATV	.34(**)	1			
ATVW	.32(**)	.96(**)	1		
ATVC	.25(**)	.77(**)	.59(**)	1	
SD	-.19(**)	-0.06	-0.03	-.14(**)	1

** Pearson's correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

As can be seen in this table, the DVMAS had a very weak negative correlation with the measure of social desirability, indicating that as people responded in less socially desirably ways, their DVMAS scores increased. Due to the large sample size this substantively weak correlation of $r = -.19$ was statistically significant ($p < .01$). The initial power analysis to determine sample size (see Chapter 2) indicated that a sample of 37 was required to detect

significant correlations among scale scores. I therefore conducted repeated post-hoc examinations of randomly selected sub-samples of the dataset with n = 40. In these analyses, the relationship between DVMAS and social desirability was always non-significant. In contrast, all other correlations remained significant even with the small sub-sample of 40 participants. This test confirmed that it was sample size rather than the strength of the relationship between the scales which accounted for the statistical significance. Hypothesis 2.2 which stated that there would be no significant relationship between the DVMAS and the measure of social desirability was therefore substantively, though not statistically, supported.

In contrast, the correlation between the DVMAS and all measures of attitudes toward non-intimate violence (ATV) were moderate and statistically significant. Hypothesis 2.1 was therefore not supported, indicating that the DVMAS was not able to discriminate between attitudes toward violence between nations, attitudes toward treatment of criminals, and attitudes toward violence in intimate relationships. Further study with other, non-academic samples, should be conducted in order to determine the stability of this finding.

Theory and the findings of the pilot test indicated that males and females differed in their overall DVMAS endorsement and in the factor structure of their responses. Therefore a post-hoc examination of the divergent validity variables was conducted separately by sex and is presented in Table 15 with correlations for men above the diagonal and for women below it. Examination of the Pearson correlation coefficients shows that the DVMAS was significantly correlated with all divergent validity measures regardless of sex.

Table 15

Divergent Validity Correlations by Sex

Scales	DVMA	ATV	ATVW	ATVC	SD
DVMAS	1.00	.30(**)	.27(**)	.29(**)	-.28(**)
ATV	.30(**)	1.00	.96(**)	.78(**)	-0.01
ATVW	.26(**)	.96(**)	1.00	.62(**)	0.00
ATVC	.25(**)	.80(**)	.61(**)	1.00	-0.06
SD	-.15(*)	-0.12	-0.07	-.19(**)	1.00

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed).

a SEX = Male above diagonal, female below.

This finding raises serious questions about the construct validity of the DVMAS which will be addressed in the next chapter.

Criterion or known group differences: Hypothesis 3

Consistent with hypothesis 3.1, and previous research, men had significantly higher mean DVMAS scores (M = 2.64, SD = .89) than did women (M = 2.09, SD = .76) t (278) = -5.50, $p < .001$, d = -.68. The effect size of this difference was moderate (Cohen, 1988).

Hypothesis 3.2 stated that there would be a negative correlation between age of female participants and DVMAS scores. Figure 5 presents a scatterplot of age and DVMAS score. The superimposed Lowess fit line on the graph shows that DVMAS scores decreased dramatically in the decade following age 18 and remained nearly constant thereafter.

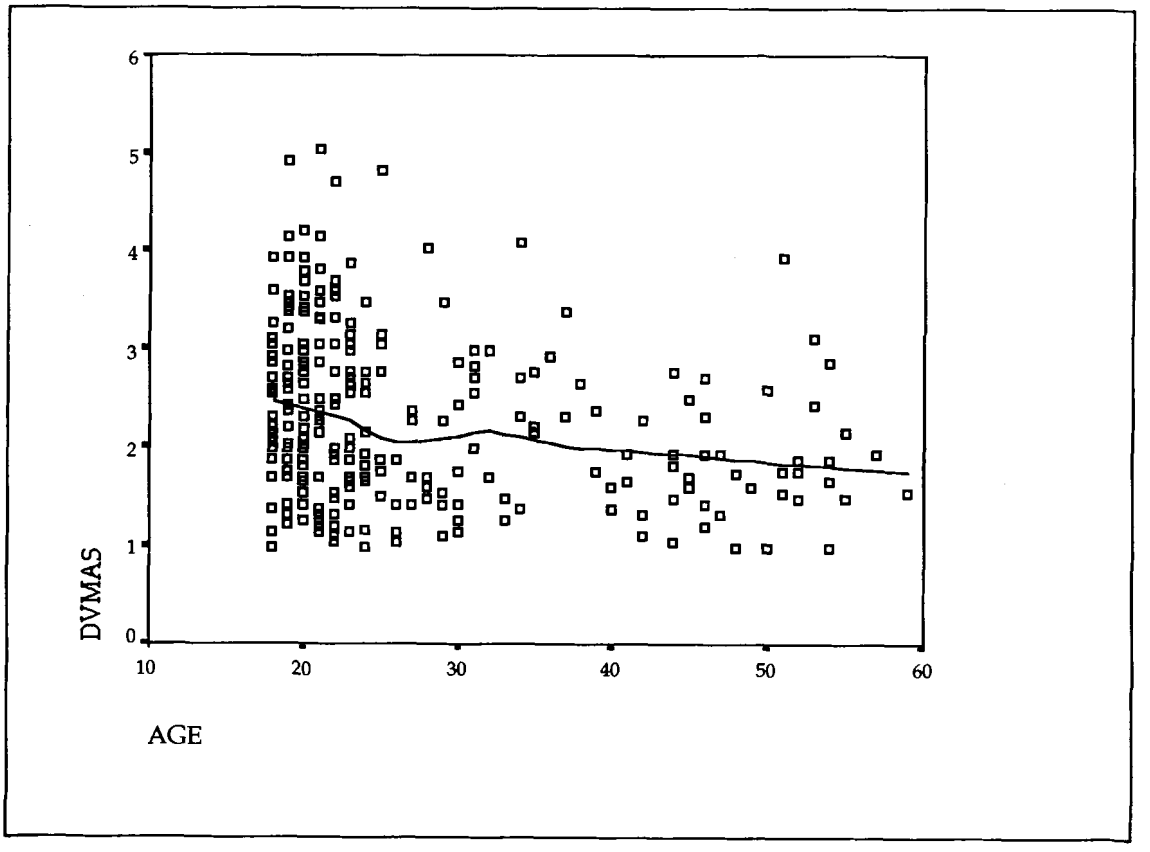

Figure 5. Scatterplot of DVMAS scores and age with Superimposed Lowess fit line

The correlation was, as predicted, negative (r = -.23) and significant at the $p < .01$ level. According to Cohen (1988), effect sizes for correlations of r = .10 should be considered small while correlations in the range of r = .24 should be considered moderate. The effect size of the relationship between age and DVMAS for women was therefore close to moderate. Hypothesis 3.2 was therefore supported though the age at which the reduction in DVMAS scores took place was a full two to three decades before the expected age (Peters, Shackelford, & Buss, 2002). This finding should also be further explored with samples which include greater numbers of people in the older age categories.

The factor structure of the instrument: Hypothesis 4

As a further test of the validity of the DVMAS, a confirmatory factor analysis was conducted. Hypothesis 4.1 predicted that when analyzed by sex, factor analysis would reveal the presence of four factors related to character blame, behavioral blame, minimization of the seriousness of the abuse, and exoneration of the perpetrator. According to hypothesis 4.2, item loadings and factor structure were expected to vary by sex and factor loadings would be both less interpretable and weaker when the responses of men and women were analyzed together.

As in Phase II, the suitability of the data for factor analysis was first evaluated. The absence of significant curvilinearity, numerous significant correlations greater than $r = .30$, uniformly small values ($M = -0.05$) among the off-diagonal elements in the anti-image matrix, and a Kaiser's measure of sampling adequacy with a value of 0.87 (which exceeded the suggested cutoff of 0.60; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001), all indicated that the data were appropriate for factor analysis. Therefore factor analysis of all responses and then the responses of males and females were conducted using varimax rotation with the minimum factor loading set to 0.35.

Factors for females and males combined

In order to test hypothesis 4.2 that factors would be more interpretable when the data was analyzed separately by sex than when analyzed with men and women together, the first factor analysis was run with the entire sample of male and female respondents. As indicated by the eigenvalues and the scree plot, two to four factors emerged which accounted for 57.7% of the variance. Of these factors, all were easily interpretable (see Table 16) though some item loadings

Table 16

Rotated Component Matrix for Males and Females

Items	Factors			
	Char	Beh	Exon	Min
3 Char: If stays, own fault	.834			
10 Char: If stay, deserves	.779			
16 Char: No sympathy if return	.771			
7 Char: If not like, leave	.609			
5 Char: Woman UC want	.589		.412	
18 Char: If return, char?	.588			
14 Char: Woman Uc wish	.577		.425	
4 Beh: Make jealous = ask for		.814		
13 Beh: Avoid if give in		.713		
12 Beh: Flirt = ask for it		.686		
6 Beh: Woman keeps arguing		.632		
17 Beh: Women instigate most		.562		
8 Min: Mutual combat		.468		
2 Exon: Man lost control			.721	
9 Exon: Man loose control			.689	
15 Exon: Caused by lost temper			.608	
11 Min: Rare in neighborhood				.617
1 Min: Not affect many				.610

were unanticipated. For example, item #8 relating to mutual combat loaded on the Behavioral Blame factor (as it did in the pilot test) rather than the Minimization factor. Similarly the two items relating to women's unconscious desire to be dominated or controlled loaded on both the expected Character Blame factor and also on the Exoneration factor. In this latter case, the interpretation of the factor remains clear: Men are not really to blame because women want to be controlled anyway.

Factors for females

Evaluation of the initial eigenvalues and the scree plot of female responses indicated the presence of three to four factors. The rotated factor loadings for female participants are presented in Table17 below. Interpretation and naming of the factors was again unambiguous, at least for the first three factors which were labeled Character Blame, Behavioral Blame, and Exoneration. The fourth factor is comprised of two items relating to Minimization. In addition, three items that loaded strongly (e.g. .76 to .69) on the first, Character Blame factor also loaded more weakly (e.g. .38 to .55) on this Minimization factor. These three items state that the domestic violence is "her own fault," that she "deserves" it, and that the respondent has no sympathy for her. It is customary practice in factor analysis to ignore the secondary (weaker) factor loading. In the present circumstance, however, this secondary loading may imply that women minimize the seriousness of domestic violence directly through statements that domestic violence occurs rarely or effects few people and indirectly through saying "If she stays, she deserves it." In any event, the fourth factor was labeled Minimization though the secondary loading of character blame items may influence the interpretation of the factor.

Table 17

Rotated Component Matrix for Females

Item	Factor			
	Char	Beh	Exon	Min
5 Char: Woman UC want	.771			
3 Char: If stays, own fault	.767			.382
14 Char: Woman Uc wish	.735			
18 Char: If return, char?	.725			
10 Char: If stay, deserves	.646			.554
16 Char: No sympathy if return	.629			.536
7 Char: If not like, leave	.594			
4 Beh: Make jealous = ask for		.863		
13 Beh: Avoid if give in		.751		
12 Beh: Flirt = ask for it		.736		
17 Beh: Women instigate most		.539		
6 Beh: Woman keeps arguing		.486		
2 Exon: Man lost control			.745	
9 Exon: Man loose control			.709	
15 Exon: Caused by lost temper		.359	.659	
8 Min: Mutual combat			.419	
11 Min: Rare in neighborhood				.651
1 Min: Not affect many				.629

For women, Hypothesis 4.1 which predicts four factors related to character blame of the victim, behavioral blame of the victim, perpetrator exoneration, and minimization was supported. Consonant with defensive attribution theory, women in this study made clear distinctions between characterological and behavioral blame. In fact, victim blame was the dominant factor in the DVMAS scale for women, accounting for fully 31.3% of the variance. All four factors accounted for 58.2% compared to 57.7% of the variance explained by the first four factors for the combined analysis of men and women. Thus hypothesis 4.2, which predicted that when analyzed by sex the factors would explain more of the variance, was partially supported, albeit by a small margin.

Factors for males

Using exactly the same procedure, a factor analysis of male participants' responses was conducted. Analysis of the eigenvalues and scree plot revealed the presence of three to five factors. The rotated factor loadings for male participants are presented in Table 18 below. Interpretation and naming of the first three factors was straightforward (if idiosyncratic) while factors four and five were uninterpretable. The first, dominant factor, was related to Character Blame. More specifically, this factor was made up entirely of items stating that the victim is responsible for the abuse because she stays. Though comprised of only three items, this factor accounted for 35.3% of the variance. For men, therefore, the dominant factor, accounting for over a third of the variance in their responses, was made up entirely items related to the non-question, "Why does she stay?"

The second factor is clearly an Exoneration factor with the addition of items relating to women's unconscious motivation. As stated previously, this admixture of items remains interpretable when understood as a statement that

Table 18

Rotated Component Matrix for Males (a, b)

Items	Components				
	Char	Exon	Beh	Min	??
10 Char: If stay, deserves	.853				
16 Char: No sympathy if return	.824				
3 Char: If stays, own fault	.809				
2 Exon: Man lost control		.732			
9 Exon: Man loose control		.673			
15 Exon: Caused by lost temper		.657			
14 Char: Woman Uc wish		.590			
5 Char: Woman UC want		.557	.391		
4 Beh: Make jealous = ask for			.797		
12 Beh: Flirt = ask for it			.732		
11 Min: Rare in neighborhood				.719	
7 Char: If not like, leave	.453			.687	
8 Min: Mutual combat			.395	.605	
1 Min: Not affect many				.467	.448
18 Char: If return, char?					.737
13 Beh: Avoid if give in			.448		.695
17 Beh: Women instigate most					.538
6 Beh: Woman keeps arguing			.391	.412	.429

a Rotation converged in 8 iterations.

b Sex = Male

men are not really to blame for domestic violence because women want to be controlled anyway.

Factor three was clearly a Behavioral Blame factor. As in the pilot test, men included the mutual violence item here in Behavioral Blame. Factor four appears related to Minimization but with the curious inclusion of the item stating that "If a woman doesn't like it, she can leave." This factor was labeled Minimization. For factor five, the dominant item with a loading of .73, was a character blame item phrased as a question ("If a woman goes back to the abuser, how much is that due to something in her character?"). This was the only item framed as a question in the instrument. Three other items loading on this factor related to behavioral blame while the last item was related to minimization. The factor was therefore uninterpretable, leaving a four factor solution.

Because the factor analysis for this phase of the study was being used to confirm the construct validity, a factor analysis was computed using the usual confirmatory practice of limiting the factors to those predicted in the literature – four in this case. For women, the factor loading was identical to that obtained when the number of factors was unconstrained. For men, the factor structure was much clearer as is evident in Table 19 below.

