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The Effect of Power versus Personal Control on Rape Myth Acceptance.

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Abstract

Much of the literature regarding rape myth acceptance has focused on factors that increase these attitudes, and little research has been done on factors that may decrease rape myth acceptance. Two studies were conducted to look at the effects of priming with either power (Study 1) or personal control (Study 2) on rape myth acceptance. Study 1 used power poses to prime participants, before they completed measures of rape myth acceptance, sexism, system justification and self-objectification. I found a significant three-way interaction between benevolent sexism, gender and power on rape myth acceptance, whereby males with high levels of benevolent sexism showed an increase in rape myth acceptance after a high power prime, relative to a low power prime. Study 2 used an online questionnaire to measure sexism levels and then prime participants with personal control, before assessing rape myth acceptance. The results again showed a significant effect for males with high levels of benevolent sexism; however, this time they showed a decrease in rape myth acceptance when personal control was increased, relative to the decreased control condition. It seems that personal control can decrease rape myth acceptance, while power increases rape myth acceptance, but only for males who are high in benevolent sexism. The results of both studies are discussed, and limitations and future recommendations are considered.

Keywords: benevolent sexism, gender, personal control, power, rape myth acceptance

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Rape and sexual assault are regrettably frequently occurring crimes in today's society, with around 85,000 women being raped each year, and over 400,000 sexually assaulted (Ministry of Justice, Home Office & the Office for National Statistics, 2013; Rape Crisis, 2014). It is a particularly prevalent crime among young adults and students, with 1 in 4 US women being raped (Fisher, Cullen, & Turner, 2000), and 1 in 7 women in the UK experiencing sexual assault whilst they are at university (National Union of Students, 2010).

Past research has indicated that both men and women often feel that rape can be justified in certain circumstances, such as if the victim is drunk, wearing revealing clothing or has previously had a sexual relationship with the perpetrator. These attitudes are known as rape myths. Rape myths aim to blame the victim and excuse the perpetrator (Burt, 1980). Attitudes such as these bear important negative consequences, on both a personal level for victims of rape, as their attacks often go unreported and/or not taken seriously, and also on a societal level for women in general, as they encourage a "rape culture" where women are objectified and sexual violence is encouraged.

Moreover, rape myths have been shown to predict rape proclivity, with those convicted of rape or other sex offences consistently showing high levels of rape myth acceptance (Malamuth, 1981). This is concerning, as it seems that belief in rape myth acceptance is not only harmful when dealing with attitudes towards sexual violence and victims of these crimes, but these beliefs may also encourage and promote committing these types of crime. We can therefore deduce that in order to challenge rape and sexual crimes, we must first challenge rape myth acceptance and victim-blaming attitudes.

Much of the literature on rape myth acceptance has focused on factors that increase or positively correlate with individuals' levels of rape myth acceptance. For example, rape myth acceptance has previously been linked to athletic participation (Murnen & Kohlman, 2007),

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high levels of pornography use (Allen, Emmers, Gebhardt & Giery, 1995; Monto & Hotaling, 2001) and high alcohol consumption (Locke & Mahalik, 2005). Less is known about factors that can potentially decrease levels of rape myth acceptance, and contribute to solving the problem of rape culture, and rape itself. When studying a problem in society, it is necessary to look at ways to solve it rather than just at what causes it; therefore, the proposed study will look into one potential way to reduce levels of rape myth acceptance.

Studies have shown that making people feel powerful or powerless can change their attitudes and behaviours (Burgmer & Englich, 2013; Van Loo & Rydell, 2013; Lammers, Dubois, Rucker & Galinsky, 2013). Changing individuals' perceptions of feelings of power can have positive effects, such as an increase in cognitive functions (Smith, Jostmann, Galinsky, & van Dijk, 2008) and even success in job interviews (Cuddy, Wilmouth & Carney, 2012). I propose that feelings of power, and the related concept of personal control, may affect participants' level of rape myth acceptance. I will also investigate related concepts about attitudes towards the self and society, which may act as potential mediators of this effect: system justification, ambivalent sexism and self-objectification.

Rape myth acceptance

“She asked for it,” “he didn’t mean to,” “it wasn’t really rape” or “she lied,” - these are examples of rape myths. Such statements lead to victim blame in certain circumstances, such as if the victim is drunk or has previously had sex with the perpetrator (Burt, 1980; Payne, Lonsway, & Fitzgerald, 1999; McMahon & Farmer, 2011). These attitudes are alarmingly prevalent in today’s society. For example, Ward (1995) stated that global negative attitudes towards rape victims were found to range between 18.3% (United Kingdom) and 51.5% (Malaysia). Additionally, McGee, O’Higgins, Garavan and Conroy found more recently in a study in Ireland in 2011 that 40.2% of the public felt that rape accusations are

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often false, when in reality, rape accusations that turn out to be false only account for between 0.2-8% of all reports (Kelly, Lovett & Regan, 2005). Furthermore, research in England and Wales shows that 34% of participants believe a rape victim is partially or totally responsible for their attack if they have had many sexual partners. We can see from these statistics that endorsement of rape myths is worryingly common. This can be incredibly problematic, for both victims and for society in general, in two key ways.

Firstly, rape myths can make rape seem justified in certain circumstances, which can contribute to an increase in the occurrence of sexual crimes. This has been shown by Malamuth (1981), who found that convicted rapists show higher levels of rape myth acceptance. In addition, men who reported high levels of rape myth acceptance also reported an increased likelihood to commit rape if it was certain they would not be caught (Bohner, Jarvis, Eyssel & Siebler, 2005). This link between acceptance of rape myths and rape proclivity is worrying; many people may dismiss rape myths as a belief that does not necessarily lead to committing rape, but this is evidently not true.

Malamuth's (1981) study highlights how attitudes and beliefs about rape can potentially affect individuals' behaviours. Although rape myths seem to only benefit the (usually) male perpetrator and disadvantage the (usually) female victim, they are frequently endorsed by both men and women (Ashton, 1982; Ellis, O'Sullivan & Sowards, 1992; Gyls & McNamara, 1996). At first it may seem strange that women would endorse something that blames them for something that is clearly not their fault and that they have no control over. However, Lonsway and Fitzgerald (1995) suggested that rape myths serve different purposes for males and females: for males, they justify men's sexual domination of women, whereas for females, they mitigate feelings of vulnerability by apportioning themselves part of the responsibility or blame for the crime. Generally, rape myths seem to serve a similar function to system justifying attitudes, which will be discussed later. System justifying attitudes also

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excuse a system that treats an individual or group unfairly in order to mitigate feelings of cognitive dissonance. Therefore, system justification may mediate the relationships between rape myth acceptance and other variables.

Endorsing rape myths also has negative practical implications for women. Hickman and Muehlenhard (1997) found that women who endorse rape myths were less likely to take preventative measures against rape. Of course, it is not the responsibility of the woman to ensure that she does not get raped: it is the responsibility of the perpetrator to ensure that he does not commit the crime in the first place. However, Hickman and Muehlenhard's (1997) study does again show how a simple belief in rape myths can affect individuals' behaviours, and potentially lead to an increase in rape and other sexual crimes. Therefore, in order to challenge the negative *behaviours* of rape and sexual violence, we must first change society's *attitudes* about these types of crime.

Secondly, rape myths discourage victims of rape and sexual assault from reporting these crimes. Generally, if society endorses rape myths, the victim will tend to blame themselves rather than their attacker. This may lead to them not reporting rape and sexual assault because they feel that they are at fault rather than the perpetrator, and therefore their attacker does not necessarily deserve to be reported because it is not, or at least not entirely, their fault (Egan & Wilson, 2012; Hayes, Lorenz & Bell, 2013). Of course this is not true - rape and sexual assault cannot logically be anyone's fault except that of the perpetrator, and any notion that the victim did anything to invite or encourage being attacked is absurd. Victims of any other violent crimes, such as theft, assault or murder, are rarely blamed for "encouraging" the attacker, therefore there's no logical reason that victims of sexual crimes should be blamed either. Furthermore, when rape victims see themselves as the one to blame for the crime, they may also be discouraged from reporting crimes because they feel that the police and criminal justice system will also feel this way. Fear of being blamed or not being

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believed is a huge factor in discouraging rape and sexual assault victims from reporting crimes (Egan & Wilson, 2012).

Several theories and concepts related to rape myth acceptance and gender relations may be able to provide insight on why rape myths exist, the purposes that they serve and why they are so often universally endorsed. The concepts discussed by these theories may also act as mediators of the relationship between certain variables and rape myth acceptance. In this study, the relationship I am examining is between levels of power and personal control with rape myth acceptance, and it is proposed that system justification, ambivalent sexism and self-objectification may potentially act as mediators in this relationship.

System justification

Building on previous work, including cognitive dissonance theory (Festinger, 1962) and just world theory (Lerner, 1980), system justification theory proposes that people generally support the status quo and feel that the current system is stable and desirable, even if in reality it is disadvantageous to them. Seemingly contradictorily, even those who are not benefited by the current system still appear to support it (Jost & Banaji, 1994). System justification theory argues that even though the subordinate group know they are being treated unfairly, they also know that they are unable to do anything to lessen or remedy this treatment. Due to this, to explain their distress they tend to blame themselves and their group for bringing suffering upon themselves rather than blaming the unfair system. This provides them with a sense of coherence, rather than the dissonance they would live with if they did not believe this (Jost & Banaji, 1994). System justifying behaviours have been found among various societal group, starting with children as young as five years old (Baron & Banaji, 2009). This can cause major problems in society, such as abuse being reported less often or

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employees concealing corporate misdemeanours, which make it harder for society to advance towards fairer, more equal policies and governments (Blasi & Jost, 2006).

System justification theory can be used to explain why rape myth acceptance occurs in both males and females, despite only seeming to benefit males. The subordinate group, in this case women, know that rape myths are unfair and implicate them for rape and sexual assault when, in fact, they are not the cause. However, they feel that they cannot change or prevent the fact that women are often raped or sexually assaulted; therefore it becomes easier for them to blame themselves and other women for attacks rather than the men that commit them (Chapleau & Oswald, 2013; Burt, 1980). This may lead to the formation of rape myths; for example, believing that a woman who was raped brought the attack upon herself because she had been drinking may be easier to accept than a woman being raped for absolutely no reason whatsoever.

It could therefore be derived from system justification theory that endorsing rape myths gives women at least some sense of control over rape and sexual assaults. Arguing that women bring rape and sexual assault upon themselves by inviting or encouraging it is easier for women to accept than the fact that they could potentially be unfairly attacked for no reason. This may help them to deal with any fear of sexual crime they hold; it cultivates a false belief that only certain types of women get raped, meaning that they feel they have partial control over whether it will or will not happen to them through things such as their choice of clothing or how much alcohol they drink (Egan, & Wilson, 2012).

This perceived level of control has been linked previously to system justification. Kay, Gaucher, Napier, Callan and Laurin (2008) showed that when personal control is threatened, individuals increase their faith in an external belief system that imposes order on their lives, such as religion or government. That is to say, when levels of personal control are

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lowered, system justification increases. More recently, Van de Toorn et al. (in press) also found a link between power and system justification. They found that when participants were primed to feel powerless, their level of system justification increased, and the opposite effect occurred when they were primed to feel powerful.

This link between feelings of powerlessness or a lack of personal control over one's life with system justification is interesting in terms of how it can be applied to the concept of rape myth acceptance. As system justification can explain the function that rape myths serve – that is, to give an illusory sense of control over one's uncontrollable circumstances – we can assume that the effect of personal control on rape myth acceptance would be similar to the effect that has been found on system justification. If feeling powerless or lacking control has the ability to increase system justification, then this may also increase rape myth acceptance. More importantly, the opposite effect may occur: increasing feelings of power or control may decrease endorsement of rape myths. This study will look into this effect, using system justification as a potential mediator for the relationships between power and personal control with rape myth acceptance.

Ambivalent sexism

Ambivalent sexism is a multidimensional construct proposed by Glick and Fiske in 1996. It is so called “ambivalent” as it includes positive evaluations of women, as well as the more traditionally understood negative ones. The construct of ambivalent sexism can be split into two subcomponents: hostile and benevolent. Each of these subcomponents can be divided into three further categories: paternalism, gender differentiation and heterosexuality (Glick & Fiske, 1996). Hostile sexism refers to the traditional, overtly negative evaluations of women. This includes ideas of women's inferior intelligence and competency, and the idea that women are objects purely designed to be used for male pleasure. Conversely, benevolent

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sexism refers to attitudes towards women that may seem positive on the outside, but are actually very damaging to gender equality as it discourages straying from traditional gender roles (Glick & Fiske, 1995).

Benevolent sexism captures views of women being seen as romantic objects that need to be cherished and protected by men. While this may seem like a positive thing for the receiver to hear, it actually promotes a continuation of patriarchal power and female subordination by encouraging traditional gender roles by portraying women as weak and needing to depend on men (Glick & Fiske, 1996). While the two concepts of benevolent and hostile sexism seem quite different from one another on the surface, they are actually highly correlated (Glick & Fiske, 2001). They are mutually supportive ideologies, and this correlation between benevolent and hostile sexism has been shown consistently across cultures. Additionally, although the two types of sexism correlated strongly, factor analyses consistently show that they are in fact two separate types of sexism. Males' average score is generally higher than females' on ambivalent sexism, and females are more likely to reject hostile sexism than benevolent sexism (Glick et al., 2000). Although benevolent sexism is the more subtle type of sexism, this could also make it the most dangerous type as it is least likely to be recognised and rejected by the receiver.

The subcomponents within each type of sexism also provide further insight into types of sexism that exist, and often these can give an understanding of how rape myths and sexism can be related. Firstly, paternalism takes the view that women are underdeveloped adults. Within hostile sexism, this is known as dominative paternalism, and suggests that men should have control over women, for example that men should control their wives' and daughters' actions and beliefs. Within benevolent sexism, this is known as protective paternalism; this is the view that men should care for and protect women, for example through working hard to earn money for the family, and looking after the household finances. This encourages

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traditional gender roles of a male breadwinner and a female homemaker (Glick & Fiske, 1996). This could be seen to encourage rape myths, as those women that deviate from traditional gender roles, such as through going out alone at night, or wearing revealing clothing, are blamed for bringing rape and sexual assault on themselves. This promotes the idea that only certain types of women get raped, and those who stick rigidly to traditional gender roles will be safe from sexual assault.

The subcomponent of gender differentiation emphasises the biological and physical differences between men and women, and uses these differences to justify adherence to traditional gender roles. Within hostile sexism, competitive gender differentiation states that only men have the necessary skills and traits that are essential to govern a society, which leads to a downwards comparison of women being seen as incapable of such tasks. Conversely, within benevolent sexism, complimentary gender differentiation focuses on the positive traits of women. This endorses the idea that women are biologically predisposed towards being a good wife and mother, and that men rely on them to fulfil these roles, thereby suggesting that men and women are entirely dependent on the other, and cannot be successful in life without a romantic partner of the opposite gender (Glick & Fiske, 1996).

