# Judgements Made Towards Male Victims of Sexual Assault: The Effect of Facial Masculinity, Sexual Orientation, Perpetrator Gender, and Respondent Gender

**by**

Jodie Parkinson

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# Abstract

Despite the well established finding that appearance affects impressions of others; researchers have yet to investigate the impact of facial appearance on judgements made towards male victims of sexual assault. As masculinity appears to have strong implications in terms of how men are judged both in society and as victims, exploring whether this has an effect on blame attributions seems an appropriate step to initiate research on the appearance of male victims of sexual assault. Over two studies, the impact of victim facial masculinity, victim sexuality, perpetrator gender, and respondent gender on judgements made towards a male victim in a hypothetical sexual assault was investigated. A synthesised face created using EvoFit, was either masculinised or feminised and presented to respondents with one of four scenarios manipulating victim sexuality (gay or heterosexual) and perpetrator gender (male or female). In study 1, 356 respondents read a hypothetical sexual assault scenario and then completed a questionnaire exploring the perceived severity of the assault, the level of victim resistance, and the level of victim and perpetrator blame. Victim facial masculinity did not affect attributions made towards the victim. Male respondents were generally more negative than women and blamed the perpetrator less. The male perpetrated assault was considered more severe than the female perpetrated assault and the male perpetrator was attributed more blame. The gay victim was also blamed more than the heterosexual victim. Differences were also found regarding the sexual orientation of the victim and the gender of the perpetrator. The aim of study 2 was to continue to explore whether or not facial masculinity affects blame attributions after making alterations to the presentation of the stimulus. Respondents (n=298) read a scenario depicting a male victim being sexually assaulted on public transport. Consistent with study 1, victim facial masculinity alone did not affect victim blame, the perceived severity of the assault or the perceived level of victim resistance. However, the feminine victim of the female perpetrator was blamed more than the feminine victim of the male perpetrator. Consistent with study 1, male respondents were more negative towards the victim than females and the male perpetrated assault was considered more severe and less resistible than that of the female perpetrator. The victim of the female perpetrated assault was also subject to more blame. In conclusion, this research makes a novel contribution to the existing literature on male victim blaming by exploring the effect of facial appearance. As an effect of facial appearance was found, facial appearance of male victims is one that

warrants further research. Implications for those working with victims and for future work are discussed.

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# Chapter 1: Introduction

## 1.1 Male Rape and English law

Until relatively recently, the sexual assault of men was largely ignored and considered a rare event, in part due to the narrow legal definition of rape in the UK (King, Coxell and Mezey, 2000). Over the years, a number of amendments have been made in English law to give recognition to the existence of men as victims of rape. Until the Criminal Justice and Public order act (1994), the term 'rape' in English law referred only to forced penile penetration of the vagina; therefore could not be applied to the rape of men. Following increasing recognition that men can be raped, the law was extended to include anal or vaginal penetration of the penis: the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act (1994) stated that *'it is an offence for a man to rape a woman or another man'* (s, 142). More recently, the Sexual Offences Act (2003) further extended the definition of rape by including penile penetration of the mouth. Whilst these are improvements in terms of recognising males as victims, the legal definition remains gender biased as rape must be through penile penetration.

Other sexual offences defined in English law are not gender specific. For instance, the Sexual Offences Act (2003) states that '*a person commits a sexual offence if he intentionally touches another person'* (s, 3, p. 8). Furthermore, the offence of 'assault by penetration' recognises that a sexual offence can occur through penetration with objects other than the penis: *'A person commits an offence if he intentionally penetrates the vagina or anus of another person with a part of his body or anything else'* (Sexual Offences Act, 2003, s. 2, p. 8). Despite the gender biased terminology, this definition does highlight that a sexual assault can be committed by a man or a woman by removing the restriction of penetration being solely by the penis. Although evidence points towards males as perpetrators, women do sexually assault men and should not be ignored in clinical or experimental research (Fisher & Pina, 2013). For the purpose of this thesis, the term 'sexual assault' will refer to any sexual crime and the act of 'rape' will specifically denote acts that are in line with the legal definition of rape as described above.

## 1.2 Reporting and the Impact of Rape on men

*1.2.1 Reporting Rates*

It has long been recognised that male rape is a largely under-reported offence, mainly due to the social stigma surrounding it (Abdullah-Khan, 2008). Until relatively recently, male rape was considered homosexual or an issue occurring only in prisons (Abdullah-Khan, 2008). Indeed, in a recent study exploring attitudes towards male rape within the metropolitan police force one officer stated *"I believe male rape is not reported by the victims as they don't trust the police – officers rarely deal with this crime as a result"* (Abdullah-Khan, 2008. p.131). This appears supported by comments made by a sample of victims in a well cited study by Walker, Archer and Davies (2005): only 5 of the 40 men reported their assault to the police and of those that did, only one stated that the police were responsive and helpful. The remaining men in this study described the police as *"unsympathetic, disinterested and homophobic"* (p.74). Discussing the crime of male rape, officers in the metropolitan police force stated *"it is difficult for officers to see how an adult male can let himself get into a situation where he can get raped and be unable to physically protect himself"* and *"never come across it and wouldn't necessarily know how to deal with it"* (Abdullah-Khan, 2008, p.131). Such comments reinforce the views of the respondents in Walker et al's. (2005) study and suggest that developments in terms of the knowledge and understanding in the area of male rape are crucial if improvements are to be made regarding victims experiences in the Criminal Justice System (CJS).

Some researchers argue that reporting may be dependent on the nature of the sexual assault. Mezey and King (2000) for example, suggest that the lower number of reported female perpetrations of sexual offences against males may reflect reluctance in men to report victimisation by a woman or an inability to recognise that an assault has occurred. Despite the lack of disclosure, the Office for National Statistics reported 1,310 police recorded rapes of a male between 2010 and 2011 and 2,412 police recorded sexual assaults on men over the same time period (Home Office Statistical Bulletin, 2011). Furthermore, this report revealed an increase of 11% for male rape victims reporting to the police and a 5% increase for female rape victims between 2010 and 2011. Temkin and Krahe (2008) argue that improvements within the CJS in terms of how the victim is treated are in part a reason for the increase in the willingness of victims to report. Notably, it is unclear whether the increase in figures is a result of an increase in rape reporting or a rise in the occurrence of rape.

A further complication in estimating reporting rates is that official sexual assault statistics tend to emulate the legal definitions, therefore reflect predominantly the rape of males by other males (Fisher & Pina, 2013). As a result, these figures may not represent the frequency of sexual offences against males when the perpetrator is female nor do they make a distinction between the two (Fisher & Pina, 2013).

### *1.2.2 The Impact of Sexual Assault on Victims*

The impact of rape on victims has been described as a severe form of trauma and often results in long-term negative outcomes including post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, substance abuse, and suicidal thoughts (Campbell, 2008). A recent review of the psychological impact of female rape victims' experiences within the CJS revealed figures as high as 65% of victims developing PTSD and 43% displaying symptoms diagnostic of depression (Campbell, 2008). The above findings appear to extend to male victims who choose to report their assaults. Walker et al. (2005) examined the effect of rape on men and found that 39 of the 40 men who participated in this study reported experiencing depression and 33 experienced feelings of guilt and self-blame. In a later study exploring long-term psychological functioning of male rape victims, Davies, Walker, Archer, and Pollard (2010) found that most victims reported feeling depressed, anxious, and blamed themselves for the assault.

Despite the increase in reporting, some argue (e.g. Campbell, 2008) that help seeking post-assault can serve as a secondary trauma whereby victims are left feeling blamed and doubted as a result of negative attitudes of those they disclose to (e.g. the police, family members, friends etc). This secondary trauma has been coined 'secondary victimisation' (Williams, 1984). The comments made by the police officers in Abdullah-Khan's (2008) study and the self-reports by victims in Walker et al's. (2005) research appear to support the notion that once victims do disclose, they often experience an unsupportive and ill-informed environment, which in turn may negatively impact on recovery. In fact, four of the five men who reported their assault to the police in Walker et al's. (2005) study regretted doing so, and one man described the legal process as having *"had a worse effect on him than the rape itself"* (p.75).

The secondary victimisation experienced by victims may be further exacerbated by the high attrition rates as cases progress through the legal system. Case numbers as low as

6% of reported rape successfully progress through the CJS and result in a conviction in the UK (see Office for Criminal Justice Reform, 2006). Alarmingly, these figures likely underestimate the number of cases that do not result in a conviction, as a large proportion are rejected by the police (Temkin & Krahe, 2008), or are never reported by victims (Davies, Smith & Rogers, 2009). Some argue that low conviction rates are in part due to the attitudes surrounding rape and the belief that victims may precipitate the assault as a result of their appearances and/or behaviours. As a result, it is important that individuals who are likely to come into contact with victims, such as police officers, and those employed in relevant support services are appropriately trained to increase knowledge and understanding of their own biases and how to deal with victims (Abdullah-Khan, 2008). This should improve recovery and reduce the likelihood that victims are subject to secondary victimisation. Developing understanding and knowledge to inform support services can be achieved through experimental research investigating what contributes to blame attributions made towards victims (Abdullah-Khan, 2008).

### *1.2.3 Characteristics of the sexual assault of men*

The majority of studies examining the characteristics of male victims have shown that they tend to be relatively young (mean ages appear to hover between 17 and 30 years) (e.g. Frazier, 1993; Stermac, Sheridan, Davidson & Dunn, 1996; Davies et al., 2010). This has been attributed to a lifestyle often adopted by younger males that could put them at a higher risk of victimisation; lifestyles that may, for example, involve drinking, taking drugs and socialising in bars (Tewksbury & Mustaine, 2001). Alcohol and drug use for instance, was associated with higher risk of sexual victimisation due to increasing vulnerability and exposure to potential perpetrators (Tewksbury & Mustaine, 2001). These findings have important implications for experimental research, which should aim to emulate the characteristics typical of a male victim to improve ecological validity.

Recent figures suggest that contrary to the widely held assumption that only gay men can become victims of sexual assault, any man can become a victim regardless of their sexuality. For instance, 50% (n=20) of the men in a recent study (Davies et al., 2010) were gay and 32.5% (13) were heterosexual. Furthermore, figures collated from SURVIVORS UK between 1994 and 2011 highlight similar rates of victimisation for gay and heterosexual victims: 13 (33%) and 15 (38%) respectively (Abdullah-Khan, 2008). As

these figures were collated using opportunity samples they do not represent victims who do not report their assault; however they do highlight that both heterosexual and gay men can become victims of sexual assault. As a result, it is important to investigate blame attributions made towards both heterosexual and gay male victims, as will be the case in this research.

Despite the common belief that men are unable to function sexually unless sexually aroused (Smith, Pine, & Hawley, 1988), men can be physically stimulated and made to engage in anal, vaginal, and oral sex against their will (Mezey & King, 2000). Due to the lack of statistics reflecting the sexual assault of men by women it is necessary to utilise the research literature when exploring prevalence rates. Stermac et al. (1996) found that sexual assaults on males involved female perpetrators in 3 of the 29 cases. Also, in a sample of men (n=115) making contact with counselling services, 10% of the perpetrators were female (King & Woollett, 1997).

Other research exploring prevalence rates of female perpetrated sexual offences against males drew on self-report measures. Struckman-Johnson (1988) found that 2% of a sample of 355 females disclosed having forced a male partner to have sexual intercourse and Shea (1998) found that 19% of a sample of 171 females admitted to using verbal aggression to coerce a man into sexual activity. Although the figures are significantly lower for female perpetrated assaults, men have disclosed sexual assaults committed by females and such figures are useful in terms of highlighting the prevalence of female perpetrated sexual assaults. However, the majority of the research is dated and more recent figures are needed to establish current prevalence rates of female perpetrated sexual assaults against males. Despite this, as men can become victims of female perpetrators, and in order to gain a thorough understanding of blame attributions towards male victims, it is necessary to investigate whether the gender of the perpetrator affects attributions made towards male victims. As a result, the effect of perpetrator gender on judgements made towards the victim will be investigated in this research.

## 1.4 Attribution Theories and Victim Blame

Shaver (1985) argued that the assignment of blame reflects a discrepancy between the observer, in experimental research the respondent, and the individual who the blame is

assigned to, in the case of this research, the victim. When attributing blame, the observer claims that the victim has in some way done something that has contributed to their victimisation. Shaver (1985) argued that the attribution of blame follows a process where once an individual is viewed as having played a role in the cause of the event, they are considered responsible. The more the event is viewed as under the control of the individual concerned, the more responsibility will be assigned to them (Shaver, 1975). Shaver stated that responsibility is assigned to an individual if intentionality, foreseeabililty, and voluntary action are considered contributing factors to an event. Applied to the situation of male rape, a victim may be held responsible if he is perceived as being able to foresee the event in terms of his behaviour, such as accepting a lift off a stranger, if he is perceived as intending for the assault to occur (e.g. by going home with the perpetrator), or as a result of his behaviour during the assault such as not fighting back. Assigning an element of responsibility to the individual concerned in terms of his causal role in an event, then allows for the attribution of blame (Shaver, 1985). Thus, although a distinction has not always been made between them in the literature, according to Shaver, responsibility and blame are two separate concepts (Shaver, 1985).

Researchers often draw on the concept of attribution theory when attempting to explain how observers attribute blame and responsibility to victims of sexual assault. A prominent researcher in the area of male rape highlighted the importance of attribution theories when explaining victim blame (Davies, 2003). Davies (2003) argued that as well as providing an explanation of victim blame, attribution theories allow for specific predictions to be made regarding the characteristics of the victim and the perpetrator, and the features of the assault. Attribution theory proposes that observations of behaviour are followed by an attempt to understand it, which involves trying to explain it, determine its meaning and to make judgements about it (Shaver, 1975). By gaining an understanding of events we are more likely to perceive them as predictable and controllable (Forsterling, 2001). With reference to a perpetrator of a sexual crime, one might ask are they to be held personally responsible for this crime, or were there extenuating circumstances that may justify its committal. Thus, we are not only concerned with the behaviour itself, but rather the reasons behind the behaviour.

### 1.4.1Motivational Theories and Victim Blame

Davies (2003) explained that motivation theories of blame propose that people blame victims to *"maintain control over their environment"* and to *"maintain self-esteem"* (p.43). Two theories are well cited in the victim blame literature in terms of theoretical explanations of victim blame: the Defensive Attribution Hypothesis (Shaver, 1970) and Lerner's Just World Theory (1980).

*1.4.1.2 Defensive Attribution Theory*

According to the defensive attribution hypothesis, attributions of blame and responsibility are dependent on the observer's perceived similarity with the victim and the perceived likelihood that they could succumb to a similar fate (Shaver, 1975). Shaver emphasised the role of 'relevance' when making defensive attributions in terms of observers perceiving a realistic threat that they could become victim to similar circumstances. As a result, when personal relevance regarding the situation (recognising that they could find themselves in similar circumstances) and to the person (identifying similar characteristics such as age, gender, personality etc.) is perceived, the observer is motivated to engage in defensive attributions. Shaver (1975) proposed two fundamental concepts of defensive attribution: firstly, that the observer is motivated to defend them self against a threat of being in a similar position (situational similarity) and if they do perceive a degree of situational similarity, defending them self against the possibility of being held personally responsible. These two distinct concepts have been named Harm Avoidance (situational similarity) and Blame Avoidance (personal similarity) (Shaw & McMartin, 1977).

Harm Avoidance and Blame Avoidance are dependent on the perceiver's personal similarity between the observer and the victim (Thornton, 1984). Accordingly, if an individual identifies situational similarity with a victim, but perceives no personal similarity, he/she may defensively attribute blame to the victim on account of harm avoidance. This is a result of the observer acknowledging that as they are personally different, they would behave differently than the victim and not succumb to a similar fate (Thornton, 1984). On the other hand, if there is no doubt to personal similarity, individuals would not attribute blame to the victim in the interest of blame avoidance, as they would not want to be similarly judged if they were in similar circumstances (Thornton, 1984). In

this instance, Shaver suggests that blame avoidance motives would result in observers attributing blame to chance rather than the personal responsibility of the victims.

Over the course of two studies, Thornton (1984) further explored the concepts of Blame and Harm avoidance and its relationship to behavioural and characterological blame (see pages 23 & 24 for a more detailed discussions on the distinction between characterological and behavioural blame) towards a victim of sexual assault. The author found that a personally dissimilar victim was assigned more responsibility and attributed more characterological blame, compared to a personally similar victim who was assigned lesser responsibility and attributed more behavioural blame. As this study involved only female respondents, it would be interesting to see the effect of including a male sample on attributions; one would expect, according to the defensive attribution hypothesis, males to perceive a higher level of similarity to the male perpetrator and less similarity to the female victim resulting in greater responsibility assigned to the victim compared to the perpetrator. The majority of research aiming to explore the importance of defensive attributions when explaining victim blame is dated. However, in a recent review of the victim blame literature, Grubb and Harrower (2008) concluded that in the interest of harm avoidance and blame avoidance, observers who perceive similarity to the victim attribute less blame towards them and more blame to the perpetrator. Applied to male rape, one would expect that males would blame a male perpetrator less than a female perpetrator as they hold a perceived similarity to the male. This will be discussed in relation to the findings from this thesis.