When constrained, the dominant factor for men was, as was predicted by hypotheses 4.3, exoneration. As in previous factor analyses reported in this chapter, this Exoneration factor included items relating to women's unconscious wish to be controlled. In addition, the item containing the question about how much the woman's staying with the abuser is due to a defect in her character now loaded on this factor. Together, these items exonerate the perpetrator by saying that he just lost control and she wants the abuse anyway so it is not his

Table 19

Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Men (a, b)

Items	Factors			
	Exon	Char	Beh	Min
2 Exon: Man lost control	.733			
15 Exon: Caused by lost temper	.695			
9 Exon: Man loose control	.637			
14 Char: Woman Uc wish	.608			
5 Char: Woman UC want	.553			
18 Char: If return, char?	.449			
10 Char: If stay, deserves		.852		
16 Char: No sympathy if return		.827		
3 Char: If stays, own fault		.807		
4 Beh: Make jealous = ask for			.772	
13 Beh: Avoid if give in			.768	
12 Beh: Flirt = ask for it			.561	
6 Beh: Woman keeps arguing			.530	
17 Beh: Women instigate most			.453	
11 Min: Rare in neighborhood				.724
7 Char: If not like, leave		.458		.665
8 Min: Mutual combat			.351	.639
1 Min: Not affect many				.439

a Rotation converged in 6 iterations.

b SEX = Male

fault. Factors two and three were unequivocally related to characterological and behavioral blame. Factor four remained somewhat problematic in that the clear minimization of three of the four items loading on this factor was complicated by the item "If she doesn't like it, she can leave." It is possible that men interpreted this item as minimizing the seriousness of the problem by implying that "If it were serious she would leave." Factor four was therefore interpretable and labeled Minimization. All four factors, which explained 58.7% of the variance were therefore retained.

Hypothesis 4.2 predicted that the factors for men and women, when analyzed separately, would explain more of the variance than when analyzed together. This hypothesis was supported by a small margin: The factors for the combined sample explained 57.7% of the variance compared to for 58.2% for the women and 58.7% for the men. The second part of Hypothesis 4.2 predicted that the factors would be more interpretable when analyzed by sex. This portion of the hypothesis was not supported as the factors for the combined sample were, unexpectedly, easily interpretable while the factors for men were not entirely interpretable until constrained to the four theoretically predicted factors.

For men, just as for women, Hypothesis 4.1 was supported as evidenced by four factors related to character blame and behavioral blame of the victim as well as exoneration of the perpetrator and minimization of the seriousness of domestic violence. As predicted by Hypothesis 4.3, while the dominant factor for women was victim blame, the dominant factor in the DVMAS scale for men was blame avoidance. Hypothesis 4.3 was therefore also supported.

Finally, the relationship of factors to each other was explored using a factor analysis with oblique rotation of the axis with Delta set at 0 to allow for maximal correlation between the factors. As can be seen in Table 20, for women, factors related to character and behavioral blame were moderately correlated (r = .35). In contrast exoneration was not correlated at all (r = .03 to .06) with any of the other factors while minimization was moderately correlated (r = .44) with behavioral blame and weakly correlated (r = .24) with character blame. Put more simply, character blame, behavioral blame, and minimization factors were all moderately correlated while the exoneration factor was uncorrelated or relatively independent for women.

For men, all factors were moderately correlated (r = .33 to -.21). The exoneration factor, however, was negatively correlated (-.21 to -.33) with all other factors.

Factor scores

Tabachnick and Fidell write that "procedures for estimating factor scores range between simple-minded (but frequently adequate) and sophisticated" (2001, p. 626). In the present study the simple-minded solutions produced superior results. Specifically, when I calculated factor scores using the default SPSS option (which entails a "squared multiple correlation between the estimated factor scores and the true factor values;" SPSS, 2001), the mean scores were so small (in the 16th and 17th decimal places) that no inferential statistics could be computed. I therefore used a simple-minded approach of creating a mean factor-based index score (Kim & Mueller, 1978a) by summing items which loaded on the factor (primary loading only) and dividing by the number of items.

Table 20

Correlation of Factors for Females and Males

	Factors			
Group	Char	Beh	Exon	Min
Females				
Char				
Beh	0.35			
Exon	0.06	0.03		
Min	0.24	0.44	-0.05	
Males				
Char				
Beh	0.30			
Exon	-0.21	-0.33		
Min	0.27	0.32	-0.33	

A weakness of this approach is that variables with larger standard deviations contribute more to the resulting score (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). If standard deviations are small, this problem is negligible. With the present data, standard deviations of DVMAS items ranged from .88 to 1.98 that indicated that problem of differential contribution was small. Finally, an advantage of this simple-minded approach was that it allowed comparison of male and female factors (e.g. character blame) which contained a different number of items. The factor scores results and analyses are presented in the next section.

Factor analysis summary

To reiterate, Hypothesis 4.1 related to the number of factors expected, based on defensive attribution and radical feminist theories. Factor analysis of the data supported the hypothesized presence of four factors.

Consistent with Hypothesis 4.2, the factor loadings for the combined sample were marginally lower (accounting for 57.7% of the variability) than when men and women were analyzed separately (with ranges from 58.2% to 58.7%). The prediction of Hypothesis 4.2 that the factor structure would be more easily interpretable for sub-samples of men and women that for the combined sample was not supported. The factors for both the combined and segregated samples were easily interpretable though with different patterns of factor loadings. Hypothesis 4.3, in contrast, was entirely supported. For women the dominant factors related to threat avoidance (through blaming the victim) while for men the dominant factors related to blame avoidance. This difference can be seen most clearly by comparing the mean scores on each of the four factors as shown in Table 21.

Table 21

Comparison of Mean Factor Scores for Men and Women

Factor	Sex	
	Female	Male
Char	2.66	2.42
Beh	1.59	1.59
Exon	2.66	2.84
Min	2.09	2.52

Consistent with hypothesis 4.3, the mean Character Blame scores for women were higher than for men while the mean Exoneration and Minimization factor scores were higher for men than for women. Interestingly, the Behavioral Blame scores were identical for males and females.

Reliability Analysis

The final step in the analysis of the data was assessment of the reliability for the entire DVMAS scale and for each of the factors. Because of the differences in the factor structure for men and women previously discussed, the analysis of factor reliability was also conducted separately for male and female respondents and then for the entire sample.

As can be seen in Table 22, DVMAS reliability measured with Cronbach's coefficient alpha was good for the entire scale (.88), for men (.88), and for women (.85). Reliability for the factors ranged from a rather weak reliability of $\alpha = .64$ or .68 for one of the factors for females and males respectively, to good reliabilities for all of the remaining factors (.88 to .70). Even the low .64 reliability of the

Exoneration factor for females was within the acceptable range set forth in Chapter 3. The factors therefore appear to be reliable measures which can be used independently in future studies.

Data Analysis Summary

In this chapter, I have described the results of analysis of data related to each of three phases in the development of a new measure of domestic violence myths. In the first phase, a panel of experts judged the instrument to have good face and content validity while a focus group was used to pre-test the instrument and suggest further refinements in item wording that would improve item clarity.

In the pilot test phase, after careful item analysis and elimination, the assessment of instrument validity continued with a factor analysis which confirmed the presence of four theoretically derived factors. This data analysis also demonstrated that the DVMAS had good internal consistency reliability even after the elimination of 62 items.

The final study further assessed the validity and reliability of the revised, 18-item DVMAS. In the assessment of convergent construct validity, all hypothesized relationships between the DVMAS and similar constructs were supported. The DVMAS therefore exhibited good convergent validity. In contrast, the DVMAS was significantly correlated with scales intended to measure divergent validity. The DVMAS therefore exhibited poor divergent validity. However, DVMAS responses did not appear to be substantively affected by social desirability which was weakly and negatively correlated with DVMAS responses. Known group validity was also supported with males

Table 22

DVMAS and DVMAS Factor Reliabilities [a]

Factor	*n* of items	Alpha
Males		
Exoneration	6	.76
Character Blame	4	.81
Behavior Blame	7	.76
Minimization	4	.68
Scale	18	.88
Females		
Character Blame	7	.86
Behavior Blame	5	.76
Exoneration	4	.64
Minimization	4	.70
Scale	18	.85
Males and Females		
Scale	18	.88

a Reliability measured with Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha

endorsing domestic violence myths at significantly greater rates than did females and with younger women scoring higher than did older females.

Factor analysis of the revised DVMAS scale confirmed the hypothesized existence of four factors with different item loadings and patterns for men and for women. Contrary to expectation, however, when analyzed together, the factor structure for males and females in this final study was clear and easily interpretable with cross loadings of only two items. Finally, reliability analysis of the DVMAS revealed that the scale had good reliability while individual factors for both men and women had adequate to good reliability.

All of these findings, was well as their implications for theory, further research, and practice will be discussed in Chapter 5.

Chapter 5: Discussion

This chapter begins with a brief overview of the study and its limitations. After a review of the study hypotheses and findings, I present a discussion of the results along with a discussion of their implications for theory, future research, and practice.

Summary of the Study

This study began with the need for an instrument to measure and statistically control for the effects of domestic violence myth acceptance. The possible existence of a set of ideas which blamed the victim, exonerated the perpetrator, and minimized the seriousness and extent of domestic violence was based on clinical experience, theory, and previous research in related domains such as rape or child sexual abuse. This set of ideas is commonly referred to under the rubric of domestic violence myths in which *myths* are defined as stereotypical attitudes and beliefs that are generally false but are widely and persistently held, and which serve to minimize, deny, or justify physical aggression against intimate partners. While such myths about the crime of rape have been extensively studied for over 20 years, no reliable and valid measure of domestic violence myths currently exists. This study was therefore undertaken to address the need for such an instrument.

Review of radical feminist literature on domestic violence and the literature from social psychology concerning defensive attributions provided a theoretical framework for the development of a measure of domestic violence myths. Together these two literatures indicated that domestic violence myths may have both social and individual functions, defending individuals and

groups from threatening awareness of or bad feelings about domestic violence while decreasing social support for victims. The literatures further indicated that the functions served by myths may be different for men than for women as a result of their commonly perceived different risks and roles related to domestic violence.

Following a review of the literature and clarification of the construct of domestic violence myths, actual construction of and testing of the measure of domestic violence myths (DVMAS) followed a well established positivist research format involving item generation, pilot testing, revision, and subsequent testing for scale reliability and validity (Cronbach, 1948; DeVellis, 1991; Ferrara, 1999; Fink, 1995a; Helmstadter, 1964; Lorr, 1989; Nunnally, 1970; Plutchik & Kellerman, 1989). The specific steps are briefly reviewed below.

Based on the review of the literature, clinical experience, and lists of domestic violence myths on (literally) hundreds of web sites maintained by women's advocacy groups, a preliminary list of 80 potential items was created. The face validity of this item pool was reviewed by a panel of experts from the fields of domestic violence advocacy, social psychology, and academia. After incorporating appropriate recommendations from the experts, the item pool was reviewed for clerical accuracy and ease of comprehension by a focus group made up of students and faculty at The University of Maine.

The revised item pool was then evaluated in a pilot test using a systematic random sample of University of Maine students and professionals who were recruited through e-mail solicitation and who completed an on-line version of the DVMAS. Based upon evaluation of various correlation matrices and factor loadings, items which were redundant or contributed little to the scale were

removed. From the remaining items, the DVMAS instrument of 18 items was constructed. In addition, confirmatory factor analysis of the pilot test data revealed the existence of 4 factors related to victim blame (characterological and behavioral), exoneration of the perpetrator, and minimization. These were precisely the factors predicted by theory. The fit between the data and theory indicated that in addition to its adequate reliability the DVMAS also showed preliminary evidence of construct validity.

The final instrument, along with six others scales which would permit further evaluation of the construct validity of the DVMAS, was then administered to another systematic random sample of University of Maine students and professionals. As in the pilot test, this sample was also recruited through e-mail solicitation and responded via the World Wide Web.

Construct validity was evaluated through analysis of the correlations of the DVMAS with other scales which were expected, based on current theory and literature, to correlate either strongly or weakly with the DVMAS. This analysis indicated that the DVMAS correlated moderately to strongly with scales measuring similar attitudes such as rape myth acceptance (Burt, 1980), endorsement of traditional sex roles, and negative attitudes toward women. Conversely, the DVMAS correlated only weakly (though significantly) with a measure of social desirability. Contrary to expectation, the DVMAS correlated moderately with a measure of acceptance of violence by governments. Put another way, greater endorsement of myths supporting violence against women was related to greater endorsement of use of force against prisoners, or foreign governments. This finding indicated either that the DVMAS lacked discriminant validity or that the theory predicting no overlap between domestic violence myth

acceptance and endorsement of attitudes supportive of other forms of violence was incorrect.

Further validation of the construct of domestic violence myths was accomplished through confirmatory factor analysis in order to compare the underlying structure of the DVMAS to the structure predicted in feminist and social psychology literature. Discussion of these and other results follows a discussion of the limitations of the current study.

Limitations

There are many limitations of the current study which need to be borne in mind while considering the results. First, a sample of University students and professionals is not representative of diverse populations. The extent to which this sample may be unique was not empirically measured but can be reasonably hypothesized. For example, University populations are perceived to be politically more liberal, better educated, and perhaps possessing a higher intelligence. It is not known how these sample biases may impact domestic violence myth acceptance. The results, therefore, should not be generalized beyond similar academic populations and further testing with more diverse samples is warranted.

The non-response of roughly 70% of the randomly selected participants indicates that the results obtained may not be generalizable to the population used in the present study. This possibility was examined to the extent possible with the data at hand. First, those who responded to the survey closely matched the University population in terms of University status (student, faculty, staff) and distribution by sex. In addition, those who responded only after two reminders were sent were compared with those who responded immediately.

There were no differences between these groups in terms of either demographic variables such as age or in their mean scores on any of the study variables such as domestic violence or rape myth acceptance. Despite these promising indicators that the low response rate did not introduce non-response bias, the results should be interpreted with caution and may suffer from both selection and non-response bias.

In addition, the use of e-mail for solicitation of participants and the World Wide Web for gathering participant responses may have altered the results in unknown ways. For example, the documented increase in inward focus that occurs with computer mediated administration of psychological tests (Davis, 1999) may increase domestic violence myth endorsement – or not. As a result, these results may be dissimilar to those obtained with future pencil-and-paper administrations of the instrument with a sample that is more representative of diverse populations.

While preliminary assessment of the construct validity of the DVMAS contained in this study is promising, the measures of both convergent and divergent validity remain problematic. In terms of convergent validity, the DVMAS was moderately correlated with measures of sex-role stereotyping, negative attitudes toward women, rape myth acceptance, and attitudes toward wife abuse. Thus the DVMAS is, as expected, correlated with constructs related to negative attitudes and violence toward women. A limitation of the methodology, however, is that the measures used do not allow us to say that the DVMAS differentiates between attitudes toward violence against women, in general, and specific attitudes toward violence in intimate relationships. The

measure of divergent validity is even more problematic and will be discussed at length below.

In terms of reliability, while the internal consistency reliability of the DVMAS was very good, the ability of the instrument to produce the same results over time (e.g. test-retest reliability) was not assessed and is therefore unknown. In addition, the stability of the internal consistency is questionable given the difference in reliability between the pilot test ($\alpha = .81$) and the final test ($\alpha = .88$).

Both the reliability and validity of the DVMAS were assessed in the present research with participants who were guaranteed complete confidentiality due to the anonymity of respondents. If this same instrument were used in settings where confidentiality cannot be so easily assured the results might reveal considerably more social desirability response bias.

Finally, the construct validity of the instrument as indicated by the fit between the theory and the factors present in the data does not meet the criteria of "invariance." Operationally, invariance can be defined as achieving identical factor structures (in terms of the number of factors and loadings of items) across studies with different populations (Bernstein et al., 2003). Even within the same population but across the two studies reported here, the factor structure and loading of items on specific factors was not invariant.

Therefore the DVMAS should be used with caution until future studies further establish its reliability and validity.