Through both of these types of gender differentiation, we can clearly see how sexism can be related to and cause rape myths. Gender differentiation implies that women owe sex to men, either because men are physically and mentally superior and therefore deserve whatever they want from those who are inferior, or because men need to be intimate with women in order to be able to fulfil their traditional gender roles as husbands, and for women to fulfil their traditional roles as wives and mothers. This could explain why rape myths occur; if it is believed that women owe sex to men, then men may see rape merely as them taking what is rightfully theirs. Rape myths such as “when a girl gets raped, it’s because the way she said ‘no’ was unclear” or “if a girl doesn’t physically resist sex, it can’t be considered rape,” show

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an attitude of men's entitlement to sex, whereby they believe sex with women is theirs for the taking. Those holding these beliefs would therefore expect a lot of obvious physical resistance for a rape case to be considered genuine, rather than a simple "lack of consent" that the law requires. Men's perceived entitlement to sex is not only damaging in that it could encourage sexual violence, but in that it may lead to even worse consequences when males become frustrated with women choosing not to have sex with them, as was the case in the recent Isla Vista killings. The perpetrator's lack of sexual success with women led him to commit six murders and 13 non-fatal injuries on random innocent people in order to "punish" women who had refused sex with him, before committing suicide (Ellis & Sidner, 2014). It is chilling cases such as this that make research into sexism all the more important, as they highlight how prominent sexism and misogyny still are in today's society, and the horrendous consequences that these attitudes can lead to.

The final subcomponent of heterosexuality refers to the intimate relationships between men and women. In terms of hostile sexism, heterosexual hostility refers to the ideas of women being sexually manipulative and using sex as a way to gain power over men (Glick & Fiske, 1996). Rape myths could therefore serve as a demonstration of this type of sexism; in particular, stating that women lie about being raped implies that they are manipulative and only "cry rape" as a way to hurt men's reputations and gain power over them. The implications of women's manipulative motivations for rape accusations can blatantly be seen in rape myths such as "girls who are caught cheating on their boyfriends often cry rape," and "rape accusations are often used as a way of getting back at guys." On the other hand, within benevolent sexism, heterosexuality is exhibited as heterosexual intimacy refers to a man's genuine desire for a psychologically and physically intimate relationship with a woman (Glick & Fiske, 1996). These attitudes are reflected in rape myths that imply a man didn't intend to rape a woman, such as "rape happens when a guy's sex drive goes out of control."

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This implies that the reasons behind rape relate solely to men's desire for sex and intimacy with women. This of course is not necessarily the case; while sexual gratification used to be thought to be the main reason that drives rape and other sexual crimes, since the 1980s there has been a shift in attitudes to adopt a more feminist view that power is the main motivation for rape (Tedeschi & Felson, 1994; Anderson & Swainson, 2001; Field, 1978; Rich & Sampson, 1990). Whilst we cannot know for sure what drives people to commit rape, and we cannot generalise theories of sex or power to all rape cases, it is probable that rape is not related to sex alone, as many rapists have the opportunity to have consensual sex with women, but choose not to.

A relationship has previously been found many times between both types of sexism and rape myth acceptance. Lonsway and Fitzgerald (1995) found that hostility towards women was highly correlated with rape myth acceptance, and that this was particularly evident in men. Chapleau, Oswald and Russell (2007) replicated this finding relating it to ambivalent sexism; they found that hostile sexism was the strongest predictor of rape myth acceptance for both men and women. They also found that benevolent sexism was positively correlated with rape myth acceptance; however, of the subcomponents of benevolent sexism, only complimentary gender differentiation was positively correlated with rape myth acceptance. Chapleau et al. (2007) suggested that people who hold views consistent with complimentary gender differentiation, such as that women are refined, cultured ladies, believe that women who are raped must have diverged from these stereotypes in some way, for example by drinking alcohol or wearing revealing clothing.

Aosved and Long (2006) conducted a study into the relationship between rape myth acceptance with sexual trauma history and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). They found that a history of sexual trauma decreased participants' levels of rape myth acceptance, and suggested that this may be because their history creates empathy for other sexual assault

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victims. PTSD symptom severity was not found to be associated with rape myth acceptance, however they did find a significant link between more traditional attitudes towards women and rape myth acceptance. This again shows the strong relationship between sexism and rape myth acceptance.

As there is such a strong link between sexism and rape myth acceptance, sexism could be a mediator between rape myth acceptance and other variables, hence why it has been included in this study. I predict a mediation model whereby a relationship between changes in feelings of power or personal control produce a change in rape myth acceptance, and this relationship is explained by ambivalent sexism. Hostile and benevolent sexism will be measured separately, as it may be the case that one type of sexism mediates the relationship more so than the other. As Chapleau and colleagues (2007) found a relationship specifically between benevolent sexism and rape myth acceptance, it is suspected that it will be benevolent rather than hostile sexism that acts as a mediator. However, although there is strong evidence to support the relationship between sexism and rape myth acceptance, we do not necessarily have as much supporting evidence regarding the expected relationship between sexism and power. It is at least plausible that manipulations that increase levels of power or control could have different effects on rape myth acceptance depending on initial levels of sexism. If no relationship between power and sexism exists, then in addition to the mediation model proposed here, a moderation model, whereby an interaction between power and sexism shows an effect on levels of rape myth acceptance, can be tested.

Self-objectification

Another explanation for why women endorse rape myths is provided by objectification theory. Women are often socialised as sexual objects, causing themselves and others to view them as sexual objects to be looked at and valued rather than respected as

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individuals. When women internalise these views, they see themselves primarily as a sexual object rather than a person (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997; Fox, Bailenson & Tricase, 2013). This is problematic because both men and women alike often disregard women's thoughts, feelings and emotions, and focus predominantly on their physical image, whereas males are often valued for their thoughts, skills and opinions more so than women (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997).

This has been linked to many social and psychological problems. For example, highly self-objectifying women may be more likely to suffer from mental health issues such as depression and eating disorders (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997). Not only does objectification therefore have negative effects on individuals, but also it can promote negative attitudes towards women, leading to increased gender inequality in the long-term (Fox et al., 2013). Exposure to sexism has been found to cause objectification of women. Calogero and Jost (2011) found that exposure to benevolent sexism, but not hostile sexism, resulted in higher self-objectification, self-surveillance and body shame in females. This was also shown to be specific to self-objectification rather than related to a more general self-focus. High levels of objectification of women have also often been found to increase levels of rape myth acceptance (Milburn, Mather & Conrad, 2000; Fox et al., 2013; Simpson-Beck, Boys, Rose & Beck, 2012). Polaschek and Gannon (2004) found that 70% convicted rapists that were interviewed made some reference to objectifying their victims, showing that objectification of women is closely linked to rape proclivity, and may even act as justification why individuals may sometimes argue that rape is acceptable; if a woman is highly objectified and merely seen as a sexual object, it is easier for a rapist to disregard her feelings (Polaschek & Gannon, 2004; Polaschek & Ward, 2002).

Therefore, we can see that objectification of women may increase rape myth acceptance, and even rape and other sexual crimes. Additionally, as both objectification and

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rape myth acceptance separately predict rape proclivity (Milburn, Mather & Conrad, 2000; Fox, Bailenson & Tricase, 2013; Simpson-Beck, Boys, Rose & Beck, 2012), we can assume that there is also likely to be an association between objectification of women and rape myth acceptance. Women who see themselves and other women as merely sexual objects may also have high levels of rape myth acceptance, and the opposite would be true for those with low levels of objectification.

Self-objectification has been previously linked to system-justification, which, as I have discussed previously, can be closely linked to rape myth acceptance (Chapleau & Oswald, 2013; Burt, 1980). Gender specific system-justification has been found to mediate the relationship between self-objectification and gender-based social activism (Calogero, 2013). This means that women who self-objectify are less likely to engage in activism to improve gender relations. This relationship can be explained and clarified by individuals' levels of endorsement of gender specific system justifying attitudes; that is to say, system justification governs the relationship between self-objectification and gender-based social activism.

As the concept of self-objectification has been previously linked to system justification (Calogero, 2013), and system justification has in turn been linked to rape myth acceptance (Chapleau & Oswald, 2013; Burt, 1980), this further supports a potential relationship between self-objectification and rape myth acceptance in women. As system justification has been linked to these two variables in previous research, a mediation model in the current study can be proposed, whereby self-objectification in women, and system justification in all individuals, may mediate the relationship between rape myth acceptance and a predictor variables – in this case, power and personal control. That is to say, a change in feelings of power or personal control may cause a change in rape myth acceptance, but this

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relationship would be explained by a change in system justification or self-objectification, or both.

Power versus personal control

Being powerful is often very beneficial for individuals in society. Power can give humans many advantages, such as more access to resources (Keltner, Gruenfeld, & Anderson, 2003) and higher cognitive functions (Smith et al., 2008). In addition, feeling powerful and having high levels of personal control can also have effects on people's attitudes, such as system justification, as mentioned earlier (Van de Toorn et al., in press; Kay et al., 2008). In this paper I focus on how feelings of power and control may affect rape myth acceptance and other related attitudes.

The concepts of power and control are often seen as conceptually very similar, and the two words are often used interchangeably. Although the two concepts are unarguably related to each other, there are some key differences between power and control – and specifically the notion of personal control. In this paper, Study 1 will focus on power and Study 2 will focus on personal control. Therefore, I will firstly briefly discuss the differences between power and control. In order to discuss these two concepts, a clear definition of both power and personal control is needed. A definition of power that fits in well in the discipline of social psychology comes from French and Raven (1959). They devised a combined definition of social influence and social power. They stated that social influence is “a change in the belief, attitude, or behaviour of a person (a target of influence), which results from the action of another person (an influencing agent).” They then went on to define social power as “the *potential* for such influence, the ability of the agent or power figure to bring about such change, using resources available to him or her” (French & Raven, 1959; Raven, 2008).

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Conversely, the concept of control has a slightly different definition to the concept of power. Personal control was developed from Rotter's social learning theory (1966; 1982), where the concepts of internal and external loci of control were developed. An internal locus of control is the belief that one has the ability to control and influence events and situations in their own life. On the other hand, an external locus of control is the belief that events in one's life are control by external sources, such as "chance" or "fate." Internal locus of control is closely linked to what is referred in the literature as personal control; those with high levels of personal control believe that they are capable of influencing their own lives, whereas those who lack personal control believe that their lives are determined by other external sources (Kay et al., 2008).

Although the definitions of power and control are quite similar, there is a key difference between the two concepts. Power is generally seen as the means to influence others (Keltner et al., 2003). This can be achieved through the distribution or withholding of material or social resources, such as money, employment or knowledge, in order to reward or punish other individuals and exert influence over them. As a result, individuals with low power come to rely on high power individuals for resources. Personal control on the other hand is an aspect of power that is seen as the capacity to influence one's own life (Kay et al., 2009). A person's level of personal control refers to the extent to which an individual believes that they have influence over themselves and their circumstances. This is the aspect of power that this study focuses on, as there is no manipulation of power over others, only of power over oneself. This feeling of increased personal control is the most similar to the feeling of "empowerment" that may be useful in reducing negative attitudes. People are cognitively motivated to have higher levels of personal control in order to limit feelings of social chaos and randomness; these feelings can cause psychological stress and therefore

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perceptions of structure and order are often preferred (Kruglanski, 1989; Kruglanski & Webster, 1996; Janoff-Bulman, 1992).

Priming people to feel high or low levels of power or control has important consequences on their behaviour and attitudes. For example, feeling powerful has been shown to improve motor functions (Burgmer & Englich, 2013), reduce the effect of stereotype threat (Van Loo & Rydell, 2013) and even make individuals more likely to succeed in job interviews (Lammers et al., 2013), compared to when participants are primed to feel powerless or are power-neutral. More relevantly to the current topic, Van de Toorn et al. (in press) found that priming participants to feel powerful or powerless had an effect on their level of system justification. As briefly discussed earlier, when participants felt powerless, they tended to agree with statements that justify the current system more so than those in a control condition. On the other hand, the participants who were primed to feel powerful showed lower levels of system justification than the control group. As discussed previously, Kay et al. (2008) also linked a lack of personal control to an increase in system justification. Conversely, those with increased levels of personal control have less feelings of cognitive dissonance and were therefore less likely to exhibit system justifying behaviours (Kruglanski, 1989; Kruglanski & Webster, 1996; Janoff-Bulman, 1992; Van de Toorn et al., in press).

Carney, Cuddy and Yap (2010) created and tested a new power prime known as power posing. This was based on the idea of non-verbal displays that are associated with different levels of power; highly powerful non-verbal displays, such as widespread limbs taking up as much space as possible, project images of high levels of power. Conversely, low power non-verbal displays, with limbs closely touching the body, minimising the amount of space the body occupies, project the idea that the individual does not have a lot of power. Evidence suggests that when people feel high or low levels of power, they tend to adopt these

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stances (Darwin, 1872; Carney, Hall, Smith, & LeBeau, 2005). However, it had not yet been tested whether standing in these poses that are associated with either high or low levels of power would initiate feelings of power itself. It has previously been shown that certain physical stances, poses or movements can cause an emotional or attitudinal change in participants, but never before related to power poses (Strack, Martin & Stepper, 1988; Briñol & Petty, 2003; Riskind & Gotay, 1982).

Carney and colleagues (2010) tested the effectiveness of this prime by measuring hormonal levels in participants' saliva before and after the prime was executed. It has been shown in past research that feeling powerful or powerless can have an effect on two key hormones: testosterone and cortisol. In individuals that feel powerful and dominant, testosterone is increased; for example, it rises before a competition and in the case of a win, but drops in the case of a defeat (Archer, 2006; Mazur & Booth, 1998). On the other hand, cortisol has been found to increase in powerless individuals, and seems to decrease as power levels increase (Sapolsky, Alberts, & Altmann, 1997; Abbott et al., 2003).

Carney and colleagues (2010) found that when participants were asked to stand in "high power" positions for two minutes, they showed increased levels of testosterone and decreased levels of cortisol compared to their baseline level. The opposite was found when participants stood in "low power" positions: compared to their baseline, they showed decreased levels of testosterone and increased cortisol. Participants also reported feelings of higher or lower levels of power, in accordance with their prime. This shows strong physiological and psychological reactions to the power primes.

From Van Toorn et al.'s study (in press) and Kay et al.'s study (2008), we can already see how power priming can affect attitudes and beliefs about the current systems in society (Van de Toorn, Tyler & Jost, 2011). As mentioned when discussing system justification, we

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can use system justification theory to explain the function of rape myths. As a link between these two concepts is probable, we can therefore expect that feelings of power or control would also have an effect on rape myth acceptance. An increase in personal control may reduce levels of rape myth acceptance for both men and women as it did for system justification (Van de Toorn et al., in press; Kay et al., 2008). This would have incredibly important real world applications, as reducing rape myths and other negative concepts such as sexism are important goals for society and clarifying the psychology behind how we can achieve this would be greatly beneficial.