#### *1.4.1.3 Just World Theory*

According to Lerner's Just World Theory (1980), people have a motivational need to believe in a just world: that is a world that is safe, where people get what they deserve and where bad things only happen to bad people. With reference to victim blaming, Just World Theory suggests that there is no such thing as an innocent victim and for something 'bad' to happen the victim's behaviour, must have played a part. Research exploring the relationship between belief in a just world and victim blaming has been inconsistent; therefore it is unclear whether or not it is useful in explaining the tendency of attributing blame to a victim. Due to its regular inclusion in the rape blame attribution literature, it is important to discuss Just World Theory and its implications for the current research.

In one of the earlier studies, Klienke and Meyer (1990) applied the just world theory to account for the differences between males' and females' perceptions of rape victims. In contrast to women with a high just world belief who were less negative to the rape victim than women with a low just world belief, men with a high just world belief were more negative to a rape victim than low just world believers. The authors concluded that compared to men who are unable to identify with the rape victim, women are less likely to blame rape victims as they belief that such an injustice could easily happen to them. In terms of implications for the current research, one would subsequently expect that the male respondents, who can identify with a male victim as a result of their gender, would be more sympathetic to the victim and attribute less blame. Interestingly, Klienke and Meyer's conclusions suggest an overlap in the concepts described in the Defensive Attribution Theory in that it is the identification with the victim that effects attributions.

More recent studies are inconsistent in their conclusions regarding the theoretical implications of Just World Theory in explaining blame attributions towards rape victims. Sleath and Bull (2010) hypothesised that belief in a just world would predict victim blaming, but contrastingly found that it did not. Sleath and Bull (2010) argued that the concept of belief in a just world does not consistently explain victim blaming and may only be applicable for certain victims, such as those of injustice. Hammond, Berry, and Rodriguez (2010) similarly found no relationship between belief in a just world and attributions of blame. More recently, in a sample of police officers, Sleath and Bull (2012) found that belief in a just world was a significant predictor of victim blaming. The authors explained that the need to believe in a just world may be more important in certain professions, such as the police service, when explaining victim blaming. Thus, according to the research conducted by Sleath and Bull, (2010), not only is the effect of belief in a just world affected by the type of crime, but also the characteristics of the individual attributing blame. Sleath and Bull (2012) concluded that given the inconsistencies in the research, questions are raised regarding the theoretical implications of Just World Theory in explaining victim blaming.

A further complication in research exploring belief in a just world comes from criticisms of the just world scale (Fisher & Pina, 2013). The scale has been criticised for being psychometrically problematic and has produced an alpha coefficient of .48, which some authors state is not acceptable (Fisher & Pina, 2013). Despite these problems, it

seems fair to suggest that belief in a just world may play a role in the process of attributing blame to victims. Nevertheless, firm conclusions regarding Just World Theory cannot be made and although not the scope of this thesis, further research is needed to establish its relationship with victim blaming.

#### *1.4.1.4 Causal Attributions*

Attribution Theory is based on the proposition that people often look for the causes of events in an attempt to explain why they happen; to make them understandable, predictable and controllable (Forsterling, 2001). When events are unexpected or traumatic, two conditions that are typically met with regards to rape, causal attributions are based on the individuating features of the event as prior knowledge in which to base explanations is limited (Temkin & Krahé, 2008). Causal attributions differ according to the observer and are affected by the nature of the event: if an event is considered 'normal' for that person (what the individual would normally expect to happen) (i.e. a scripted event) it will illicit different attributions than when it is different from what they would typically expect (i.e. an unscripted event) (Forsterling, 2001). So, in the case of sexual assault of men, which is likely to be unscripted, unexpected and traumatic, attributions are more likely to be based on the character and/or behaviour of the victim and the perpetrator.

In fact, the academic literature on attributions of blame has revealed a number of key factors that influence causal attributions about victims and perpetrators of sexual assault. These were recently summarised by Temkin and Krahé (2008): perceiver characteristics (characteristics relating to the observer making the judgement such as gender and rape supportive attitudes); victim characteristics (characteristics relating to the victim such as physical appearance and the victims behaviour); perpetrator characteristics (e.g. race and physical appearance); and contextual factors (e.g. previous relationship between the victim and the perpetrator). The effect these factors have on blame attributions will be discussed in the following section of this thesis.

## 1.5 Experimental Studies and Attributions of Blame

In recent years, a number of studies have been published in the UK investigating blame attributions made towards male rape victims (see Davies & Rogers, 2006; and Davies, 2011

for a review). The experimental literature exploring the perceptions of male rape victims has yielded a number of consistent findings that were summarised by Davies and Rogers in their 2006 review paper and more recently by Davies (2011): male victims tend to be blamed more than female victims; male victims of a female perpetrator are blamed more than victims of a male perpetrator; gay victims are blamed more than heterosexual victims; and males tend to be more negative than females.

### *1.5.1 Respondent Attitudes*

Although attitudes are subject to various definitions, they have been described as *"relatively stable and enduring cognitive tendencies to respond in a certain way to a variety of social stimuli"* (Ward, 1995 p.40). Many researchers (e.g. Aronson, Wilson, & Akert, 2005) argue that attitudes are made up of three components: firstly a cognitive component, which covers thoughts and beliefs about a social stimulus; an affective/evaluative component, which consist of an emotional reaction towards a stimulus; and a behaviour component, which links to the behavioural implications of the attitude towards the social stimulus. Ward (1995) applied the three attitude components to the perception of rape: if you hold negative beliefs about rape victims (e.g. rape victims' often provoke the assault in some way), this may affect how you subsequently feel and behave towards them (e.g. consider them deserving of the assault). Attitudes are formed through personal experiences, the influences of other people, and through emotional responses (Hogg & Vaughan, 2002). For example, a police officer might hold a negative attitude towards male rape victims following the direct experience of investigating a case that turned out to be false. Further, Zajonc (1968) argued a mere exposure effect whereby exposure to an object affects the evaluation of it, which then strengthens our response one way or another. For instance, if a police officer observes further accusations of rape, which turn out to be false, the negative attitude towards rape victims may be strengthened. Other social psychologists promote the social learning process on attitude formation (Hogg & Vaughan, 2002). One form of attitude formation, which occurs as a result of observing the outcomes of others, is known as modelling (Hogg & Vaughan, 2002). Thus, an individual who has observed negative attitudes towards rape victims modelled by a significant other may themselves develop negative attitudes towards victims.

As attitudes cannot be directly observed they are typically measured by asking people questions using questionnaires or scales. Using such methods, respondents are usually asked the extent to which they agree/disagree with a number of statements relating to the attitude in question. The majority of research studies on attitudes towards victims of sexual assault have sampled university students (see Pollard, 1992 for a review of the female blame attribution literature), although a number of studies have recently been published exploring attitudes of police officers, lawyers, and health professionals (e.g. Davies et al., 2009; Khraé, Temkin, Bieneck, & Berger, 2008; Campbell, 2008 respectively). A potential drawback when measuring attitudes is that respondents may be resistant in divulging their true feelings, even more so when their attitude is at conflict with a general norm (Hogg & Vaughan, 2002). This effect may be prevalent when measuring attitudes towards sexual assault victims as respondents may not want to be seen to blame the victim. Nevertheless, attitudes surrounding sexual assault victims will undoubtedly affect the way in which victims are viewed, therefore attempting to understand people's attitudes towards victims through experimental research is an important step in improving the way they are treated. Making improvements in how a victim is treated once they disclose, should help to reduce the secondary victimisation often described by victims where they have been left feeling blamed and doubted by those they disclose to.

### *1.5.2 Acceptance of Rape Myths*

Myths about sexual aggression are widely held in society. These beliefs, coined 'rape myths' are generally false, prejudicial beliefs about rape, rape victims, and perpetrators of rape (Burt, 1980). A number of definitions of rape myths now exist in the literature, and tend to encompass three facets: firstly, that they are false or biased beliefs, secondly, they are widely shared, and thirdly they serve to explain or justify certain behaviours. More recently a definition was proposed to include the content and functions of rape myths: Gerger, Kley, Bohner, and Siebler (2007) defined rape myths as "*descriptive or prescriptive beliefs about sexual aggression (i.e. about its scope, causes, context, and consequences) that serve to deny, downplay, or justify sexually aggressive behavior that men commit against women"* (p.425). In contrast to Gerger et al's. (2007) definition of rape myths, which fails to consider the perpetration of sexual aggression against men, Burt's (1970) definition, although focused on female rape myths, is notably gender neutral.

A number of rape myths pertaining specifically to men have now been established in the literature (see Melanson, 1999) and were recently summarised by Sleath and Bull (2010): 'men's physical size and strength means that they are unlikely to be overpowered or forced into sex; men are the instigators of sexual activity and thus would not be targeted for rape; men who are victims of rape lose their manhood; the occurrence of male rape is rare; men are strong enough to cope with the experience of being raped; and male rape only happens in prisons. Male rape myths appear to be linked to views of masculinity which emphasise men as strong, assertive, sexually dominant, and heterosexual (Davies, 2002; Sleath & Bull, 2010). The manifestation of male rape myths may serve to increase victim blaming by others (e.g. men's physical size and strength means that they are unlikely to be overpowered or forced into sex), decrease supportive views from others (men are strong enough to cope with the experience of being raped), and lead the victim to blame themselves (a victim of rape loses their manhood).

Although limited compared to the literature pertaining to female rape myths, research investigating male rape myth acceptance (RMA) and its relationship to blaming appears to be on the increase. In an early study, Struckman-Johnson and Struckman-Johnson (1992) investigated the level of male RMA amongst male and female college students and unexpectedly found that levels of acceptance were low. Although both males and females showed disagreement with male rape myths, the females in this sample were more rejecting of rape myths compared to males. The authors attributed this low level of acceptance to sampling of students, who they suggested may be more receptive and understanding of the plight of female rape victims. This suggestion was supported by a later study by Kassing, Beesley and Frey (2005) who found that older, less educated men (characteristics in opposition to the sample of men in Struckman-Johnson & Struckman-Johnson's research) were more accepting of male rape myths. Interestingly, Kassing et al. (1995) also found that characteristics typically associated with masculinity such as power, competitive attitudes, and homophobia were also related to higher acceptance of male rape myths. Along with highlighting characteristics associated with higher levels of male RMA, Kassing et al. (1995) support the notion that traditional views of masculinity are indeed associated with negative judgments of male victims.

Rape myth acceptance has been shown to increase blame towards female victims and decrease blame towards the perpetrator (see Ward, 1995, for a review). Sleath and Bull

(2010) extended the rape myth acceptance research by investigating male rape myth acceptance (RMA) and its link to male rape victim blaming. They found that acceptance of rape myths reached 51% in some cases and acceptance of such myths was found to increase victim blaming and decrease the level of blame attributed to the perpetrator. Although a previous cross-national study (Ward, 1995) revealed that the United Kingdom (UK) had the lowest average female RMA score across 15 countries (including the United States, Germany, Australia, and Canada), the RMA levels in Sleath and Bull's (2010) study were high. In relation to the above, male rape victim blaming may be higher in countries outside of the UK due to the higher levels of RMA.

Regarding factors associated with both female and male RMA levels, gender has been one of the most widely studied factors and has yielded consistent findings: RMA levels are higher for men than for women (Struckman-Johnson & Struckman-Johnson, 1992; Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994; Suarez & Gadalla, 2010; Sleath & Bull, 2010; Davies, Gilston, & Rogers, 2012). Concern is raised with these findings due to the over-representation of men within the police force, often the first point of contact with the CJS when victims choose to disclose. Home Office Statistics released in March 2011 revealed that only 26.2% (36,617) of 139,586 Police officers were women (Home Office Statistical Bulletin, 2011). As RMA and victim blaming tends to be higher amongst men, whose gender dominate the population of the police force, one would expect that victims who choose to report may be subject to negative judgements, which would increase the risk of secondary victimisation and negatively impact on recovery (Williams, 1984).

Relating male rape myths to the development of attitudes (see pages 16 & 17) it seems fair to suggest that the acceptance of rape myths may be reinforced through personal experiences and influences of other people. For example, if an individual who works with victims holds the stereotypical belief that 'the extent of a man's existence should be a major factor in determining if he was raped' and observes others expressing this attitudinal belief, the belief is likely to be strengthened. This may also be the case if the victim's behavior mirrors the belief: a victim who evidenced no physical resistance, reports a sexual assault, which subsequently turns out to be false. If this individual then encounters a male victim who gave no physical resistance, the way in which they respond to them will be affected by this stereotypical belief.

*1.5.3 Respondent Gender*

Across numerous studies, men have been shown to engage in more victim blaming than women, regardless of the gender of the victim (see Davies, 2011 for a review). Some authors have suggested (e.g. Temkin & Krahé, 2008) that this may be a result of men endorsing more rape supportive attitudes. As mentioned previously there is substantial evidence that men evidence higher levels of RMA and RMA has been show to increase blame towards victims (see Ward, 1995, for a review). Another explanation of why men are more negative towards victims than females is that women are more familiar with the concern of rape, are more likely to have personal acquaintance with rape victims, and are more likely to have considered rape in relation to their daily activities (Grubb & Harrower, 2008). As a result, it may be easier for women to empathise with a victim of rape and recognise that sexual assault would be traumatic for any individual, which would result in less negative judgements. In relation to this thesis, one would expect the victim to be subject to more negative judgements by males as opposed to females due to the endorsement of rape myths by men and the ability of women to emphasise with the victim.

Despite research generally concluding that males tend to be more negative in terms of the judgements they make about a victim of sexual assault, there have been exceptions albeit with female victims. Newcomb, Van Den Eynde, Hafner and Jolly (2008) for example, found that although males were more likely to minimise the seriousness of a sexual assault against a female, there were no gender differences when attributing blame towards the female victim. Frese, Moya and Megias (2004) similarly found no gender differences in victim blaming when the victim was female. With regards to male victims, Davies et al. (2009) found no gender difference in police perceptions of sexual assault victims. In fact, although they were more negative towards male victims than female victims (the male victim was attributed more blame than the female victim), the police population in this study was generally pro-victim in terms of blame attributions and the perceived severity of the assault. These findings are contrary to those reported by Page (2008) who found that only 48% of police officers (in a sample in the United States) stated that they would believe a man who claimed to have been raped. The inconsistency in these results may be due to the different characteristics of the victim, the perpetrator and the assault, which does affect the way victim is judged (this will be discussed in subsequent sections of the thesis). On the other hand, the inconsistencies could be attributed to the different levels of police training within the UK compared to the United States, or

individual experiences relating to attitude development, as discussed previously (see page 16 & 17). Members of the police force in the UK may have had different experiences when dealing with male victims, which would subsequently impact on their attitudes and subsequent judgements towards them. For example, if a police officer investigated a case of male rape whereby the victim was found to be telling the truth, any negative attitudes they hold towards male victims may be challenged by this new experience and possibly reduced.

### *1.5.4 Respondent Gender Role Beliefs*

It is generally acknowledged that traditional gender roles are more rigid for men than for women, and men who do not live up to the traditional gender roles are subject to backlash (Moss-Racusin, Phlean, & Rudman, 2010). This backlash against gender role violation can be witnessed as early as childhood where a young boy who demonstrates feminine behaviour experiences a loss of status in contrast to a female who adopts masculine traits who is then considered 'tomboyish' (Archer, 1992). Some authors argue that whilst gender roles appear to have been relaxed for women, the same cannot be said for men who are still required to uphold masculine ideals such as strength and dominance (Moss-Racusin et al., 2010).

From a young age stereotypes and norms are imposed on children by parents and peers, which serve to dictate the type of behaviour we expect to see demonstrated (Levant, Hirsch, Celentano, Hill, MacEachern, Marty, & Schnedecker, 1992). In addition to behaviour expectations, gender stereotypes include beliefs about physical appearance (e.g. masculine males are viewed as physically muscular; Helgeson, 1994), and emotionality (masculine men are expected to emotionally stoic) (Levant et al., 1992). Norms relating to masculinity prescribe men as strong, dominant, self-reliant, emotionally stoic, and sexually aggressive (Iwamoto, Cheng, Lee, Takamatsu & Gordon, 2011; Sleath & Bull, 2010; & Levant et al., 1992), whereas women are expected to be passive, emotionally expressive and affectionate (Sleath & Bull, 2012).

A number of studies have now been conducted investigating the effect of gender role beliefs on victim blaming and it has been suggested that people who endorse traditional gender role beliefs are more likely to engage in victim blaming than those who have a less traditional view of gender roles (Pollard, 1992). In a review examining the female rape literature, Pollard (1992) concluded that a victim is judged more negatively when they

engage in behaviour that violates typical gender role expectations. For instance, a female was blamed more when they gave a lift to a stranger as this is viewed as a behaviour that they should not engage in. The academic literature on male victims appears to have reached similar conclusions: when a man is viewed as not fighting back or resisting, behaviour diverging away from what is typically expected of men, negative judgements increase. White and Robinson Kurpius (2002) found a positive relationship between gender role beliefs; the stronger the gender role beliefs, the more blame was attributed to the victim. More recently, Sleath and Bull (2010) found that whilst gender role beliefs were not related to victim blaming, they did have a relationship with perpetrator blaming; stronger gender role beliefs resulted in less blame attributed to the perpetrator. These findings have implications for the current research: the male victim with the masculine face will be expected to behave in a masculine way (e.g. fight back and resist the assault) therefore will be blamed more for their victimisation. As gender role beliefs prescribe men as emotionally apt to deal with traumatic situations, the sexual assault of the male victim with the masculine face may be viewed as less severe than the assault of male victim with the feminine face.