Discussion of the Results

The Sample

For both the pilot test and final test of the DVMAS, the sample was comprised of undergraduate and graduate students as well as faculty and staff at

The University of Maine. In both tests the sample was predominantly young and undergraduate. The literature provided no basis for inquiring about participants' racial or ethnic backgrounds so such questions were not included. In the final test of the DVMAS, the response rate was approximately 30%. Don Dillman notes "a low response rate does not necessarily entail nonresponse error....[because] those who respond to a survey may not differ in any measurable way from those who do respond" (Dillman, 1991, p. 229). The problem for the survey researcher is to ascertain if respondents do indeed differ from non-respondents, especially regarding the variables of interest. As noted in the previous section, comparison of early and late responders revealed no difference in response to any study variables. Similarly, examination of demographic information for the sample and population from which the sample was drawn indicated that the sample was reasonably congruent with the population. These evaluations all indicate that response bias may not be a serious factor in the present study. The evaluations, however, are indicative at best.

The Research Questions

In this section I will review and discuss the results of the study as they relate to each of the research questions and hypotheses. Discussion of the resulting research and practice implications will follow.

Reliability

The first study question, "Does the instrument demonstrate adequate reliability?" was answered affirmatively. DeVellis argues that "one of the most important indicators of a scale's quality is the reliability coefficient, alpha" (1991, p. 83). The Cronbach's internal reliability coefficient of .88 in the present study

indicates that the DVMAS possesses excellent internal reliability and thus satisfies this test of scale quality.

Contrary to expectation, however, the reliability coefficient of the final study was .07 *higher* than the pilot test reliability, not the .05 *lower* predicted by DeVellis (1991). Unfortunately the present data do not allow any analysis of the reasons for this greater scale reliability. Future research will be helpful in establishing the stability of the internal reliability coefficient for the scale.

The reliability of the factor scores, when factors were assessed for males and females separately, was adequate for one factor for each sex and good for the remaining three factors for each sex. This finding indicates that the factors may be used as subscales in future research. The reliability analysis therefore indicated that the DVMAS is a reliable measure. The next question, however is: A reliable measure of what?

Convergent construct validity

As predicted by hypothesis 1, moderate to strong correlations were found between DVMAS scores and measures of similar constructs such as attitudes towards the rights and roles of women, rape myth acceptance, and sex-role stereotypes. In previous research using these scales, Pearson correlation coefficients ranged from $r = .51$ to .40 with a mean across studies of .46 (see Chapter 1, page 55 for a complete review). In the current study, the correlations between the DVMAS and convergent scales ranged from .65 to .47 with a mean correlation between scales of .57. This result indicates that the DVMAS is even more strongly related to measures of negative attitudes toward women than are similar scales such as Burt's Rape Myth Acceptance (RMA) scale.

Feminist scholars have, for years, asserted that violence against women arises not from social stress or individual psychopathology but rather from patriarchal and sexist beliefs and attitudes which promote (or at least condone) such violence (see, for example, Adams, 1986; Brownmiller, 1974/1993; Yllo, 1994). The present findings support this view as they show that domestic violence myths are moderately to strongly related to patriarchal and negative attitudes toward women.

In particular, higher scores on the DVMAS were significantly correlated with higher scores on a measure of Attitudes Toward Women. This correlation indicates that DVMAS scores are related to conservative sex-role attitudes in which women should not swear, tell dirty jokes, drink to intoxication, work outside the home, challenge male authority in the home or workplace, nor enjoy the same liberties as men. Highly correlated with these sex-role attitudes were scores on Burt's sex role stereotypes which were, in turn, also moderately correlated with DVMAS scores (1980). Burt's measure is similar to the attitudes toward women measure, but includes items about women's sexuality.

Because the present DVMAS scale was closely modeled on Burt's Rape Myth Acceptance (RMA) scale, the finding that the correlation between the DVMAS and RMA was the strongest (r = .65) of the convergent validity correlations was not surprising. Both studies used similar definitions of myths. The strong correlation may therefore indicate that the two scales measure the same underlying construct of myths about violence against women.

The present research therefore replicates previous findings of a strong relationship between greater endorsement of conservative sex-role ideology, acceptance of negative domestic violence attitudes (Finke, 1994), and

endorsement of rape myths (Burt, 1980). This finding is consistent with the radical feminist proposition that attitudes toward domestic violence myths are part of a larger framework of attitudes toward women and women's rights and liberties. Nevertheless, there appears to be sufficient differences between RMA and DVMAS to indicate that they are measuring sufficiently different attitudes to justify their separate use in differentiating between sexual assault myths and domestic violence myths.

Divergent construct validity

The finding of a moderate (r = .34) correlation between the DVMAS and the Attitudes Toward Violence (ATV) scale and its two subscales measuring attitudes toward warfare and attitudes toward the treatment of criminals was contrary to the expectation stated in hypothesis 2.1. This result was due, in part, to a misstatement of the hypothesis. Whereas I stated that the ATV would be weakly and non-significantly correlated with the DVMAS, previous researchers stated (and found) that the ATV would simply be *least strongly* correlated with their measure (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1995; Payne, Lonsway, & Fitzgerald, 1999). Had my hypothesis been thus stated it would have been supported. In fact the correlation of ATV to DVMAS in the present study was considerable weaker (r = .34) than the r = .47 correlation found by Lonsway et al. (1995). The minor shift in the wording of the hypothesis from no significant correlation to least correlation would not, however, address the substantive meaning of the moderately strong correlation between the DVMAS and the ATV. This meaning is explored next.

Examination of the correlations between the DVMAS and individual ATV items shows that the DVMAS fails to correlate with only two items on the ATV. These items relate to the severity of sentencing (e.g. "Prisoners should have more

severe sentences than they do."). These two items therefore appear to relate to an intellectual appraisal of the criminal justice system. In contrast, the strongest correlations between the DVMAS and ATV involved items such as "War in self-defense is perfectly right" (r = .30), "Our country has the right to protect its borders forcefully (r = .30), "Violent crimes should be punished violently." (r = .28), and "Spying on our nation should be severely dealt with" (r = .28). Looked at linguistically, these four items all contain reference to a physically aggressive response: "...self-defense, ...protect...forcefully,...punished violently, [and] ...severely dealt with." The DVMAS therefore appears to have a moderate correlation with a measure relating to the *use of force* by governments to resolve conflicts. Put differently, the correlation pattern between the DVMAS and ATV appears to indicate that individuals who endorse the use of force in intimate relationship also tend to endorse the use of force by governments. This finding, if replicated in future studies with diverse samples, may indicate either that the DVMAS lacks discriminant validity or that while domestic violence myths and attitudes are most strongly related to patriarchal and sexist attitudes, they are also related to more general attitudes about the use of violence to resolve conflicts. Such findings would then require some modification of either the DVMAS or the dominant radical feminist conceptualization of domestic violence as unrelated to general criminal or aggressive tendencies.

Criterion or known group differences

The finding in the present study that men have significantly higher endorsement of domestic violence myths is consistent with previous studies exploring sex differences in attitudes towards violence against women and rape myths (see for example, Bohner & Schwarz, 1996; Bohner, Weisbrod, Raymond,

Barzvi, & Schwarz, 1993; Burt, 1980; Ellis, O'Sullivan, & Sowards, 1992; Gidycz, Layman, Rich, Crothers, Gylys, 2001; Payne, Lonsway, & Fitzgerald, 1999; Toulouse, 1997). In those studies men consistently score significantly higher than do women. In fact I know of no study in which men's endorsement of rape myths was not significantly greater than the endorsement by women. The present finding indicates simply that that DVMAS measures a construct which, as predicted, is endorsed at significantly higher rates by men than women in the present sample.

The significantly higher scores on the DVMAS for younger women compared to older women may have important theoretical implications. This finding is consistent with expectations which, in turn, are based on a four part causal pathway. The pathway begins with numerous epidemiological studies showing that younger women are at an elevated risk of domestic violence compared to older women (Brownridge, 2002; Buss & Shackelford, 1997; Carlson, Harris, & Holden, 1999; Shackelford, Buss, & Peters, 2000). This age difference in risk is thought to increase hedonic (personal) relevance of domestic violence for younger participants (Thornton, Hogate, Moirs, Pinette, & Presby, 1986) which leads to a greater need for threat avoidance (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1995). This need for threat avoidance (which was supported in the present study) leads finally to the greater endorsement of domestic violence myths among younger compared to older women. Future multivariate research is needed to replicate and then further explore the theoretical implications of the age difference in DVMAS scores among women.

It must be noted, however, that the decrease in DVMAS scores among women in the present study occurred much earlier (between age 18 and age 28)

than the actual decrease in actual domestic violence risk (between age 38 and 45) found in epidemiological research (Peters, Shackelford, & Buss, 2002). Because of the limited focus of the present study, no reasons for this early decline can be determined. It may have been an artifact of the predominance of undergraduate women in the sample such that women in the age range of 26 to 45 were underrepresented. This finding therefore awaits further study in future research which could focus on the relationship between risk of assault and myth endorsement.

Factor structure of the DVMAS

In the present study, exploratory factor analysis was used to confirm the fit of the data (and hence the instrument) to the theory. A generally good fit provides additional indications that the scale is measuring the construct it intends (and claims) to measure.

One of the most striking findings of the present study was the consistent distinction made by participants between character blame and behavioral blame. This distinction was based on defensive attribution theory and has been supported by previous experimental research (e.g. Thornton 1982). In survey research, however, the results have been less consistent. Newman and Colon (1994), for example, found no distinction between behavioral and characterological attributions of blame toward a rape victim. While these authors found four factors unrelated to behavioral or characterological blame, Feld (1978) found ten factors, two of which involved behavioral blame and none of which involved character blame. Similarly Payne, et al. (1999) found seven factors related to rape myths with behavioral and characterological blame items distributed across several different factors. The present study indicates that if a

confirmatory factor analysis, with the number of factors dictated by the theoretical literature, had been used in those previous studies more interpretable factor structures may have emerged. The present study is therefore in contrast with these latter studies in terms of the clear four factor solution and the fit between the data and defensive attribution theory regarding character and behavior blame.

Throughout the design and construction of the DVMAS, I remained clear that I was constructing an instrument not to measure general attitudes toward domestic violence but rather to measure those attitudes toward domestic violence which served a defensive function. The fit of the DVMAS with defensive attribution theory may indicate that the scale fulfills this design goal and therefore has reasonable construct validity.

In addition to the character and behavior blame factors, analysis of the responses of both men and women revealed additional factors related to exoneration of the perpetrator and minimization of the abuse. The scale thus fits with the radical feminist theory that myths about crime serve three underlying goals: To blame the victim, to minimize the extent and seriousness of the crime, and to exonerate the perpetrator of the crime. That these factors emerged relatively consistently throughout the pilot and final test of the instrument is a further preliminary indicator of construct validity.

Another indicator of construct validity is the difference in factor loadings for men and for women. Specifically, men engaged more strongly in blame avoidance while women engaged primarily in threat avoidance. Numerous authors studying either defensive attribution (e.g. Thornton, 1982) or violence against women predict just these differences. For example, Lonsway and

Fitzgerald conclude that "rape myth acceptance functions differently for men and women; its critical function for men is to justify male sexual violence, whereas for women it is to deny personal vulnerability" (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1995, p. 709; see also Anderson, & Umberson, 2001 for supporting qualitative findings). Both the final study of the DVMAS and the pilot study found precisely this difference in endorsement and function. Women more strongly endorsed items relating to threat avoidance while men more strongly endorsed items related to blame avoidance. This finding is therefore consistent with both theory and prior research and may provide yet further evidence of construct validity of the DVMAS.

In addition, the finding of different myth functions by gender, if replicated with unbiased and more diverse samples, may indicate that future studies of myths about crime should be analyzed by sex. Without that understanding, research results may be misleading. For example, Toulouse (1997) tested a factorial model of rape myths that was elegantly supported by theory and empirical studies. But, because he lacked sufficient sample size, he was unable to analyze his results by sex and admits that the poor fit of the data to the model may be a result of that inability.

The finding in the present study regarding different functions for men and women may also have implications for the invariability of the measure. I previously argued that future research was needed to establish the factorial invariability of the DVMAS. This finding of differential endorsement of myths by men and women may indicate that invariability should *not* be a feature of myth scales when analyzed for men and women together but *should* be a feature when analyzed separately by sex.

Finally, it should be noted that the factors in the DVMAS accounted for approximately 58% of the variance of data. This compares favorably with other myth scales such as a revised version of Burt's Rape Myth Acceptance Scale in which four the four retained factors accounted for 51% of the total variance (Newman & Colon, 1994, p. 597) or Field's original (1978) 8 factor solution which accounted for 50% of the variance.

Problems in factor space

While the factor analysis of the final sample data was generally consistent with theory and predictions, some departures from the expected factor structure did occur and need to be addressed. The first of the problems to be addressed is the difference in factor structure between the pilot and final studies. This difference included some difference in item loading for men and women (e.g. item #7, "If a woman doesn't like it she can leave" loaded on different factors) and the difference in the dominant factor for males and females. To understand possible reasons for these variations I will look first at the psychology of myth endorsement and then at the psychometric properties of the DVMAS.

Kristianses and Guiletti (1990), in a study using different domestic violence vignettes, found a complex interaction between the degree of apparent provocation by a female victim, attitudes toward women, beliefs in a just world, and the resulting attributions of blame made by female research participants. Variation of just the degree of apparent provocation in the vignettes interacted with participants' beliefs and attitudes to result in significant differences in degree of character or behavioral blame. Similarly, defensive attribution researchers have found that when vignette elements such as similarity to the victim are systematically varied, the type of defensive attributions made by

participants shifts between behavioral blame and characterological blame (Thornton, 1984). Together these and other studies indicate that differences in various elements of the story of domestic violence that a subject has in mind may have a significant effect on the relative strength of endorsement of character blame versus behavioral blame. In the present study the schema or internal representation of domestic violence being accessed by participants as they filled out the survey was not controlled. Consequently participants may have accessed quite different internal images of domestic violence and may therefore have responded to the questions based on vastly different images of domestic violence: a disagreement which ends in mutual pushing and shoving compared to an unprovoked assault which results in hospitalization of the victim. Based on the vignette studies just cited, this variety of possible internal representations should result in different factor loadings for different individuals or groups. These differences, however, could not be detected or controlled for in the present research design and therefore are exerting unknown effects on the factor structure. While the large sample used in this study should have balanced out these different internal scenarios, this supposition should be tested in future research.

In addition, the instability of the factor structure may be partially due to the relatively strong correlations between items. When items within a scale are strongly correlated then relatively small variations in item scores (and the resulting correlation matrix) can make relatively large changes in item loadings and the resulting factor structure (T. Coladarci, personal communication, February 18, 2003). In the present scale, the DVMAS had an average item to corrected total correlation of $r = .52$. This correlation was considerably stronger

than any of the corrected item-total correlations of the other four measures of attitudes toward women or rape myths. Those scales had corrected item-total correlations which ranged from a low of .31 to a high of only .41.

Yet another consideration regarding the instability of the factor structure concerns the assumption of multivariate normality of the DVMAS data. Eight items in the DVMAS had skewness over 1.00 with four items with skewness of greater than 2.00. An example is shown in Figure 6 below which reveals an essentially dichotomous (1 and greater than 1) distribution of responses.