On the other hand, previous research has demonstrated an association between power and sex. Bargh, Raymond, Pryor and Strack (1995) demonstrated that men who scored highly on a scale measuring their likelihood to sexually harass seemed to possess an automatic association between the concepts of power and sex. When they were primed with power stimuli, as opposed to neutral stimuli, they found a confederate female researcher more attractive. Therefore the researchers concluded that one possible aspect of sexual exploitation of women could be this power-sex association, whereby power produces a nonconscious influence on sexual feelings towards women they have power over. We can therefore see how among men power has previously been linked with sexual harassment. However, this association predicts a link between power and sexual assault or rape, rather than rape myth acceptance. Therefore, the present study will develop this research into power and personal control priming, and explore the psychological effects that these feelings can have on rape myth acceptance, system justification, self-objectification and ambivalent sexism, and also look at how these effects differ for men and women. As women feel more powerful, it may be the case that they no longer have a psychological need to accept rape myths, whereas for males the opposite may occur – as they feel more powerful, their level of rape myth acceptance increases. Another novelty in the current study will be the use of power poses as a

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way to induce powerful feelings in individuals, rather than simple power accessibility used in Bargh and colleagues' study (1995). This will provide an insight into how personal control specifically is related to the power-sex association, rather than power over others.

Aims of studies

In this paper, I present two studies into the effect of priming an increase or decrease in feelings of personal control on rape myth acceptance. I predict that women who feel more powerful or in control will have decreased attitudes to rape myth acceptance, relative to those who feel powerless or lack control, and that the opposite effect would occur for men for power. However, for increased personal control, I expect the same response of a decrease in rape myth acceptance for both men and women. I also examine potential mediators and moderators for the relationship between personal control and rape myth acceptance, specifically self-objectification, ambivalent sexism and self-objectification.

Hypotheses

The hypotheses for these studies are that when primed with increased power female participants will report lower levels of rape myth acceptance, and males will report higher levels of rape myth acceptance, relative to when they are primed with a decreased sense of power. For personal control, an increase in feelings of personal control will show a decrease in rape myth acceptance for all participants. When primed with powerful feelings or increased personal control, female participants will report lower levels of benevolent sexism, and males will report higher levels of benevolent sexism, relative to when they are primed with powerless feelings or a decreased sense of personal control. When primed with powerful feelings or increased personal control, female participants will report lower levels of gender specific system justification, and male participants will report higher levels, relative to when they are primed with powerless feelings or a decreased sense of personal control. Benevolent

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sexism will act as a mediator between the relationships between feelings of power or personal control and rape myth acceptance in all participants. If no relationship between power or personal control and sexism is found, then benevolent sexism will be tested as a moderator on the relationships between power and personal control with rape myth acceptance. Self-objectification will act as a mediator between the relationship between feelings of power and rape myth acceptance in female participants. System justification will act as a mediator to explain the relationship between feelings of power and rape myth acceptance in all participants.

Study 1

Study 1 examined how power priming, specifically “power posing,” may affect participants’ levels of rape myth acceptance, system justification, ambivalent sexism and self-objectification. As we already know that participants’ attitudes can be affected by power priming (Van de Toorn et al., in press), this study explored the effect that power poses could have on attitudinal change, with a focus on rape myth acceptance in particular. Potential mediators are also examined. The hypotheses for this study were:

- 1) Females in a high power position would show decreased levels of rape myth acceptance, relative to a low power position, and that males would show the opposite effect.
- 2) When in a high power position, female participants will report lower levels of self-objectification, relative to when they are primed with powerless feelings or a decreased sense of personal control.

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- 3) When in a high power position, female participants will report lower levels of benevolent sexism, and males will report higher levels of benevolent sexism, relative to a low power position.
- 4) When in a high power position, female participants will report lower levels of gender specific system justification, and male participants will report higher levels, relative to a low power position.
- 5) Benevolent sexism will act as a mediator between the relationship between feelings of power and rape myth acceptance in all participants.
- 6) As an alternative to hypothesis five, benevolent sexism will act as a moderator on the relationship between feelings of power and rape myth acceptance in all participants.
- 7) Self-objectification will act as a mediator between the relationship between feelings of power and rape myth acceptance in female participants.
- 8) System justification will act as a mediator to explain the relationship between feelings of power and rape myth acceptance in all participants.

Method

Participants. Participants consisted of 165 students at the University of Kent (34 male; 131 female), age 17-44 ($M = 20.12$, $SD = 3.42$). Ideally, to gain a large enough sample to see an effect if one existed, I aimed to collect data from 200 participants, with 50 of each gender in each condition. However due to lack of time and resources this was not possible. They were recruited online via the university's research participation scheme. Most completed the study in exchange for course credits, which meant that most were first year ($N = 78$) or second year ($N = 80$) students, but the dataset also included some third/final year ($N = 6$) and postgraduate students ($N = 1$). Most participants identified as White/Caucasian ($N =$

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115), with others identifying as Black ($N = 12$), Hispanic ($N = 1$), Asian ($N = 13$) or other ($N = 24$). They were randomly assigned to power conditions, and numbers in each condition were roughly equal (high power condition $N = 82$; low power condition $N = 83$).

Procedure. After reading and completing an information form (Appendix A) and consent form (Appendix A), participants were placed in a different room from the researcher and asked to sit in a certain pose for one minute whilst completing an impression formation filler task. The experimenter explained the pose and the task to them, and made sure they were sitting correctly and comfortably before leaving the room. After one minute, they completed the same task but this time with a standing pose rather than sitting. Participants were not aware that these poses were related to power priming.

After completing the power pose task, participants completed the Updated Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (McMahon & Farmer, 2011) and the Gender System Justification Scale (Jost & Kay, 2005). They were then asked to complete a modified version of the Self-Objectification Questionnaire (Calegero & Jost, 2011; Noll & Fredrickson, 1998). Finally, they completed the Ambivalent Sexism Inventory (Glick & Fiske, 1996). All of these scales were done using Qualtrics, and were completed one after the other on the computer in the lab.

When participants had completed all the measures, they were given a debrief form to read by the researcher. This provided them with the true aims and hypotheses of the study, and also included details of the university's counselling service and a local rape help line charity, East Kent Rape Line, due to the sensitive nature of the topic. They were also given details of the researcher, supervisor and the psychology office in case they had any questions, comments or complaints about the research, or in case they wished to withdraw their data at any point. A copy of the debrief form can be found in appendix A.

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Measures.

Power priming. Four power poses were taken from Carney et al. (2010). Two of these were high power poses, and two were low power poses. Each category of high and low power contained one standing and one sitting pose. The poses used can be found in Appendix B. These poses had previously been carefully selected by Carney et al. (2010), and were rated in a pre-test to check that they conveyed the chosen level of power suitably, in that high power poses were rated significantly higher than low power poses in terms of the level of power that they conveyed. The poses were also rated in a pre-test in Carney and colleagues' study (2010) in terms of comfort, difficulty and pain in order to establish that all four poses scored equal on these three factors. This was to establish that the effect of a change in feelings of power was only a result of the high or low power attribute of the pose, rather than due to a confounding variable. Whilst sitting or standing in these poses, participants completed an impression formation filler task that was also taken from Carney and colleagues (2010).

Rape myth acceptance. The scale used to measure rape myth acceptance was the Updated Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale ($M=3.96$, $SD=0.59$, $\alpha=.91$), which is an adaptation of the original Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (McMahon & Farmer, 2011; Payne et al., 1999), which has been adjusted to make it more appropriate for students. The scale consists of 22 items split into four subscales to measure different types of rape myths. All items are measured on a five point Likert scale (1 = *strongly agree*, 5 = *strongly disagree*). Higher scores indicate a higher rejection of rape myths.

The first subscale is "she asked for it," and consists of items such as "If a girl is raped while she is drunk, she is at least somewhat responsible for letting things get out of hand." The second subscale is "he didn't mean to," consisting of items such as, "Guys don't usually intend to force sex on a girl, but sometimes they get too sexually carried away." The third

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subscale is “it wasn’t really rape,” containing items such as, “A rape probably didn’t happen if a girl doesn’t have any bruises or marks.” Finally, subscale four is “she lied,” which consists of items such as, “A lot of times, girls who say they were raped often led the guy on and then had regrets.” A full copy of the scale can be found in Appendix C.

System justification. The Gender System Justification Scale (Jost & Kay, 2005) ($M=5.03$, $SD=1.32$, $\alpha=.81$) was used. This measures system justifying attitudes specifically related to gender. This is measured on a nine point Likert scale (1 = *strongly agree*, 9 = *strongly disagree*). The scale contains eight items, with lower numbers indicating system justifying behaviours, although two of the items in the scale are reverse scored. A full copy of the scale can be seen in Appendix D, however some example items from this scale include: “The division of labour in families generally operates as it should,” “Everyone (male or female) has a fair shot and wealth and happiness” and “Most policies relating to gender and the sexual division of labour serve the greater good.”

Self-objectification. To measure self-objectification, a modified version of the Self-Objectification Questionnaire (Calegero & Jost, 2011; Noll & Fredrickson, 1998) was used ($M=.41$, $SD=11.43$). Participants were asked to rank appearance-based and competence-based attributes in terms of which has the greatest impact on their self-concept. This was modified from the original simply by condensing the original six attributes for appearance and competence into five attributes; the disregarded attributes were “colouring” and “stamina.” The remaining appearance-based attributes were: weight, physical attractiveness, sculpted muscles, measurements and sex appeal. The competence-based attributes were: health, strength, physical fitness, energy levels and physical coordination. The score for self-objectification was calculated by subtracting the sum of the ranks from the competence-based attributes from the sum of the ranks for the appearance-based attributes. This gave each

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participant a score between 25 and -25, with higher scores indicating higher levels of self-objectification.

Ambivalent sexism. To measure sexism, Glick and Fiske's (1995) Ambivalent Sexism Inventory ($M=3.97$, $SD=0.85$, $\alpha=.90$) was used. This is a 22-item scale comprised of 11 benevolent sexism items ($M = 3.84$, $SD = 0.95$, $\alpha = .81$) and 11 hostile sexism items ($M = 4.07$, $SD = 1.00$, $\alpha = .90$). Two of the items on the benevolent sexism scale were accidentally excluded from the study materials, but the scale still formed a reliable measure overall. Items are scored on a six point Likert scale, where higher scores indicate a higher level of sexism (1 = *disagree strongly*, 6 = *agree strongly*). Six of the 22 items are reverse scored. Some examples from the benevolent sexism items include: "No matter how accomplished he is, a man is not truly complete as a person until he has the love of a woman" and "Women should be cherished and protected by men." Some examples from the hostile sexism items include: "When women lose to men in a fair competition, they typically complain about being discriminated against" and "Once a woman gets a man to commit to her, she usually tries to put him on a tight leash." This scale can be found in Appendix E.

Design. This study employed a between subjects design testing the effects of high power vs. low power priming (independent variable) on rape myth acceptance (dependent variable). Further dependent variables that were measured as potential mediators of rape myth acceptance were system justification, self-objectification and sexism.

Ethics. All participants involved in this study were treated in line with the British Psychological Society (BPS) code of ethics and conduct. Ethical approval was given by the University of Kent's ethics committee, which can be found in Appendix A. All participants read an information sheet and signed a consent form before participating. All participants were also informed that they could withdraw their data at any point during the study and for

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up to two months after completing the study. Participants' data was also anonymous and could only be identified by their unique identification code. After completing the study, all participants were fully debriefed and were given the contact details for the university's counselling service and a local charity, East Kent Rape Line in case they had any issues they wished to follow up.

Results

Analytic strategy. Responses from the questionnaires were put into the statistic database programme IBM SPSS Statistics 21. Any reverse-scored items for all questionnaires were recoded. The mean scores were calculated for each scale, as well as for the two subscales within the Ambivalent Sexism Inventory. The mean scores and standard deviations can be seen in Table 1. For gender, females were coded “-1” and males were coded “1.” For power condition, low power was coded as “-1” and high power was coded as “1.” All statistical analyses were conducted using 0.05 alpha level. Throughout the analyses, the PROCESS and MODPROBE macros were both used (Hayes, 2013; Hayes & Matthes, 2009). All continuous variables, except for the dependent variable, rape myth acceptance, were mean centred so that main effects could be interpreted. For all analyses where rape myth acceptance is a dependent variable, age, year of study and race were entered as covariates in the model, as research has found relationships between certain ages and ethnicities with rape myth acceptance (Bampton, 2009; Kassing, Beesley & Frey, 2005; Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994). Additionally, where benevolent and hostile sexism were examined separately, they were entered as covariates for each other, as they have been shown to correlate strongly (Glick & Fiske, 2001).

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Table 1

*Mean scores for each dependent variable by males and females in each power condition
(with standard deviations in parentheses)*

Variable	Males			Females			Total		
	High power	Low power	Total	High power	Low power	Total	High power	Low power	Total
Rape myth acceptance	3.88 (0.58)	3.64 (0.60)	3.76 (0.59)	3.99 (0.60)	4.03 (0.56)	4.00 (0.58)	3.96 (0.59)	3.95 (0.58)	3.96 (0.59)
System justification	4.88 (1.78)	4.82 (1.37)	4.85 (0.85)	5.11 (1.31)	5.05 (1.36)	5.08 (0.84)	5.06 (1.28)	5.00 (1.36)	5.03 (1.32)
Self-objectification	-1.71 (9.43)	-6.65 (10.66)	-4.18 (10.22)	-0.38 (11.97)	1.52 (11.15)	0.57 (11.56)	0.66 (11.44)	0.16 (11.47)	0.41 (11.43)
Hostile sexism	3.78 (1.09)	3.84 (0.94)	3.8 (1)	4.18 (1.01)	4.1 (0.97)	4.14 (0.99)	4.1 (1.03)	4.05 (0.97)	4.07 (1)
Benevolent sexism	3.8 (0.98)	3.73 (1.06)	3.77 (1.00)	3.8 (0.96)	3.91 (0.92)	3.86 (0.94)	3.8 (0.96)	3.87 (0.95)	3.84 (0.95)

Correlations. There were several significant correlations between some of the dependent variables. Self-objectification did not significantly correlate with any other dependent variable. However, all other dependent variables showed significant correlations. All correlations between dependent variables can be seen in Table 2.

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Table 2

Correlation matrix for dependent variables in Study 1.