### *1.5.5 Characterological vs. Behavioural Blame*

Research exploring victim blame attributions has made distinctions between different types of blame (e.g. Howard 1994); characterological and behavioural blame. Characterological blame refers to blame attributions relating to the victim's character, personality, or disposition, whereas behavioural blame attributions relate to the victim's behaviour such as not taking enough precaution (Sleath & Bull, 2010). Howard (1984) applied the distinction between behavioural and characterological blame, to explain blame attributions towards both male and female victims. The results revealed that female victims were subject to more characterological blame, whereas males were attributed more behavioural blame, suggesting that respondents' blame attributions were affected by gender stereotypes in that more blame was attributed to women in terms of characteristics typical of the female stereotype (e.g. trusting nature, passivity, and carelessness).

Although previous research (e.g. Pollard, 1992) has suggested that blame attributions are higher in situations where the victim did not resist, Howard (1984) suggested that the role of physical resistance would be more pertinent in relation to the

blaming of male sexual assault victims due to the sex-role stereotype of males being strong, assertive, and able to escape from confrontational situations (Herek, 1998). The male victims in Howard's (1984) study were blamed more when their behaviour was contradictory to the male stereotype (e.g. not fighting back, not trying to escape). Howard (1984) explained, due to masculine characteristics, which portray men able to resist an attack, they are behaviourally blamed more than females who are attributed feminine characteristics such as being incapable of defending themselves. This research suggests the distinction between different types of blame inter-links with gender stereotypes in the attribution of blame. In this case, a male victim is attributed more behavioural blame when his behaviour is inconsistent with that typically expected of a man. This research also this highlights the role of masculinity in victim blaming and the need for research to directly explore this; in the case of this thesis through facial masculinity.

Men in particular appear to be more negative towards male victims than female victims, when the victim could be perceived as able to resist the assault or fight back (see Davies, 2011 for a review). Similar to the results revealed in Howard's (1984) study, White and Robinson Kurpius (2002) found that compared to a female victim, a male victim was blamed more for 'not fighting back', 'not trying to escape' and 'looking scared'; behaviours opposed with masculinity. This has been attributed to men's tendency to endorse more traditional views of masculinity. The result of an increase in blame when male victims are viewed to be behaving in a way that diverges from what is typically masculine may be more pertinent for a male who exudes a masculine appearance either by body type or facial appearance. In relation to this thesis, the victim with the masculine face may be subject to more blame as a result of the perception that he should have been able to resist the assault due to his observed masculinity.

### *1.5.6 'Real Rape' Stereotype*

Criminology Theory and research suggests that a stereotype exists relating to type of crime and the sex of victim and the more a crime deviates away from what is typically normal (i.e. the type of crime one expects others to become a victim of), blame may increase (Howard, 1984). For example, Howard (1984) found that the rape of a man was considered the least likely type of assault and the rape of a woman the most likely type of assault compared to crimes of robbery for both sexes. Thus, a male rape victim would be blamed

more due to the assault deviating from what is typically normal. Howard (1984) also suggested that due to certain characteristics attributed to females such as vulnerability, weakness, and submissiveness, they would be perceived as a more likely victim of personal crime compared to males. As the above suggests, stereotypes appear to extend to the crime of rape and have led to the term the 'real rape'. The real rape stereotype represents a generalised idea of what a typical rape situation is: a female victim is attacked by a male stranger, in an outdoor location, involving the use of threat or force and physical resistance (Temkin & Krahé, 2008). Sleath (2012) recently suggested that the real rape stereotype not only raises questions as to whether the rape is a 'real rape' but also affects the behaviour of the victims (e.g. if the assault deviates from the real rape stereotype, they may be less likely to report).

Despite the existence of the real rape stereotype, this deviates somewhat from official records of the most common form of rape, which typically involves a degree of acquaintance between the victim and the perpetrator and a lack of physical injury due to the victim's fear of fighting back (Temkin & Krahé, 2008). In a sample of 55 men (data was collected from Survivors UK and the victimisation survey), 22 had some degree of acquaintance with the perpetrator and 10 were raped by strangers (data was unavailable for 19 of the men in the sample) (Abdullah-Khan, 2008). Further, over half (9 out of 16) described being too afraid to resist or fight, or that they froze with fear. One of the men stated *"... I didn't say anything. I didn't struggle because I was afraid..."* (p. 207). Some researchers (e.g. Temkin & Krahé, 2008) argue that the more the rape deviates from the 'real rape' stereotype, the less people are willing to accept it as a genuine rape. As a result, blame attributions towards the victim increase (Best, Dansky, & Kilpatrick, 1992; Emmers-Sommer & Allen, 1999).

In a recent study exploring Police Officer's attitudes towards rape victims, Page (2008) found that although rape was considered a serious crime, the likelihood of the victim being discredited increased the more the characteristics deviated from the real rape stereotype: 19% of officers stated that it was unlikely that they would believe a married victim who claimed she was raped by her husband and 21% claimed it was unlikely they would believe a man who claimed to have been raped. These findings have clear implications for the current research; as the very nature of male rape deviates largely from

the ‘real rape’ stereotype in that the male who is typically the perpetrator becomes the victim, blame attribution may increase.

### *1.5.7 Victim Sexual Orientation*

The majority of experimental research studies exploring the effect of victim sexual orientation on blame attributions has found that gay male victims are judged more negatively than heterosexual victims (e.g. Davies & McCartney, 2003; Davies et al., 2006; See Davies, 2011 for a review). One of the first studies (Ford Liwag-McLamb, & Foley, 1998) to manipulate both victim gender and sexual orientation found that heterosexual females and gay males received more blame than heterosexual males and lesbian females. Mitchell (1999) also found that males portrayed as gay were viewed more negatively than males portrayed as heterosexual. Mitchell (1999) examined the effect of victim sexual orientation on attributions of responsibility, pleasure, and trauma related to the assault and revealed that not only was the gay male victim blamed more than the heterosexual victim, but the gay male victim was perceived to experience less trauma and more pleasure from the assault compared to the heterosexual victim. In a later study, Wakelin and Long (2003) investigated judgements made toward both male and female victims of a stranger rape perpetrated by a male and demonstrated that not only were victims blamed more when they were assaulted in line with their sexuality (gay males, heterosexual females) but were viewed as having more of an unconscious desire for the assault to happen to them (this was measured by asking respondents to rate the perceived unconscious desire on the part of the victim). In a more recent study of a hypothetical rape of a 15 year old, Davies, Rogers and Whitelegg (2009) also found that the gay male victim was blamed more than the heterosexual male victim and the lesbian female victim. The authors suggested that homophobic biases may manifest when making judgements towards victims in the case of both adolescent and adult rape.

Regarding the finding that lesbian victims are not blamed to the extent of gay male victims it has been suggested (e.g. Kite & Whitley, 1996) that a gay male may be perceived as possessing female-typed traits and as gender roles are more rigid for men as opposed to women, people are more negative towards males who have female-typed traits than females who possess male-typed traits. Furthermore, the students in Wakelin and Long’s (2003) study believed that chance factors (chance factors were measured by asking respondents to

partition blame to four contributing factors one of which was chance) had played a bigger role in the rape of a gay man than in the rape of a heterosexual man. The authors suggested that this may be a result of the stereotype that gay men are believed to evidence their sexuality through their appearance and behaviour, therefore in some way are encouraging rape by male perpetrators.

It appears that women and gay men are less homophobic than heterosexual males and previous research confirms that this extends to the rape of men. For example, Davies and McCartney (2003) found that heterosexual men were more negative towards a gay male rape victim than gay men, endorsing more male rape myths, considering the assault as less severe, and attributing more blame to the victim. More recently, Davies et al. (2012) found that compared to women, men were more negative towards a gay male victim, judging the assault as less severe and attributing more blame to the victim. The male respondents in this study also displayed more negative attitudes towards gay men than the female respondents. As men tend to endorse more homophobic attitudes than women (Herek, 1998), it is not surprising that a gay male victim is judged more negatively by men compared to women. The above research examining the effect of victim sexuality suggests that although non-consensual, the homosexual nature of male sexual assault triggers homophobic reactions and as a consequence attributions of blame and other negative judgements toward the victim increase.

### *1.5.8 Male Victims of Female Perpetrators*

The belief that men are incapable of functioning sexually unless sexually aroused has manifested in judicial systems where female defendants have been acquitted on the grounds that the male victim was deemed incapable of functioning sexually unless he was a willing participant (Smith et al. 1988). Such beliefs have also emerged in the empirical literature and appear to increase negative judgements towards male victims of female perpetrators. In a recent study (Sleath & Bull, 2010), over 50% of men and 19% of women showed agreement with the statement 'I would have a hard time believing a man who told me he was raped by a woman'. Although, this statement refers specifically to male rape, it does highlight the existence of the belief that women are unable to commit a sexual offence against a man.

Researchers (e.g. Davies & Rogers, 2006) have suggested that as we are socialised to believe that women are sexually passive and men are the sexual initiators, a situation in which a dominant female forces a male to have an unwanted sexual encounter is considered implausible. A well cited study by Smith et al. (1988) revealed that males who were sexually victimised by females were judged as gaining pleasure from the incident and considered more likely to have encouraged it somehow. This belief was particularly prominent amongst male respondents, 47% of which rated the incident as pleasurable compared to only 9% of females. Smith et al. (1988) concluded that the males' largely positive view of the female perpetrated sexual assault was a result of a failure to view the incident as an assault, instead endorsing the stereotypical view that men should always be ready for, and enjoy sex with a woman.

In a study predominantly exploring RMA in a sample of college students, Struckman-Johnson and Struckman-Johnson (1992) found that respondents were more likely to blame the victim, view the incident as less traumatic, and endorse rape myths in a female perpetrated sexual assault of a male. In a later study, Davies, Pollard and Archer (2006) found that in a number of scenarios, where manipulations were made in terms of perpetrator gender and victim sexual orientation, the heterosexual male victim of a female perpetrator was attributed the most blame. The authors explained that in this case, blame attributions may have been based on the traditional gender role belief that a heterosexual man should enjoy sex with a woman. Also, in this study, when the perpetrator was female, the heterosexual male was blamed more than the gay male and when the perpetrator was male, the gay victim was blamed more than the heterosexual victim. The previous studies support the notion that victims who are assaulted in line with their sexuality (e.g. heterosexual male assaulted by a female) are blamed more than victims who are assaulted against their sexuality (e.g. gay male assaulted by a female).

## 1.6 Facial Appearance and Victim Blaming

It has long been established that appearance can affect an initial impression of an individual's character (Berry & McArthur, 1986). This is much the case among writers who often use physiognomic descriptions to create distinct impressions and to manipulate the reader's feelings towards a character (Berry, 1990). Take children's fiction for example, negative characters (e.g. evil witch) who the reader is intended to dislike are often

described as physically unattractive and positive characters who the readers are expected to favour (e.g. the heroic prince) are described as physically attractive. Although psychological descriptions of character develop with maturity, physical attributes such as facial appearance play an integral role in determining how observers respond in social interactions and in our judgements of character (Liggett, 1974; Berry & McArthur, 1986; Little & Hancock, 2002).

When we meet someone new and have little information about that person, we form impressions quickly using observations and schemas (Aronson et al. 2005). A schema cued by features such as physical appearance allows us to form quick impressions of others and is called an 'implicit personality theory' (Aronson et al. 2005). Implicit personality theories have been described as *"idiosyncratic and personal ways of characterising other people and explaining their behaviour"* (Hogg & Vaughan, 2002 p.46). A widely held implicit personality theory associated with physical attractiveness is that attractive people are generally viewed more favourably and thought to possess more positive personality traits: this has become known as 'what is beautiful is good' (Dion, Berscheid, & Walster, 1972).

### *1.6.1 Rape Victim Attractiveness*

In light of the above, one would expect an attractive victim of a sexual assault to be viewed more positively than an unattractive victim. However, there is no published research that investigates the effects of male victim appearance on the way he is subsequently judged. The majority of research exploring this has focused on females victims and has found inconsistent results. In an early study for instance, Seligman, Brickman and Kaulack (1976) found that an unattractive female victim of rape [attractive/unattractive photographs were chosen following a pilot study] was perceived as having provoked the assault in some way compared to the attractive victim. On the other hand, Thornton (1977) found no effect of female rape victim attractiveness on judgments made towards the victim. They did however, find an effect of victim attractiveness on the way the defendant was judged; the defendant of the attractive victim was judged more severely compared to the defendant of the unattractive victim.

Summarising the literature, Pollard (1992) acknowledged the inconsistency of the effect of female victim attractiveness and highlighted the effect as being more pertinent

when making judgments towards the perpetrator. It is important to note that the academic literature investigating the effect of appearance is dated and the paper written by Pollard (1992) is the latest academic paper to discuss the effect of rape victim appearance on attributions of blame. Although research has focused on the effect of physical attractiveness on the way a female victim is judged, other facial characteristics may influence personality judgments and subsequently blaming. The way a victim appears physically is likely to affect the way in which they are subsequently viewed; therefore attempting to understand people's attitudinal biases that are triggered as a result of a victim's physical appearance, is an important step in improving the way they are treated once they come into contact with individuals who they disclose to. This has important implications for members of the CJS and other individuals who come into contact with victims such as members of a jury, who have not met the victim prior to the case. In this instance, initial impressions may be formed on account of the victim's physical appearance (see Berry & McArthur, 1986).

### *1.6.2 Facial Masculinity*

As research has consistently found an effect of appearance on the way people are viewed and male rape victim blaming research has suggested an effect of traditional views of masculinity on blaming, it is surprising that research has yet to combine the two. Masculine norms stipulate that masculine men are dominant, emotionally and physically strong (Helgeson, 1994), and are more likely to engage in risk taking behaviours (Iwamoto et al, 2011). Therefore one would expect that a masculine male rape victim would be subject to attributions pertaining to such norms (e.g. considered more able to deal with the sexual assault and viewed as more able to resist). As gender roles prescribe men to be masculine in both behaviour and appearance, increasing understanding of the way a masculine appearance subsequently affects blame attributions is important to improve understanding of what contributes to the negative judgements male victims often describe when they choose to disclose their victimisation.

Despite the lack of research on the appearance of male sexual assault victims, a number of studies have manipulated facial masculinity to explore how this affects general personality attributions. The effect of facial masculinity on the way a male is viewed has generally been negative, with males who have masculine facial features viewed more negatively than males with feminine facial features. For example, in one of the earliest

reported studies, Perrett, Penton-Voak, Rowland, Yoshikawa, Burt, Henzil, Castles, and Akamatsu (1998) manipulated the masculinity and femininity (faces were feminised and masculinised by 50%) of a number of faces to explore its effect on personality attributions. The results revealed that enhancing masculinity in male faces, increased perceptions of dominance and negative personality attributions such as coldness and dishonesty. The respondents in this study showed a preference in terms of attractiveness towards the feminised, rather than masculinised male face, which the authors attributed to the negative personality traits associated with a masculine face. Applied to male victims who choose to disclose an assault, one would expect a male victim to be judged negatively as a result of the negative personality judgements often made towards men with a masculine face.

The negative effect of facial masculinity on personality attributions was replicated by Johnston, Hagel, Franklin, Fine, and Grammar (2001) who found that females attributed negative personality traits towards masculine males perceiving them as more selfish, threatening, volatile, and controlling. Additional studies (e.g. Swaddle & Reirson, 2002; DeBruine, Jones, Little, Boothroyd, Perrett, Penton-Voak, 2006) have found that not only does facial masculinity signify dominance, but also negative personality traits and less suitability as a long-term partner. In a later study, Boothroyd, Jones, Burt, and Perrett (2007) found that Masculine male faces were considered more dominant, less faithful, and less warm compared to feminine male faces. It is clear from the outlined research that masculinity in male faces evokes a number of undesirable negative personality attributions including dishonesty, selfishness, dominance and aggression. It has been suggested (e.g. Pivonkova, Rubesova, Lindova, & Havlicek, 2011) that masculine features may also indicate higher testosterone levels, which is linked to characteristics such as aggressiveness and anti-social behaviour.

It is clear from the above research that facial appearance, in particular masculinity, plays an integral role in how males are viewed. As such, these findings have important implications in the research of male rape victim blaming. In line with the above, it is suggested that due to the negative traits associated with masculine males, a masculine male rape victim would be subject to more negative judgements than a victim with a feminine face. Although not measured in relation to blame attributions, facial masculinity does appear to negatively affect the way a male is judged. Furthermore, as previous research has highlighted the importance of traditional views of masculinity in male rape blame attributions, initiating blame attribution research in relation to the appearance of male

sexual assault victims using facial masculinity is both realistic and relevant to the male rape blaming literature.