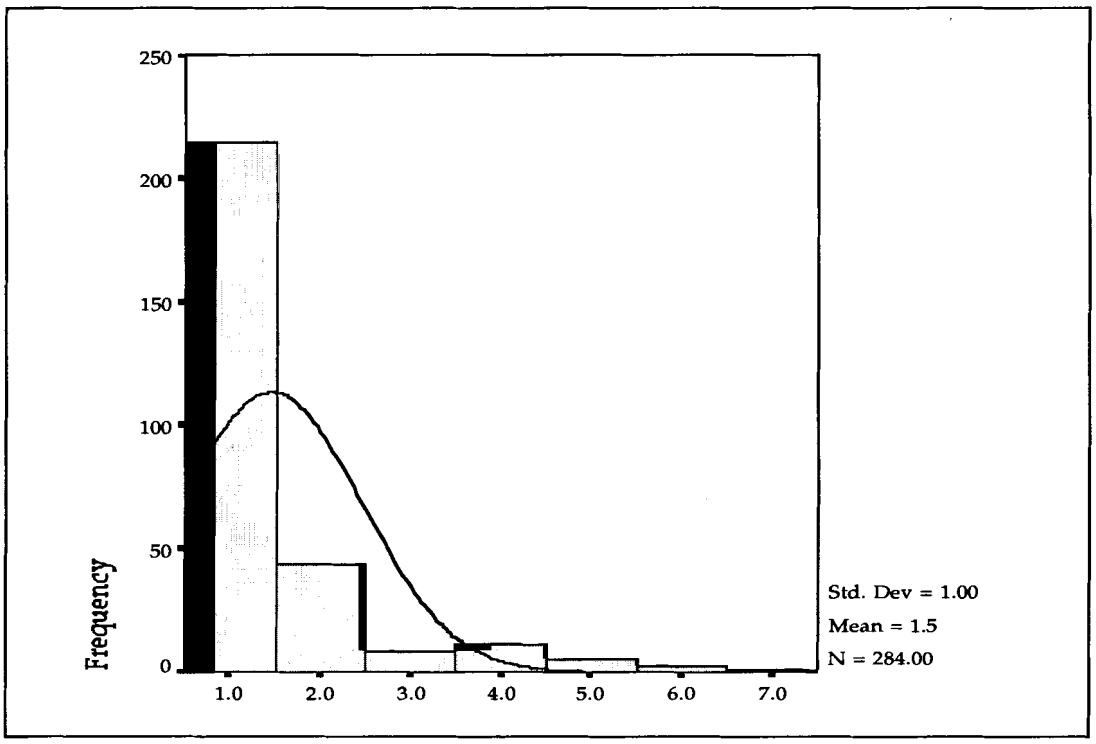

Figure 6. Histogram of Item #4, "Making a man jealous is asking for it."

While it is possible to use dichotomous data in factor analysis, "the consequences of violating the assumption [of multivariate normalcy] are not clearly understood" (Kim & Mueller, 1978b, p. 77). The presence of essentially dichotomous variables in the factor analysis of DVMAS items may therefore

have an unknown effect. This understanding may point to a fundamental flaw in the construction of the DVMAS scale in which items with non-normal distributions were retained during pilot testing if they made other, offsetting contributions to the scale.

Finally, the instability of the factor structure may be due to an interaction of the lack of control over participants' schemas of domestic violence and the psychometric properties of the scale. Teasing out these differences is an important topic for future research and will be discussed below.

Another difference between the pilot and final studies concerns the prediction in hypothesis 2.2 that a more interpretable factor structure would emerge when the data were analyzed by sex than all together. This hypothesis was supported in the pilot data in which two of the factors for the data for men and women combined were uninterpretable in contrast to four clear and easily interpretable factors which emerged when the data were analyzed separately by sex. In the final data, however, the factor structure for the total sample was not only clearly interpretable, it was more easily interpretable than the factor structure for men when the data were analyzed by sex. While there was some loss (as predicted) in explanatory power for the factor solution for the combined data, this loss was only a few percentage points. This finding, if replicated in further studies, may indicate that while domestic violence myths may have different functions for men and women, those differences are slight compared to the underlying unifying themes of blaming the victim, exonerating the perpetrator, and minimizing the abuse. Such findings would be consistent with the finding by Payne, Lonsway, and Fitzgerald (1999) in which their LISREL model indicated the presence of seven rape myth components which "applied

equally well for men and women" (p. 42). Conversely, the easy interpretation of the combined sample may reflect the 60 : 40 sex ratio of respondents in that there were not enough men to alter the pattern of responding of the female respondents. Thus the factor solution for the combined sample was, with the exception of the loading of 3 items, identical to the factor solution for females. Future research will be needed to clarify this and the many other questions raised regarding the stability of the factor analysis.

Summary of Findings

Before discussing the implications of this study for research and practice, I will briefly summarize the important findings of this study. First, the study found that among the population sampled, the existence of domestic violence myths is verified. As expected, these myths correlated moderately with measures of negative, sexist, or patriarchal attitudes toward women and least strongly with measures of governmental use of force and social desirability. The study also showed that domestic violence myths operate through blaming the victim, exonerating the perpetrator, and minimizing the seriousness of domestic violence. Not surprisingly the study found that the myths were endorsed more by males than females in the current population. While these findings have some important implications for practice and policy, the limitations of the study should be addressed first through future research with the DVMAS. This research will be addressed next followed by discussion of the implications for policy and practice.

Recommendations for Future Research

The recommendations for future research in this section begin with research designed to overcome the limitations and weaknesses of the present

study. Following this discussion and predicated on the assumption that the scale is found to be a reliable and valid measure, some suggestions for experimental and evaluation research are presented.

General Population Samples

The most pressing need for research with the DVMAS is to assess the reliability, validity, factorial structure, and invariance of the instrument among samples representative of diverse populations. Because domestic violence is widely viewed as occurring in all social strata and locations, samples which reflect those strata are needed. While none are ideal, systematic random samples of registered voters, persons holding drivers' licenses, or telephone subscribers would improve the representatives of the sample and therefore the generalizability of the results. In addition, samples which reflect the populations of concern to social workers should be systematically studied with the DVMAS.

The first goal of these studies is simply to determine if the phenomenon identified as endorsement of domestic violence myths in the current study occurs in other samples as well. If the answer to that question is affirmative then further studies can begin to establish norms for myth endorsement among different populations as well as estimations for the internal consistency reliability of the scale. With these two aspects established, future research should then address the validity of the instrument.

Further Validation

In the present research, validity of the DVMAS was assessed through convergent and divergent validity, known groups validity, and factor analysis. Convergent validity was strongly supported though future studies should tease

out the subtle distinction between attitudes toward violence toward women in general and attitudes toward violence toward women in intimate relationships.

In contrast to the generally positive results for convergent validity, the assessment of divergent validity was problematic and should be addressed through correlational studies using measures of attitudes toward use of violence between strangers as well as measures of tendencies toward aggressiveness (Edmunds & Kendrick, 1980). These studies would explore the possibility that endorsement of domestic violence myths is part of a larger set of attitudes toward the use of violence and individual responsibility for that violence.

Factor structure

The construct validity of the DVMAS as assessed by the fit between theory and the factor structure of responses was equivocal. Further factorial studies of the DVMAS are therefore required. These studies should examine the invariance of the factor solution in studies with diverse populations. In addition, those studies should continue to examine the difference in factor structure when responses are analyzed separately by sex and when amalgamated. These studies would address the debate in the literature concerning not only the structure of domestic violence myths but also the possibility of different psycho/social purposes which those myths serve for men and women.

A second line of factor analytic studies should use vignettes. The term *domestic violence* can refer to behavior ranging from a frustrated shove to a "tooth loosening assault intended to punish, humiliate, and terrorize" (Dobash, Dobash, Wilson, & Daly, 1992, p. 75). Unless this disparity in internal image or schema is controlled for, participants may complete the DVMAS while drawing upon widely divergent internal images, definitions, and understandings of the

construct of domestic violence (Alexander & Becker, 1978). This divergence is likely to increase the overall error variance in the results (Saunders, Villeponteaus, Lipovsky, Kilpatrick, & Veronen, 1992). In addition, with different internal images and definitions, factor loadings may be idiosyncratic for the individual and uninterpretable for the group. Future factor analysis research with the DVMAS could control for this possibility through use of explicit vignettes which precede administration of the DVMAS and which prime certain cognitive constructs of domestic violence. Such studies could then look specifically at the composition and relative strength of the factors and factor scores which result from experimental manipulation of the participants' domestic violence schema.

Construct validity

Establishing the construct validity of a new instrument is a long, involved, process which requires data from several studies in "an attempt to ferret out the underlying dimensions that an instrument is tapping and thereby to validate the theory behind the instrument" (Bostwick & Kyte, 1988, p. 118). This process is therefore dependent on (1) positive results in all the research outlined above and (2) subsequent widespread use of the DVMAS and ongoing analysis of the fit between the instrument and the theory. Future research, however, should be aimed at contributing to this construct validation through replication studies with different populations, multiple regression studies, and path analysis studies which illuminate the underlying causal relationships between domestic violence myths and other constructs. For example, I previously noted a possible pathway between age and endorsement of domestic violence myths through risk

assessment and defense against threat. This and other such models should be evaluated in future research.

Criterion validity

Establishing criterion validity, often referred to as the "gold standard" of validity of a new attitude measure is even more problematic. Most commonly, the researcher compares the results of a new instrument with a behavioral (or biological) manifestation of the construct under consideration. Thus repeated arrest for driving under the influence might serve as a criterion for a measure of alcoholism. With attitudes, however, the link between behavior and attitude is less direct. For example, men arrested for domestic violence assault do not necessarily have higher levels of domestic violence myth acceptance. They may have higher levels, but that link needs to be empirically established before it can be used as a criterion for validating a measure of domestic violence myths.

One way out of this "chicken/egg" dilemma is for future research to use interviews to create "known groups" of men who do and do not ascribe to domestic violence myths and then to compare those results with the results of the DVMAS for the same individuals. An even better methodology would involve longitudinal studies examining possible relationships between DVMAS scores and arrest for domestic violence assault. Establishing such a link would establish the predictive validity of the instrument. At the same time, use of the DVMAS with groups which *may* vary in their myth endorsement (e.g. domestic violence advocates compared to men arrested for domestic violence assault) will help to establish normative data which can be used in later criterion validation studies.

Attitudes and Behavior

Following further validation, one of the more pressing research needs with the DVMAS is to explore the relationship between domestic violence myth acceptance and domestic violence behavior. Similar studies demonstrating a link between rape myth acceptance and a propensity to and commission of rape (Check & Malamuth, 1985; Lanier, 2001) have been of great theoretical and practical value. Does greater total myth acceptance predict greater likelihood of engaging in domestic violence behavior? Do high scores on certain factors indicate elevated risks of particular behaviors? One way to approach these research questions is to replicate the multivariate analysis research of Check and Malamuth (1985) who found that rape myth acceptance was positively correlated with self-reported likelihood of raping *and* that these self reports predicted later behavior. Similarly, future research could explore the relationship between endorsement of domestic violence myths and (1) the self-reported likelihood of engaging in domestic violence, (2) self-reports of actual past behavior, and (3) longitudinal reports of later arrest for domestic violence. Is there, as postulated by feminist theory, a confluence between domestic violence myth acceptance, self reports of likelihood of engaging in domestic violence and actual behavior? From their review of the rape myth literature, Hinck and Thomas conclude that rape myths are "a crucial factor in explanatory models of rape behavior" (1999, p. 1). This crucial role was further articulated by Reitzel-Jaffe and Wolfe (2001) who found that negative attitudes toward women mediated the link between witnessing domestic violence or experiencing abuse in childhood and later commission of domestic violence. Future research should explore the possibility

that domestic violence myths are likewise an important factor in explanatory models of domestic violence behavior.

Testing Theory

Following further successful validation of the instrument, future research using the DVMAS could also refine our understanding of the relationship of domestic violence myths and different theories of domestic violence. For example, the DVMAS could be used to test Johnson's hypothesis that family violence and feminist researchers have been examining two separate populations of abusive men: "patriarchal terrorists" and men who engage in "common couples conflict" (1995; 2001). If Johnson's hypothesis is correct, then men from these two populations should have significantly different DVMAS scores with the patriarchal terrorists having a significantly higher score than the men involved in common couples conflict. A lack of significant difference would call into question Johnson's assertion that there is a qualitative difference in the populations and dynamics of abuse.

Some evolutionary psychology theorists have predicted and found that rates of domestic violence decrease dramatically as women approach the end of childbearing years (Peters, Shackelford, & Buss, 2002). These same authors have suggested that these findings indicate a need to revise radical feminist theories of domestic violence so that the focus is explicitly on control over female sexuality rather than a global need or desire of males to control females (see also Smuts, 1996). To the extent that attitudes facilitate behavior, DVMAS scores of men partnered with reproductive aged women should be significantly higher than for men partnered with post reproductive aged women. This research would provide yet another test of one aspect of evolutionary psychological theorizing.

Finally theory, cross cultural research, and empirical studies show that rape myths decrease support for rape victims. The effect of domestic violence myths on social support for batterers and battered women needs to be experimentally evaluated.

Program Evaluation

Among the many research needs in which a further validated DVMAS would prove useful are studies of the effects of batterers intervention programs on domestic violence myth acceptance. Such programs are almost universally founded on pro-feminist theory and seek, through psychoeducational interventions, to alter men's thinking, feeling, and actions as they relate to their intimate partners. These programs are firmly founded on the assumed relationship between attitudes and behavior. Evaluation research could therefore assess if men who complete such programs show significant reductions in any or all of the factor scores on the DVMAS.

Similarly, the DVMAS could be used as a pre-post measure of support services with battered women. While women generally endorse fewer domestic violence myths, battered women are not immune from internalizing both the cultural messages about how they cause the violence and the explicit messages frequently given by batterer about the woman's responsibility for the violence (McGaha, 1998). The DVMAS could therefore be used as an evaluative measure of the progress women have made in discarding these victim-blaming myths.

Given the importance of violence prevention, the DVMAS can also be used in the evaluation of domestic violence prevention programs such as those conducted on college campuses, in high schools, and even some middle school settings.

In all of these evaluative uses, researchers can examine change in not only the overall DVMAS score but also the factor scores and scores on individual items that make up a scale (see, for example, Sunderland, 2002). This evaluation is useful in assessing areas in which prevention or psychoeducational programs are and are not effecting change. For example, if a post test reveals significant decrease on most, but not all factors or items of the DVMAS, those factors or items which remain unchanged indicate areas in which the program is less effective and may need to be redesigned. Thus the DVMAS may be useful in an ongoing process of program evaluation and evolution (DePoy & Gilson, 2003).

Implications for Practice and Policy

The implications for practice and policy resulting from this study are somewhat limited because the goal of the present study related only to the development and validation of an instrument to measure a construct (domestic violence myths) which previously existed only in theory and clinical practice. This study therefore represents a first step in a long process related to the development of a valid measure and articulation of the construct of domestic violence myths. In addition, no major implications for social work practice can be made based on a sample which is so clearly unrepresentative of the oppressed populations of interest for social workers. Substantial implications for practice will not emerge until the scale is further validated (and possibly revised) and then used in research studies which can be generalized to social work populations and practices. The implications for practice and policy which are discussed below therefore must be considered tentative and exploratory rather than definite or exhaustive.

Support for Battered Women

This study empirically confirmed the existence, at least in the population sampled, of domestic violence myths which blame the victim, exonerate the perpetrator, and minimize the seriousness of the abuse. In this section I explore the implications of this finding.