Variable	1	2	3	4	5
1 Self-objectification	-				
2 Rape myth acceptance	.03	-			
3 System justification	.08	.32**	-		
4 Hostile sexism	.03	.64**	.37**	-	
5 Benevolent sexism	.08	.48*	.17**	.50**	-

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

The effect of power poses on rape myth acceptance. A factorial general linear model (GLM) was conducted with rape myth acceptance as the dependent variable, and with gender and power condition as independent variables. As mentioned earlier, age, race and gender were entered as covariates (Bampton, 2009; Kassing, Beesley & Frey, 2005; Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994). The main effect of gender was significant, $F(1, 158) = 5.65, p = .02$, with females reporting higher levels of rape myth acceptance than males. The main effect of

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power condition was not significant, $F(1, 158) = .49, p = .48$. There was also no significant interaction between gender and power condition, $F(1, 158) = 1.38, p = .24$.

The effect of power poses on system justification. A factorial GLM was also conducted on system justification, with gender and power condition as independent variables. There was no significant main effect of gender, $F(1, 161) = .82, p = .37$, and no significant main effect of power condition, $F(1, 161) = .05, p = .83$. There was also no significant interaction between gender and power condition, $F(1, 161) < .001, p = .99$.

The effect of power poses on self-objectification. A factorial GLM was conducted on self-objectification, using gender and power condition as independent variables. There was a significant main effect of gender, $F(1, 161) = 4.77, p = .03$, but the main effect of power was not significant, $F(1, 161) = .49, p = .49$. The interaction between gender and power condition was also not found to be significant, $F(1, 161) = 2.48, p = .12$.

The effect of power poses on ambivalent sexism. A factorial GLM with ambivalent sexism as a dependent variable and gender and power as independent variables was also conducted. There was no significant main effect of gender, $F(1, 161) = 1.82, p = .18$, and also no significant main effect of power condition, $F(1, 161) = .001, p = .98$. The interaction was also not significant, $F(1, 161) < .001, p = .99$.

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The effect of power poses on benevolent sexism. A factorial GLM with benevolent sexism as the dependent variable and gender and power as independent variables was conducted. There was no significant effect of gender, $F(1, 161) = .233, p = .63$, and no significant effect of power condition, $F(1, 161) = .01, p = .92$. The interaction was not significant, $F(1, 161) = .24, p = .63$.

The effect of power poses on hostile sexism. A factorial GLM with hostile sexism as the dependent variables and gender and power as independent variables was also conducted. There was a marginally significant effect of gender, $F(1, 161) = 2.94, p = .09$, and no significant effect of power condition, $F(1, 161) = .001, p = .98$. The interaction was not significant, $F(1, 161) = .133, p = .72$.

Benevolent sexism as a moderator. As benevolent sexism was not affected by power, it was considered as a moderator rather than a mediator for the relationship between power and rape myth acceptance.¹ The analysis showed that the overall model was significant, $R^2 = .52, F(11, 153) = 15.32, p < .001$. The main effect of gender was significant, $b = -.08, SE = .04, t(153) = -1.98, p = .049$, but the main effect of benevolent sexism was not significant, $b = .06, SE = .05, t(153) = -1.20, p = .23$. The main effect of power condition was not significant, $b = .05, SE = .04, t(153) = 1.16, p = .25$. The interaction between power condition and benevolent sexism was significant, $b = .14, SE = .04, t(153) = 3.14, p = .002$, and the interaction between power condition and gender was marginally significant, $b = .08, SE = .04, t(153) = 1.98, p = .054$. The interaction between benevolent sexism and gender was marginally significant, $b = -.07, SE = .04, t(153) = -1.78, p = .08$. The three-way interaction

¹ When covariates were not included, the three-way interaction between gender, power and benevolent sexism was not significant, $b = .08, SE = .05, t(157) = -1.65, p = .10$. The simple slopes pattern was the same as when covariates are not included, except that for males with average level of benevolent sexism the effect was not significant, rather than marginally significant, $t(157) = 1.52, p = .13$.

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between gender, power condition and benevolent sexism was significant, $b = .09$, $SE = .04$, $t(153) = 2.08$, $p = .04$. The results of the moderation analysis can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3

Effects of power condition, gender and benevolent sexism on rape myth acceptance (controlling for age, gender, year of study and hostile sexism; Study 1, N=165)

Variables	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>
Power	.05	.04	1.16
Gender	-.08	.04	-1.98*
Benevolent sexism	.06	.05	-1.20
Power x gender	.08	.04	1.98 ⁺
Power x benevolent sexism	.14	.04	3.14**
Gender x benevolent sexism	.07	.04	-1.78 ⁺
Power x gender x benevolent sexism	.09	.04	2.08*
<i>F</i>	$F(11, 153) = 5.32***$		
<i>R</i> ²	.52		

⁺ $p < .10$. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$

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Simple slopes were computed in order to decompose the three-way interaction. The results showed that the interaction between benevolent sexism and power condition was not significant for females $b = .05$, $SE = .04$, $t(123) = 1.25$, $p = .21$ but was significant for males $b = .24$, $SE = .10$, $t(26) = 2.42$, $p = .02$. For males with low levels of benevolent sexism (1 SD below the mean), the effect of power on rape myth acceptance was not significant, $t(153) = -0.86$, $p = .39$. For males at the mean level of benevolent sexism, the effect of power on rape myth acceptance was marginally significant, $t(153) = 1.76$, $p = .08$. For males with high levels of benevolent sexism (1 SD above the mean), the effect of power on rape myth acceptance was significant, $t(153) = 3.26$, $p = .001$. The results for males can be seen in Figure 1, and the results for females can be seen in Figure 2.

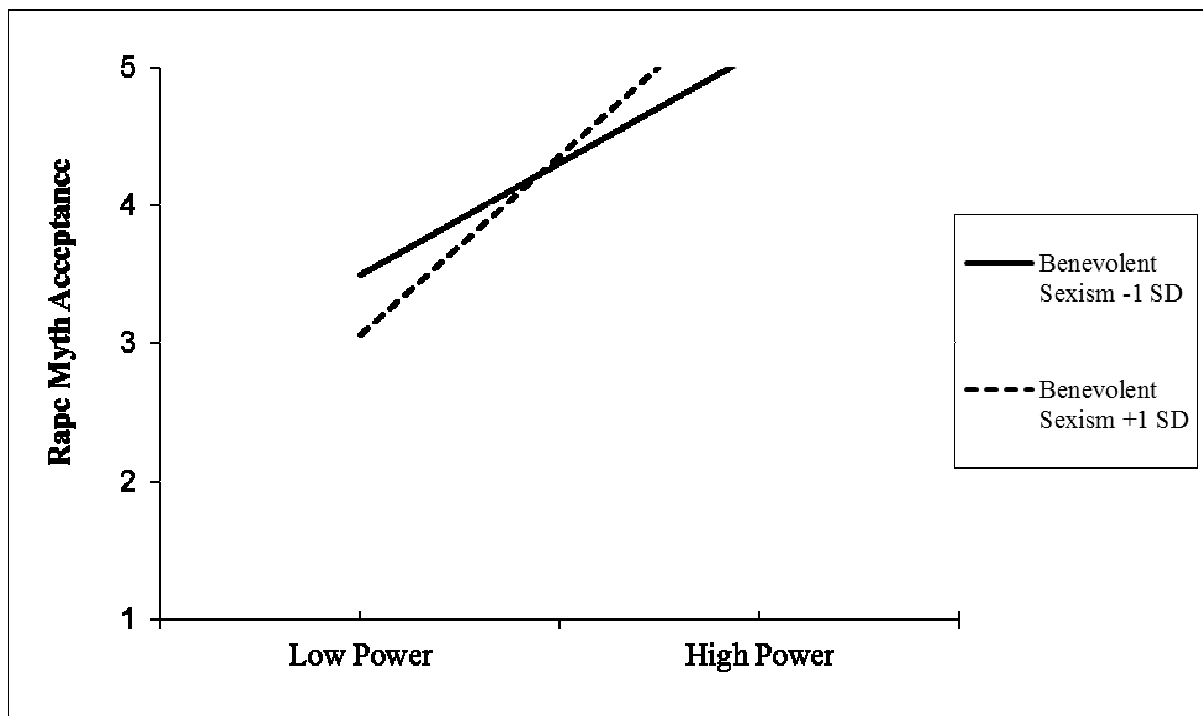


Figure 1. The results of a three-way interaction between benevolent sexism, power and gender on rape myth acceptance for male participants.

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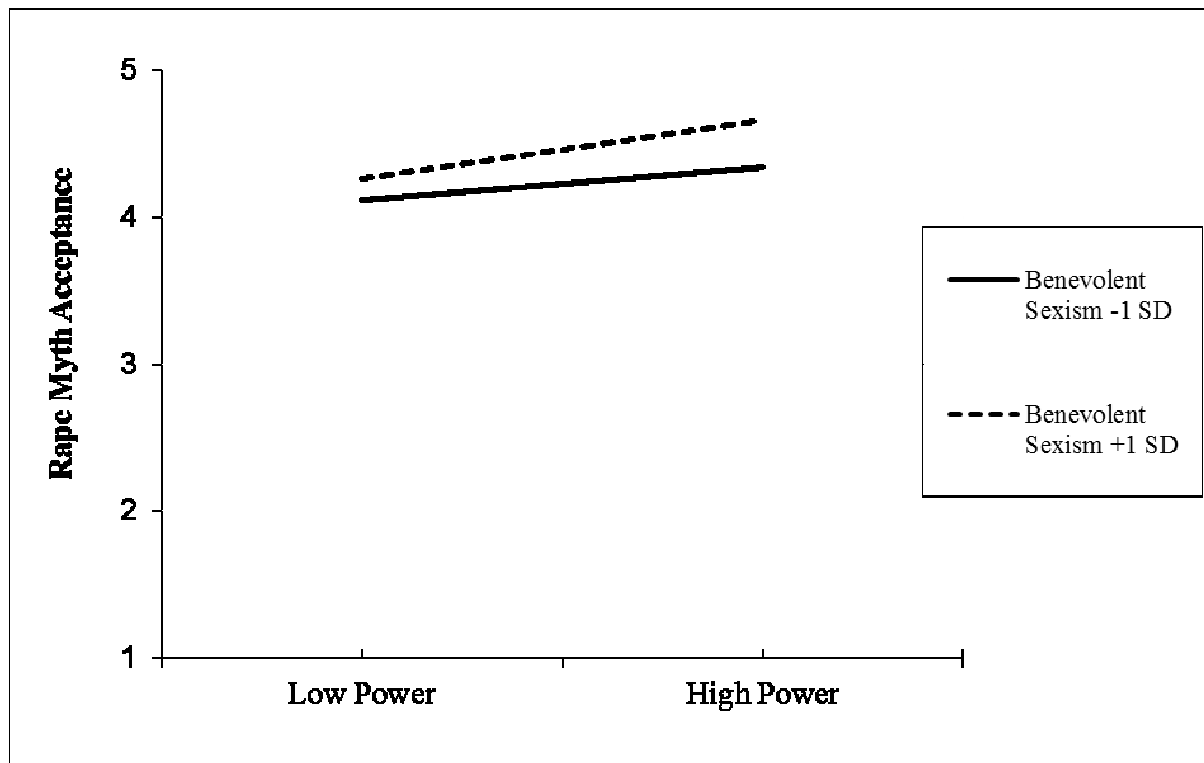


Figure 2. The results of a three-way interaction between benevolent sexism, power and gender on rape myth acceptance for female participants.

Hostile sexism as a moderator. As hostile sexism was also not affected by power, it was considered as a moderator for the relationship between power and rape myth acceptance in order to see whether there was a difference between hostile and benevolent sexism in terms of their relationships with power and gender.¹ The analysis showed that the overall model was significant, $R^2 = .49$, $F(11, 153) = 13.54$, $p < .001$. The main effect of gender was marginally significant, $b = -.08$, $SE = .04$, $t(153) = -1.81$, $p = .07$, and the main effect of hostile sexism was significant, $b = .29$, $SE = .05$, $t(153) = 6.26$, $p < .001$. The main effect of power condition was not significant, $b = .05$, $SE = .04$, $t(153) = 1.21$, $p = .23$. The interaction between power condition and hostile sexism was marginally significant, $b = .08$, $SE = .04$, $t(153) = 1.75$, $p = .08$, and the interaction between power condition and gender was

¹ When covariates were not included, the three-way interaction remains not significant, $b = .02$, $SE = .04$, $t(157) = 0.56$, $p = .58$.

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significant, $b = .09$, $SE = .04$, $t(153) = 2.06$, $p = .04$. The interaction between hostile sexism and gender was not significant, $b = -.05$, $SE = .04$, $t(153) = -1.08$, $p = .28$. The three-way interaction between hostile sexism, gender and power condition was not significant, $b = .04$, $SE = .04$, $t(153) = 0.91$, $p = .36$. The results from the moderation analysis can be seen in Table 4.

Table 4

Effects of power condition, gender and hostile sexism on rape myth acceptance (controlling for age, gender, year of study and benevolent sexism; Study 1, N=165)

Variables	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>
Power	.05	.04	1.12
Gender	-.08	.04	-1.81 ⁺
Hostile sexism	.29	.05	6.26***
Power x gender	.09	.04	2.06*
Power x hostile sexism	.08	.04	1.75 ⁺
Gender x hostile sexism	-.05	.04	-1.08
Power x gender x hostile sexism	.04	.04	0.91
<i>F</i>	<i>F</i> (11, 153) = 13.54		
<i>R</i> ²	.49		

⁺ $p < .10$. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Discussion of Study 1

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The results of this study show that there was no significant main effect of power on participants' attitudes to rape myth acceptance. Power priming also did not show a significant effect on system justification, self-objectification, ambivalent sexism, hostile sexism or benevolent sexism. However, when benevolent sexism was included as a moderator in the analysis, a significant three-way interaction was found between power, gender and benevolent sexism on rape myth acceptance. This interaction between power, gender and benevolent sexism was significant for men, but not significant effect was found for women. When inspected more closely, it was found that this interaction effect between power and gender was only significant for benevolent sexism but not for hostile sexism. Only males with a high level of benevolent sexism were significantly affected by the power poses. In other words, highly benevolently sexist males showed an increase in rape myth acceptance after adopting a high power pose, and a decrease after adopting a low power pose.

Previous research by Bargh and colleagues (1995) showed an automatic power-sex association, whereby power caused a nonconscious influence upon sexual feelings, but only for males who had scored highly on a "likelihood to sexually harass" scale. A similar pattern of moderation can be seen in the current study; only males with an above average score on benevolent sexism were affected by the power stimuli. Perhaps it is not only men who score highly as likely to sexually harass, as Bargh and colleagues found, but also men who score highly on general sexism measures that are affected by this power-sex association. Furthermore, perhaps this automatic association does not only cause an increase in sexual feelings towards women in an inferior position of power, but also causes other concerning issues such as an increase in acceptance of rape myths. This effect was particularly prominent for those scoring highly on benevolent sexism, once again showing that although this area of sexism seems less harmful, in reality it these attitudes that could cause the most damage in terms of gender equality.