Sell, Cosmides, Tooby, Sznycer, Von Rueden, and Gurven (2009) hypothesised that masculine features in male faces are cues of physical strength. Therefore one would expect a masculine male rape victim to be perceived as possessing physical strength eliciting stereotypes such as 'he should have been able to resist'. As previous gender stereotype research has found that people who are highly masculine or feminine in appearance elicit the perception that they are masculine or feminine in others ways as well (Deaux & Lewis, 1984), it seems fair to suggest that a male victim who is masculine in appearance would be subject to more behavioural blame than a male victim who is feminine in appearance as he would be expected to respond to an assault in a masculine way (e.g. resisting and fighting back). This may be particularly important on a practical level in the event of disclosure. For instance, a male victim who is masculine in appearance may be viewed as more likely to have been able to resist a sexual assault by police officers, jury members, victim support workers and other individuals with whom they disclose to, compared to a male victim who is feminine in appearance. If this is case, it is important that this information is delivered to the relevant individuals so that they are aware of the potential biases they may hold and how such biases could contribute to blame attributions towards the victim.

### *1.6.4 Rationale and Aims of this Thesis*

It is evident from the preceding literature review that the theoretical explanations of blame inter-link with each other and are dependent on the characteristics of the victim and the perpetrator, and the features individual to the sexual assault. The defensive attribution hypothesis has clear links with the distinction of characterological and behavioural blame, which is strongly related to gender stereotypes. For example, behavioural blame attributions increase where there is perceived similarity to a victim compared to a personally dissimilar individual (Thornton, 1984) and a male victim who is viewed as not behaving in a stereotypically masculine way is attributed more behavioural blame (Howard, 1984). Although attribution theories will not be directly tested, these theories will be drawn upon when interpreting the findings.

Several conclusions can be made from the male rape blame attribution literature: firstly, the gender of the respondent, the gender of the perpetrator, the sexual orientation of the victim, and the characteristics of the assault all contribute to the way a male victim is subsequently judged (see Davies, 2011 for a review). It is also clear that physical appearance affects the way individuals are viewed in relation to what is expected of them behaviourally and emotionally (Deaux & Lewis, 1984; Levant et al, 1992). For example, a man who is masculine in appearance is expected to be emotionally stoic (Levant et al, 1992), physically strong (Sell et al, 2009), and demonstrate the ability to physically resist an assault (Sleath & Bull, 2010).

The aim of this research is to extend and replicate the current research on attributions made towards male victims of sexual assault by investigating how appearance may influence judgements. More specifically, this research will uniquely explore the impact of facial masculinity on the way a male victim of a sexual assault is judged. Although more men now report sexual assault, little is known about how a victim's appearance affects attributions made towards them. However, facial masculinity has been shown to affect the way a male is judged and previous research has highlighted the importance of traditional views of masculinity in male rape blame attributions. Consequently, initiating research in relation to the appearance of male sexual assault victims using facial masculinity makes an important contribution to the current research area. As victim sexual orientation, perpetrator gender and respondent gender have all been shown to affect the way a victim is viewed, these factors will be included in this research (predictions for study 1 can be found on pages 39 & 40 and study 2 on page 54 & 55).

Developing knowledge and understanding through experimental research of the attributional biases made towards male victims has important real-world implications, particularly for individuals working with male victims and/or employed to educate the general public about this type of crime. As mentioned previously, male sexual assault remains a largely under-reported offence due to the social stigma surrounding it and as a result of the negative treatment victims fear they will received or have received in the past (see sections 1.2.1 & 1.2.2). The findings from experimental research could be used to educate both professionals working with male victims and the general public, this should help to improve the way they are treated and in the long-term reduce the risk of secondary

victimisation, which often has a long-term negative impact on victims' recovery (Williams, 1984).

This research also offers a methodologically unique approach by utilising synthesised images of males created using EvoFit, a composite system typically used in criminal investigations (see pages 36 & 37 for a description of EvoFit). As previous research (e.g. Dion et al. 1972) has concluded that certain facial features are viewed differently than others (e.g. attractiveness) and this thesis aimed to investigate the effect of facial masculinity, a pilot study was conducted to screen a number of EvoFit faces to ensure that that were not rated high or low on these particular features. The pilot study will be discussed in the next chapter of this thesis.

# Chapter 2: Method

## Pilot Study

*2.1. Design*

A within subjects design was employed to investigate which of six facial composites were perceived as most average in ratings of masculinity, femininity, and attractiveness.

*2.1.2 Respondents*

Sixty (27 males, 33 females) students from the University of Central Lancashire participated in this study. Respondents ranged in age from 19 to 54, with a mean age of 24.6 (*SD* = 7.39).

*2.1.3 Materials*

The questionnaire booklet, consisting of four sections, was designed for the purpose of this study. The first section informed respondents of the general purpose of the study and that the presented faces were hypothetical; not an actual person. The information sheet also detailed instructions on how to return the completed questionnaire booklet (see Appendix 1 for the pilot study questionnaire).

The second section contained a set of demographic items assessing respondent age, gender, and occupational status.

The third section instructed respondents on how to complete the questionnaire and presented the facial composites and rating scales (see figure 1 for an example of a facial composite). The simulated faces were created by EvoFit: a computerised facial composite system developed to facilitate the construction of a facial image likened to that of a perpetrator of crime (for an explanation of EvoFit methods, see Frowd, Bruce, McIntyre, Ross, & Hancock, 2006). Faces used in appearance research are typically composites that are created by digitally blending photographs of individuals and then manipulated accordingly (e.g. Perret et al. 1998; Boothroyd, Jones, Burt, & Debruine, 2008). For example, in their 2006 study Buckingham, Debruine, Little, Welling, Conway, Tiddeman, and Jones created a prototype face by averaging the shape and colour information from 20 faces and then masculinising or feminising the composite by 50%. However, when creating such face databases, individuals are not asked to consent to being portrayed as a victim of crime, thus would not be applicable for research examining the effect of facial appearance

with relation to victims of crime. This problem can be overcome with the use of the facial composite system, EvoFIT.

EvoFIT is a computerised facial composite system that was developed in order to assist a crime witness construct an image of a perpetrator (Frowd, 2011). Adopting an evolutionary approach, facial recognition begins with the presentation of a number of faces to a crime witness. The witness then selects a number of faces that best represent the assailant. This process in repeated until a best likeness is achieved (Frowd & Hancock, 2007). Originally, the EvoFit database was created using 72 photographs of white males, however, this was later increased to 200 in order to better represent an average male face (Frowd et al, 2006). Using 200 photographs of the white male faces, a prinicipal component analysis was used to "provide a set of reference faces (eignefaces) that can be combined in variable amounts to produce a novel face…" (Frowd et al, 2006. p.43). Consequently, all faces contained in the EvoFIT database are synthesised, not real people, therefore consent to use the face to be portrayed as a victim of crime is not required.

Another positive feature of EvoFit in terms of its application to blaming research is the possibility of manipulating various holistic dimensions including masculinity, honesty, and attractiveness. Holistic dimensions were created for use in EvoFit by asking respondents to provide a rating that best described a large number of faces along various scales (e.g. masculinity/femininity, unattractive/attractive, dishonest/honest, and unhealthy/healthy) (Frowd et al, 2006). The faces with the lowest rating and the faces with the highest rating were averaged for each holistic dimension, which allowed for the creation of scales to aid manipulation of the desired dimension. Thus, to make a male face appear more masculine, the face would be progressed along the relevant scale in the direction of the average masculine face. Although the use of EvoFit in blaming research is plausible, the developers cannot say for certain that perception would be the same as a human face (C. Frowd, personal communication, October, 12, 2010). Despite this, faces created in EvoFIT can be utilised to explore the effect of certain facial characteristics on judgements made towards a victim of crime, more specific to this research, victims of sexual assault.

As previous researchers (e.g. Dion et al, 1972) have concluded that attractive faces are viewed more favourably compared to unattractive faces, it was important that this feature was controlled for when considering the effect of facial masculinity on blame attributions. Also, it was important that the face selected was considered average in terms masculinity and femininity to ensure that any attributions were based on the manipulation

of masculinity/femininity rather than the fact that the face was already considered highly masculine or feminine. As a result, a pilot study was conducted on six randomly created EvoFit faces to determine which of them was considered most average in terms of attractiveness, masculinity, and femininity. Each face was rated on a 7-point Likert scale. The masculinity and femininity items were rated from 1 "not at all masculine/feminine" to 7 "very masculine/feminine" (a high score indicated that the image was perceived high in masculinity, femininity, or attractiveness and a low score, low in perceived masculinity, femininity, or attractiveness). The remaining items on the scale were rated from 1 "not (e.g. honest)" to 7 "very (e.g. honest)". After rating the six facial composites, respondents were presented with the fourth section: a debrief sheet, which explained the purpose of the study and contact details for the researchers.

**Figure 1. Facial composite**

*2.1.4 Procedure*

The study was approved by the School of Psychology Ethics Committee. Respondents were approached in the University Cafeteria and asked to participate in the study. Each respondent handed the completed questionnaire back to the researcher immediately after they had completed it. Although respondents were given the option of completing the questionnaire booklet in their own time and returning it according to the instructions on the information sheet, all respondents chose to hand it back to the researcher once completed.

*2.1.5 Results*

Ratings of masculinity, femininity, and attractiveness were recorded for each of the six facial composites. Mean scores were generated for each condition, with a score of four indicating that the image was considered average. Table 1 below shows the means and standard deviations for the masculinity, femininity, and attractiveness ratings of the six

facial composites. Table 2 shows the mean scores (masculinity, femininity, and attractiveness) according to the gender of the participant.

**Table 1. Masculinity, femininity, and attractiveness ratings for the six facial composites.**

| | Masculinity | | Femininity | | Attractiveness | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Facial Image | *M* | *SD* | *M* | *SD* | *M* | *SD* |
| 1 | 4.75 | 1.14 | 2.97 | 1.27 | 4.70 | 1.08 |
| 2 | 4.27 | 1.17 | 4.08 | 1.54 | 4.38 | 1.22 |
| 3 | 4.52 | 1.21 | 3.80 | 1.40 | 3.65 | 1.16 |
| 4 | 5.95 | .89 | 2.18 | 1.35 | 3.75 | 1.22 |
| 5 | 4.58 | 1.33 | 3.72 | 1.28 | 3.82 | 1.14 |
| 6 | 5.40 | .99 | 2.95 | 1.21 | 3.73 | 1.31 |

**Table 2. Masculinity, femininity, and attractiveness ratings for the six facial composites according to participant gender.**

| | Masculinity | | | | Femininity | | | | Attractiveness | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Males | | Females | | Males | | Females | | Males | | Females | |
| Image | *M* | *SD* | *M* | *SD* | *M* | *SD* | *M* | *SD* | *M* | *SD* | *M* | *SD* |
| 1 | 4.81 | 1.14 | 4.70 | 1.16 | 2.70 | 1.10 | 3.18 | 1.38 | 4.33 | 1.12 | 5.00 | .97 |
| 2 | 3.89 | 1.15 | 4.57 | 1.12 | 4.18 | 1.46 | 4.00 | 1.62 | 3.93 | 1.07 | 4.76 | 1.22 |
| 3 | 4.07 | 1.30 | 4.88 | 1.02 | 3.70 | 1.44 | 3.88 | 1.39 | 3.67 | 1.14 | 3.63 | 1.19 |
| 4 | 5.67 | .96 | 6.18 | .77 | 2.33 | 1.41 | 2.06 | 1.29 | 3.48 | 1.19 | 3.97 | 1.21 |
| 5 | 4.41 | 1.11 | 4.73 | 1.48 | 3.70 | 1.17 | 3.73 | 1.37 | 3.85 | 1.03 | 3.79 | 1.24 |
| 6 | 5.00 | 1.07 | 5.73 | .80 | 2.85 | 1.19 | 3.03 | 1.24 | 3.37 | 1.08 | 4.03 | 1.42 |

Image 2 was considered the most average in terms of masculinity (*M* = 4.27. *SD* = 1.17) and femininity (*M* = 4.08, *SD* = 1.54) and was rated close to the average on attractiveness (*M* = 4.38, *SD* = 1.22). Image 5 was considered most average in attractiveness (*M* = 3.82, *SD* = 1.14) and was rated close to the mean score in femininity (*M* = 3.17, *SD* = 1.28) and masculinity (*M* = 4.58, *SD* = 1.33). Image 3 was also rated close to the mean score on all three ratings (masculinity *M* = 4.52, *SD* = 1.21; femininity *M* = 3.80, *SD* = 1.40; attractiveness *M* = 3.65, *SD* = 1.16). Compared to images 2, 3, and 5, images 1, 4, and 6 were not rated average in perceived masculinity and femininity (see Table 1). Images 4 and

6 were rated close to the mean score for attractiveness (image 4 *M* = 3.75, *SD* = 1.22; image 6 *M* = 3.73, *SD* = 1.31), however, all images were similar in mean scores for this rating (see Table 1). As a result, images 1, 4, and 6 were not analysed further.

The mean scores for image 2 were greater for females compared to males on the masculinity (Females *M* = 4.57, *SD* = 1.12; Males *M* = 3.89, *SD* = 1.15) and attractiveness (Females *M* = 4.76, *SD* = 1.22; Males *M* = 3.93, *SD* = 1.07) ratings. A one-tailed paired samples *t*-test revealed that males and females differed significantly when rating image 2 for masculinity ($t(59) = 18.5$, $p < .001$) and attractiveness ($t(59) = 19.0$, $p < .001$) (see Table 3 for *t*-test results). This suggests that females considered image 2 significantly more masculine and attractive compared to males. As a result, this image is not average in terms of perceived masculinity and attractiveness as males and females differ significantly in how they perceive it. As images 3 and 5 were perceived as close to average on all 3 ratings (masculinity, femininity, and attractiveness) and the ratings did not differ according to gender, paired samples *t*-tests were conducted to examine whether the ratings of the 2 images were significantly different. There was no significant difference in ratings of masculinity ($t(59) = -.34$, $p = .73$), femininity ($t(59) = .35$, $p = .73$), or attractiveness ($t(59) = -1.01$, $p = .32$) between images 3 and 5.

In summary, as a result of this gender difference in perception for image 2, this image is not considered average and will not be utilised in future studies. To conclude, images 3 and 5 were perceived as average in terms of masculinity, femininity, and attractiveness and these perceptions did not differ significantly between the two images and therefore could be utilised in future studies.

## Study 1

### *2.2 Design*

A between subjects design was used to investigate the effect of facial masculinity (feminine vs. masculine), sexual orientation (heterosexual vs. gay), perpetrator gender (male vs. female), and respondent gender (male vs. female) on judgements of a male sexual assault victim. Respondents were randomly assigned to conditions.

### *2.2.1 Respondents*

A total of 356 (148 males, 208 females) students from the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) participated in this study. Respondents mean age was 22.7 (*SD* = 5.01, range 18-

49). The majority (80.1%, *n*=285) of respondents were White British; 5.9% (*n*=21) Asian Pakistani; and 5.1% (*n*=18) Asian Indian. The number of participants in each condition varied and is outlined in Table 3 below. A post hoc power analysis using GPower (see Faul & Erdfelde, 1992) indicated that the statistical power for this study was .79 for detecting a small effect size and .99 and above for detecting a medium and large effect size. The level of power was reaching adequacy for detecting a small effect and was above the recommended required power of .8 and above for detecting a medium or large effect size (see Cohen, 1992).

**Table 3. Number of respondents for each condition in study 1.**

| | Facial Masculinity | | Perpetrator Gender | | Victim sexual orientation | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Respondent Gender | Masculine | Feminine | Male | Female | Gay | Heterosexual |
| Male | 73 | 75 | 78 | 70 | 66 | 82 |
| Female | 111 | 97 | 103 | 105 | 100 | 108 |

*2.2.2 Materials*

The questionnaire booklet, consisting of five sections, was designed for the purpose of this study. The first section informed respondents of the general purpose of the study and that the presented male face was simulated: not a real person. The information sheet also detailed the limitations of anonymity and how to return the completed questionnaire. The last section of the information sheet provided respondents with the contact details of the researchers (see appendix 2 for the questionnaire used in study 1).

The second section of the questionnaire consisted of the facial composite (created using EvoFit) and a hypothetical sexual assault scenario. Six faces were originally simulated and screened to determine, which were perceived as most average in attractivess, masculinity and femininity. One of the most average faces was chosen for use in this study and then manipulated in terms of masculinity and femininity using EvoFit: the facial composite was feminised and masculinised by 50% (see Figure 1 for the original facial composite, Figure 2 for the feminised facial composite, and Figure 3 for the masculinised facial composite). The image measured 6.35cm in height and 4.76cm in width. Eight scenarios were developed for use in the study. The scenario was made as realistic as possible with consideration to how respondents might view it. For example, a scenario where a woman overpowers a man may be considered unrealistic. Thus, the scenario

described a male accepting a lift off either a female or male perpetrator, following which he was driven to a secluded place and subject to a sexual assault via genital touching.

The hypothetical scenario aimed to realistically reflect a situation that respondents would perceive as realistic; the scenario was not piloted prior to conducting the main study. The eight scenarios manipulated the sexual orientation of the victim (heterosexual or gay), the degree of victim facial masculinity (masculine or feminine), and the gender of the perpetrator (male or female). All scenarios were identical excluding the name of the victim's partner, whether the victim was described as having a boyfriend or girlfriend (to manipulate sexual orientation), and the name of the perpetrator (to manipulate perpetrator gender).