If, as is reasonable to assume, the construct of domestic violence myth acceptance is found to exist in other populations, this finding has implications regarding social support for battered women and social sanctions against batterers. In Chapter 2 I cited ethnographic as well as empirical and theoretical literature supporting the existence of a link between domestic violence myths and reduction of social support for crime victims. Based on that literature, we may find that societies, cultures, communities, and agencies with higher overall endorsement of domestic violence myths offer less support to battered women and more to batterers. If confirmed, this link between myths and support has implications for practice on every level from micro to macro. Judith Herman, in her review of the history of the study of trauma (1992) demonstrates that without external support (e.g. the support of an active political movement) awareness of the reality and dynamics of trauma fades from consciousness with alarming regularity and speed. This fading, she argues, occurs at the level of individual practitioners, agencies, professional organizations, state legislative bodies, and national deliberative and legislative bodies. Evidence of this fading phenomenon is available when studying a particular atrocity (e.g. the Armenian genocide of the early 1900s) or when studying a more narrow phenomenon such as the historical understanding of trauma-related dissociation (Ellenberger, 1970;

Masson, 1992; Putnam, 1989; Ross, 1989) or combat related psychiatric disorders (Ellenberger, 1970; Herman, 1992)

While myths may promote lack of support for domestic violence victims, Herman's work indicates that the problem may be more widespread in that myths promote marginalization of the problem of domestic violence, including its victims. At the same time, the myths exonerate the perpetrator so that the focus remains on, "Why does she stay" rather than "Why does he beat up someone he says he loves?" This shift of focus from the doer to the recipient may, in part, explain policies within fields such as child-welfare that say the battered woman, not the man, is guilty of child abuse if the children witness her being beaten up. A concomitant practice issue is that child welfare workers frequently force the victim and her children to leave the home of the batterer rather than using the powers of the state to force the batterer to relocate. This practice obviously punishes the victim and causes greater disruption for her and the children these workers are trying to help. A focus on the existence, prevalence, and impact of domestic violence myths among child-welfare personnel at all levels of the system may help reform policies and practices which arise out of and contribute to a lack of social support for victims.

Program Evaluation and Funding

The evaluation studies discussed previously may also have policy implications related to funding of programs to assist battered women. Such programs are constantly asked by funders to prove their effectiveness. The ability of such programs to demonstrate that they reduce internalized negative images among battered women could be linked with studies which show that women who make external rather than internal attributions recover more quickly

from traumatic events (Janoff-Bulman, 1979). Together, these findings would bolster the ability of these agencies to compete for funding.

In terms of programs for batterers, this study provides preliminary support for the radical feminist proposition that domestic violence myths are related to patriarchal views of women. If, as has been accomplished in the field of rape, a connection is established between domestic violence myth endorsement and battering behavior, this finding would undermine theories which stress the sociological and psychopathological etiologies of battering. In terms of practice, this finding would then indicate that programs for batterers should focus not on overcoming unemployment or ego deficits but rather on the underlying patriarchal and sexist attitudes which support violence against intimate partners. In terms of policy, this finding would indicate that programs for batterers should continue to be monitored and regulated by community coalitions which give a dominant role to battered women's advocacy agencies (Department of Corrections, 1998). Framed from the opposite perspective, establishing a link between domestic violence myths and battering behavior would indicate that programs which focus exclusively on anger management and substance abuse (Tanner, 2001) are ill-advised.

Conclusion

In this dissertation I have described the need, rationale for, and development and testing of a new measure of domestic violence myth acceptance. Based on a careful articulation of the underlying theory and construct of domestic violence myths, I was able to develop a scale that shows initial evidence of being a reliable and valid measure. It is my hope that this measure will prove useful to both researchers and practitioners and, through

skilled usage by both groups, will ultimately help change the very attitudes it measures and the culture in which those attitudes are born and nurtured. My final hope is that through this kind of social change, domestic violence becomes, like child labor or infanticide in North America, a rare occurrence, instantly recognized as aberrant, and universally condemned.

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Appendix A: Forms and Letters

Phase I Documents and Forms

Phase I: Focus Group Flyer

Free Lunch!!! **
Trade Your Opinions for
Free Lunch

I am developing a new, paper & pencil measure of attitudes toward domestic violence. I need people to try it out and make comments. Want to be a pilot tester?

In trade, I'll provide:
Pizza and Salads
(Meat, Veggie, Vegan)
Sodas, & Cider

Where: Room 102 Social Work Building
When: 12:00 to 1:00 on Tues, January 21, 2004

Please join in and contribute to the development of a
New Research Instrument.

Thanks, Jay Peters, Ph.D. Candidate

** You must be at least 18 years of age to participate

Phase I: Informed Consent

Welcome!

1. You are being asked to participate in a research project being conducted by Jay Peters, a graduate student in the Individualized Ph.D. program. The purpose of the research is to develop a new measure of domestic violence attitudes. You must be at least 18 years of age to participate.

What Will You Be Asked to Do?

2. If you decide to participate, you and a group of 5 to 15 individuals will be asked indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with statements such as "Domestic violence usually occurs in poor families." When everyone in the group has completed the form, the group will discuss questions such as "Were there any questions that anyone found unclear?" The entire session will last 60 minutes.

Risks

3. There is a possibility that you may become psychologically uncomfortable answering some of the questions in this study. There are no other foreseeable short- or long-term risks to you in participating in this study.

Benefits

4. Other than the free lunch, there are no direct benefits to you from participating in this study. Your participation will, however, contribute to an understanding of and ability to assess some domestic violence attitudes.

Confidentiality

5. Your name will not be on any of the documents related to the study. Please do not write your name on the questionnaire. I will not record names in my notes. Those notes and any notes you make on the questionnaire will be transcribed by me whereupon my notes and the questionnaires will be shredded. There will be no records linking you to the data. Study data will be destroyed at the completion of the study, scheduled for May 2003. My faculty advisor, Liz DePoy, will have access to de-identified data resulting from the study

Voluntary participation

6. Participation is voluntary. If you choose to take part in this study, you may stop at any time during the study and you may skip any questions you do not wish to answer. There are no negative consequences to stopping or skipping questions; you will still receive the free lunch. Return of the survey implies consent to participate.

Contact Information

If you have any questions about this study, please contact me at (581-2355, School of Social Work, or via FirstClass). You may also reach the faculty advisor on this study, Liz DePoy, at (581, 3255 or via FirstClass). If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact Gayle Anderson, Assistant to the University of Maine's Protection of Human Subjects Review Board, at 581-1498 (or e-mail gayle@maine.edu).

Phase I: Focus Group Questions

First, I'd like to start with some simple things:

Did anyone notice any grammatical or spelling errors on the form?
Were there any words that were unclear or mis-used?

Now, more generally:

Were there any questions which anyone found unclear?

Were there any questions which anyone found confusing?
Were there any questions which anyone had difficulty answering?

Focus Group Debriefing

Thank you for participating in this study.

This is the first of three phases of a study to develop and test the reliability and validity of a new instrument to measure what are commonly called domestic violence myths or false beliefs. Your answers will help me revise the instrument for content and clarity before pilot testing.

If you found answering these questions has caused you psychological distress, you may want to contact either Spruce Run (945-5102) or Cutler Health Center (581-4000) to talk with someone.

Again, thank you for your time and effort participating in this study.

Jay Peters

Phase II Documents and Forms

Phase II First E-mail Notice

Subject: Research request

I am writing to ask your help in a study of attitudes toward violence that I am conducting here at The University of Maine.*

The goal of this project is to develop a new measure of some of those attitudes. In the long term, my hope is that this measure will help programs that actually reduce violence on campuses and in communities.

This study is anonymous. Your name will not appear on any study data. In fact, even the numerical "name" of your computer (e.g. 130.111.123) that is automatically recorded will be deleted from the data!

Completing this questionnaire is entirely voluntary. You can help us very much, however, by clicking on the link below and completing the survey.

If you have any questions or comments about this study, I would be happy to talk with you (581-2355) or to hear from you by e-mail (Jay Peters on FirstClass).

Thank you very much for helping with this important study. To participate, please click on the link below.

Link to study: http://www.umaine.edu/sws/welcomeII.htm

Jay Peters,
Ph.D. Candidate, Individualized Program

* You must be at least 18 years of age to participate.

Phase II Second E-mail Notice

Subject: Re: Research Request

Over 250 hundred people have already responded to my request last week for help with a research study. The data look very promising and will help enormously in this important research project. Thank you to everyone who already responded!

If you have not yet responded and would like to,* please click on the link below. Your response will dramatically increase the value of the data I especially need to hear from men so that the results accurately reflect what you think!

Link to study: http://www.umaine.edu/sws/welcomeII.htm

Thanks again to everyone for taking the time to complete this study.

Jay

P.S. Many people wanted to know: Your name was selected at random from the 14,000+ names in the FirstClass directory.

* You must be at least 18 years of age to participate.

Phase II Informed Consent

Welcome!

7. You are being asked to participate in a research project being conducted by Jay Peters, a graduate student in the Individualized Ph.D. program. The purpose of the research is to develop a new instrument of domestic violence attitudes in order to fill a gap in existing research instruments, research, and knowledge.

What Will You Be Asked to Do?

8. If you decide to participate,* you will be asked to click on different radio buttons to indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with statements such as "Domestic violence usually occurs in poor families." It will take approximately 20 minutes to complete the form.

Risks

9. There is the possibility that you may become uncomfortable answering the questions. There are no other foreseeable risks to you in participating in this study.

Benefits

10. Other than feeling good about your contribution to research knowledge, there are no direct benefits to you from participating in this study. Your participation will, however, increase our understanding of and ability to assess some domestic violence attitudes.

Confidentiality

11. This study is anonymous. There will be no records linking you to the data.

Voluntary

12. Participation is voluntary. If you choose to take part in this study, you may stop at any time during the study. You may skip any questions you do not wish to answer. Clicking on the "Submit my answers" button at the end of the survey implies consent to participate.

Contact Information

13. If you have any questions about this study, please contact me at (581-2355, School of Social Work, or via FirstClass). You may also reach the faculty advisor on this study, Liz DePoy, at (581, 3255 or via FirstClass). If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact Gayle Anderson, Assistant to the University of Maine's Protection of Human Subjects Review Board, at 581-1498 (or e-mail gayle@maine.edu).

* You must be at least 18 years of age to participate.

Phase II: Debriefing Letter

Thank you for participating in this study.

This is the second of three phases of a study to develop and test the reliability and validity of a new instrument to measure what are commonly called domestic violence myths or false beliefs. Your answers will help me determine which questions should be retained, and which omitted from the final version of the instrument. In addition your answers will help me take a first look at the structure of domestic violence myths.

If you found answering these questions has caused you psychological distress, you may want to contact either Spruce Run (945-5102) or Cutler Health Center (581-4000) to talk with someone.

Again, thank you for your time and effort participating in this study.

Jay Peters

Phase III

Phase III: Pre-notice letter

Subject: Upcoming research request

In a couple of days you will receive an e-mail request to fill out a brief questionnaire for an important research project being conducted here at The University of Maine.

The research concerns attitudes toward violence and contains a new attitude scale which students, faculty, and staff here helped me develop earlier this year.

I am writing now because many people like to know ahead of time when something important is coming via e-mail. This study is important as it will help us understand (and eventually change) attitudes which support violence. Your name was chosen at random from the FirstClass directory. If you prefer not to participate, please let me know and I will remove your name from the list.

Thank you for your time and consideration. It is only with the generous help of people like you that this research can be successful. Please note, you must be at least 18 years of age to participate.

Jay Peters,
Ph.D. Candidate, Individualized Program

Phase III: Request to Participate

Subject: Research request

I am writing to ask your help in a study of attitudes toward violence that I am conducting here at The University of Maine. Your name was chosen at random from the FirstClass directory.

While some attitudes toward violence have been studied a lot, others are virtually unknown. This study will help us measure and understand one of the unknowns. Then, in the long term, I hope this research will help in the development of programs that will actually reduce violence on campuses and in our communities.

Your answers are completely confidential. Your name will not appear anywhere on the completed survey and even the numerical "name" of your computer will be deleted from the mailing list so that your name cannot be connected with your answers in any way. Completing this questionnaire is entirely voluntary. You can help us very much, however, by clicking on the link below and completing the survey.

If you have any questions or comments about this study, I would be happy to talk with you (581-2355) or to hear from you by e-mail (by reply to this message or to Jay Peters on FirstClass).

Thank you very much for helping with this important study. To participate, click on the link below.*

Click here for the study: http://www.umaine.edu/sws/welcome.htm

Jay Peters,

Ph.D. Candidate, Individualized Program

* You must be at least 18 years of age to participate. Your name was chosen at random from the FirstClass directory but if you wish not to participate and not to receive reminders, please just let me know and I will remove your name from the list.

Phase III: First Follow-up Letter

Subject: Re: Research request

Last week I sent letter requesting your help with some research I am conducting.

Many people have already responded to the survey on attitudes toward violence, but I really want to make sure that I hear from you. I am especially grateful for your help because it is only by hearing from everyone who was selected that I can really understand these attitudes.

Thank you in advance for your time and effort filling out the survey.*

Link to study: http://www.umaine.edu/sws/welcome.htm

Jay Peters,
Ph.D. Candidate, Individualized Program
(581-2355)

* You must be at least 18 years of age to participate. If you already filled out the survey or would prefer not to be contacted with future reminders about this study, please let me know and I will remove your name from the list.

Phase III: Second Follow-up Letter

Subject: Final request Re: Research request

I Really Want to Know!

Over the past weeks, I have written requesting your help with research I am conducting on attitudes toward violence. If you already filled out the survey and submitted it, please accept my thanks and ignore this letter.

People who respond later to such surveys often have quite different thoughts and opinions than do people who respond right away. This means that your response is **very** important for me to get an accurate picture of attitudes towards violence, not one biased by the people who responded right away.

I therefore hope that you will take approximately 20 minutes to click on the link below and fill out the survey. Your thoughts and opinions are important to make sure I get it right and don't draw conclusions that don't really reflect the attitudes and ideas of people here at The University of Maine.

Remember, your responses are strictly confidential. Your name never appears on the survey and even your computer's numerical "name" is immediately removed from the data so that individual names can never be connected with answers in any way. Protecting the confidentiality of people's answers is very important to me and to the University. You must, however, be at least 18 years of age to participate.

Thank you very much,
Jay Peters

Click here to go to the study: http://www.umaine.edu/sws/welcome.htm

P.S. If you would like to contact me to talk about this research you can either reply to this e-mail or call me at 581-2355. Thanks again.

Phase III: Thank you letter

Thank you **so** much for completing and submitting the survey on attitudes toward violence. I truly appreciate the time and effort you took to help out with this important research.

Thanks again, Jay

Phase III: Welcome Screen

Attitudes Towards Violence

Welcome!
Thank you for deciding to look at this study. If you are over 18 years of age, please read on. **

Importance
Despite tons (literally) of research on attitudes toward certain kinds of violence such as rape, we know much less about some other attitudes. Because attitudes shape behavior and attitudes can change, your participation in this study will help us understand what change is needed, possible, and desired in order to reduce violence in society. Your participation will be very helpful and greatly appreciated.

Time
Competing the questionnaire will take about half an hour. Press "Yes" below if you would like to contribute to this research, otherwise press "No Thanks" to exit this page. Thanks, Jay

Yes! No Thanks

** You must be at least 18 years of age to participate in the study.

Phase III: Informed Consent

Attitudes Toward Violence Survey
Voluntary Consent Form

Introduction

The information below will help you make an informed decision about your consent to participate in this project. You are being asked to participate in a research study conducted by Jay Peters, Ph.D. Candidate, Individualized Program. You must be at least 18 years of age to participate.

Purpose

This research will help us understand the nature of and relationships between different attitudes toward violence and non-violence.

What's Involved

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to answer a series of questions. For example, you will be asked to indicate how true the following statement is for you: "I sometimes try to get even rather than forgive and forget." Other questions ask how much you agree or disagree with statements such as "A man should be arrested if he hits his wife." Answering all the questions takes most people about half an hour.