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The results of previous studies have generally found positive effects from using power poses, such as a greater success in job interviews (Cuddy, Wilmuth & Carney, 2012). However, more recently, adverse effects have also been found recently by Yap, Wazlawek, Lucas, Cuddy and Carney (2013). Powerful poses showed an increase in stealing, cheating on tests and committing traffic violations. Maybe power poses are therefore not as positive as the first studies using them demonstrated. Similarly, the results of the current study demonstrate the adverse effects that power posing can have on attitudes. If power posing is encouraged and used in order to promote positive effects, certain groups will also generate negative effects. As this study demonstrates, power posing may lead to males with higher levels of sexism showing increased levels of rape myth acceptance. This may lead to further negative consequences for society- as I have already discussed the problems that rape myth acceptance can cause for rape and sexual assault victims, as well as for women and the rest of society in general (Hickman & Muehlenhard, 1997; Egan & Wilson, 2012; Hayes et al., 2013; Malamuth, 1981; Bohner et al., 2005).

In the current study, I considered both benevolent and hostile sexism separately as moderators. Hostile sexism did not show a significant three-way interaction, but benevolent sexism did. Males with high levels of benevolent sexism showed significantly increased levels of rape myth acceptance after they had completed the high power pose. A strong association between benevolent sexism, but not hostile sexism, has previously been found with rape myth acceptance (Chapleau et al., 2007; Viki & Abrams, 2002). It seems that benevolent sexism plays an important role in the endorsement of rape myths, whereby people tend to hold victim blaming attitudes if the victim has violated traditional female gender stereotypes, such as through drinking alcohol, wearing revealing clothing or being promiscuous (Viki & Abrams, 2002; Cassidy & Hurrell, 1995; Monson, Langhunrichsen-Rohling, Binderup, 2000). The current study therefore supports these findings, as the

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interaction of power and gender with benevolent sexism, but not hostile sexism, was found to be significant.

There are several possible explanations of why the power posing only affected males (with high levels of benevolent sexism). Perhaps women are more resistant to priming in general, or are more resistant to power priming because they are so frequently the victim of inequality, and are therefore not as used to having power as males are. This would also explain why males with a low sexism score were not affected by the power prime; perhaps as they view themselves as equal to women in everyday life, they do not see themselves as having power over them or being unequal in terms of gender. Conversely, males who scored averagely or highly on sexism scales are more at ease with being considered powerful, as they truly believe that this is the case for themselves and the rest of their gender in everyday life. This may have made them more easily affected by the prime. In other words, they already believe they are more powerful than women, so are happy to accept an increase in powerful feelings as soon as the opportunity is given. This suggests that perhaps a feeling of “power over others” was created, rather than a feeling of personal control.

The findings in the current study regarding power priming’s effect on system justification do not support previous work by Van der Toorn and colleagues (in press). In this previous study, a significant change in system justifying attitudes was found. Low power primes produced an increase in system justification, whereas high power primes produced the opposite effect. It is partly based on this that the hypotheses for women for Study 1 were formed, but these were not supported. We therefore must question the type of “power” that was created in both the current study, and in Van der Toorn and colleagues’ study (in press). As has been discussed, there are important differences between power and personal control, and these two concepts can have opposite effects. In researching these two concepts, care

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must be taken to ensure that the type of power the prime aims to create is the type that is truly generated in the study.

The results of this study also showed significant differences between genders on several of the dependent variables. Firstly, there was a significant effect of gender on self-objectification. Self-objectification was found to be higher in females than in males. This is not unexpected, as previous studies have often found females to objectify themselves more than males do (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997; Szymanski, Moffitt & Carr, 2011; Fox et al. , 2013). It is thought that this could be due to several reasons, such as traditional sex roles (McKay, 2013; Trivers, 1985; Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997) or regular objectification of women by the media (Kistler & Lee, 2009; Harrison & Fredrickson, 2003; Roberts & Gettman, 2004; McKay, 2013). Although we cannot argue that these factors necessarily cause self-objectification in women, they have certainly been shown to strengthen stereotyped female attitudes about themselves and prime certain attitudes and behaviours associated with these stereotypes (Kistler & Lee, 2009; Roberts & Gettman, 2004; McKay, 2013).

Additionally, a significant difference was found between the male and female mean scores on rape myth acceptance. At first this may not seem surprising; many previous studies have found differences between genders in terms of rape myth acceptance in that males have generally been found to show higher levels of rape myth acceptance than females, as well as higher levels of sexism (Johnson, Kuck & Schander, 1997; Jenkins & Dambrot, 1987; Margolin, Miller & Moran, 1989; Muir, Lonsway & Payne, 1996; Gorbett, 2007; Davies, Gilston & Rogers, 2012; Bannon, Brosi & Foubert, 2013). Yet unexpectedly in the current study, females were found to have higher levels of rape myth acceptance compared to males. This is inconsistent with previous research, as it is usually males who report higher levels of rape myth acceptance. This could indicate that males' levels of rape myth acceptance are generally reducing, or that females' levels of rape myth acceptance are increasing.

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Additionally, there was a marginally significant effect of gender on hostile sexism, but not on benevolent sexism, or on ambivalent sexism overall. For hostile sexism, females reported significantly higher levels than male participants. Previous studies have generally found a difference between males and females level of sexism, with males always having higher scores (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1995; Jones & Jacklin, 1988; Davies et al. 2012), so it is surprising that no significant difference was found between genders in the current study for ambivalent sexism overall, or for benevolent sexism. It is perhaps even more surprising that it was women rather than men who showed higher levels of hostile sexism, as previous studies have consistently shown males to report higher levels of all types of sexism than females (Glick et al., 2000). From this, we can conclude that either the males in our study had lower sexism scores than previous research has found, or that females in this study had increased sexism scores. That is to say, we know that the two genders scored reasonably similarly, but we cannot necessarily confirm why this is the case.

The fact that females scored higher on both rape myth acceptance and benevolent sexism than males is unusual compared to other similar studies (Johnson et al., 1997; Jenkins & Dambrot, 1987; Margolin et al., 1989; Muir et al., 1996; Gorbett, 2007; Davies et al., 2012; Bannon et al., 2013). These concepts are similar, and positively correlated, so it is not unexpected that those who score highly on one will score similarly on the other. It is difficult to explain why the females in this sample scored significantly higher than males. One explanation could be that university students hold different attitudes than the general population; some argue that a university campus environment endorses a “rape culture” that encourages sexism, the objectification of women and trivialisation of sexual assault and rape (Younis, 2014). Perhaps being in this environment makes females more likely to hold benevolently sexist attitudes and endorse rape myths more. Additionally, although males are

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also exposed to the same environment, perhaps females are more susceptible to being affected by these attitudes.

It may also be the case that females in this study had typical levels of rape myth acceptance and benevolent sexism, and it was males who showed a reduced level of these variables, creating a significant difference. Most of the students in the sample were studying Psychology, and as a result may be more aware of harmful issues in society such as rape myth acceptance and sexism, due to learning about them as part of their course. This was demonstrated by Jones and Jacklin (1988), who found that participants levels of sexism decreased significantly after taking an introductory women's and men's study course. This effect may have been replicated in this study, with Psychology students having more knowledge about the subject area making them less likely to support negative attitudes than the general public. However, Pettijohn and Walzer (2008) found that only student studying a "Psychology of Prejudice" course, rather than a more general "Introduction to Psychology" showed significantly lower levels of sexism. It may therefore be the case that only when students specifically study prejudice, rather than just Psychology in general, do their attitudes become less sexist.

There were some significant correlations found between the dependent variables in this research. Both benevolent sexism and hostile sexism also all correlated significantly with rape myth acceptance. This means that participants scoring highly on any of the sexism scales are likely to report higher levels of rape myth acceptance as well. This is to be expected; it has been discussed previously how sexism is related to rape myth acceptance, and how previous studies have found a link between sexism and endorsement of rape myths (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1995; Chapleau et al., 2007).

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Another significant correlation was found between system justification and rape myth acceptance. This was a positive correlation, showing that when participants' level of system justification increases, their levels of rape myths did as well. This is also to be expected; the discussion of the literature shows how system justification demonstrates the function that rape myths serve, by mitigating any fear of sexual assault through attribution of blame to the victims of such crimes, which gives a sense of control over whether or not an individual will become the victim of such a crime (Egan, & Wilson, 2012; Kay et al, 2012; Van de Toorn et al., in press). We can therefore use this to suggest why a correlation between these two variables occurred. System justification was also positively correlated with ambivalent sexism, as well as with benevolent and hostile sexism independently. When system justification increased, ambivalent sexism, hostile sexism and benevolent sexism also increased. This could be because the two concepts of system justification and sexism are both positively correlated with rape myth acceptance. As both system justification and sexism explain and clarify the function and psychological purpose that rape myths serve, it's not unexpected that they too would be correlated with each other.

Self-objectification did not correlate significantly with any of the other dependent variables. This is not necessarily surprising; as it is usually women that self-objectify, we could expect that the overall sample would not show any effects when both genders are included, as males may balance out any effects. However, even when split by gender, neither males' nor females' self-objectification showed any significant correlation with other variables. This is unusual, as there has previously been a link found between benevolent sexism and self-objectification in women (Calogero & Jost, 2011). However, Calogero and Jost's study found a significant increase in self-objectification in women after being exposed to benevolent sexism. This link does not necessarily predict a correlation between the two variables before any manipulations; it only shows a causal relationship between them.

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The main aim of the current study was to look at ways to reduce rape myth acceptance and try to empower women. This was unsuccessful, but this may have been because of the type of feeling of power that was created. As previously discussed, there are two key types of power: power over others, and power over oneself and one's life – which can also be conceptualised as personal control (Kay et al., 2009). Our main aim was to empower participants, which is perhaps a feeling closer to inducing personal control. Additionally, as rape myths seem to serve the purpose of providing feelings of control over whether or not women are the victims of rape (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1995), it could be the case that when feelings of control are experimentally induced, this is associated with less need for control, and lead to a decrease in rape myth acceptance. Therefore, it is necessary to focus further on the issue of priming participants with increased personal control, rather than with feelings of power over others. Study 2 will address this issue further.

Study 2

A significant moderation effect was found in Study 1 for males scoring high in benevolent sexism. However, this may have been the case only for males as they are used to being the “more powerful” sex, they easily slip into feeling powerful over others, rather than a feeling of increased personal control. I decided to seek to run another study with more of a focus on personal control, in order to examine the effects of personal control specifically on rape myth acceptance. Some previous studies have found an association between an internal locus of control and acceptance of rape myths for both men and women (Yalçın, 2006; Salman, 2007). Internal locus of control is a similar concept to personal control; both are essentially the ideas that one has the ability to control their own lives. It has been previously suggested that perhaps an increase in personal control suggests that rape and sexual assault are controllable events, and therefore more blame is attributed to the victim (Yalçın, 2006; Salman, 2007).

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However, we need to establish a difference between the need for personal control, versus the state of actually having personal control. Personal control has been associated with positive outcomes in previous research. Deci and Ryan's self-determination theory (1985) shows that humans have an innate need for autonomy, or personal control. Research shows that when this innate need for autonomy, or personal control, is satisfied, positive outcomes are exhibited (Deci & Ryan, 2000). More recently, personal control was found to decrease defensiveness in in-group identification (Cichocka, Golec de Zavala, Marchlewska, Olechowski & Bilewicz, under review). We can therefore observe how personal control seems to produce societally positive outcomes. Rape myth acceptance is generally associated with personal control, in that it allows women to feel a certain level of control over whether or not they are the victim of a sexual assault, so perhaps when the need for personal control is satisfied by another measure, such as a prime, there will be a decrease in rape myth acceptance. Unlike in Study 1, an effect for both genders is now expected regarding the relationship between personal control and rape myth acceptance; as personal control has been previously associated with positive outcomes for both genders, it may be the case that an increase in personal control can produce a decrease in rape myth acceptance for both males and females.

As the study was originally focusing on empowerment, but Study 1 seemed to produce an effect of power over others, Study 2 will focus exclusively on personal control. This aspect of power seems to be closer to the feeling of empowerment that the overall studies aim to achieve. Therefore, a different, more established prime was used in order to gain an effect in line with the original hypotheses of the studies overall. This study aimed to examine the effect of personal control on rape myth acceptance. Because Study 1 found a moderation effect on benevolent sexism, it is expected that this variable will act as a moderator in Study 2 as well. The hypotheses for this study are:

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- 1) An increase in personal control will lead to a decrease in rape myth acceptance for all participants, relative to a decrease in personal control.
- 2) Benevolent sexism will act as a moderator on the relationship between personal control and rape myth acceptance.

Method

Participants. Participants were recruited through the use of Mechanical Turk (MTurk). There were 219 participants in total (133 male; 86 female), with an age range of 18-71 ($M = 32.53$, $SD = 10.92$). As in Study 1, in order to gain a large enough sample to be able to produce an effect if one existed, I aimed to sample at least 200 participants, with 50 of each gender in each condition. However, extra participants were requested in case any needed to be excluded from analyses due to failing the attention check. Most participants identified as White/Caucasian ($N = 169$), with others identifying as Black ($N = 17$), Hispanic ($N = 12$), Asian ($N = 14$), Native American ($N = 2$) or other ($N = 4$). They were randomly assigned to increased or decreased personal control conditions (increased personal control, $N = 104$; decreased personal control, $N = 115$).

Procedure. This study was conducted online using Qualtrics. Participants were first asked to read an information form (Appendix F) and then indicate their consent to participate by ticking a check box on the consent form (Appendix F). Before beginning the questionnaires, participants were asked to create a unique participant identification code, so that their data could be identified if they wished to withdraw at a later date.

Participants then completed the Ambivalent Sexism Inventory (Glick & Fiske, 1995). As there was no significant relationship found in Study 1 between sexism and power, there was no need for participants to complete this measure after the manipulation. They were then

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randomly assigned to one of two conditions: high or low personal control. In the high personal control condition, they were asked to recall an incident where a negative event happened, but they had control over the situation, and write about it in no more than 100 words. The low personal control condition was exactly the same with the exception of recalling a negative event where they did not have control over the situation. As it has been shown that threatening prime manipulations are stronger after a short time delay (Pyszczynski, Greenberg & Solomon, 1999; Greenberg, Pyszczynski, Solomon, Simon & Breus, 1994), a neutral filler task that also served as a check of participants' attention was included, whereby they were asked to select "none of the above" out of a list of colours. A copy of this attention check can be found in Appendix G. If participants selected anything other than "none of the above," they were excluded from analyses, as it is likely that they were not reading and answering all the questions thoroughly. Participants then completed the Updated Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (McMahon & Farmer, 2011), before filling in some demographic questions including, gender, age and race.