The third section of the questionnaire contained a 20-item rating scale. The rating scale was modified from Davies, Pollard and Archer (2001) and aimed to explore victim blaming, the judged severity of the assault, and perpetrator blaming. Three items (1, 6, and 8) related directly to victim blaming, such as "Michael was responsible for the incident". Items 2, 3, 4, and 7 aimed to explore the how preventable respondents viewed the assault (e.g. "Michael did not put up enough of a fight"); items 5, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16 related to how severe the assault was viewed (e.g. "Michael will be traumatised by what happened"); and the final 4 items related directly to perpetrator blaming (e.g. "Andrew is to blame for what happened"). Each item was rated on a 7-point scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Item 5 was reverse scored to ensure that all low scores indicated low victim blame and all high scores high victim blame. Respondents then completed a set of demographic items assessing age, gender, and ethnicity.

The final section of the questionnaire booklet, explained the purpose of the study and detailed contact information for researchers and organisations that may be able to support respondents if required.

**Figure 2: Feminised Composite**

**Figure 3: Original Composite**

**Figure 4: Masculinised Composite**

*2.2.3 Procedure*

This study was approved by the School of Psychology Ethics Committee. Respondents were approached on the University campus and asked to participate in the study. Although given the option of completing the questionnaire in their own time and returning it according to the instructions on the information sheet, all respondents chose to hand it back to the researcher once completed. A response rate of 89% was achieved.

## Study 2

*2.3. Design*

Apart from the addition of the Male Rape Myth Scale (MRMS), the same design as study 1 was employed.

*2.3.1 Respondents*

Two-hundred and ninety eight (137 males, 161 females) UCLan students ranging in age from 17 to 67 (mean age 22.9, *SD* 7.39) participated in this study. Most of the respondents described themselves as White British (83.6%, *n*=249), Asian Indian (3%, *n*=10), or White Other (3%, *n*=9). The number of participants in each condition varied and is outlined in Table 4 below. A post hoc power analysis using GPower (see Faul & Erdfelde, 1992) indicated that the statistical power for this study was .86 for detecting a small effect size and .99 and above for detecting a medium and large effect size. This was more than an adequate level of power (recommended level of .8 and above; see Cohen, 1992).

**Table 4. Number of respondents in each condition for study 2**

| | Facial Masculinity | | Perpetrator Gender | | Victim sexual orientation | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Respondent Gender | Masculine | Feminine | Male | Female | Gay | Heterosexual |
| Male | 74 | 63 | 73 | 64 | 60 | 77 |
| Female | 80 | 81 | 77 | 84 | 86 | 75 |

*2.3.2 Materials*

The questionnaire used in study 1 was modified for use in study 2 (see appendix 3). The first section, the information sheet, was unchanged. In section 2, although the same composite was used, it was enlarged (from 6.35cm in height to 9.98cm and from 4.76cm in width to 7.49cm) and presented with information about the victim (see appendix 3 for the questionnaire used in this study). The image was enlarged in order to increase the likelihood that respondents take time to view it rather than proceeding straight to the scenario. A general personality attribution question was also added to draw attention to the image (e.g. what type of personality do you think Michael has?). As with study 1, 8 scenarios were developed for study 2 to manipulate the same variables: sexual orientation of the victim (heterosexual or gay); and the gender of the perpetrator (male or female). All scenarios were identical excluding the name of the victim's partner, whether the victim was described as having a boyfriend or girlfriend (to manipulate sexual orientation), and the name of the perpetrator (to manipulate perpetrator gender). As a result of feedback from a number of respondents in study 1 who described the scenario as unrealistic in the female perpetrator conditions, this was changed in study 2. A case example taken from a media publication, the Police Gazette, was modified to create anonymity to the victim. This scenario involved a male being sexually assaulted as he slept on a train. Changes were made to the location of the incident, from a southern location to a northern location, the time that it happened and also the type of train. As the scenario replicated an actual case of a female perpetrated sexual assault of a male, it should increase respondents' perceptions that the situation could realistically occur between a victim and a perpetrator of both genders.

The addition of the MRMS which is rated from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 strongly agree), meant that the scale items from study 1 were also changed to concur with the

MRMS (the highest rating was changed from 7 strongly agree to 6 strongly agree); this was to make any subsequent analysis easier. Other than the highest rating change, the 10-item rating scale from study 1 remained unchanged. The MRMS is a 22 item scale assessing the level of agreement with male rape myths. The MRMS showed a Cronbach's alpha of .92 in this study evidencing good internal consistency. Respondents then completed the same demographic information as in study 1 and were presented with the same debrief sheet as study 1.

*2.3.3 Procedure*

This study was approved by the School of Psychology Ethics Committee. The procedure used in study one was replicated for study 2. Respondents were approached on the University campus and asked to participate. Although given the option of completing the questionnaire in their own time and returning it according to the instructions on the information sheet, all respondents chose to hand it back to the researcher once completed.

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# Chapter 3: Study 1

## 3.1 Introduction

The effects of victim facial masculinity, respondent gender, victim sexual orientation, and perpetrator gender on judgements made towards a male victim of a sexual assault were investigated in this study. Facial masculinity was manipulated using a simulated face created by EvoFIT and victim sexual orientation and perpetrator gender were manipulated in a stranger sexual assault scenario. In order to make the scenario as realistic as possible it was important to consider how respondents might view the scenario. For example, a scenario where a woman overpowers a man may be considered unrealistic. Thus, the scenario described a male accepting a lift off either a female or male perpetrator, following which he was driven to a secluded place and subject to a sexual assault via genital touching.

In chapter one (see pages 31, 32, & 33) the lack of research in the area of male rape exploring the effect of appearance on blame attributions was highlighted. As a result of this, predictions in this research regarding the effect of facial masculinity are based on general facial masculinity research. Thus, it was expected that the victim with a masculinised face would be viewed more negatively than the victim with a feminised face as males with masculine faces are generally viewed more negative than males with feminine faces (Johnston et al., 2001; Perrett et al., 1998). This was also supported by previous research which has found that masculinity is a sign of physical strength and that males who are considered masculine in appearance are also expected to behave in a masculine manner (Deaux & Lewis, 1984). Thus, the victim with the masculine face would be expected to resist an assault and be emotionally apt to deal with it. As such, it was predicted that the assault of the masculine victim would also be perceived as less severe.

Also, in chapter 1, previous research was discussed suggesting that the more an event diverges from what is considered 'normal', the more the individual will rely on its individuating features when making attributions of blame. As the very nature of male rape deviates from what is largely considered a stereotypical rape (the male who is typically the perpetrator becomes the victim) and may not be consistent with the existing scripts held by the respondents, they may be forced to focus on the individuating features such as the victim's physical appearance and behaviour (Davies, 2003). As such, the male victim with the masculine face may be attributed more blame than the victim with the feminine face as

they are perceived as not fighting back and adhering to typically expected masculine behaviours.

Consistent with previous blame attribution research trends the following predictions were also made in study 1: prediction (1) male respondents would be more negative toward the victim than female respondents; (2) gay victims would be viewed more negatively than heterosexual victims; (3) the victim of a female perpetrated assault would be viewed more negatively than the victim of a male perpetrated assaulted; (4) the victim would be judged more negatively when they were assaulted by a perpetrator of the gender to which they are normally attracted to; that is the gay victim of a male perpetrator would be viewed more negatively than a heterosexual victim and a heterosexual victim of a female perpetrator would be viewed more negatively than the gay victim.

## 3.2 Results

The independent variables and ratings scales were screened for missing data. Rating scale item 5 was reverse scored to ensure that all high scores on the victim blame items indicated high victim blame and low scores low victim blame (additional data screening was conducted after the factor analysis).

### *3.2.1 Factor Analysis*

The 20-item attribution questionnaire was then subject to a principal components analysis with varimax rotation using PASW 18. Prior to performing the principal components analysis, the suitability of the data for factor analysis was assessed. Inspection of the correlation matrix revealed many coefficients of .3 and above. The Kaiser-Meyer-Oklin value was .89 exceeding the recommended value of .6, and Bartlett's test of sphericity reached statistical significance, supporting the factorability of the correlation matrix.

Kaisers criterion limited the number of factors to those with Eigenvalues greater than 1 and only factor loadings greater than .3 were selected for analysis. Principal components analysis revealed 4 factors with Eigenvalues greater than one, together accounting for 64.75% of the variance in attribution items. Inspection of the scree-plot revealed a levelling off after factor 3 and again after factor 5; four factors were retained for rotation. Prior to rotation, factor one accounted for 36.91% of the variance, decreasing to

21.42% after rotation. Factor 2 accounted for 13.67% of the variance prior to rotation, increasing to 16.45% after rotation. Factor 3 accounted for 7.84% of the variance, increasing to 14.33 after rotation. Factor 4 accounted for 6.33% of the variance prior to rotation, increasing to 12.55 percent after rotation.

All items loaded onto at least one factor. Twelve items loaded onto factor 1, with three items being omitted due to higher loadings on factor 2. The remaining 7 items related to how severe incident was judged and the extent to which it would impact on the victim's life. This scale was labelled 'assault severity' and showed a Cronbach's Alpha of .87. Seven items loaded on to factor 2; three of which were omitted due to stronger loadings onto factor 1. The remaining four items assessed the level of blame and responsibility attributed to the perpetrator; this scale was labelled 'perpetrator blame' and showed a Cronbach's Alpha of .86. Four items loaded on to factor 3 and assessed how resistible the incident was perceived: this scale was labelled 'victim resistance' and showed a Cronbach's Alpha of .86. Factor 4 contained 6 items, three of which were omitted due to stronger loadings on to factors 1 and 3. The remaining three items related to blame towards the victim and was labelled 'victim blame'. This scale showed a Cronbach's Alpha of .77. All scales in this study showed good internal consistency with alpha scores above .7. It is important to note that high scores for victim blame, victim resistance, and perpetrator blame indicate more negative victim judgements, whereas high scores for severity represent more positive victim judgements as a high score suggests respondents considered the assault as more severe. The item factor loadings, Eigenvalues, and percentage variance accounted for by each factor are presented in Table 5.

**Table 5. Factor Loadings, Eigenvalues, Percentage Variance, and Questionnaire Items for Severity, Perpetrator Blame, Victim resistance, and Victim Blame.**

| Scale No. | | Factor Loadings | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Factor 1 | Factor 2 | Factor 3 | Factor 4 |
| **Factor 1: Assault Severity** | | | | | |
| Eigenvalue = 4.28 | | | | | |
| Variance Explained = 21.42% | | | | | |
| 5 | Michael should be given sympathy for what happened | .45* | | | -.42* |
| 9 | Michael enjoyed what happened to him | -.56* | | | .36* |
| 10 | The Police should take this incident seriously | .67 | .41* | | |
| 11 | Michael will be traumatised by what happened | .83 | | | |
| 12 | Michael's life will be adversely affected by what happened | .81 | | | |
| 13 | The incident will have a negative effect on Michael's relationship with his partner | .61 | | | |
| 14 | The Police will believe Michael | .43 | | | |
| 15 | Michael should report this incident to the police | .64 | .50* | | |
| 16 | Michael should be offered support in dealing with what happened | .66 | .53* | | |
| **Factor 2: Perpetrator Blame** | | | | | |
| Eigenvalue = 3.29 | | | | | |
| Variance Explained = 16.45% | | | | | |
| 17 | Becky/Andrew is to blame for what happened | | .78 | | |
| 18 | Becky/Andrew should be punished for what she/he did to Michael | .31* | .81 | | |
| 19 | Becky/Andrew should be sent to prison for what happened | .44* | .67 | | |
| 20 | Becky/Andrew should be held responsible for what she/he did to Michael | .31* | .81 | | |
| **Factor 3: Victim Resistance** | | | | | |
| Eigenvalue = 2.87 | | | | | |
| Variance Explained = 14.33% | | | | | |
| 2 | Michael could have done more to prevent what happened | | | .61 | .38* |
| 3 | Michael did not put up enough of a fight | | | .89 | |
| 4 | Michael should have tried harder to resist | | | .88 | |
| 7 | Michael should have tried harder to escape from the car | | | .83 | |
| **Factor 4: Victim Blame** | | | | | |
| Eigenvalue = 2.51 | | | | | |
| Variance Explained = 12.55% | | | | | |
| 1 | Michael was responsible for the incident | | | | .76 |
| 6 | Michael's behaviour was to blame for the incident | | | | .79 |
| 8 | The incident was Michael's fault | | | | .78 |

* Denotes omitted items and not used for further analysis

*3.2.2 MANOVA*

Preliminary testing using box-plots was completed after the factor analysis as a MANOVA is conducted on the identified factors rather than the individual items. Three extreme

outliers were identified and removed from the data set. One case was removed from the data set due to inaccurate completion of the questionnaire (the respondent had written the rating scale on the last page of the questionnaire, but had reversed all scoring). Eight additional cases were removed as they were far away from the highest and lowest scores (see Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001; p. 71). Individual inspection of these cases revealed that the respondents appeared to have either confused the names of the victim and the perpetrator or had given up; as each case had low victim blaming scores and low perpetrator blaming scores (e.g. the respondent had circled all 1s towards the end of the questionnaire). Assumption testing was conducted to check for multivariate outliers using Mahalanob's distances. Three multivariate outliers were identified, two of which were included in the analysis as the scores (19.57 and 19.47) did not deviate too much from the critical value score (critical value score = 18.47; see Pallant, 2005 p. 251). The remaining case was removed from the data set as it deviated largely from the critical value score (36.37). This left a remaining sample of 343 to be included in subsequent analyses. The results of the evaluation of homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices was violated therefore Pillai's Trace criterion was used. The evaluation of equality of variance was satisfactory and Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients revealed moderate correlations between the dependent variables.

The four rotated factors (assault severity, perpetrator blame, victim resistance, and victim blame) were subject to a 2 (respondent gender) x2 (perpetrator gender) x2 (facial masculinity) x2 (victim sexual orientation) Multivariate Analysis of Variance. There were statistically significant multivariate effects for perpetrator gender $F(4, 324)=4.87$, $p=.001$, Pillai's Trace = .056, partial eta squared = .06 victim sexual orientation $F(4, 324)=2.36$, $p=.05$, Pillai's Trace = .028, partial eta squared = .03, respondent gender $F(4, 324)=11.59$, $p<.001$, Pillai's Trace = .125 partial eta squared = .12, and perpetrator gender x victim sexual orientation $F(4, 324) = 2.69$, $p=.03$, Pillai's Trace = .032 partial eta squared = .03. No other significant multivariate effects were found. Significant multivariate effects were followed up via post-hoc univariate testing.

When the results for the dependent variables were considered separately, significant univariate main effects of respondent gender on assault severity $F(1,327) = 21.11$, $p<.001$, partial eta squared = .06, perpetrator blame $F(1,327) = 14.90$, $p<.001$, partial eta squared = .04, victim resistance $F(1,327) = 73.30$, $p<.001$, partial eta squared = .09, and victim blame

$F(1,327) = 21.54$, $p<.001$, partial eta squared = .04 were identified. Inspection of the mean scores suggests that females perceived the assault as more severe and the victim less able to resist compared to males. The effect sizes calculated using eta squared indicate moderate differences between the means. Females also blamed the perpetrator more than males and blamed the victim less. There was a significant main effect of perpetrator gender on severity $F(1,327) = 6.40$, $p=.010$, partial eta squared = .02 and perpetrator blame $F(1,327) = 7.56$, $p=.009$, partial eta squared = .02. The main effect of perpetrator gender on victim blame was also approaching significance $F(1,327) = 3.47$, $p=.06$, partial eta squared = .01. Inspection of the mean scores suggest that the assault committed by a male perpetrator was considered more severe compared to the female perpetrated assault. The male perpetrator was also blamed more compared to the female perpetrator. The difference between the mean scores for perpetrator gender, calculated using eta squared, were small. There was a significant main effect of victim sexual orientation on victim blame $F(1,327)= 16.01$, $p=.002$, partial eta squared = .03. The mean scores suggest that the gay victim was blamed more than the heterosexual victim. The difference between the mean scores as calculated using eta squared was small. A significant multivariate interaction effect between the gender of the perpetrator and victim sexual orientation was identified $F(1,327) = 7.28$, $p=.006$, partial eta squared = .02. Post-hoc simple effects using two-tailed *t*-tests suggest that the male perpetrated assault of the heterosexual victim was considered significantly more severe than the male perpetrated assault of the gay victim $t(172)= 2.42$, $p<.025$. Table 6 shows the univariate effects for severity, victim resistance, perpetrator blame, and victim blame. The mean scores, standard deviations, and significant effects are displayed in Table 7.