Risks

There are two groups of questions in this study which may cause some people to become uncomfortable. The first group of 18 questions ask you to agree or disagree with common statements about domestic violence such as "Men who hit women are under a lot of stress." These questions may cause some people to feel uncomfortable or angry.

A second group of questions concern common attitudes toward rape and may also cause some people to feel uncomfortable or angry.

Benefits

While this study will probably not benefit you directly, this research will help us learn about the relationships between different attitudes toward violence. In addition, the research contains a pilot test of a new research instrument. I will share the results of this research (and the instrument) with interested people and groups throughout the state and at national conferences and in international journals. It is my hope that the research and instrument will contribute to social change reducing violence in human relationships.

Confidentiality

Your answers are completely confidential. Your name will not appear anywhere on the completed survey and even the numerical "name" of your computer will be deleted from the database so that your name cannot be connected with your answers in any way. When you return your survey I ask that you send me an e-

mail saying you have completed the form so that I can remove your name from the master list of study participants, further protecting your confidentiality.

While the study is underway the data will be electronically stored on a password protected web site at the University of Maine. Once all responses have been received the data will be stored on my laptop computer which is kept in my possession or in my locked office at all times. My faculty advisor, Liz DePoy, Ph.D., will have access to the data until the study is complete. I will keep the data indefinitely.

Voluntary Participation

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You may stop at any time or skip any questions you do not want to answer without any negative consequences.

Contact Information

If you have any questions about the research or participating in the study, please contact myself or my faculty advisor:

Jay Peters, Ph.D. Candidate
School of Social Work
University of Maine
Orono, Me 04469
207-581-2355
jpeters@maine.edu

Elizabeth DePoy, Ph.D.
School of Social Work
University of Maine
Orono, Me 04469
207-581-2399

If you have questions about your rights as a research subject, please contact Gayle Anderson, Special Assistant for Research Administration, 581-1498 or gayle@maine.edu.

Your Choice

If you agree to participate in this research study, click on "Yes!" below to indicate your consent and go to the survey. Clicking the "Yes!" button implies you have read and understood the above information. Otherwise, click "No thanks" to exit.

Thank you very much for your participation, Jay Peters

Yes! No Thanks

Remember, you must be at least 18 years of age to participate.

Phase III: Debriefing Information

Thank You
Your survey responses have been entered in the database for this study.

Thank you for taking the time to respond to this survey. Your reply will help generate new knowledge about attitudes toward violence. More information about the study is available below.

Avoid Reminders
If you send me an e-mail message saying simply that you submitted your survey, I will remove your name from the mailing list so you don't get sent follow up requests. (click here to send mail)

Debriefing Information
The immediate goal of the research you participated in is to develop a way to measure what are commonly called domestic violence myths. In addition to the 20 myth questions you answered, I included many other questions related to different attitudes in order to compare the measure of domestic violence myths with other, established attitude measures. This comparison will help determine whether the new domestic violence myth measure is valid (measures what I think it measures)

The long-term aim of having a valid measure of domestic violence myths is to be able to measure and alter the underlying social beliefs which promote violence between intimate partners.

If completing this survey has left you feeling uncomfortable or upset in any way I have listed some organizations which provide free counseling services. These organizations know about the study I am doing and are prepared to talk with and assist you.

Resources
On campus:
Cutler Health Center
University of Maine
581-4179

Off campus:
Spruce Run
P.O. 653
Bangor, ME 04402-0653
945-5102

Contacts
If you would like any additional information about this study please don't hesitate to contact me that the address below. Again, many thanks for your participation. Jay

If you have questions about your rights as a research subject, please contact Gayle Anderson, Special Assistant for Research Administration, 581-1498 or gayle@maine.edu,

Jay Peters
School of Social Work
University of Maine
Orono, Maine 04469
(207) 581-2355
jpeters@maine.edu

Appendix B: Instruments

Attitudes Toward Violence (ATV) scale

1. Any nation should be ready with a strong military at all times.
2. War can be just.
3. A violent revolution can be perfectly right.
4. Every nation should have a war industry.
5. The manufacture of weapons is necessary.
6. War is often necessary.
7. The government should send armed soldiers to control violent University riots.
8. Universities should use armed police against students who destroy University property.
9. War in self-defense is perfectly right.
10. It is all right for the government to stop violent outbursts in neighboring countries with our armed soldiers.
11. Our country should be aggressive with its military internationally.
12. Spying on our nation should be severely dealt with.
13. Killing of civilians should be accepted as an unavoidable part of war.
14. Violence against the enemy should be part of every nation's defense.
15. Out country has the right to protect its borders forcefully.
16. Capital punishment is often necessary.
17. Prisoners should never get out of their sentence early for good behavior.

18. Violent crimes should be punished violently.
19. The death penalty should be part of every penal code.
20. Any prisoner deserves to be mistreated by other prisoners in jail.
21. Prisoners should have more severe sentences than they do.
22. No mater how severe the crime, no one should pay with "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth."

Velicer, W. F., Huckel, L. H., & Hansen, C. E. (1989). A measurement model for measuring attitudes toward violence. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 15*(3), 349-364.

Attitudes Towards Wife Abuse (AWA) scale *(Briere, 1987)*

1. A wife should move out of the house if her husband hits her. *
2. A man is never justified in hitting his wife. *
3. A husband should have the right to discipline his wife when it is necessary.
4. A man's home is his castle.
5. A man should be arrested if he hits his wife.*
6. A man is entitled to sex with his wife whenever he wants it.
7. Wife beating is grounds for divorce.*
8. Some women seem to ask for beatings from their husbands.

* Items scored in reverse.

Briere, J. (1987). Predicting self-reported likelihood of battering: Attitudes and childhood experiences. *The Journal of Research in Personality, 21,* 61-69.

Attitudes Toward Women (ATW) scale

The statements listed below describe attitudes toward the role of women in society that different people have. There are no right or wrong answers, only opinions. You are asked to express you feeling about each statement by indicating whether you (A) agree strongly, (B) agree mildly, (C) disagree mildly, or (D) disagree strongly. Please indicate your opinion by blackening either A, B, C, or D. on the answer sheet for each item.

AS 1 Swearing and obscenity are more repulsive in the speech of a woman than of a man.

DS 2 Women should take increasing responsibility for leadership in solving the intellectual and social problems of the day.

DS 3 Both husband and wife should be allowed the same grounds for divorce.

AS 4 Telling dirty jokes should be mostly a masculine prerogative.

AS 5 Intoxication among women is worse than intoxication among men.

DS 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.

DS 7 It is insulting to women to have the "obey" clause remain in the marriage service.

DS 8 There should be a strict merit system put in appointment and promotions without regard to sex.

DS 9 A woman should be as free as a man to propose marriage.

AS 10 Women should worry less about their rights and more about becoming good wives and mothers.

DS 11 Women earning as much as their dates should bear equally the expenses when they go out together.

DS 12 Women should assume their rightful placed in business and all the professions along with men.

AS 13 A woman should not expect to go to exactly the same places or have quite the same freedom of action as a man.

AS 14 Sons in a family should be given more encouragement to go to college than daughters.

AS 15 It is ridiculous for a woman to run a locomotive and for a man to darn socks.

AS 16 In general, the father should have greater authority than the mother in the brining up of the children.

AS 17 Women should be encouraged not to become sexually intimate with anyone before marriage, even their fiancés.

DS 18 The husband should not be favored by law over the wife in the disposal of family property or income.

AS 19 Women should be concerned with their duties of childbearing and house tending rather than with desires for professional and business careers.

AS 20 The intellectual leadership of a community should be largely in the hands of men.

DS 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.

AS 22 On average, women should be regarded as less capable of contributing to economic production than are men.

AS 23 There are many jobs in which men should be given preference over women in being hired or promoted.

DS 24 Women should be given equal opportunity with men for apprenticeship in the various trades.

DS 25 The modern girl is entitled to the same freedom from regulation and control that is given to the modern boy.

*The most conservative choice is scored as 0. [Agree strongly = 0; recode items marked DS]

Spence, J. T., Helmreich, R. L., and Stapp, J. (1974). A short version of the Attitudes Toward Women Scale (AWS). *Bulletin of Psychonomic Society, 2,* 219-220.

Domestic Violence Myth Acceptance Scale

1. Domestic violence does not affect many people
2. When a man is violent it is because he lost control of his temper.
3. If a woman continues living with a man who beat her then its her own fault if she is beaten again
4. Making a man jealous is asking for it.
5. Some women unconsciously want their partners to control them.
6. A lot of domestic violence occurs because women keep on arguing about things with their partners.
7. If a woman doesn't like it, she can leave.
8. Most domestic violence involves mutual violence between the partners.
9. Abusive men lose control so much that they don't know what they're doing.
10. I hate to say it, but if a woman stays with the man who abused her, she basically deserves what she gets.
11. Domestic violence rarely happens in my neighborhood
12. Women who flirt are asking for it.
13. Women can avoid physical abuse if they give in occasionally.
14. Many women have an unconscious wish to be dominated by their partners.
15. Domestic violence results from a momentary loss of temper.
16. I don't have much sympathy for a battered woman who keeps going back to the abuser.
17. Women instigate most family violence.
18. If a woman goes back to the abuser, how much is that due to something in her character?

Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (Burt, 1980)

1. A woman who goes to the home or apartment of a man on their first date implies that she is willing to have sex.
2. Any female can get raped.
3. One reason that women falsely report a rape is that they frequently have a need to call attention to themselves.
4. Any healthy woman can successfully resist a rapist if she really wants to.
5. When women go around braless or wearing short skirts and tight tops they are just asking for trouble.
6. In the majority of rapes, the victim is promiscuous or has a bad reputation.
7. If a girl engages in necking or petting and she lets things get out of hand, it is her own fault if her partner forces sex on her.
8. Women who get raped while hitchhiking get what they deserve.
9. A woman who is stuck-up and thinks she is too good to talk to guys on the street deserves to be taught a lesson.
10. Many women have an unconscious wish to be raped, and may then unconsciously set up a situation in which they are likely to be attacked.
11. If a woman gets drunk at a party and has intercourse with a man she's just met there, she should be considered "fair game" to other males at the party who want to have sex with her too, whether she wants to or not.
12. What percentage of women who report a rape would you say are lying because they are angry and want to get back at the man they accuse?
13. What percentage of reported rapes would you guess were merely invented by women who discovered they were pregnant and wanted to protect their own reputation?

A person comes to you and claims they were raped. How likely would you be to believe their statement if the person were:

14. your best friend?

15. an Indian woman?

16. a neighborhood woman?

17. a young boy?

18. a black woman?

19. a white woman?

Burt, M. R (1980). Cultural myths and support for rape. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 38,* 217-230.

Used with permission of the author

Sex Role Stereotyping (Burt, 1980)

Seven point scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree

1. A man should fight when the woman he's with is insulted by another man.
2. It is acceptable for the woman to pay for the date
3. A woman should be a virgin when she marries
4. There is something wrong with a woman who doesn't want to marry and raise a family
5. It is better for a woman to use her feminine charm to get what she wants rather than to ask for it outright
6. It is acceptable for a woman to have a career, but marriage and family should come first
7. It looks worse for a woman to be drunk than for a man to be drunk.
8. There is nothing wrong with a woman going to a bar alone.

Burt, M. R (1980). Cultural myths and support for rape. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 38*(2), 217-230.

Short Form of Marlow–Crowne Social Desirability Scale

Listed below are a number of statements concerning personal attitudes and traits. Read each item carefully and decide how true or false the statement is as it pertains to your personality.

[6 point Likert scale with anchors of "Always True" to "Always False"]

1. No matter who I'm talking to, I'm always a good listener.
2. I have sometimes taken unfair advantage of another person.
3. I am always courteous, even to people who are disagreeable.
4. I sometimes try to get even, rather than forgive and forget.
5. I am quick to admit making a mistake.
6. I sometime feel resentful when I don't get my own way.
7. I am always willing to admit when I make a mistake
8. There have been occasions when I took advantage of someone I disliked.
9. I would never think of letting someone else be punished for my wrongdoing
10. At times I have wished that something bad would happen to someone I disliked.

Crowne, D. P., & Marlowe, D. (1960). A new scale of social desirability independent of psychopathology. *Journal of Consulting Psychology, 24*(4), 349, 354.

Used with permission of the author.

Short version tested by:

Greenwald, H. J. & Satow, Y. (1970). A short social desirability scale. *Psychological Reports, 27*, 131-135.

Demographic Questions

Now for some easy demographic questions that may help us further understand how people responded to all these questions:

1. Your age (in years): _____
2. Your sex (Circle one): Female Male
3. Your sexual orientation (Circle one): straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual
4. Your marital status (Circle one): Single Married Separated Divorced Partnered
5. Your relationship status (Circle one):
6. a) Currently I am in a long term committed relationship
7. b) Currently I am not in a long term committed relationship
8. Your status at The University of Maine
    - Undergraduate student
    - Graduate student
    - Staff
    - Faculty
    - Other (Please describe) _____

Appendix C: Initial Item Pool

No.	Factor*	Item
1	Beh	Men often get violent because they are tired of being nagged by their partners.
2	Beh	Most batterers aren't violent with other people, so the partner must provoke it.
3	Beh	The victim often provokes the man past the breaking point.
4	Beh	If a woman is hit, she must have done something to provoke it.
5	Beh	A lot of domestic violence occurs because women keep on arguing about things with their partners.
6	Beh	Women can avoid physical abuse if they give in occasionally.
7	Beh	Women often do things that provoke their partners to get violent.
8	Beh	Women instigate most family violence.
9	Beh	Any woman can avoid being beaten by her boyfriend.
10	Beh	Making a man jealous is asking for it.
11	Beh	The violence would stop if she would get out of the house when he's about to blow up
12	Beh	She should be able to tell when he's about to get violent.
13	Beh	By staying in the relationship, the woman invites the abuse.
14	Beh	It is okay to get loud if your partner keeps nagging you.
15	Beh	Women who flirt are asking for it.
16	Beh	If a woman provokes her partner, how responsible is she if he gets violent?

17	Char	Some women get addicted to violent men.
18	Char	Many women have an unconscious wish to be dominated by their partners.
19	Char	Some women unconsciously want their partners to control them.
20	Char	Some women like their man to show that he's the boss now and then
21	Char	Women only respect men who dominate them.
22	Char	Victims unconsciously seek out abuse.
23	Char	Women with low self-esteem are drawn to abusive relationships.
24	Char	Most victims of domestic violence have psychological disorders.
25	Char	Domestic violence victims are not strong willed enough to stop being victimized.
26	Char	If a woman doesn't like it, she can leave.
27	Char	If women didn't like it, they wouldn't stay.
28	Char	I don't have much sympathy for a battered woman who keeps going back to the abuser.
29	Char	I hate to say it, but if a woman stays with the man who abused her, she basically deserves what she gets.
30	Char	If a woman continues living with a man who beat her then its her own fault if she is beaten again
31	Char	If a woman stays in the relationship after being beaten, how responsible is she for what happens to her?

32	Char	If a woman goes back to the abuser, how much is that due to something in her character?
33	Exon	A man who hits his partner was probably abused as a kid.
34	Exon	Alcohol or drug abuse causes domestic violence.
35	Exon	Alcohol or drug abuse causes men to be violent.
36	Exon	Alcohol is usually a big part of the problem when a man hits his partner.
37	Exon	Domestic violence is sometimes okay because God wants men to be in control of their families.
38	Exon	Domestic violence only occurs when the abuser is drunk, or high on drugs.
39	Exon	Having a really bad day at work causes a lot of domestic violence
40	Exon	The abuser is just momentarily out of control
41	Exon	When a man is violent it is because he lost control of his temper.
42	Exon	Abusive men lose control so much that they don't know what they're doing.
43	Exon	Men who abuse their partners usually grew up in violent homes.
44	Exon	Domestic violence results from a momentary loss of temper.
45	Exon	Men who abuse have a hard time communicating.
46	Exon	Men who abuse have a hard time expressing their feelings.
47	Exon	Guys who grew up poor are more likely to hit their partners.
48	Exon	If a man is drunk, how responsible is he if he gets violent with his partner?