When participants had completed all the measures, they were debriefed through the use of an online form at the end of the study. This provided them with the true aims and hypotheses of the study, and also included details of an international rape charity, RAINN, with a help line that diverts callers to their local rape crisis centre. They were also given details of the researcher, supervisor and the university psychology office in case they had any questions, comments or complaints about the research, or in case they wished to withdraw their data at any point. A copy of the debrief form can be found in Appendix F.

Measures.

Rape myth acceptance. As in Study 1, the Updated Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (McMahon & Farmer, 2011) was used to measure rape myth acceptance ($M = 3.87$, $SD = 0.76$, $\alpha = .94$). This is adaptation of the original Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (Payne

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et al., 1999), and has been adjusted to make it more appropriate for students. However, as it was used in Study 1, it was decided to keep the same scale in order to remain consistent, rather than use the original Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (Payne et al., 1999). The scale was exactly the same as in Study 1, consisting of 22 items split into four subscales to measure different types of rape myths. All items are measured on a five point Likert scale (1 = *strongly agree*, 5 = *strongly disagree*). Higher scores again indicate a higher rejection of rape myths. A full copy of the scale can be found in Appendix C.

Ambivalent sexism. To measure sexism, Glick and Fiske's (1995) Ambivalent Sexism Inventory ($M = 3.60$, $SD = 0.90$, $\alpha = .94$) was again used (Appendix E). This remained exactly the same as in Study 1, involving a 22-item scale comprised of two subscales for benevolent ($M = 3.60$, $SD = 0.96$, $\alpha = .87$) and hostile ($M = 3.60$, $SD = 1.07$, $\alpha = .91$) sexism. The overall scale encompassed 11 benevolent sexism items and 11 hostile sexism items. The full scale was used, despite the hypotheses only relating to benevolent sexism, in order to achieve consistency with Study 1. The two benevolent sexism items that were accidentally excluded in Study 1 were included in Study 2. Items were again scored on a six point Likert scale, where higher scores indicate a higher level of sexism (1 = *disagree strongly*, 6 = *agree strongly*). Six of the 22 items are reverse scored.

Design. This study employed a between subjects design testing the effects of high control vs. low control priming (independent variable) on rape myth acceptance (dependent variables). A further independent variable that was measured as a potential moderator of rape myth acceptance was benevolent sexism.

Ethics. All participants involved in this study were treated in line with the British Psychological Society (BPS) code of ethics and conduct. Separate ethical approval was given for Study 2 by the University of Kent's ethics committee, which can be found in Appendix F.

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All participants read an information sheet and indicated their consent via a check box on the consent form before participating. All participants were also informed that they could withdraw their data at any point during the study and for up to two months after completing the study. Participants' data was again anonymous, and was conducted online, so they could only be identified by their unique identification code. After completing the study, all participants were fully debriefed and were given the contact details for an international rape charity, RAINN, as well as a help line number that diverts their call to their local rape crisis centre, in case they had any issues they wished to follow up. They were also given the researcher and supervisor's details in case they wished to ask further questions about the study.

Results

Analytic strategy. The results were downloaded from Qualtrics and entered into SPSS 21. Any reverse-scored items for all questionnaires were recoded, and mean scores were calculated for each scale, as well as for the two subscales within the Ambivalent Sexism Inventory. For gender, females were coded "-1" and males were coded "1." For power condition, low personal control was coded as "-1" and high personal control was coded as "1." A total of 26 participants who did not pass the attention check question were excluded from all analyses. All statistical analyses were conducted using 0.05 alpha level. All continuous variables, except for the dependent variable, rape myth acceptance, were mean centred so that main effects could be interpreted. Where appropriate, age, year of study and race were entered as covariates in the model, as research has found relationships between certain ages and ethnicities with rape myth acceptance (Bampton, 2009; Kassing, Beesley & Frey, 2005; Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994). Additionally, where benevolent and hostile sexism were examined separately, they were entered as covariates for each other, as they have been shown to correlate strongly (Glick & Fiske, 2001). Throughout the analysis, both the

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MODPROBE and the PROCESS macros were used (Hayes & Matthes, 2009; Hayes, 2013).

The means for each scale can be found in Table 5 and Table 6.

Table 5

Mean scores for rape myth acceptance for males and females in each personal control condition (with standard deviations in parentheses)

Dependent variable	Males			Females			Total		
	Increased control	Decreased control	Total	Increased control	Decreased control	Total	Increased control	Decreased control	Total
Rape myth acceptance	3.49 (0.71)	3.75 (0.74)	3.63 (0.73)	4.24 (0.76)	4.15 (0.59)	4.20 (0.68)	3.82 (0.82)	3.91 (0.71)	3.87 (0.76)

Table 6

Mean scores for hostile and benevolent sexism for males and females (with standard deviations in parentheses)

Dependent variable	Males	Females	Total
Hostile sexism	3.32 (0.99)	3.99 (1.07)	3.60 (1.07)
Benevolent sexism	3.41 (3.63)	3.85 (0.98)	3.59 (0.96)

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Correlations. As the dependent variables were found to be correlated in Study 1, this was checked again in Study 2. All the continuous variables in Study 2 were significantly correlated at $p < .01$. These correlations are presented in Table 7.

Table 7

Correlation matrix for dependent variables in Study 2

Variable	1	2	3
1 Rape myth acceptance	-		
2 Hostile sexism	.74**	-	
3 Benevolent sexism	.37**	.56**	-

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

The effect of personal control on rape myth acceptance. A factorial general linear model (GLM) was conducted with rape myth acceptance as the dependent variable, and with gender and personal control as independent variables.² The main effect of gender was significant, $F(5, 187) = 32.20, p < .001$, with females reporting higher levels of rape myth acceptance than males. The main effect of personal control was not significant, $F(5, 187) =$

² When covariates are not included, the two-way interaction between gender and personal control is still marginally significant, $F(3, 189) = 2.90, p = .09$. The pattern of simple slopes for women is the same, but for men, personal control only has a marginally significant effect on rape myth acceptance, $t(189) = -1.94, p = .054$.

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0.67, $p = .42$. The interaction between gender and personal control was marginally significant, $F(5, 187) = 3.09, p = .08$.

Simple main effects were computed in order to decompose the marginally significant two-way interaction between gender and personal control on rape myth acceptance. For females the effect of personal control on rape myth acceptance was not significant, $t(187) = -0.63, p = .53$. For males, the effect of personal control on rape myth acceptance was significant, $t(187) = -1.98, p = .049$. This means that for males, a change in personal control significantly affected levels of rape myth acceptance.

Benevolent sexism as a moderator. The analysis was consistent with Study 1, whereby both benevolent and hostile sexism were considered as moderators to see whether the any effects shown were the result of one particular type of sexism. Benevolent sexism was considered as a moderator of a two-way interaction of gender and personal control on rape myth acceptance. Analyses were again conducted using the PROCESS macro, provided by Hayes (2013)³. The results showed that for the relationship between personal control, gender and benevolent sexism on rape myth acceptance, the overall model was significant, $R^2 = .61, F(10, 182) = 28.30, p < .001$. The main effect of gender was significant, $b = -.14, SE = .04, t(182) = -3.59, p < .001$, and the main effect of benevolent sexism was not significant, $b = -.10, SE = .05, t(182) = -2.04, p = .17$. The main effect of personal control was significant $b = -.07, SE = .04, t(182) = -2.00, p = .047$. The interaction between personal control and benevolent sexism was not significant, $b = -.02, SE = .04, t(182) = -0.45, p = .65$, and the interaction between personal control and gender was not significant, $b = -.05, SE = .04, t(182) = -1.26, p = .21$. The interaction between benevolent sexism and gender was not significant, $b =$

³ When covariates are not included, the three-way interaction between personal, rape myth acceptance and benevolent sexism remains significant, $b = -.12, SE = .05, t(185) = -2.27, p = .02$, and the pattern of the simple slopes is the same as when the covariates are included.

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= -.01, $SE = .04$, $t(182) = -0.34$, $p = .73$. A significant three-way interaction between personal control, benevolent sexism and gender was found, $b = -.10$, $SE = .04$, $t(182) = -2.45$, $p = .02$.

The results from the moderation analysis can be seen in Table 8.

Table 8

Effects of personal control, gender and benevolent sexism on rape myth acceptance (controlling for age, gender, and hostile sexism; Study 2, N=219)

Variables	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>
Personal control	-.07	.04	-2.00*
Gender	-.14	.04	-3.59***
Benevolent sexism	-.10	.05	-2.04
Personal control x gender	-.05	.04	-1.26
Personal control x benevolent sexism	-.02	.04	-0.45
Gender x benevolent sexism	-.01	.04	-0.34
Personal control x gender x benevolent sexism	-.10	.04	-2.45*
<i>F</i>	$F(10, 182) = 28.30***$		
<i>R</i> ²	.61		

⁺ $p < .10$. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Simple slopes were computed in order to decompose the three-way interaction. The results showed that the interaction between benevolent sexism and personal control was not significant for females, $b = -.10$, $SE = .04$, $t(182) = -2.45$, $p = .02$, but was significant for

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males, $b = -.11$, $SE = .05$, $t(105) = -2.12$, $p = .04$. For males with low levels of benevolent sexism (1 *SD* below the mean), the effect of personal control on rape myth acceptance was not significant, $t(182) = -0.20$, $p = .84$. At the mean level of benevolent sexism, the effect of personal control on rape myth acceptance for males was significant, $t(182) = -2.53$, $p = .01$. For males with high levels of benevolent sexism (1 *SD* above the mean), the effect of personal control on rape myth acceptance was significant, $t(182) = -2.99$, $p = .003$. The results of the interaction between personal control and benevolent sexism on rape myth acceptance can be seen for each gender in Figure 3 and Figure 4.

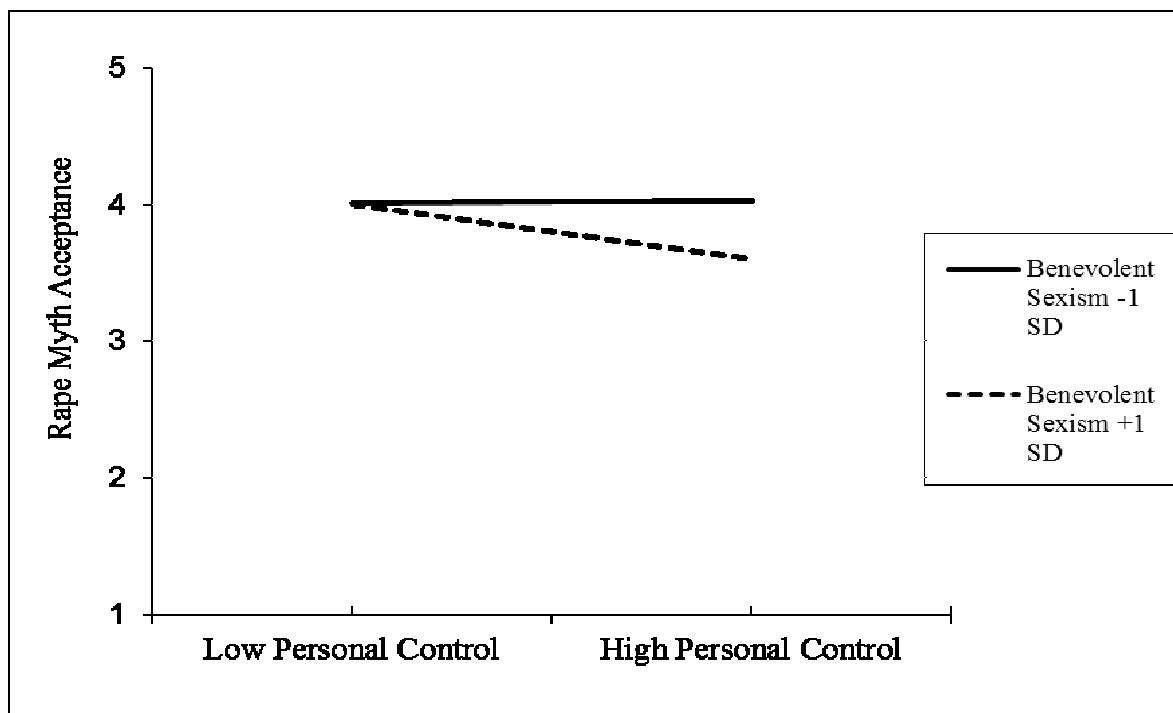


Figure 3. The results of a three-way interaction between benevolent sexism and personal control on rape myth acceptance for male participants.

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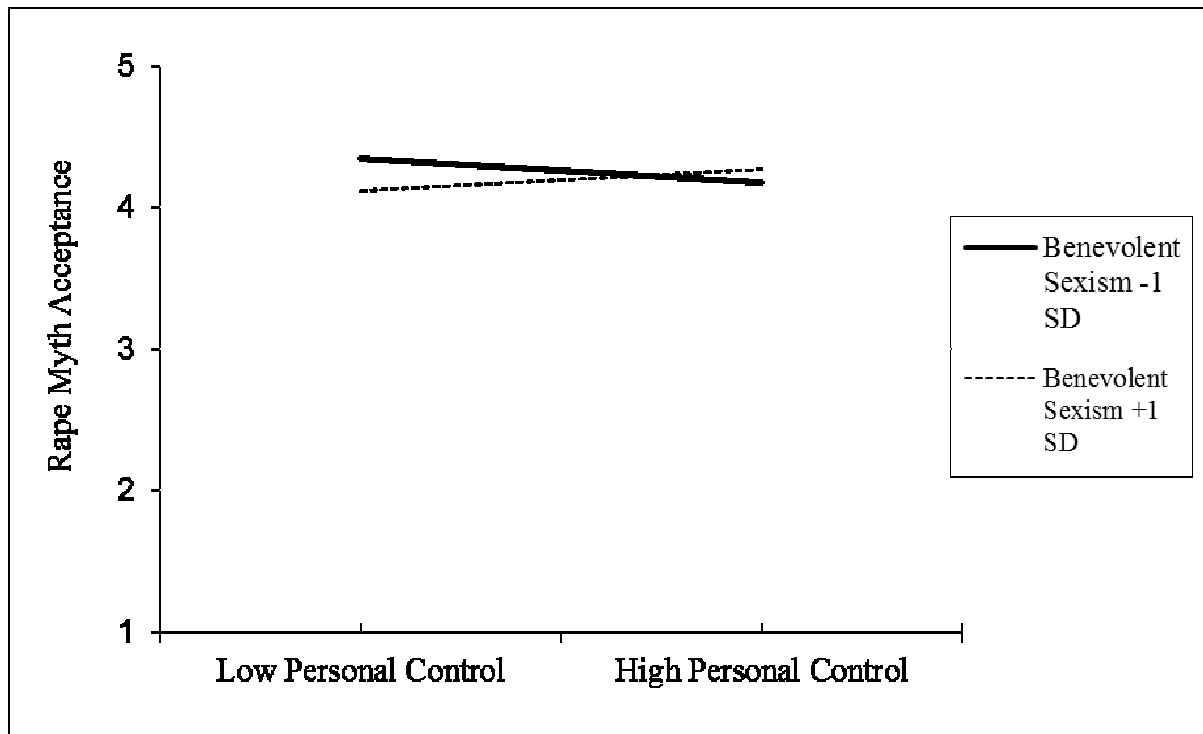


Figure 4. The results of a three-way interaction between benevolent sexism and personal control on rape myth acceptance for female participants.