**Table 6. Univariate Effects for Assault Severity, Perpetrator Blame, Victim Resistance, and Victim Blame**

| | Condition | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Assault Severity | | | Perpetrator Blame | | | Victim resistance | | | Victim Blame | | |
| | *df* | *F* | Sig. | *df* | *F* | Sig. | *df* | *F* | Sig. | *df* | *F* | Sig. |
| Perpetrator Gender | 1,327 | 6.64 | **.010** | 1,327 | 6.89 | **.009** | 1,327 | 2.14 | .144 | 1,327 | 3.47 | .063 |
| Victim Facial Masculinity | 1,327 | .041 | .839 | 1,327 | .74 | .391 | 1,327 | 1.18 | 2.79 | 1,327 | .20 | .653 |
| Victim Sexual Orientation | 1,327 | .95 | .329 | 1,327 | 2.21 | .138 | 1,327 | .90 | .344 | 1,327 | 9.36 | **.002** |
| Respondent Gender | 1,327 | 21.92 | **<.000** | 1,327 | 13.58 | **<.000** | 1,327 | 33.96 | **<.000** | 1,327 | 12.60 | **<.000** |
| Perpetrator Gender x Victim Facial Masculinity | 1,327 | 2.71 | .101 | 1,327 | .08 | .775 | 1,327 | .001 | .978 | 1,327 | 1.22 | .270 |
| Perpetrator Gender x Victim Sexual Orientation | 1,327 | 7.56 | **.006** | 1,327 | 1.22 | .270 | 1,327 | .40 | .526 | 1,327 | 2.85 | .092 |
| Perpetrator Gender x Respondent Gender | 1,327 | .90 | .764 | 1,327 | .74 | .389 | 1,327 | .013 | .909 | 1,327 | .702 | .403 |
| Victim Facial Masculinity x Victim Sexual Orientation | 1,327 | .216 | .642 | 1,327 | 2.70 | .101 | 1,327 | .83 | .363 | 1,327 | 1.31 | .253 |
| Victim Facial Masculinity x Respondent Gender | 1,327 | .23 | .628 | 1,327 | .14 | .704 | 1,327 | .04 | .835 | 1,327 | .22 | .641 |
| Victim Sexual Orientation x Respondent Gender | 1,327 | .001 | .975 | 1,327 | .166 | .684 | 1,327 | .000 | .984 | 1,327 | .37 | .544 |
| Perpetrator Gender x Victim Facial Masculinity x Victim Sexual Orientation | 1,327 | .98 | .322 | 1,327 | .16 | .691 | 1,327 | .32 | .571 | 1,327 | 2.06 | .152 |
| Perpetrator Gender x Victim Facial Masculinity x Respondent Gender | 1,327 | .12 | .726 | 1,327 | .05 | .83 | 1,327 | .11 | .734 | 1,327 | .66 | .42 |
| Perpetrator Gender x Victim Sexual Orientation x Respondent Gender | 1,327 | 2.31 | .13 | 1,327 | .50 | .481 | 1,327 | .127 | .721 | 1,327 | .29 | .592 |
| Victim Facial Masculinity x Victim Sexual Orientation x Respondent Gender | 1,327 | 3.19 | .075 | 1,327 | 2.37 | 1.24 | 1,327 | .03 | .864 | 1,327 | 1.35 | .247 |
| Perpetrator Gender x Victim Facial Masculinity x Victim Sexual Orientation x Respondent Gender | 1,327 | .00 | .984 | 1,327 | .17 | .684 | 1,327 | .92 | .339 | 1,327 | .17 | .684 |

**Table 7. Means and Standard Deviations for Assault Severity, Victim resistance, Perpetrator blame, and Victim blame according to Facial Masculinity, Victim Sexual Orientation, and Respondent Gender.**

| | Facial Masculinity | | | | Victim Sexual Orientation | | | | Perpetrator Gender | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Feminine | | Masculine | | Heterosexual | | Gay | | Male | | Female | | All | | |
| Respondent Gender | *M* | *SD* | *M* | *SD* | *M* | *SD* | *M* | *SD* | *M* | *SD* | *M* | *SD* | *M* | *SD* | Sig effects |
| Assault Severity | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Males | 4.97 | 1.10 | 5.03 | 1.04 | 5.05 | .99 | 4.94 | 1.17 | 5.15 | 1.05 | 4.84 | 1.08 | 5.00 | 1.07 | PG *p*=.007 |
| Females | 5.53 | 1.00 | 5.49 | .88 | 5.58 | .85 | 5.44 | 1.03 | 5.66 | .89 | 5.36 | .97 | 5.51 | .94 | RG *p*<.000 |
| All | 5.29 | 1.08 | 5.31 | .98 | 5.34 | .95 | 5.24 | 1.11 | 5.44 | .99 | 5.15 | 1.04 | 5.30 | 1.02 | PG x VSO *p*=.006 |
| Victim resistance | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Males | 5.05 | 1.23 | 5.27 | 1.45 | 5.09 | 1.47 | 5.25 | 1.17 | 5.26 | 1.36 | 5.05 | 1.33 | 5.16 | 1.34 | RG *p*<.000 |
| Females | 4.16 | 1.46 | 4.28 | 1.59 | 4.15 | 1.57 | 4.29 | 1.49 | 4.34 | 1.49 | 4.10 | 1.56 | 4.22 | 1.53 | |
| All | 4.54 | 1.43 | 4.68 | 1.61 | 4.57 | 1.59 | 4.67 | 1.45 | 4.74 | 1.50 | 4.49 | 1.54 | 4.62 | 1.52 | |
| Perpetrator Blame | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Males | 5.71 | 1.01 | 5.75 | 1.04 | 5.79 | .96 | 5.66 | 1.09 | 5.93 | .99 | 5.52 | 1.02 | 5.73 | 1.02 | PG *p*=.009 |
| Females | 6.08 | 1.13 | 6.22 | 1.02 | 6.27 | .95 | 6.03 | 1.19 | 6.26 | 1.05 | 6.05 | 1.09 | 6.15 | 1.07 | RG *p*<.000 |
| All | 5.92 | 1.09 | 6.03 | 1.05 | 6.06 | .98 | 5.89 | 1.16 | 6.12 | 1.04 | 5.83 | 1.09 | 5.97 | 1.07 | |
| Victim Blame | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Males | 2.90 | 1.47 | 2.83 | 1.26 | 2.62 | 1.30 | 3.17 | 1.39 | 2.93 | 1.39 | 2.79 | 1.34 | 2.86 | 1.36 | RG *p*<.000 |
| Females | 2.39 | 1.34 | 2.38 | 1.26 | 2.23 | 1.15 | 2.55 | 1.42 | 2.56 | 1.34 | 2.21 | 1.23 | 2.38 | 1.30 | VSO *p*=.002 |
| All | 2.61 | 1.42 | 2.56 | 1.28 | 2.40 | 1.23 | 2.80 | 1.44 | 2.71 | 1.37 | 2.45 | 1.31 | 2.59 | 1.34 | |

To summarise, as predicted, males made more anti-victim judgements compared to females, considering the assault less severe and more resistible. Whilst it was expected that males would attribute more blame to the victim, they also attributed less blame to the perpetrator. Furthermore, the male perpetrator was attributed more blame compared to the female perpetrator and the assault was considered more severe. Contrary to predictions, the gender of the perpetrator did not affect attributions of blame towards the victim. Also, the masculinity of the victims face did not affect judgements made towards them; this was not

consistent with the study predictions. The sexual orientation of the victim had an effect on blame attributions; as predicted, the gay victim was blamed more that the heterosexual victim. Finally, and as expected, the results revealed that the male perpetrated assault was considered less severe when the victim was of the gender to which they are typically attracted to. So, the assault of the heterosexual victim was considered more severe when they were assaulted by a male compared to the gay victim.

### 3.3 Discussion

Contrary to predictions, the masculinity or femininity of the victims face did not influence judgements made towards the victim or the perpetrator and there was no difference in the perceived severity or resistibility of the assault. So, the assault of the masculine victim was considered no less severe or resistible than the assault of the victim with the feminine face. Although no research has directly investigated the effect of victim facial masculinity on judgements made towards them, these findings are not consistent with previous facial masculinity research whereby a masculine male has been subject to more negative personality judgements than a male with a feminine face (e.g. Perrett et al., 1998; Johnston et al., 2001). Although this study did not investigate personality judgements directly, the negative biases typically attributed to men with a masculine face were expected to translate to male victims with masculine faces and contribute to a more negative view of the victim. Failure to find a significant effect of facial masculinity may have been a result of the lack of salience of the image. In this study, the image was relatively small (6.35cm in height and 4.76cm in width), which could have reduced the attention given to it. In this case, respondents may have had a brief glance at the image and proceeded straight to reading the scenario. Consequently, the image may not have figured in respondents judgements once they had read the scenario, therefore any ratings would have been based on the hypothetical scenario rather than the appearance of the victim. An increase in the size of the face and somehow drawing respondent's attention to the image to increase its impact on judgements is warranted in study 2 (details of how this was achieved can be found on page 58).

Consistent with previous trends (see Davies & Rogers, 2006; and Davies, 2011 for a review), males were generally more negative towards the victim than females, perceiving the assault as less severe and believing the victim should have tried harder to resist. Males also blamed the victim more and the perpetrator less than females. Theoretically, the male

respondents may have had a high belief in a just world and subsequently attributed more blame to the victim. Although certainly an avenue for future research, it is difficult to discuss the results in relation to Just World Theory as belief in a just world was not directly measured. Alternatively, it may be the case that the males in this study made defensive attributions in the interest of harm avoidance. More specifically, they viewed the victim as blameworthy in an attempt to affirm the same event could not happen to them. Some authors argue (e.g. Davies, 2002) that women are able to empathise with sexual assault victims more so than men and as a result are able to differentiate their personal attitudes, which in some cases may be negative (e.g. sexual assault victims often provoke their assault in some way). It was also suggested that women recognise that regardless of the characteristics of the victim an incident of sexual assault would be traumatic and would have a negative impact on the victim.

It may be the case that the men in this study were endorsing traditional views of masculinity and believed that the victim is to blame for not behaving in a stereotypically masculine way (e.g. fought off the attacker and trying harder to resist). Previous researchers (e.g. Moss-Racusin et al., 2010) have concluded that men who do not conform to stereotypically masculine behaviours are subject to backlash in terms of the way they are viewed. This may have manifested in this research where the male victim is blamed more for not conforming to what is considered typically masculine behaviour (e.g. resisting an assault or fighting back). This is consistent with previous male rape research that has concluded that male victim's are blamed more as a result of the gender role belief that men should be able to resist or fight off such an assault (see Davies & Rogers, 2006 for a review). Although not measured in this study, this finding would also be consistent with previous research that has directly investigated the relationship between gender role beliefs and victim blaming; gender role beliefs are positively related to victim blaming and negatively related to perpetrator blaming (see White & Robinson Kurpius, 2002, and Sleath & Bull, 2010). Obtaining a measure of respondents' gender role beliefs would have been useful in this study to determine if stronger gender role beliefs were in fact linked to the increase in blaming.

Although effect sizes were small, the gender of the perpetrator affected how severe the assault was perceived and how much blame was attributed to the perpetrator: the male perpetrated assault was considered more severe than the female perpetrated assault and the

male perpetrator was blamed more than the female perpetrator. Again, this may be a result of traditional views of masculinity which dictate that men should always be willing for and to want sex with a woman (Davies & Rogers, 2006). The fact that the female perpetrator was blamed less and the assault considered less severe, may have been due to respondents endorsing the stereotypical belief that men cannot be sexually assault by a woman and should always be ready and willing to have sex with women (Smith et al., 1988).

In line with previous work documented in the literature review by Davies (2011), the gay victim was blamed more than the heterosexual victim, albeit with a small effect size. Previous research has consistently evidenced that gay male victims are judged more negatively than heterosexual male victims and has been explained in terms of homophobic beliefs (Davies & Rogers, 2006). Davies et al. (2012) recently found that compared to women, men were more negative towards a gay male victim, judging the assault as less severe and attributing more blame to the victim. The authors also found that men held generally more negative attitudes towards gay men than women. The role of homophobia in terms of its contribution to victim blaming is further supported by research which has found that heterosexual men were more negative towards a gay male rape victim than gay men (Davies & McCartney, 2003). As was the case in previous research, homophobic beliefs may have played a part in the negative judgements towards the gay male victim in this study and resulted in this victim being subject to more negative judgements.

There was also an interaction effect between the sexual orientation of the victim and the gender of the perpetrator; the assault of the heterosexual victim by a male perpetrator was considered more severe than the male perpetrated assault of the gay victim. A number of explanations have been purported to explain the tendency to attribute more blame to victims who are assaulted in line with their sexuality (Davies et al., 2006). Firstly, respondents may consider the assault as less traumatic for a victim who was assaulted by someone of the gender to which they are normally attracted. Also, victims in this case may be perceived as having someway provoked the assault or not having done enough to prevent it. Finally, Davies et al. (2006) suggested that attributions may be based on more specific victim characteristics. For example, the situation where the gay victim is assaulted by a male will elicit homophobic reactions resulting in more blame, and the heterosexual victim assaulted by a female may be viewed as not conforming to the gender role stereotype that they should always be willing to have sex with a woman. As research (e.g.

Moss-Racusin et al., 2010) has shown that men who violate tradition gender roles are subject to backlash, the victim in this case will be attributed more blame.

In conclusion, it is clear from these findings, that gender stereotypes and traditional views of masculinity play an integral role in the attribution of blame towards male victims both in terms of increasing blame towards the victim and decreasing blame towards the perpetrator. Furthermore, these findings have clear theoretical links with Shaver's (1975) defensive attribution theory with the male respondents making defensive attributions in the interest of harm avoidance; viewing the victim as blameworthy in an attempt to affirm the same event could not happen to them. The role of homophobia in relation to victim blame is further supported by the finding that the gay male victim was subject to more blame as opposed to the heterosexual victim. Finally, although the masculinity of the victim's face did not significantly affect judgements, this research, makes a unique contribution to the area of male rape blame attribution literature by being one of the first studies to manipulate the victims physical appearance. As mentioned earlier (see page 50) the results may be due to the image lacking salience as a result of its size, which may have reduced the amount of attention given to it prior to reading the hypothetical scenario. Subsequently, any judgements would be more pertinent to the information provided in the scenario rather than the features of the image such as its masculinity/femininity. As this research is the first of its kind to investigate the effect of the appearance of male victims on how they are subsequently judged, it is in its initial stages in terms of establishing appropriate measures and how they are presented. However, due to the importance of masculinity in relation to how men are judged as victims, it is important to continue to explore whether masculinity in terms of appearance has an effect on blame attributions; this will be the main aim of study two.

# Chapter 4: Study 2

## 4.1 Introduction

The aim of study 2 was to continue to explore whether or not facial masculinity affects blame attributions after making alterations to the presentation of the stimulus. As mentioned in the previous discussion, this research is the first of its kind to investigate the affect of the appearance of male victims using EvoFit on attributions of blame, therefore is in the initial stages in terms of establishing the appropriate presentation of the stimulus. However, due to the importance of masculinity in relation to how male victims are judged, it is important to continue to explore whether masculinity in terms of appearance impacts on victim blaming.

The lack of an effect on judgements made towards the victim or the perpetrator as a result of facial masculinity in study 1 may have been a result of features of the image such as its size and salience. For study 2, the image was increased from 6.35cm in height to 9.98cm in height and from 4.76cm in width to 7.49cm in width. A question was added related to the image to improve salience. This should increase the likelihood that respondents take time to view the image as they have to answer a question about it rather than proceeding straight to the scenario. As in study 1, it was predicted that the victim with the masculine face will be subject to more negative judgements than the victim with the feminine face.

As a result of feedback from a number of respondents in study 1 who stated that the scenario was not realistic in the female perpetrator conditions (one respondent for example stated 'this would never happen in real-life'), this was changed in study 2. A case example taken from a media publication, the Police Gazette, was modified to create anonymity to the victim. The details that were changed included the location of the incident, from a southern location to a northern location, the time that it happened and also the type of train. As the scenario replicated an actual case of a female perpetrated sexual assault of a male, it should increase respondents' perceptions that the situation could realistically occur between a victim and a perpetrator of both genders. Changing the scenario in study 2 also increased the originality of the second study as it is not simply a replica of study 1. As in study 1, the scenario involved a stranger who committed a sexual assault on a lone victim who had not been engaging in any pre-assault risk taking behaviours such as drinking and taking drugs.

In the current study, the perpetrator was described to touch the victim's genitals after they had fallen asleep on a train.

This study also aimed to replicate the findings from study 1 that were in line with previous research trends: victim sexual orientation and perpetrator gender were manipulated between subjects. It was predicted from the findings of study 1 that male respondents would make more negative judgements towards the victim, the gay male victim would be viewed more negatively than the heterosexual victim and the victim of the female perpetrator would be subject to more negative judgements than the victim of the male perpetrator. It was also predicted that the victim would be blamed in line with their sexuality. That is the gay victim of the male perpetrator would be blamed more than the heterosexual victim of the male perpetrator and the heterosexual victim of the female perpetrator would be subject to more blame than the gay victim of the female perpetrator.