49	MinS	Battering is too strong a term to describe most domestic violence.
50	MinS	The harm caused by domestic violence is mostly no big deal.
51	MinS	It is not really domestic violence if there is no physical violence.
52	MinS	Most domestic violence just involves pushing and shoving.
53	MinS	Most domestic violence involves mutual violence between the partners.
54	MinS	Women are just as violent toward their partners as men are.
55	MinS	The abuse can't be that bad or she'd leave.
56	MinS	If the abuse were really hurtful, the woman would put the man in jail
57	MinS	If the woman does not get a restraining or protective order then the abuse must not have been serious
58	MinS	If my partner ever hit me, I'd be out of there so fast it would make your head spin.
59	MinS	If my partner ever hit me, I'd give it right back to them.
60	MinS	If a man is only violent toward his partner once or twice a year, how serious is the violence?
61	MinE	Domestic violence doesn't happen very often in my community.
62	MinE	Domestic violence rarely happens in my neighborhood
63	MinE	Domestic violence does not affect many people
64	MinE	Domestic violence is rare
65	MinE	Women frequently fabricate allegations of abuse to hurt their former partner.
66	MinE	Women often invent or exaggerate stories of abuse.

67	MinE	After a relationship ends, many women make up or exaggerate stories of abuse.
68	MinE	What percentage of women who report being physically abused would you say are lying because they want to get back at the man they accuse?
69	MinE	I can tell who the batterers are
70	MinE	Domestic violence is usually a one-time, isolated occurrence.
71	Non	I can understand why a woman would stay with a man who beat her up.**
72	Non	I understand why many battered women don't leave.**
73	Non	Battered women often stay in the relationship because it is too dangerous to leave.**
74	Non	Battered women are extraordinarily resourceful in trying to stop the violence.**
75	Non	Anyone can be battered**
76	Non	Domestic violence is a serious social problem.**
77	Non	There is no excuse for anyone to hit his or her partner, ever.**
78	Non	No matter what a woman does, she does not deserve to be beaten.**
79	Non	Alcohol does not cause someone to get violent with his or her partner.**
80	Non	Abusive men choose to get violent or not.**

* Factors: Beh = Behavioral blame, Char = Character blame, Exon = Exoneration, Min = minimization of seriousness, MinE = minimization of extent

** Indicate non-myth items which were reverse scored

Appendix D: Item Survival Map

-1 Detracts from this element
1 Contributes to this element

Item # in Scale	Item	Orig Factor	Final score	Missing Data
17	I don't have much sympathy for a battered	Char	12	
34	Some women unconsciously want their	Char	9	
44	Domestic violence doesn't happen very often	MinE	9	
2	Domestic violence rarely happens in my neig	MinE	9	
21	Women frequently fabricate allegations of ab	MinE	9	
11	Some women like their man to show that he'	Char	8	
35	Alcohol or drug abuse causes domestic vio	Exon	8	
76	Alcohol or drug abuse causes men to be vio	Exon	8	
41	Abusive men lose control so much that they	Exon	8	
46	Victims unconsciously seek out abuse.	Char	6	
74	If a woman doesn't like it, she can leave.	Char	6	
36	I hate to say it, but if a woman stays with the	Char	6	
26	If a woman stays in the relationship after bei	Char	6	
75	Domestic violence results from a momentary	Exon	6	
68	Domestic violence does not affect many peo	MinE	6	
9	Making a man jealous is asking for it.	Beh	5	
66	Many women have an unconscious wish to b	Char	5	
57	If a woman continues living with a man who	Char	5	
29	Alcohol is usually a big part of the problem	Exon	5	
77	When a man is violent it is because he lost co	Exon	5	-2
25	Battering is too strong a term to describe mo	MinS	5	
78	A lot of domestic violence occurs because w	Beh	4	
42	Women instigate most family violence.	Beh	4	
40	If a woman goes back to the abuser, how mu	Char	4	
3	Men who abuse their partners usually grew	Exon	4	
59	Men who abuse have a hard time expressing	Exon	4	
72	After a relationship ends, many women mak	MinE	4	
32	Most domestic violence involves mutual viol	MinS	4	-1
18	Women can avoid physical abuse if they give	Beh	3	
19	Women who flirt are asking for it.	Beh	3	
55	Most domestic violence just involves pus	MinS	3	
14	If the abuse were really hurtful, the woman	MinS	3	
54	If a woman is hit, she must have done some	Beh	2	
5	Women often do things that provoke their p	Beh	2	
12	She should be able to tell when he's about to	Beh	2	

Males Skewed after Transfor	Females Skewed after Transfor	Scale Variance	r > .576 or r < .30 Item-Total Correlation	Correlate with < 6 items	Correlate with <10 > 5 or > 19	Initial Factor for women	Loads on multiple Factors
		1	1		-1	2	
			1		-1	1	
						1	
						1	
			1	-1	-1	1	
						1	
					1	1	
					1	1	
						1	
						1	
		1				1	
	-1		1		-1	2	
						2	
					-1	1	
			1			1	
	-1				-1	1	
			1	-1	-1	1	
	-1		1	-1	-1	2	
					1	1	
		1				1	
					-1	1	
			1	-1	-1	2	
	-1				-1	1	
			1			1	-1
			-1		1	1	
					1	1	
			1	-1	-1	-1	-1
						-1	
	-1				-1	2	
	-1					2	
						1	
							-1
	-2	-1			-1	1	
			1	-1	-1	1	
					-1	-1	

Initial Factor for Men	Loads on multiple Factors	Overall Scale Reliabil	Theory Factor Reliable	Female Theory Factor Loading	Loads on > 1 Factor Wome	Male Theory Factor Loadin	Loads on > 1 Factor Men	Factor Variance	Item-Factor Total Correlate
1			1	1	2		2		1	1
1			1	1	2		2	-1	1	1
1			1	1	2		2			1
1			1	1	2		2			1
1			1	1	2		2		1	1
1			1	1	2		2			
1				1	1		2			1
1				1	1		2			1
1			1		2		2			1
1			1	1			2			
1			1		2				1	-1
1					2		2			
1	-1		1		2				1	
1			1		2		2			
1	-1			1	2	-1	2	-1		1
1					2		2			1
1	-1		1	1	2			-1	1	1
1					2		2			
1							2			
1			1	1					1	1
1					2		2			
1						-1	2			1
1					2		2			
1			1						1	
1							2			
1				1				-1		1
1				1	2		2			1
1			1	1			2			1
1							2			
1	-1				2					
-1				1	2	-1	2			-1
1				1		-1	2			1
1					2		2	-1		1
1				1		-1				1
1			1	1					1	

Item # in Scale	Item	Orig Factor	Final score	Missing Data
7	If a woman provokes her partner, how resp	Beh	2	
69	Some women get addicted to violent men.	Char	2	
1	Domestic violence victims are not strong wil	Char	2	
70	Men who abuse have a hard time communic	Exon	2	
80	What percentage of women who report bein	MinE	2	
52	Alcohol does not cause someone to get viole	Non	2	
61	The victim often provokes the man past the b	Beh	1	
71	The abuser is just momentarily out of control	Exon	1	-1
43	If my partner ever hit me, I'd give it right bac	MinS	1	
6	If a man is only violent toward his partner o	MinS	1	
60	Men often get violent because they are tired	Beh	0	
58	The violence would stop if she would get out	Beh	0	
63	A man who hits his partner was probably ab	Exon	0	
30	Guys who grew up poor are more likely to h	Exon	0	
38	Women with low self-esteem are drawn to a	Char	-1	
27	If women didn't like it, they wouldn't stay.	Char	-1	
13	Having a really bad day at work causes a lot	Exon	-1	
65	It is not really domestic violence if there is n	MinS	-1	
15	Anyone can be battered*	Non	-1	
53	Any woman can avoid being beaten by her b	Beh	-2	
22	By staying in the relationship, the woman in	Beh	-2	
39	Women are just as violent toward their patn	MinS	-2	
24	The abuse can't be that bad or she'd leave.	MinS	-2	
79	If the woman does not get a restraining or pr	MinS	-2	-1
23	I can understand why a woman would stay	Non	-2	
56	I understand why many battered women do	Non	-2	
37	Abusive men choose to get violent or not.	Non	-2	
47	It is okay to get loud if your partner keeps na	Beh	-3	
20	Most victims of domestic violence have psy	Char	-3	
28	Women often invent or exaggerate stories of	MinE	-3	
31	Battered women often stay in the relationshi	Non	-3	
16	Battered women are extraordinarily resourc	Non	-3	
4	Domestic violence only occurs when the abu	Exon	-4	
73	I can tell who the batterers are	MinE	-5	
10	Most batterers aren't violent with other peo	Beh	-6	
45	Domestic violence is rare	MinE	-6	
49	If my partner ever hit me, I'd be out of there	MinS	-6	
50	Domestic violence is usually a one-time, isol	MinE	-7	
48	Domestic violence is a serious social problem	Non	-7	
33	There is no excuse for anyone to hit his or he	Non	-7	

Males Skewed after Transform	Females Skewed after Transform	Scale Variance	r > .576 or r < .30 Item-Total Correlation	Correlate with < 6 items	Correlate with <10 > 5 or > 19	Initial Factor for women	Loads on multiple Factors
					-1	-1	-1	
						1	-1	
						-1	1	
				-1		1	1	
						-1	-1	
				-1		1	1	
		-1				-1	1	
				1		-1	-1	-1
			1				-1	
							-1	-1
						-1	1	
						-1	1	
				-1		1	1	
							1	
						1	1	
		-1					1	
							-1	
		-2					1	
		-1	1	-1		1	1	
			1				-1	
			1				-1	-1
						1	-1	
		-1				-1	1	-1
		-2	-1				-1	-1
			1	-1		1	-1	
			1	-1		1	-1	
			1	-1		1	-1	
							-1	
							-1	
					-1	-1	-1	
				-1		1	-1	
				-1		1	-1	
-1	-1						-2	
				-1				
	-2					-1	-1	-1
	-2	-1					1	
				-1		1	-1	
	-1	-1					-1	
	-2	-1		-1			-1	
-1	-2						-2	

Initial Factor for Men	Loads on multiple Factors	Overall Scale Reliabil	Theory Factor Reliable	Female Theory Factor Loadin	Loads on > 1 Factor Wome	Male Theory Factor Loadin	Loads on > 1 Factor Men	Factor Variance	Item-Factor Total Correlate
1		1	1	2		2	-1		-1
1						2			-1
1		1			-1			1	
1			1				-2		1
1				2		2			-1
1									
1					-1	2			
1	-1			2		2			
-1			1			2			-1
1						2			
-1		1	1						-1
1					-2				1
1		-1							-1
-1					-1	2			-1
-1							-1		-1
1			-1						-1
-1						2			-1
1	-1			2			-1	-1	
-1								-1	
-1									-1
1	-1	1	-1						-1
-1			1				-1		-1
1					-1		-1		1
				2		2		-1	1
-1		-1							
-1		-1							
-1		-1							
-1			1		-1				-1
-1									-1
1	-1								
-1		-1							
-1		-1							
-1							-1	-1	-1
1					-1		-1		
-1					-1		-1	-1	
-1		-1	-1					-1	-1
-1					-1			-1	-1
-1								-1	
-2									

	Item	Orig Factor	Final score	Missing Data
51	If a man is drunk, how responsible is he if he gets violent with his partner?	Exon	-8	
8	No matter what a woman does, she does not deserve to be beaten.*	NonBeh	-8	
62	Women only respect men who dominate them.	Char	-9	
67	The harm caused by domestic violence is mostly no big deal.	MinS	-9	
64	Domestic violence is sometimes okay because God wants men to be in control of their families.	Exon	-10	

Males Skewed after Transform	Females Skewed after Transform	Scale Variance	r > .576 or r < .30 Item-Total Correlation	Correlate with < 6 items	Correlate with <10 > 5 or > 19	Initial Factor for women	Loads on multiple Factors
		-2	-1	-1	1	-1	
	-1	-3				-2	
	-1	-3	-1			-2	
	-1	-3	-1			-2	
		-3		-1	1	-1	

Initial Factor for Men	Loads on multiple Factors	Overall Scale Reliabil	Theory Factor Reliable	Female Theory Factor Loadin	Loads on > 1 Factor Wome	Male Theory Factor Loadin	Loads on > 1 Factor Men	Factor Variance	Item-Factor Total Correlate
		-1	-1					-1	-1
-2									
-2									
-2									
-1		-1	-1				-1	-1	-1

Appendix E: Descriptives for Initial Item Pool

Table 23

*Descriptive Statistics for Initial Item Pool**

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev	Skewness	Kurtosis
DVMA1	349	1	7	3.05	1.92	0.47	-1.02
DVMA2	349	1	7	4.21	1.50	-0.23	-0.57
DVMA3	349	1	7	4.28	1.74	-0.31	-0.80
DVMA4	348	1	7	4.67	1.40	-0.36	-0.30
DVMA5	349	1	7	1.50	1.00	3.05	11.98
DVMA6	347	1	7	2.20	1.46	1.21	0.65
DVMA7	347	1	7	3.32	1.71	0.20	-1.02
DVMA8	348	1	7	2.33	1.47	1.01	0.43
DVMA9	349	1	7	1.61	1.13	2.54	7.20
DVMA10	346	1	7	1.26	0.70	3.81	18.81
DVMA11	347	1	7	4.82	2.00	-0.37	-1.24
DVMA12	348	1	7	2.03	1.38	1.60	2.26
DVMA13	349	1	6	1.82	1.20	1.64	2.09
DVMA14	348	1	7	4.29	1.67	-0.22	-0.73
DVMA15	348	1	7	2.84	1.63	0.42	-1.00
DVMA16	347	1	7	3.74	1.84	0.00	-1.06
DVMA17	347	1	7	1.62	1.19	2.63	7.38
DVMA18	348	1	7	1.64	1.60	2.63	5.60
DVMA19	348	1	7	2.24	1.38	1.19	1.11
DVMA20	346	1	7	2.75	1.88	0.90	-0.40
DVMA21	348	1	7	1.75	1.20	1.82	3.07
DVMA22	348	1	7	1.57	1.09	2.63	8.04
DVMA23	348	1	7	2.38	1.48	0.84	-0.35
DVMA24	347	1	7	4.46	1.43	-0.34	-0.47
DVMA25	346	1	7	2.48	1.37	0.64	-0.49
DVMA26	347	1	7	1.76	1.31	2.16	4.51
DVMA27	347	1	7	2.07	1.92	1.36	0.01
DVMA28	346	1	7	1.95	1.24	1.51	2.20
DVMA29	344	1	7	3.08	2.03	0.55	-0.95
DVMA30	347	1	7	1.47	0.97	2.99	10.94
DVMA31	346	1	7	3.50	1.71	0.10	-1.03
DVMA32	343	1	7	2.59	1.41	0.69	-0.26
DVMA33	344	1	7	2.40	1.40	0.97	0.56
DVMA34	347	1	7	3.86	1.95	0.21	-1.12
DVMA35	346	1	7	2.02	1.32	1.48	1.84
DVMA36	345	1	7	3.11	1.46	0.11	-0.78
DVMA37	346	1	7	2.89	1.87	0.75	-0.54
DVMA38	346	1	7	1.74	1.11	1.99	4.52
DVMA39	345	1	7	2.30	1.44	1.15	0.76