Hostile sexism as a moderator. Hostile sexism was entered as a moderator for the interaction between personal control and gender on rape myth acceptance. Again, all continuous variables were mean centred, and the PROCESS macro was used (Hayes, 2013).

⁴. The results showed that for the relationship between personal control, gender and benevolent sexism on rape myth acceptance, the overall model was significant, $R^2 = .60$, $F(10, 182) = 28.62$, $p < .001$. The main effect of gender was significant, $b = -.14$, $SE = .04$, $t(182) = -3.64$, $p < .001$. The main effect of hostile sexism was significant, $b = .52$, $SE = .04$, $t(182) = 12.35$, $p < .001$, and the main effect of personal control was marginally significant, $b = -.07$, $SE = .04$, $t(182) = -1.73$, $p = .07$. The interaction between personal control and hostile

⁴ When covariates are not included, the three-way interactions remains not significant, $b = -.06$, $SE = .04$, $t(185) = -1.57$, $p = .12$.

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sexism was not significant, $b = -.01$, $SE = .04$, $t(182) = -0.33$, $p = .74$, and the interaction between personal control and gender was not significant, $b = -.05$, $SE = .04$, $t(182) = -1.23$, $p = .22$. The interaction between hostile sexism and gender was not significant, $b = .02$, $SE = .04$, $t(182) = 0.91$, $p = .36$. The three-way interaction between personal control, hostile sexism and gender was not significant, $b = -.06$, $SE = .04$, $t(182) = -1.67$, $p = .10$. The results from this moderation analysis can be seen in Table 9.

Table 9

Effects of personal control, gender and hostile sexism on rape myth acceptance (controlling for age, gender, year of study and benevolent sexism; Study 2, N=219)

Variables	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>
Personal control	-.07	.04	1.73 ⁺
Gender	-.14	.04	-3.64***
Hostile sexism	.52	.04	12.35***
Personal control x gender	-.05	.04	-1.23
Personal control x hostile sexism	-.01	.04	-0.33
Gender x hostile sexism	.02	.04	0.91
Personal control x gender x hostile sexism	-.06	.04	-1.67

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F	$F(10, 182) = 28.62^{***}$
R^2	.60

⁺ $p < .10$. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Discussion of Study 2

The results of Study 2 show that personal control has a significant effect on rape myth acceptance, but only for males and not for females. The results show that for males, an increase in personal control causes a decrease in rape myth acceptance. Because previous research has shown positive outcomes of increased personal control (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Cichocka et al., under review), I predicted that an increase in personal control would decrease rape myth acceptance. This hypothesis was therefore partially supported; there was an effect of personal control on rape myth acceptance, but only for male participants. The moderation hypothesis was also partially supported. Benevolent sexism acted as a moderator for the relationship between personal control and rape myth acceptance, but only for male participants. That is to say, only males at a high level of benevolent sexism showed the effect of personal control decreasing their levels of rape myth acceptance.

Perhaps the decrease in rape myth acceptance when personal control is increased that was found in the present study is in fact related to the idea of personal empowerment. Personal control, as opposed to power, is related to the ability to influence one's own life, rather than control other people. When personal control is increased, one becomes more aware of their autonomy and responsibility for their own influence on events in their life (Deci & Ryan, 1985; 2000). As rape myth acceptance also serves the purpose of providing a feeling of control over one's life, it could be possible that when the need for personal control is already satisfied, in this case by the prime, then there is no longer a psychological need to

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support rape myths, which is why we see a decrease in endorsement of rape myths when personal control is increased.

The effect of decreasing rape myth acceptance when personal control was increased was only found for males with high levels of benevolent sexism. This could be because males with low levels of benevolent sexism already have low levels of rape myth acceptance, therefore there is no space to decrease it further through personal control. We could expect the same effect of personal control for women's level of rape myth acceptance; an increase in personal control may increase women's realisation that they can influence their own lives without the need to rely on men, and may therefore decrease their level of rape myth acceptance as it did for males. However, this was not the case. Possibly women are simply harder to empower: women frequently occupy fewer senior positions in the workplace (Holt, 2012), get paid less than their male colleagues (Burns, 2013) and are the most common victims of domestic violence (Women's Aid, 2006). A prime during an online study might just not be strong enough to overcome the feeling of limited personal control and lack of power that women experience everyday throughout their lives. Future research could address this issue in order to determine whether it is the strength of the prime rather than the feeling of personal control that causes the gender differences in this study.

The results from the current study also show a significantly higher level of rape myth acceptance for women rather than men. As discussed in Study 1, this is unusual; normally males show a higher level of rape myth acceptance than women, as well as a higher level of sexism (Johnson et al., 1997; Jenkins & Dambrot, 1987; Margolin et al., 1989; Muir et al., 1996; Gorbett, 2007; Davies et al., 2012; Bannon et al., 2013). This seems to suggest that the females used in this study, and in Study 1, showed an unusually high level of rape myth acceptance compared to previous studies, or than males in this sample showed unusually low levels of rape myth acceptance. There were also significant correlations in this study between

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all the continuous variables. Most relevantly, there was a correlation between both types of sexism and rape myth acceptance, which is not unexpected as this was found in Study 1.

General discussion

In two studies I investigated, Study 1 showed an increase in levels of rape myth acceptance when primed with feelings of power, and the opposite effect for feelings of powerlessness, but only for males with high levels of benevolent sexism. Study 2 showed a decrease in levels of rape myth acceptance when primed with an increase in feelings of personal control, and the opposite effect when primed with a decrease in feelings of personal control, but again, only for males with high levels of benevolent sexism. Throughout the two studies, somewhat opposite effects were shown. Power poses increased levels of rape myth acceptance, whereas personal control decreased levels of rape myth acceptance. This appears to be a unique finding; to my knowledge, no other study has previously found such a difference in the effects of power and personal control on rape myth acceptance. The results from Study 1 and Study 2 show just how different the two concepts of power and personal control really are.

Another unique aspect of these studies is that only males scoring highly in benevolent sexism were affected by both the power posing and the personal control prime. As discussed previously, this may be because males with low levels of benevolent sexism already have low levels rape myth acceptance, therefore personal control or power priming could not have decreased this further. We would expect the same effect to be shown for women, but this was not the case in the current research. As mentioned previously, perhaps this was because the prime in an online study was simply not strong enough to empower women.

As mentioned previously, the effect found in this study may have been similar to effect to that which was found in the power-sex association by Bargh and colleagues (1995).

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This showed that those likely to sexually assault were affected by a power prime, which instigated automatic sexual feelings towards women in an inferior power position. This could also have been the case in the current studies; perhaps males with high levels of benevolent sexism are also easily affected by the power-sex association, and an increase in rape myth acceptance is another effect of this automatic reaction to power primes or to a decrease in personal control. This further contrasts the effects that personal control and power can have on behaviour, and as we do not yet fully understand the relationship between the power-sex association and personal control, perhaps this could be an interesting topic for future research.

Limitations

There were several limitations that may have affected the outcome of this study. Firstly, there was a small sample of male participants in Study 1, due to the unbalanced gender ratio within the school of Psychology. Although males were encouraged to participate, they were still greatly outnumbered by female participants, making the sample not representative. Additionally, the sample in Study 1 consisted entirely of students at the University of Kent, and the vast majority of these were studying Psychology. This could have affected the results, as Psychology students may have learnt about the topics surrounding this study as part of their course. They therefore may have already seen and studied the measures used, as well as having participated in other studies that used the same measures as used in this study. This would be disadvantageous, as participants may guess the aims of the study and produce demand characteristics. This would not produce a true result, as participants' natural behaviour would be altered. Additionally, because of the lack of male participants and the selective use of Psychology students in Study 1, the results of this study cannot be generalised to the general population. More importantly, the lack of males in Study 1 limits our ability to compare the results to those of Study 2. Additionally, the two studies used

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different nationalities, which may cause problems when comparing the results. There may be cultural differences between the UK and the USA, such as attitudes towards women or prevalence of meritocratic beliefs, which may affect the results.

As there was no manipulation check in either study, we cannot know whether feelings of power or personal control were truly influenced or not. However, the primes that were used had been checked and used in previous research, so it is unlikely that the desired effect was not produced in the current studies. Being conducted in a lab and online, the studies may also have lacked ecological validity. Lab settings and online questionnaires do not accurately represent real life situations; therefore we cannot assume that if an effect occurs or does not occur in a lab that the same will happen in real life situations. We also do not know whether participants' attitudes given in the questionnaires give an accurate representation of their attitudes and behaviours in real life; past research has shown that individuals often show attitudes in questionnaires that are incongruous with their behaviours. Teper, Inzlicht and Page-Gould (2011) studied participants' moral forecasting compared with their moral behaviours, and found much incongruity between behaviours they predicted that they would exhibit, and behaviours that they actually exhibited in real life. While we cannot know which direction this would take in terms of sexism – that is to say, whether individuals would be more or less sexist than they indicate on questionnaires - we can deduce from this that perhaps some participants in this study would display different levels of sexism in their behaviours than they have indicated in their answers in the study.

Another factor that may influence participants' answers is social desirability bias. It is not socially acceptable to hold extreme, overt sexist or victim-blaming views for example, so if any participants held views such as these that are deemed socially unacceptable, they may try to “tone them down” to make them appear more in line with the rest of society. This may especially be the case in studies about sensitive or personal issues such as rape or self-

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objectification (Heiman, 2002), and therefore may have been exacerbated in this study due to the sensitive natures of the topics. This is problematic as it is not a true reflection of individuals' attitudes. However, this was controlled for by using anonymity for both studies, and assuring participants that their data would only ever be accessed by the researchers.

Future research and applications

In future research, it may be beneficial to replicate both Study 1 and Study 2 using manipulations of power and personal control in the same design, at the same time using a more diverse sample size including older participants, non-students and those of varying nationalities. Currently we cannot know for sure whether any differences between the two studies were due to the different manipulations, the different samples used or the different recruitment techniques used. It is therefore important for future research to conduct a study in which all conditions are identical, except for the manipulations of either high or low power or personal control, in order to assess the differences these two concepts have on rape myth acceptance. Research may also use different types of prime for the manipulations, as a stronger prime may result in a significant effect for women rather than solely for men. Previous work by Van de Toorn et al. (in press) used a different power prime from the current study, and found a significant effect on participants' system justification attitudes, which was not replicated in this study, leading to a suggestion that perhaps different types of power were created in the present study and Van de Toorn and colleagues' study (in press). Consequently, it is recommended that a manipulation check is incorporated into future studies, in order to check whether the effect being produced relates to "power over others" or to personal control.

Additionally, in future replications of this study, more implicit measures should perhaps be used to measure the dependent variables. As previously discussed, participants may change their answers to questions to conform to social desirability, which leads to

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incongruity between their score on certain measures and their true attitudes. With more implicit measures for things such as sexism and rape myth acceptance, we could assess participants' true attitudes without the need to use a social desirability scale and adjust their answers in accordance with this.

Furthermore, future studies could perhaps look into the relationship between rape myth acceptance and the automatic power-sex association (Bargh et al., 1995). This study shows an increase in rape myth acceptance when primed with powerful stimuli, but only for those high in benevolent sexism. This is similar to the effect found in the power-sex association, whereby those scoring as highly likely to sexually harass were affected by a power stimulus that caused an increase in attraction towards women of a lower power status. Future studies could therefore recreate Bargh and colleagues' study (1995), whilst including a measure of rape myth acceptance and benevolent sexism into. Also, as stated earlier, it would be interesting to test the power-sex association in terms of personal control, rather than power, to see if the opposite effect occurs. As has been shown in the present study, power and personal control had opposite effects on rape myth acceptance, so perhaps this would also be the case for power's relationship to other variables.

Future studies could also look more specifically into different types of sexism that moderate the relationship between power or personal control with rape myth acceptance; although this study has found a clear moderation of benevolent sexism rather than hostile, this could be narrowed down even further by looking at specific aspects of benevolent sexism. Chapleau and colleagues (2007) have already demonstrated that a relationship between complimentary gender differentiation and rape myth acceptance exists, but this link was not found for the other two aspects of benevolent sexism: protective paternalism and intimate heterosexuality. It may therefore be the case that complimentary gender differentiation specifically, rather than benevolent sexism generally, moderates the

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relationship between power or personal control and rape myth acceptance, but further research is needed to confirm this.

Finally, as there was a significant decrease in rape myth acceptance when manipulating personal control, it may be useful to adapt this manipulation to serve as a basis for some interventions, not only for rape myth acceptance but potentially for other forms of prejudice reduction, including negative attitudes towards overweight individuals, ageism, homophobia, racism and religious discrimination. This research may therefore prove to be useful in terms of general prejudice reduction in society.

Conclusion

This current study provides unique knowledge about the way sexism and rape myth acceptance are affected by feelings of power and personal control. This sheds light upon how concepts such as power priming, empowerment and power-sex associations (Bargh et al., 1995) may be related to these attitudes, and how fulfilling the psychological need for certain feelings can result in a change in rape myth acceptance. This could provide a base for important applications of this knowledge in order to reduce harmful attitudes such as sexism and rape myth acceptance within society. Research such as this is of great value, as without it, we cannot expect to ever achieve equality for men and women, both in the UK and the rest of the world.

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APPENDIX A

Study 1 Ethics: Information Sheet, Informed Consent, Debrief and Ethical Approval

Information Sheet

Study Information Sheet

Title of Project:	Attitudes towards sexuality and violence.	Ethics Approval Number:	20133147
Investigator(s):	Jessica Thorne	Researcher Email:	JT360@kentforlife.net

This study aims to look at attitudes towards sexuality, violence and gender relations.

In order to take part in this study, participants must be able to comfortably sit or stand in two poses given by the experimenter for one minute each.

During this study, you will be asked to stand or sit in a certain way whilst completing a task. You will then be asked to complete several questionnaires regarding your attitudes towards sexuality, violence and gender relations. The whole study will take no more than 30 minutes.

Many of the questions in this study will be about your attitudes towards sexuality and violence. Some participants may find this distressing, however you will be fully debriefed after the study, and you are able to stop and withdraw your data at any point during the study. You will also receive contact information for the university's counselling service and related charities in case you wish to follow up any issues from the study.

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All data will be fully anonymous and no participants will be able to be identified from any of their answers. Only the researchers will have access to the data.

You will be awarded 2 RPS credits for your participation in this study.