As RMA has been shown to predict victim and perpetrator blaming in the case of male rape (Sleath & Bull, 2010) and male rape myths have been linked to traditional views of masculinity, a measure of male RMA was included in study 2 to explore the implications of RMA on attributions of blame towards male victims. Some researchers (e.g. Sleath & Bull, 2010) argue that the male rape myth literature is far behind that of the female rape myth literature and only with continued research can the full scope of male rape myths be understood. In addition to an increase in blame, Sleath and Bull (2010) found that where a hypothetical rape scenario contained high levels of rape myths, victim blame increased. The authors suggested that this had implications for victims who choose to report an assault which has features relating to rape myths; in this case the victim is likely to experience more negative judgements. As a result, it is important to continue to explore the relationship RMA has with the negative judgements towards males. As Sleath and Bull's (2010) study explored the link between RMA and victim blame, this study aims to explore whether RMA is linked to other negative judgements towards the victim such as the perceived severity and resistibility of the assault. The male rape myth scale (MRMS) developed by Melanson (1999) will be used to measure respondents RMA. It was expected that men would endorse more male rape myths than women and that a high acceptance of rape myths would have a positive relationship with victim blame and the perceived resistibility of the assault. Also, higher RMA was expected to have a negative relationship

with the perceived severity of the assault, that is higher RMA would be associated with the assault being viewed as less severe for the victim.

## 4.2 Results

The independent variables and ratings scales were screened for missing data and incorrectly entered data using frequencies. One case was identified on the following item "Most men who are raped by a woman are somewhat to blame for not being more careful" and corrected using the identified questionnaire.

### *4.2.1 Factor Analysis*

The 20-item questionnaire was subject to a prinicipal components analysis with varimax rotation using SPSS 19. Inspection of the correlation matrix revealed many coefficients of .3 and above. The Kaiser-Meyer-Oklin value was .87 exceeding the recommended value of .6 and Bartlett's test of sphericity reached statistical significance supporting the factorability of the data.

Kaisers criterion limited the number of factors to those with Eigenvalues greater than 1 and only factor loadings greater than .3 were selected for analysis. Principal components analysis revealed 4 factors with Eigenvalues greater than one, together accounting for 67.66% of the variance in attributions. Inspection of the scree-plot revealed a levelling off after factor 3; 3 factors were retained for rotation. Prior to rotation, factor 1 accounted for 34.63% of the variance, decreasing to 21.52 after rotation. Factor 2 accounted for 12.61% of the variance prior to rotation, increasing to 17.71% after rotation. Factor 3 accounted for 7.90% of the variance prior to rotation, increasing to 15.91% after rotation.

All items loaded onto at least one factor. Nine items loaded onto factor 1 relating to how severe the incident was perceived including how it may affect the victim's life and the level of punishment for the perpetrator. This scale was labelled 'assault severity' and showed a Cronbach's Alpha of .86. Four items with loadings greater than .4 loaded onto factor 2; 2 further items were omitted due to stronger loadings onto factor 3. Items that loaded onto factor 2 related to how resistible the assault was perceived and was labelled 'victim resistance'. This scale showed a Cronbach's Alpha of .92. Factor 3 contained 5

items relating to victim blame and was labelled ‘victim blame’. This scale showed a Cronbach’s Alpha of .80. All scales showed good internal consistency with scores above .7. High scores for severity represent more positive victim judgements as a high score suggests respondents considered the assault as more severe. High scores for victim blame, victim resistance, and perpetrator blame indicate more negative victim judgements. The item factor loadings, Eigenvalues, and percentage variance accounted for by each factor are presented in Table 8.

**Table 8. Factor Loadings, Eigenvalues, Percentage Variance, and Questionnaire Items for Assault Severity, Victim resistance and Victim Blame.**

| Scale No. | | Factor Loadings | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Factor 1 | Factor 2 | Factor 3 |
| Factor 1: Assault Severity | | | | |
| Eigenvalue = 4.30 | | | | |
| Variance Explained = 21.52% | | | | |
| 10 | The Police should take this incident seriously | .60 | | |
| 11 | Michael will be traumatised by what happened | .74 | | |
| 12 | Michael's life will be adversely affected by what happened | .74 | | |
| 13 | The incident will have a negative effect on Michael's relationship with his partner | .64 | | |
| 14 | The Police will believe Michael | .35* | | |
| 15 | Michael should report this incident to the police | .61 | | -.37* |
| 16 | Michael should be offered support in dealing with what happened | .61 | | -.35* |
| 18 | Becky/Andrew should be punished for what she/he did to Michael | .62 | | -.41* |
| 19 | Becky/Andrew should be sent to prison for what happened | .69 | | |
| 20 | Becky/Andrew should be held responsible for what she/he did to Michael | .62 | | -.37* |
| Factor 2: Victim Resistance | | | | |
| Eigenvalue = 3.54 | | | | |
| Variance Explained = 17.71% | | | | |
| 2 | Michael could have done more to prevent what happened | | .74 | |
| 3 | Michael did not put up enough of a fight | | .89 | |
| 4 | Michael should have tried harder to resist | | .90 | |
| 7 | Michael should have tried harder to escape | | .87 | |
| Factor 3: Victim Blame | | | | |
| Eigenvalue = 3.18 | | | | |
| Variance Explained = 15.91% | | | | |
| 1 | Michael was responsible for the incident | | | .77 |
| 5 | Michael should not be given sympathy for what happened | | | .51 |
| 6 | Michael's behaviour was to blame for the incident | | .31* | .68 |
| 8 | The incident was Michael's fault | | | .80 |
| 9 | Michael enjoyed what happened to him | | .38* | .57 |
| 17 | Becky/Andrew is to blame for what happened | | | -.31 |

* denotes omitted items

*4.2.2 MANOVA*

Consistent with study 1, preliminary testing using box-plots was conducted on the factors and revealed 1 extreme outlier; this case was removed from the data set. A further case was removed from the data set as it contained a large number of missing responses. Assumption testing was carried out to check for multivariate outliers, multicollinearity and singularity; Mahalanobis distances revealed no multivariate outliers and Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients revealed moderate correlations between the dependent variables. Homogeneity of variance and equality of variance were violated therefore Pillai's Trace criterion and an adjusted alpha level of .025 was used.

The 3 rotated factors (assault severity, victim resistance and victim blame) were subject to a 2 (facial masculinity) x2 (perpetrator gender) x2 (victim sexual orientation) x2 (respondent gender) Multivariate Analysis of Variance. There were statistically significant multivariate effects for perpetrator gender $F(3,280) = 14.08$, $p<.001$, Pillai's Trace =.131, partial eta squared = .13, respondent gender $F(3,280) = 14.71$, $p<.001$, Pillai's Trace =.136, partial eta squared = .14, and facial masculinity x perpetrator gender x respondent gender $F(3,280) = 4.26$, $p=.006$, Pillai's Trace =.044 partial eta squared = .04. Significant multivariate effects were followed up via post-hoc univariate testing.

When the results for the dependent variables were considered separately, significant univariate main effects of perpetrator gender on assault severity $F(1,282) = 35.61$, $p<.001$, partial eta squared = .11, victim resistance $F(1,282) = 17.04$, $p<.001$, partial eta squared = .06, and victim blame $F(1,282) = 11.73$, $p=.001$, partial eta squared = .04 were identified. Inspection of the mean scores suggests that as with study 1 the female perpetrated assault was considered less severe than the male perpetrated assault. The effect sizes calculated using eta squared indicate moderate to large differences between the mean scores for perpetrator gender. In addition, the female perpetrated assault was considered more resistible in this study. The victim of the female perpetrated assault was attributed more blame than the victim of the male perpetrated assault; this was not found in study 1. There was a significant main effect of respondent gender on severity $F(1,282) = 22.08$, $p<.001$, partial eta squared = .07, victim resistance $F(1,282) = 20.09$, $p<.001$, partial eta squared = .07 and victim blame $F(1,282) = 36.52$, $p<.001$, partial eta squared = .11. Consistent with study 1, the mean scores suggest that males considered the assault less severe, attributed more blame to the victim and considered the assault more resistible than females. The

effect sizes as calculated using eta squared, suggested moderate to large differences between the mean scores for respondent gender.

A significant multivariate interaction effect between facial masculinity, perpetrator gender, and respondent gender on victim blame was identified $F(1,282) = 7.03$, $p=.008$. partial eta squared =.02. Inspection of line graphs suggest that the interaction was between perpetrator gender and facial masculinity. Post-hoc simple effects using Adjusted to 0.25 two-tailed *t*-tests suggest that the victim with the feminine face assaulted by the female perpetrator was attributed significantly more blame than the victim with the feminine face assaulted by the male perpetrator $t(142)= -2.66$, $p=.009$. Table 9 provides a summary of the univariate effects for assault severity, victim resistance, perpetrator blame, and victim blame. The mean scores, standard deviations, and significant effects are displayed in Table 10.

**Table 9. Univariate Effects for Assault Severity, Victim resistance, and Victim Blame**

| | Condition | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Severity | | | Victim resistance | | | Victim Blame | | |
| | *df* | *F* | Sig. | *df* | *F* | Sig. | *df* | *F* | Sig. |
| Victim Facial Masculinity | 1,282 | .28 | .600 | 1,282 | 1.06 | .304 | 1,282 | .30 | .585 |
| Victim Sexual Orientation | 1,282 | 2.81 | .095 | 1,282 | 1.03 | .311 | 1,282 | 1.89 | .170 |
| Perpetrator Gender | 1,282 | 35.61 | **<.000** | 1,282 | 17.04 | **<.000** | 1,282 | 11.73 | **.001** |
| Respondent Gender | 1,282 | 22.08 | **<.000** | 1,282 | 20.10 | <.**000** | 1,282 | 36.52 | **<.000** |
| Victim Facial Masculinity x Victim Sexual Orientation | 1,282 | .11 | .744 | 1,282 | .611 | .435 | 1,282 | **.002** | .968 |
| Victim Facial Masculinity x Perpetrator Gender | 1,282 | .37 | .545 | 1,282 | 3.78 | .053 | 1,282 | .12 | .732 |
| Victim Facial Masculinity x Respondent Gender | 1,282 | .98 | .323 | 1,282 | .39 | .535 | 1,282 | .040 | .842 |
| Victim Sexual Orientation x Perpetrator Gender | 1,282 | 1.90 | .169 | 1,282 | .01 | .933 | 1,282 | .01 | .93 |
| Victim Sexual Orientation x Respondent Gender | 1,282 | .03 | .86 | 1,282 | .24 | .621 | 1,282 | .97 | .32 |
| Perpetrator Gender x Respondent Gender | 1,282 | 2.41 | .121 | 1,282 | 1.16 | .283 | 1,282 | .42 | .518 |
| Victim Facial Masculinity x Victim Sexual Orientation x Perpetrator Gender | 1,282 | 3.47 | .064 | 1,282 | .01 | .934 | 1,282 | 1.53 | .217 |
| Victim Facial Masculinity x Victim Sexual Orientation x Respondent Gender | 1,282 | 4.67 | **.032** | 1,282 | .01 | .923 | 1,282 | .68 | .410 |
| Victim Facial Masculinity x Perpetrator Gender x Respondent Gender | 1,282 | .03 | .855 | 1,282 | .66 | .419 | 1,282 | 7.03 | **.008** |
| Victim Sexual Orientation x Perpetrator Gender x Respondent Gender | 1,282 | .28 | .598 | 1,282 | .00 | .995 | 1,282 | .69 | .41 |
| Victim Facial Masculinity x Victim Sexual Orientation x Perpetrator Gender x Respondent Gender | 1,282 | .01 | .920 | 1,282 | .043 | .835 | 1,282 | .001 | .977 |

**Table 10. Means and Standard Deviations for Severity, Victim resistance and Victim blame according to Facial Masculinity, Victim Sexual Orientation, and Respondent Gender.**

| | Facial Masculinity | | | | Victim Sexual Orientation | | | | Perpetrator Gender | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Feminine | | Masculine | | Heterosexual | | Gay | | Male | | Female | | All | | |
| Respondent Gender | *M* | *SD* | *M* | *SD* | *M* | *SD* | *M* | *SD* | *M* | *SD* | *M* | *SD* | *M* | *SD* | Sig effects |
| Severity | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Males | 4.80 | .67 | 4.96 | .73 | 4.96 | .74 | 4.79 | .65 | 5.17 | .56 | 4.56 | .71 | 4.89 | .70 | PG *p*<.001 |
| Females | 5.25 | .66 | 5.15 | .68 | 5.24 | .65 | 5.17 | .69 | 5.37 | .63 | 5.05 | .67 | 5.20 | .67 | RG *p*<.001 |
| All | 5.06 | .70 | 5.06 | .71 | 5.10 | .70 | 5.01 | .70 | 5.27 | .60 | 4.84 | .73 | 5.06 | .70 | |
| Victim resistance | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | PG *p*<.001 |
| Males | 4.29 | 1.34 | 4.32 | 1.18 | 4.42 | 1.36 | 4.16 | 1.10 | 4.11 | 1.28 | 4.53 | 1.20 | 4.30 | 1.25 | RG *p*<.001 |
| Females | 3.41 | 1.55 | 3.71 | 1.41 | 3.66 | 1.51 | 3.47 | 1.46 | 3.11 | 1.47 | 3.97 | 1.38 | 3.57 | 1.48 | |
| All | 3.80 | 1.52 | 4.00 | 1.34 | 4.04 | 1.48 | 3.75 | 1.36 | 3.60 | 1.46 | 4.21 | 1.33 | 3.90 | 1.43 | |
| Victim Blame | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Males | 1.95 | .92 | 1.95 | .81 | 1.85 | .83 | 2.07 | .89 | 1.78 | .72 | 2.14 | .97 | 1.94 | .86 | PG *p*=.001 |
| Females | 1.45 | .69 | 1.46 | .56 | 1.45 | .65 | 1.46 | .61 | 1.34 | .54 | 1.57 | .68 | 1.46 | .63 | RG *p*=<001 |
| All | 1.67 | .83 | 1.70 | .73 | 1.65 | .77 | 1.71 | .79 | 1.55 | .67 | 1.82 | .86 | 1.68 | .78 | FM x PG x RG *p*=.008 |

Sig effects: FM = Facial Masculinity, PG = perpetrator gender, RG = respondent gender.

### *4.2.3 Rape Myth Acceptance*

The data was analysed to explore the percentage of respondents (the sample as a whole and separately for males and females) who showed some level of agreement (slightly agree, moderately agree, and strongly agree) with male rape myths. Total rape myth acceptance scores were calculated and the MRMS showed a Cronbach's alpha of .92. Respondents' level of agreement with male rape myths ranged from 6.5% to 54%. The percentage level of agreement was higher for males compared to female respondents across all rape myths. A two-tailed *t*-test revealed that males were significantly more accepting of male rape myths than females (*M*=2.98, *SD*=.94, *M*=2.25, *SD*=.79 respectively; *t*(296)= 7.32, *p*<.001).

The relationship between RMA, perceived severity and victim resistance of the assault, and victim blame was investigated using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. Preliminary analyses were performed to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity. There was a strong, negative correlation

between RMA and severity ($r$=-.50, $n$=298, $p$<.001), with higher levels of RMA associated with lower perceived assault severity. There was also a strong, positive correlation between RMA and both victim resistance and victim blame ($r$=.53, $n$=298, $p$<.001; $r$=.53, $n$=298, $p$<.001 respectively): respondents with higher RMA thought that the victim should/could have made more resistance and showed higher levels of victim blame (see Table 11).

**Table 11. Correlations between RMA, Victim Resistance, Victim Blame, and Severity**

| Measures | 1 | 2 | 3 |
|---|---|---|---|
| (1) Total RMA | | | |
| (2) Severity | -.50** | | |
| (3) Victim resistance | .53** | -.35** | |
| (4) Victim Blame | .53** | -.54** | .48** |

** $p$<.001

In summary, and as predicted, the victim of female perpetrated sexual assault was attributed more blame compared to the victim of the male perpetrated assault. The female perpetrated assault was also considered less severe and more resistible than the assault committed by the male perpetrator. Also consistent with predictions, males made more anti-victim judgements compared to females regardless of perpetrator gender, considering the assault less severe and more resistible. Males also attributed more blame to the victim. Although the sexual orientation of the victim significantly affected judgements in study 1, this was not the case for study 2. Consistent with study 1, but not the predictions, the masculinity of the victims face alone did not affect judgements made towards them. However, the victim with a feminine face was attributed more blame when the perpetrator was female as opposed to male. Finally, higher acceptance of rape myths was positively related to victim blame and the perceived resistibility of the assault. Higher RMA also had a negative relationship with the perceived severity of the assault.

## 4.3 Discussion

Unlike study 1, which had four dependent variables (victim blame, perpetrator blame, assault severity, and resistibility) only three factors were isolated in this study: victim blame, assault severity and resistibility. As predicted, males were more negative than females (judging the assault as less severe, more resistible, and attributing more blame to

the victim). Importantly, all effect sizes in gender differences were moderate to large. As with study 1, these findings lend support to Shaver's (1975) defensive attribution theory where the male respondents made defensive attributions in the interest of harm avoidance. In this case they viewed the victim as blameworthy and considered the assault more resistible which may have been an attempt to affirm the same event could not happen to them. The finding that males were more negative than females is consistent with the findings from numerous studies (see Davies 2011 for a review) and suggests that it is important to educate men regarding the impact of rape on male victims, particularly as a high proportion of men are represented in the police force; often the first point of contact for victims who choose to report.