Table 23 continued

DVMA40	347	1	7	2.47	1.51	0.88	0.02
DVMA41	347	1	7	3.16	1.80	0.39	-1.05
DVMA42	347	1	7	1.59	0.92	2.39	8.20
DVMA43	345	1	7	1.60	1.06	2.22	5.52
DVMA44	342	1	7	4.02	1.93	-0.13	-1.22
DVMA45	346	1	7	2.26	1.50	1.03	0.10
DVMA46	347	1	7	3.44	1.75	0.24	-0.83
DVMA47	347	1	7	3.18	1.78	0.64	-0.61
DVMA48	346	1	7	2.60	1.53	0.77	-0.02
DVMA49	347	1	7	2.20	1.37	1.25	1.16
DVMA50	345	1	7	1.82	1.46	2.03	3.45
DVMA51	345	1	7	2.18	1.51	1.46	1.63
DVMA52	347	1	7	2.60	1.64	0.74	-0.50
DVMA53	347	1	7	1.48	0.93	2.78	9.91
DVMA54	345	1	7	1.50	1.39	3.12	8.74
DVMA55	346	1	7	1.63	1.12	2.26	5.66
DVMA56	346	1	7	3.48	1.85	0.15	-1.23
DVMA57	346	1	7	4.64	1.61	-0.55	-0.28
DVMA58	345	1	7	5.44	1.79	-0.96	-0.15
DVMA59	344	1	7	2.80	1.63	0.73	-0.36
DVMA60	345	1	7	1.16	0.80	6.16	39.83
DVMA61	347	1	7	1.36	0.98	3.63	14.84
DVMA62	344	1	7	1.42	0.87	2.82	9.69
DVMA63	347	1	7	2.12	1.37	1.08	0.18
DVMA64	344	1	7	2.08	1.35	1.37	1.27
DVMA65	345	1	7	1.57	1.08	2.36	6.00
DVMA66	344	1	7	4.41	1.82	-0.33	-0.78
DVMA67	345	1	7	4.75	1.64	-0.52	-0.47
DVMA68	347	1	7	2.04	1.54	1.63	1.78
DVMA69	347	1	7	2.74	1.62	0.67	-0.57
DVMA70	346	1	7	2.12	1.32	1.14	0.59
DVMA71	347	1	7	4.79	1.81	-0.66	-0.55
DVMA72	346	1	7	2.90	1.66	0.54	-0.77
DVMA73	345	1	7	3.48	1.99	0.40	-1.07
DVMA74	346	1	7	4.00	1.91	-0.10	-1.22
DVMA75	347	1	7	2.53	1.53	0.68	-0.56
DVMA76	347	1	7	1.96	1.21	1.74	3.56
DVMA77	346	1	7	2.05	1.17	1.74	3.52
DVMA78	345	1	7	1.29	0.84	4.08	19.76
DVMA79	344	1	7	4.12	1.70	-0.11	-0.96
DVMA80	344	1	7	3.49	1.79	0.22	-1.03
Valid N (listwise)	275						

* Prior to log transformation of skewed items

Appendix F: Reliability Statistics for Initial Item Pool

Table 24

Reliability (Alpha) for Initial Item Pool

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item- Total Correlation	Alpha if Item Deleted
DVMA1	152.85	1131.01	0.41	0.90
DVMA2	151.67	1152.68	0.32	0.90
DVMA3	151.59	1142.25	0.35	0.90
DVMA4	151.21	1170.90	0.15	0.91
RDVMA5	155.74	1183.39	0.23	0.91
RDVMA6	155.60	1178.68	0.44	0.90
DVMA7	152.56	1144.37	0.34	0.90
DVMA8	153.52	1140.01	0.45	0.90
RDVMA9	155.72	1179.11	0.50	0.90
DVMA11	151.04	1148.60	0.25	0.91
RDVMA12	155.63	1181.65	0.29	0.90
RDVMA13	155.67	1179.23	0.46	0.90
DVMA14	151.58	1143.92	0.36	0.90
DVMA15	153.03	1135.43	0.44	0.90
DVMA16	152.15	1136.84	0.38	0.90
RDVMA17	155.72	1180.37	0.41	0.90
RDVMA19	155.59	1177.19	0.54	0.90
DVMA20	153.10	1135.81	0.37	0.90
RDVMA21	155.69	1178.10	0.53	0.90
DVMA23	153.47	1136.96	0.48	0.90
DVMA24	151.42	1160.70	0.25	0.90
DVMA25	153.38	1155.36	0.32	0.90
RDVMA26	155.69	1177.64	0.55	0.90
RDVMA27	155.68	1181.76	0.22	0.90
RDVMA28	155.64	1180.03	0.40	0.90
DVMA29	152.80	1134.68	0.35	0.90
RDVMA30	155.75	1179.83	0.51	0.90
DVMA31	152.35	1144.66	0.34	0.90
DVMA32	153.27	1143.19	0.44	0.90
DVMA33	153.45	1126.03	0.63	0.90
DVMA34	151.99	1148.56	0.26	0.91
RDVMA35	155.63	1176.89	0.57	0.90
DVMA36	152.76	1150.71	0.34	0.90
DVMA37	152.98	1109.88	0.59	0.90
RDVMA38	155.68	1177.92	0.57	0.90
RDVMA39	155.57	1174.81	0.67	0.90
DVMA40	153.40	1148.95	0.35	0.90
RDVMA42	155.71	1181.61	0.37	0.90
RDVMA43	155.72	1179.42	0.49	0.90

Table 24 continued

DVMA41	152.69	1121.32	0.51	0.90
DVMA44	151.84	1125.49	0.45	0.90
DVMA45	153.60	1124.79	0.60	0.90
DVMA46	152.42	1145.35	0.32	0.90
DVMA47	152.70	1164.32	0.16	0.91
DVMA48	153.26	1144.46	0.38	0.90
RDVMA49	155.59	1176.62	0.58	0.90
RDVMA50	155.69	1175.98	0.61	0.90
RDVMA51	155.61	1176.24	0.57	0.90
DVMA52	153.26	1119.47	0.59	0.90
RDVMA53	155.74	1181.22	0.41	0.90
RDVMA55	155.72	1179.76	0.46	0.90
DVMA56	152.38	1127.27	0.45	0.90
DVMA57	151.25	1149.66	0.32	0.90
DVMA58	150.44	1183.40	0.00	0.91
DVMA59	153.07	1125.87	0.53	0.90
RDVMA60	155.83	1184.89	0.19	0.91
RDVMA62	155.76	1180.38	0.49	0.90
DVMA63	153.74	1140.15	0.48	0.90
RDVMA64	155.62	1176.64	0.58	0.90
RDVMA65	155.73	1179.40	0.49	0.90
DVMA66	151.47	1166.81	0.13	0.91
DVMA67	151.13	1150.17	0.30	0.90
RDVMA68	155.64	1174.44	0.66	0.90
DVMA69	153.11	1138.96	0.41	0.90
RDVMA70	155.61	1175.93	0.63	0.90
DVMA71	151.08	1151.52	0.26	0.90
DVMA72	152.95	1127.12	0.51	0.90
DVMA73	152.37	1115.87	0.50	0.90
DVMA74	151.85	1161.62	0.16	0.91
DVMA75	153.33	1133.05	0.50	0.90
RDVMA76	155.64	1179.67	0.44	0.90
RDVMA77	155.61	1179.44	0.49	0.90
RDVMA78	155.79	1185.24	0.12	0.91
DVMA79	151.75	1118.11	0.58	0.90
DVMA80	152.41	1124.43	0.50	0.90

N of Cases = 345.0
N of Items = 75
Alpha = .9051

Appendix G: Item Survival Map for 30 Item Pool

-1 Detracts from this element
1 Contributes to this element

Rand	Orig	Item	Factor	Score	Missing Data
21	**10**	**Making a man jealous is asking for it.**	**Beh**	**3**	
43	**8**	**Women instigate most family violen**	**Beh**	**2**	
49	**5**	**A lot of domestic violence occurs bec**	**Beh**	**3**	
55	**15**	**Women who flirt are asking for it.**	**Beh**	**2**	
65	**6**	**Women can avoid physical abuse if**	**Beh**	**2**	
37	**28**	**I don't have much sympathy for a bat**	**Char**	**5**	
45	**18**	**Many women have an unconscious w**	**Char**	**5**	
50	**29**	**I hate to say it, but if a woman stays**	**Char**	**3**	
52	**19**	**Some women unconsciously want th**	**Char**	**4**	
68	**30**	**If a woman continues living with a m**	**Char**	**4**	
73	**26**	**If a woman doesn't like it, she can le**	**Char**	**4**	
79	**32**	**If a woman goes back to the abuser, how much is that due to something in**	**Char**	**4**	
44	**41**	**When a man is violent it is because h**	**Exon**	**1**	**-2**
56	**42**	**Abusive men lose control so much th**	**Exon**	**0**	
72	**44**	**Domestic violence results from a mo**	**Exon**	**0**	
28	**63**	**Domestic violence does not affect ma**	**MinE**	**0**	
48	**62**	**Domestic violence rarely happens in**	**MinE**	**1**	
32	**53**	**Most domestic violence involves mu**	**MinS**	**-1**	**-1**
2	36	Alcohol is usually a big part of the pro	Exon	-1	
16	34	Alcohol or drug abuse causes dom	Exon	2	
31	35	Alcohol or drug abuse causes men to b	Exon	2	
8	61	Domestic violence doesn't happen ve	MinE	1	
33	65	Women frequently fabricate alleg	MinE	1	
39	67	After a relationship ends, many wome	MinE	0	
15	20	Some women like their man to show t	Char	1	
23	22	Victims unconsciously seek out abuse.	Char	-2	
80	31	If a woman stays in the relationship aft	Char	2	
14	46	Men who abuse have a hard time exp	Exon	-1	
24	43	Men who abuse their partners usually	Exon	-5	
6	49	Battering is too strong a term to des	MinS	-5	

Low Reliability	Variance	r > .598 or r < .30 Item-Total Correlate	Correlate with < 9 items	Correlate with >9 & < 20	Female Factor Loading	Loads on > 1 Factor Women	Male Factor Loading
-1					1		**1**
-1	**-1**				1		**1**
-1					1		**1**
-1	**-1**				1		**1**
-1	**-1**				1		**1**
	1				1		**1**
				2	1		**1**
-1		**1**			1		**1**
	1						
		1			1		**1**
	1				1		**1**
	1				1		**1**
	1						
							-1
-1	**-1**						
						-1	
-1		-1		-1			
		-1					1
		-1					1
		1					
		1				-1	
						-1	
	1				1		1
		-1					
-1		-1	-2		-1		1
-1	-1				-1		

Loads on > 1 Factor Men	Female Theory Factor Loading	Male Theory Factor Loading	Loads > 1	Low Item-Th-Factor Total Correlation	Hurting Theory Factor Reliabilty	Alt Wording
	1	1				
	1	1				
	1	1				
	1	1				
	1	1				
	1	1				
	1	1	-1			
	1	1			-1	
	1	1				1
-1	1	1				
	1					
						1
	1	1				
		1	-1			
	1	1		-1		
	1	1				
	1	1				-1
	1	1		-1		
	1	1				
	1	1				
	1	1				
	1	1				-1
-1	1	1	-1			
-1	1	1	-1			
	1	1		-1		
				-1		
						-1
				-1		
-1				-1		

Table 25

Corelations Among Final 30 DVMAS Items

Item #	21	28	32	37	43	44	45	48	49	50	52	55	56	65	68	72	73
21																	
28	0.41																
32	0.34	0.20															
37	0.36	0.29	0.32														
43	0.56	0.33	0.44	0.38													
44	0.19	0.15	0.17	0.24	0.10**												
45	0.37	0.24	0.32	0.39	0.46	0.24											
48	0.33	0.48	0.17	0.19	0.22	0.22	0.21										
49	0.57	0.33	0.36	0.34	0.51	0.25	0.42	0.30									
50	0.43	0.32	0.29	0.64	0.42	0.18	0.40	0.27	0.43								
52	0.26	0.26	0.27	0.34	0.29	0.25	0.70	0.22	0.39	0.38							
55	0.57	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.42	0.12	0.34	0.24	0.48	0.33	0.30						
56	0.26	0.13	0.16	0.19	0.15	0.38	0.29	0.17	0.24	0.16	0.28	0.22					
65	0.45	0.37	0.31	0.30	0.48	0.27	0.40	0.30	0.53	0.41	0.33	0.43	0.20				
68	0.44	0.34	0.32	0.67	0.47	0.27	0.50	0.25	0.46	0.70	0.43	0.34	0.21	0.45			
72	0.31	0.31	0.27	0.37	0.29	0.46	0.29	0.28	0.38	0.31	0.24	0.25	0.36	0.32	0.38		
73	0.25	0.22	0.24	0.54	0.24	0.24	0.27	0.15	0.29	0.48	0.28	0.23	0.21	0.20	0.51	0.34	
79	0.24	0.14	0.25	0.44	0.23	0.29	0.33	0.19	0.30	0.39	0.34	0.24	0.23	0.22	0.45	0.29	0.42

* Unless otherwise marked. all correlations significant at the 0.05 level

** Correlation is NOT significant at the 0.05 level .

Appendix I: Final DVMAS Instrument

Domestic Violence Myth Acceptance Scale (DVMAS)

1. Domestic violence does not affect many people
2. When a man is violent it is because he lost control of his temper.
3. If a woman continues living with a man who beat her then its her own fault if she is beaten again
4. Making a man jealous is asking for it.
5. Some women unconsciously want their partners to control them.
6. A lot of domestic violence occurs because women keep on arguing about things with their partners.
7. If a woman doesn't like it, she can leave.
8. Most domestic violence involves mutual violence between the partners.
9. Abusive men lose control so much that they don't know what they're doing.
10. I hate to say it, but if a woman stays with the man who abused her, she basically deserves what she gets.
11. Domestic violence rarely happens in my neighborhood
12. Women who flirt are asking for it.
13. Women can avoid physical abuse if they give in occasionally.
14. Many women have an unconscious wish to be dominated by their partners.
15. Domestic violence results from a momentary loss of temper.
16. I don't have much sympathy for a battered woman who keeps going back to the abuser.
17. Women instigate most family violence.
18. If a woman goes back to the abuser, how much is that due to something in her character?

Biography of the Author

Jay Peters was born and raised in Rockport Massachusetts, graduating from high school there in 1966. He went to Brandeis University where he majored in English literature and dabbled in Medieval History and theatre set design and construction. During his final year at Brandeis he apprenticed with Alan Melad Furniture, making the transition from the slap-dash of theatre set construction to building fine furniture. He spent the next fourteen years in Blue Hill, Maine, designing and building gracious modern furniture.

In an abrupt change of career and life paths, Jay went back to school in social work in 1986 and then spent eight years working with trauma survivors in the Bronx, New York. He began writing for professional publications in 1995 and, soon after realizing how much he wanted to pursue research and writing, was blessed again by the opportunity to join the faculty at the School of Social Work at the University of Maine as a Child Welfare Specialist. Since that time he has taught, written, and presented extensively on topics related to trauma and recovery. Jay is a candidate for the Doctor of Philosophy degree, Interdisciplinary, in Social Work and Trauma Studies from The University of Maine in May, 2003.