Remember that participation in this research study is completely voluntary. Even after you agree to participate and begin the study, you are still free to withdraw at any time and for any reason.

If you would like a copy of this consent form to keep, please ask the researcher. If you have any complaints or concerns about this research, you can direct these, in writing, to the Chair of the Psychology Research Ethics Committee by email at: psychethics@kent.ac.uk.

Alternatively, you can contact us by post at: Ethics Committee Chair, School of Psychology, University of Kent, Canterbury, CT2 7NP.

Informed Consent

RESEARCH INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Title of Project:	Attitudes towards sexuality and violence.	Ethics Approval Number:	20133147
Investigator(s):	Jessica Thorne	Researcher Email:	JT360@kent.ac.uk

POWER VS PERSONAL CONTROL ON RAPE MYTH ACCEPTANCE

Please read the following statements and, if you agree, initial the corresponding box to confirm agreement:

	Initials
I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.	<input style="width: 80px; height: 80px;" type="text"/>
I understand that my participation is <u>voluntary</u> and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason.	<input style="width: 80px; height: 80px;" type="text"/>
I understand that my data will be treated confidentially and any publication resulting from this work will report only data that does not identify me.	<input style="width: 80px; height: 80px;" type="text"/>
I freely agree to participate in this study.	<input style="width: 80px; height: 80px;" type="text"/>

Signatures:

_____	_____	_____
Name of participant (block	Date	Signature

POWER VS PERSONAL CONTROL ON RAPE MYTH ACCEPTANCE

capitals)

JESSICA THORNE _____

Researcher (block capitals)

Date

Signature

If you would like a copy of this consent form to keep, please ask the researcher. If you have any complaints or concerns about this research, you can direct these, in writing, to the Chair of the Psychology Research Ethics Committee by email at: psychethics@kent.ac.uk.

Alternatively, you can contact us by post at: Ethics Committee Chair, School of Psychology, University of Kent, Canterbury, CT2 7NP.

Debrief

Debrief Sheet

We would now like to provide you with further information about the aims of this study.

This study aimed to look at how high or low power priming affects participant's levels of rape myth acceptance. Rape myths are false beliefs about rape that excuse the perpetrator and blame the victim, such as "she was drunk" or "he didn't mean to." We wanted to see whether subtly making participants feel more or less powerful than normal would affect how much they endorse these rape myths, as well as other factors associated with them such as support for the current system in society, self-objectification and sexism.

Participants were either in a low or high power condition, where they were asked to stand in poses designed to make them feel powerful or powerless. After this, participants completed four questionnaires about their attitudes to rape, support for the current social systems, self-objectification and sexism.

POWER VS PERSONAL CONTROL ON RAPE MYTH ACCEPTANCE

We anticipate that female participants in the high power condition will accept less rape myths, and male participants will accept more rape myths, and vice versa for the low power condition.

If you have any further questions about the research, please email Jessica Thorne (JT360@kent.ac.uk). In addition you may contact her supervisor, Aleksandra Cichocka (A.K.Cichocka@kent.ac.uk).

If you have any concerns about this research, please contact the Psychology Office on 01227 823961.

Due to the sensitive nature of this topic, details of the university's counselling service and East Kent Rape Line can be found below in case you have any further issues you wish to follow up.

The university's counselling service can be found in Keynes College room LG2, or contacted on 01227823206.

East Kent Rape Line is a local charity that provides a helpline as well as free face-to-face counselling. Their helplines are available from 6.30pm-9.30pm Monday to Friday.

Helpline: 08004582818

Support Line: 01227450400

www.eastkentraneline.com

Ethical Approval

POWER VS PERSONAL CONTROL ON RAPE MYTH ACCEPTANCE

APPROVAL BY PSYCHOLOGY RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

The following research project has been approved by

The Psychology Research Ethics Committee

Date: 21:51 11-11-2013

Code: 20133147

Applicant details:

Name: Jessica Thorne

Status: MSc Student

Email address: jt360@kent.ac.uk

Title of the research:

Attitudes towards sexuality and violence.

When carrying out this research you are reminded to

- * follow the Departmental Guidelines for Conducting Research with Human Participants
- * comply with the Data Protection Act 1998
- * refer any amendments to the protocol to the Panel

Please keep this form in a safe place. You may be asked to present it at a later stage of your study for monitoring purposes. Final year project students and MSc students will need to submit a copy of this form with their project.

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APPENDIX B

Power Poses

Taken from Carney and colleagues (2010).

High power 1 SIT = feet on table, hands behind back, head tilted up (do not show participant pics, this is just for experimenter to know what pose should look like). Make sure feet are comfortable- in pilot testing feet were not comfy.



High power 2 STAND = standing, dominant foot in front, hands on table in “tent fingers” pose, head slightly up



Low power 1 SIT = legs together, hands folded, head tilted down



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Low power 2 STAND = standing, legs crossed in front of each other, arms crossed in front/folded, head slightly cocked down



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APPENDIX C

The Updated Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale

1 = strongly agree, 5 = strongly disagree – higher scores indicate greater rejection of rape myths

Subscale 1: She asked for it

1. If a girl is raped while she is drunk, she is at least somewhat responsible for letting things get out of hand.
2. When girls go to parties wearing slutty clothes, they are asking for trouble.
3. If a girl goes to a room alone with a guy at a party, it is her own fault if she is raped.
4. If a girl acts like a slut, eventually she is going to get into trouble.
5. When girls get raped, it's often because the way they said "no" was unclear.
6. If a girl initiates kissing or hooking up, she should not be surprised if a guy assumes she

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wants to have sex.

Subscale 2: He didn't mean to

7. When guys rape, it is usually because of their strong desire for sex.

8. Guys don't usually intend to force sex on a girl, but sometimes they get too sexually carried away.

9. Rape happens when a guy's sex drive goes out of control.

10. If a guy is drunk, he might rape someone unintentionally.

11. It shouldn't be considered rape if a guy is drunk and didn't realize what he was doing.

12. If both people are drunk, it can't be rape.

Subscale 3: It wasn't really rape

13. If a girl doesn't physically resist sex—even if protesting verbally—it can't be considered

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rape.

14. If a girl doesn't physically fight back, you can't really say it was rape.

15. A rape probably doesn't happen if a girl doesn't have any bruises or marks.

16. If the accused "rapist" doesn't have a weapon, you really can't call it rape.

17. If a girl doesn't say "no" she can't claim rape.

Subscale 4: She lied

18. A lot of times, girls who say they were raped agreed to have sex and then regret it.

19. Rape accusations are often used as a way of getting back at guys.

20. A lot of times, girls who say they were raped often led the guy on and then had regrets.

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21. A lot of times, girls who claim they were raped have emotional problems.

22. Girls who are caught cheating on their boyfriends sometimes claim it was rape.

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APPENDIX D

The Gender System Justification Scale

Now, please read the following statements and circle a number to indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement.

1) In general, relations between men and women are fair.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Strongly				Neutral				Strongly
Agree								Disagree

2) The division of labour in families generally operates as it should.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Strongly				Neutral				Strongly
Agree								Disagree

3) Gender roles need to be radically restructured.*

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Strongly				Neutral				Strongly
Agree								Disagree

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4) For women, the United States is the best country in the world to live in.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Strongly				Neutral				Strongly
Agree								Disagree

5) Most policies relating to gender and the sexual division of labour serve the greater good.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Strongly				Neutral				Strongly
Agree								Disagree

6) Everyone (male or female) has a fair shot and wealth and happiness.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Strongly				Neutral				Strongly
Agree								Disagree

7) Sexism in society is getting worse every year.*

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

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Strongly

Neutral

Strongly

Agree

Disagree

8) Society is set up so that men and women usually get what they deserve.

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

Strongly

Neutral

Strongly

Agree

Disagree

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APPENDIX E

The Ambivalent Sexism Inventory

“Below is a series of statements concerning men and women and their relationships in contemporary society. Please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each statement using the following scale: 0 = disagree strongly; 1 = disagree somewhat; 2 = disagree slightly; 3 = agree slightly; 4 = agree somewhat; 5 = agree strongly.”

B(1) 1. No matter how accomplished he is, a man is not truly complete as a person unless he has the love of a woman.

H 2. Many women are actually seeking special favours, such as hiring policies that favour them over men, under the guise of asking for "equality."

B(P)* 3. In a disaster, women ought not necessarily to be rescued before men.

H 4. Most women interpret innocent remarks or acts as being sexist.

H 5. Women are too easily offended.

B(I)* 6. People are often truly happy in life without being romantically involved with a member of the other sex.

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H* 7. Feminists are not seeking for women to have more power than men.

B (G) 8. Many women have a quality of purity that few men possess.

B(P) 9. Women should be cherished and protected by men.

H 10. Most women fail to appreciate fully all that men do for them.

H 11. Women seek to gain power by getting control over men.

B(I) 12. Every man ought to have a woman whom he adores.

B(1)* 13. Men are complete without women.

H 14. Women exaggerate problems they have at work.

H 15. Once a woman gets a man to commit to her, she usually tries to put him on a tight leash.

H 16. When women lose to men in a fair competition, they typically complain about being discriminated against.

B(P) 17. A good woman should be set on a pedestal by her man.

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H18. There are actually very few women who get a kick out of teasing men by seeming sexually available and then refusing male advances.

B(G) 19. Women, compared to men, tend to have a superior moral sensibility.

B(P) 20. Men should be willing to sacrifice their own well being in order to provide financially for the women in their lives.

H21. Feminists are making entirely reasonable demands of men.

B(G) 22. Women, as compared to men, tend to have a more refined sense of culture and good taste.

Note. H = Hostile Sexism, B =

Benevolent Sexism, (P) = Protective Paternalism, (G) = Complementary

Gender Differentiation, (I) = Heterosexual Intimacy, * = reverse scored item.

Scoring Instructions

The ASI may be used as an overall measure of sexism, with hostile and benevolent components equally weighted, by simply averaging the score for all items after reversing the items listed below. The two ASI

POWER VS PERSONAL CONTROL ON RAPE MYTH ACCEPTANCE

subscales (Hostile Sexism and Benevolent Sexism) may also be calculated separately. For correlational research, purer measures of HS and BS can be obtained by using partial correlations (so that the effects of the correlation between the scales is removed).

Reverse the following items (0 = 5, 1 = 4, 2 = 3, 3 = 2, 4 = 1, 5 = 0): 3, 6,7, 13, 18,21.

Hostile Sexism Score = average of the following items: 2, 4, 5, 7, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16, 18,21.

Benevolent Sexism Score = average of the following items: 1, 3, 6, 8, 9, 12, 13, 17, 19,20,22.

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APPENDIX F

Study 2 Ethics: Information Sheet, Informed Consent, Debrief and Ethical Approval

Information Sheet

This study aims to look at attitudes towards sexuality, violence and gender relations.

During this study, you will be asked to complete several questionnaires regarding your attitudes towards sexuality, violence and gender relations. The whole study will take no more than 15 minutes.

Many of the questions in this study will be about your attitudes towards sexuality and violence. Some participants may find this distressing, however you will be fully debriefed after the study, and you are able to stop and withdraw your data at any point during the study. You will also receive contact information for related charities in case you wish to follow up any issues from the study.

All data will be fully anonymous and no participants will be able to be identified from any of their answers. Only the researchers will have access to the data.

If you have any complaints or concerns about this research, you can direct these, in writing, to the Chair of the Psychology Research Ethics Committee by email at: psychethics@kent.ac.uk. Alternatively, you can contact us by post at: Ethics Committee Chair, School of Psychology, University of Kent, Canterbury, CT2 7NP.

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Informed Consent

Volunteer Consent

Please read the following consent statements carefully and tick the confirmation box at the bottom of the page, which indicates that you fully consent to participate in this study.

I have been adequately informed about the nature of this study and received full information about my ethical rights as a participant and I have been given opportunity to ask questions.

I fully understand that the decision to participate is up to me and that I can change my mind and withdraw from the study at any time without it affecting how I am treated in the future. I also understand that I am not obliged to answer any questions in this questionnaire that make me uncomfortable.

I have been guaranteed that all the information collected in this study is strictly confidential and will not bear any personal details that may identify me.

I have read the participant information and agree to take part in this study.

Debrief

We would now like to provide you with further information about the aims of this study.

This study aimed to look at how feelings of high or low feelings of control affect participants' levels of rape myth acceptance and sexism. Rape myths are false beliefs about rape that

POWER VS PERSONAL CONTROL ON RAPE MYTH ACCEPTANCE

excuse the perpetrator and blame the victim, such as “she was drunk” or “he didn’t mean to.”

We wanted to see whether subtly making participants feel more or less control than normal would affect how much they endorse these rape myths. We were also looking at whether rape myths are connected with sexism.

Participants were firstly asked to complete a measure of sexism. Then, they were asked to recall a situation where they either had or did not have control over the situation. They were then asked to complete a measure of rape myth acceptance, as well as some demographic questions.

We anticipate that female participants in the high control condition will accept less rape myths, and male participants will accept more rape myths, and vice versa for the low control condition.

If you have any further questions about the research, please email Jessica Thorne (JT360@kent.ac.uk). In addition you may contact her supervisor, Aleksandra Cichocka (A.K.Cichocka@kent.ac.uk).

If you have any concerns about this research, please contact the Psychology Office on +441227 823961

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Due to the sensitive nature of this topic, details of an international rape charity, Rape Crisis, can be found below:

Helpline: 1-800-656-HOPE (this forwards you call to your local rape crisis centre)

Website: <http://www.ibiblio.org/rcip/>

Ethical Approval

APPROVAL BY PSYCHOLOGY RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

The following research project has been approved by

The Psychology Research Ethics Committee

Date: 13:50 01-07-2014

Code: 20143146

Applicant details:

Name: Jessica Thorne

Status: MSc Student

Email address: jt360@kent.ac.uk

Title of the research:

Attitudes toward sexuality and violence - 2 (online)

When carrying out this research you are reminded to

* follow the Departmental Guidelines for Conducting Research with Human Participants

* comply with the Data Protection Act 1998

* refer any amendments to the protocol to the Panel

Please keep this form in a safe place. You may be asked to present it at a later stage of your study for monitoring purposes. Final year project students and MSc students will need to

submit a copy of this form with their project.

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APPENDIX G

Study 2: Attention Check

The current research shows that our preference for a specific colour may be related to the way we feel in any situation, which in turn can affect our attention spans and choices. To help us understand how people make decisions in different colour environment, we are interested in information about you. Specifically, we are interested in whether you actually take time to read the directions in our survey's visual condition; if not, some results may not tell us very much about decision making in the real world. To show that you have read the instructions, please ignore the question below about your colour preferences and instead check only the “none of above” option as your answer.

What is your favourite colour?

Red

Green

Purple

Yellow

White

Brown

Gold

Blue

Silver

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Orange

Black

Pink

None of the above