It was also predicted that the female perpetrated assault would be considered less severe and more resistible than the male perpetrated assault and the male perpetrator blamed more (see Davies & Rogers, 2006 for a review). Finally it was predicted that the victim of the female perpetrator would receive more blame for the assault, these predictions were also supported. The findings from study two relating to the gender of the perpetrator, are similar to those reported by Struckman-Johnson and Struckman-Johnson (1992) who found that the victim was subject to more to blame and the incident viewed as less traumatic when the perpetrator was female. The tendency of negative victim judgements to increase when the perpetrator is female has been attributed to traditional views of masculinity which prescribe that men should always be ready for and willing to have sex with a woman (Smith et al., 1988).

In this study, the sexual orientation of the victim did not affect the way they were viewed by respondents. This is inconsistent with both study 1 and the majority of previous research (e.g. Davies et al., 2001). However, in a recent study, Davies (unpublished manuscript) found that although the assault was considered less severe, the gay male victim was not subject to more blame. It may be that the respondents in this study endorsed less homophobic beliefs than what is typically expected therefore judgements towards the gay male victim were more positive than usual. However, homophobia was not directly measured in this study. More positive reactions towards gay males may be a result of the difference in the scenario content.

It may be the case that the scenario used in study 2 (where the victim was sexually assaulted as he slept on a train) was considered less preventable and the victim viewed as

having not played a causal role in its occurrence compared to the scenario in study 1 (accepting a lift of a stranger). This is consistent with Shaver's (1985) theory of responsibility and blame (see page 14); in order for an individual to be attributed blame, they must be considered responsible (i.e. that their behaviour has in some way contributed to the event). Therefore the victim, regardless of their sexual orientation, would not be considered blameworthy as their behaviour did not have a causal role in the assault.

In contrast to study 1, the results from this study did show a significant effect of victim facial appearance; the victim with the feminine face was attributed more blame when the perpetrator was female, as opposed to male. This is surprising as one would expect a victim with a masculine face to be blamed more due to traditional views of masculinity, which suggest that masculine men would be able to resist an assault. This result does however, clearly link to gender stereotype theory, where non-conformity results in backlash (see Moss-Racusin et al, 2010). The respondents may have regarded the feminine victim more negatively as they are viewed to diverge from the masculine stereotype both in appearance and for not resisting the assault. As gender stereotypes are more rigid for men as opposed to women (Moss et al., 2010), the feminine victim in this case is attributed more blame.

As this research has shown that facial appearance has an effect on attributions towards the victim, it seems fair to suggest that a victim may be judged regarding their appearance. As such, future research could extend the findings from this research by exploring the effect of masculine appearance as a whole (e.g. in terms of body type and facial appearance). It seems fair to suggest that masculinity in relation to body type (e.g. muscular appearance) is more easily detectable than masculinity in terms of facial features; therefore, the effect on attributions of blame may be stronger. Also, any individual who comes into contact with male victims will view their body type as well as their facial appearance. In fact, previous gender stereotype research has found that people who are highly masculine or feminine in appearance, not just in the face, elicit the perception that they are masculine or feminine in others ways as well and are expected to behave in other stereotypical masculine ways (Deaux & Lewis, 1984), in the case of male rape to fight of or resist an assault. The effect of body type for male victims on the way they are subsequently viewed is certainly an avenue for future research.

As with the results reported by Sleath and Bull (2010), male rape myth acceptance had a strong relationship with negative judgements of the victim. Consistent with Sleath

and Bull's (2010) findings, the acceptance of male rape myths has a strong positive relationship with victim blame. As respondents belief in male rape myths increased as did attributions of blame and the perception that the victim could have done more to resist. Respondents with higher RMA also considered the assault as less severe. This suggests that holding stereotypical beliefs about the sexual assault of males increases the likelihood that a person will engage in victim blaming and has wider implications particularly with regards to those who may come into contact with victims. For example, it may be important for individuals who will come into contact with victims to be screened regarding their acceptance of rape myths and provided with the relevant training as a result.

Many of the rape myths contained in the MRMS relate to concepts of masculinity such as 'any healthy man can resist rape if he really wants' and imply that as with men who are subject to backlash when they are viewed to violate traditional masculine gender roles (Moss-Racusin et al., 2010), male victims of sexual assault are blamed as a result of not fighting back or resisting, behaviours stereotypically associated with being masculine (Davies, 2002). Kassing, Beesley, and Frey (2005) argued that the acceptance of male rape myths may manifest in the way victims are treated, in particular they may be treated with suspicion as they are viewed, as a man, able to resist the assault. They further argue that educating the public is not enough to dispel such rape myths and that more is needed in order to change the way that such beliefs are developed. The increase in reporting rates as evidenced by figures released by the Home Office (see Home Office Statistical Bulletin, 2011), may contribute to a shift in the acceptance of rape myths. Theory pertaining to attitude development (see pages 16 & 17) suggests that attitudes are formed through personal experiences, the influences of other people, and through emotion responses (Hogg & Vaughan, 2002), and mere exposure to an event effects the evaluation of it (Zajonc, 1968); therefore an increase in exposure in terms of contact with male victims may help to change stereotypical beliefs about male rape. This research extends the current research on male rape victim blaming and its relationship to RMA by highlighting that not only does RMA increase attributions of blame but also contributes to how severe the assault is perceived and whether or not the assault is considered resistible.

In summary, it is evident, that gender stereotypes and traditional views of masculinity are important factors in the attribution of blame towards male victims. This is supported by the finding that the male victim was attributed more negative judgements

when the perpetrator was female, an assault where a male victim would be perceived as more likely to resist compared to an assault involving a male perpetrator. Another important factor in the attribution of blame towards male victims is the acceptance of male rape myths. Consistent with previous research (e.g. Sleath & Bull, 2010), an increase in RMA was related to an increase in blame towards the victim. Interestingly, RMA was also related to how severe and resistible the assault was perceived (higher RMA was related to the assault being perceived as less severe and more resistible). These two concepts relate directly to traditional views of masculinity where a man is expected to be emotionally apt to deal with difficult situations, resulting in the event being considered less severe, and perceived as possessing the physical strength to resist an assault, leading to respondents perceiving the assault as more resistible.

Finally, facial masculinity did significantly affect judgements made towards the victim when the perpetrator was female; the victim with the feminine face was attributed more blame than the victim with the masculine face. Due to the importance of masculinity on how men are judged as victims and the result that masculinity in terms of facial appearance had an effect on judgements, it is important to continue to explore whether masculinity in other aspects (e.g. body type) has an effect on blame attributions.

# Chapter 5: General Discussion

Overall, this thesis revealed a number of consistent findings. Firstly, men were more negative towards the victim regardless of the victim's sexual orientation, facial appearance, or the gender of the perpetrator. Men considered the assault less severe, more resistible and attributed less blame to the perpetrator compared to women. Importantly, all effect sizes in gender differences were moderate to large. Secondly, the victim of the female perpetrator was subject to more negative judgements than the victim of the male perpetrator (the assault was considered less severe, more resistible, and the victim was attributed more blame). Thirdly, the facial masculinity of the victim alone, did not affect judgements made towards them, however when the victim had a feminine face they were attributed more blame when the perpetrator was female as opposed to male. In contrast to the moderate to large effects reported across respondent gender, the effect size for this finding was small. The effect of the victim's sexual orientation varied between the two studies. Although a small effect, in study 1, the gay victim was blamed more than the heterosexual victim and the assault was considered less severe for the gay victim of the male perpetrator. The effect of victim sexual orientation did not affect attributions in study 2.

In study 2, the victim with the feminine face was attributed more blame when the perpetrator was female as opposed to male. This could be explained in terms of gender stereotype theory. The victim with the feminine face may have been subject to more blame as a result of violating the masculine gender stereotype in two ways. Firstly, as a result of them deviating from what is prescribed by the male gender stereotype in terms of appearance and secondly in relation to what is expected behaviourally; that is a man is expected to be ready and willing to have sex with a woman (Davies, 2002). Previous research has found that feminine males are considered weak and sensitive, behaviours that violate what is typically expected of men (Helgeson, 1994). As gender stereotypes are more rigid for men as opposed to women (Moss et al., 2010), the feminine victim in this case is attributed more blame.

This finding could also be explained theoretically by the Defensive Attribution Theory and the concepts of harm avoidance and blame avoidance (see pages 14 & 15; Shaver, 1975). Shaver (1975) proposed that where situational similarity is perceived, that is someone could realistically consider themselves being in a similar situation, they attribute blame towards the victim in the interest of harm avoidance. It seems fair to suggest that

using public transport (the situation the victim was in at the time of the sexual assault in study 2) is a situation individuals consider likely in terms of experiencing themselves. Furthermore, the male respondents in this study may have no perceived personal similarity with the victim as they are feminine in appearance, and female respondents have no personal similarity with the victim as he is male. As a result, respondents attribute blame towards the victim in the interest of harm avoidance as they believe they would behave differently if they were to find themselves in a similar situation.

So far, male blame attribution research has focused solely on the use of hypothetical scenarios when investigating attributions of blame and the physical appearance of the victim has been ignored. This is surprising, as the effect of physical appearance on how we view others is well established in the academic literature (e.g. Berry & McArthur, 1986; Perret et al., 1998). If research is to contribute to a reduction in negative judgements towards male victims, it must envelope all factors that may contribute to attributions of blame including the appearance of both the victim and the perpetrator. This may be more pertinent in relation to the study of male victims as gender stereotype theory links directly to the physical appearance of men in terms of how they are expected to behave; muscularity is viewed as a cue to masculinity (Helgeson, 1994), and masculine behaviours pertain men as strong and able to resist an assault (Davies, 2002). Thus a male victim who is masculine in appearance would be viewed as being able to resist an assault and therefore be subject to more blame.

Across both studies, scales included items relating to general victim blame, assault severity, assault resistibility and in study 1, perpetrator blame. Also, victim blame items, assault severity items, and resistibility items all loaded onto the same factor across both studies. However in study 2, although loading onto the same factor, the perpetrator blame factor contained various outliers. Once this factor was collapsed onto severity, all outliers disappeared and the reliability score for severity increased. The different factor structures across the two studies maybe a result of the use of different hypothetical scenarios. For example, the scenario in study 1 involved the perpetrator picking up the victim in a car, driving them to an isolated spot, committing the sexual assault and continuing to do so despite resistance. In study 2 on the other hand, the perpetrator sexually assaulted the victim who had fallen asleep on a train. Consequently, the actions of the perpetrator may be more salient in study 1, which would have affected attributions towards them.

It is possible that a number of processes are involved in the attribution of blame towards male victims of sexual assault. The different negative judgements may reflect the different cognitive processes involved depending on the characteristics of the victim and the perpetrator and the features of the assault. As the nature of male rape means that it is likely to be unscripted and unexpected, respondents may rely on the individuating features of the event as they do not have much prior knowledge about it (see pages 24 & 25; Temkin & Krahe, 2008). This theory is supported by the findings from this study in that the individuating features of the assault (e.g. the appearance of the victim in study two, the sexual orientation of the victim in study 1, and the gender of the perpetrator) all had an effect on blame attributions towards the victim. For example, the gay male victim was subject to more negative judgements that the heterosexual victim in study 1. In this case, attributions are based on the sexual orientation of the victim, which may manifest from homophobic beliefs due to the homophobic nature of the assault. This is consistent with previous research trends (e.g. Davies & McCartney, 2003) which has found that gay male victims are subject to more negative judgements than heterosexual victims.

Lerner's (1980) Just World Theory and its link to the current findings is not clearly evident. According to Klienke and Meyer (1990) who applied the Just World Theory to account for the differences between males' and females' perceptions of rape victims, men are unable to identify with a rape victim and more likely to attribute blame as they believe they could not succumb to such an event. However, the victim in Klienke and Meyer's (1990) study was female. The victim in the current research was male, therefore one would expect male respondents to have some level of identification with the victim and if applied to Just World Theory, attribute less blame; however this was not the case in this research.

Previous male rape attribution research and the findings from this thesis can however, be linked directly to the Defensive Attribution Theory, particularly with regards to the male respondents. When men are forced to make judgements towards a male victim, they may engage in defensive attributions in an attempt to assert that the same fate could not happen to them (Shaver, 1975). Consistent with the Defensive Attribution Theory and the expectation discussed earlier (see page 15), male respondents in this thesis, were more negative towards the victim compared to females across both studies.

The research findings also have a clear theoretical link to gender stereotype theory. For example, when a male victim is seen as not resisting, attributions may be based on

gender stereotypical beliefs, which prescribe men as strong and able to resist an assault (Davies, 2002). This is in line with previous attribution research trends where male victims are viewed more negatively as a result of them diverging away from behaviours considered typically masculine (Davies & Rogers, 2006). The result of an increase in blame when the perpetrator was female as opposed to male also conforms to gender stereotype theory which prescribes that men should always be willing for and ready to have sex with women (Davies, 2002). Furthermore, although not directly explored in this thesis, previous research has concluded that gender role beliefs are positively related to victim blaming (White & Robinson Kurpius, 2002). This is certainly an avenue worth exploring in future research with regards to the appearance of male victims.

This research is the first of its kind to consider the effect of physical appearance on the way a male victim of sexual assault is subsequently viewed. The findings from this thesis make a unique contribution to the male rape attribution literature by establishing that facial appearance does affect the way a male victim is subsequently judged; in this case, the victim with the feminine face was attributed more blame when the perpetrator was female as opposed to male. The fact that an effect of facial appearance was found suggests that this is an important factor in relation to attributions of blame and should continue to be explored in future research. There are various other interesting and novel avenues for future research that could stem from this thesis in terms of masculinity and physical appearance that will contribute to a fuller understanding of how male victims are judged. For example, the effect of masculine appearance could be explored in terms of body type (e.g. using a photograph of a muscular individual versus non-muscular individual) and using verbal descriptions (e.g. 'Michael is muscular in appearance'). Masculinity could also be described in terms of behaviours typically associated with masculine individuals (e.g. 'Michael attends a gym for bodybuilders and regularly plays for the local rugby team'). A further interest for future research would be to consider how the appearance of the perpetrator effects judgements towards the victim and the perpetrator themselves.

This research also makes a unique contribution to the existing male rape attribution literature by utilising synthesised faces contained in the EvoFit database. Typically, previous research exploring the affect of female rape victim's appearance has used real-life photographs that have been rated as either attractive or unattractive (e.g. Seligman et al., 1972). Using synthesised images contained in the EvoFit database has the unique advantage of allowing for the manipulation of various holistic features to be explored in terms of their

effect on blame attributions, including masculinity, honesty and attractiveness are undoubtedly interesting areas for future research.

This thesis makes a further novel contribution to the existing literature by demonstrating that not only is RMA associated with victim blaming, but also how severe and resistible the assault is perceived. This finding has important implications for both victims and individuals who come into contact with victims. For instance, a victim may believe that they should have put up more resistance or minimise the severity of the assault, which could impact on their decision to disclose and subsequently their recovery. Future research is warranted to explore concepts within male rape myths. A number of male rape myths relate specifically to traditional views of masculinity such as 'any healthy man can successfully resist a rapist if he really wants to' and 'most men would enjoy being raped by a woman'. It would be interesting to investigate whether rape myths relating to masculinity are more pertinent to the negative judgements made towards male victims. As rape myths have been shown to predict victim and perpetrator blaming, their impact on blaming could be explored further by examining their underlying sub-sets relating to traditional views of masculinity and their link to the physical appearance of the victim (e.g. are rape myths relating to masculinity more pronounced when the victim is of a masculine appearance).

### *5.1 Limitations*

Due to the sole sampling of students, this research is limited in terms of its generalisability to populations other than students. In a study investigating the difference in student samples and general population samples, Collings, Brigitte, and Bodill (2003) found that students' attributions in a child sexual abuse situation, differed significantly to that of the general population (e.g. students were more likely to attribute culpability to the victim). Despite this, it is important to acknowledge research that has found results consistent with research trends using general population samples. Davies and McCartney (2003) for example, found that heterosexual men were more negative towards a male victim than heterosexual women. In further support of the sampling of students, Pollard (1992) concluded that "generalization of the effects would reasonably be expected" (p.321). Other researchers (e.g. Struckman-Johnson, 1988) argue that utilising a sample of students is justifiable due to the higher rates of sexual victimisation among them.

Post-hoc power analysis revealed that statistical power across both studies was adequate therefore the chances of a Type II error occurring were low. Although this

research had adequate statistical power, it may be limited in terms of the potential for there being a floor effect. This may have occurred due to the measures not being adequate to detect an affect. A pilot study may have helped to pinpoint any problems within the hypothetical scenarios or in relation to the scales used which may have contributed to a floor effect in the results.

The current research is also limited in terms of generalisiability as the use of a hypothetical scenario reduces ecological validity. As Davies et al. (2006) point out, an individual may respond differently to a real life sexual assault compared to a hypothetical representation of a sexual assault. Ecological validity was however improved for study 2 with the use of a modified version of a real-life case study that was presented in the media. Regardless, as the empirical literature on female and male victims of sexual has employed the use of a hypothetical scenario and has improved our understanding of how victims are perceived, the use of a similar method in this research is justified. An important implication of the highlighted methodological limitations is the direction for future research, which would benefit from utilising difference populations such as professionals who are likely to have contact with victims and scenarios based on actual accounts of male sexual assault, to gain a fuller understanding of the judgements people make towards male victims. Utilising a modified version of a real-life sexual assault against a male, as was the case in the second study of this thesis, provides an improved insight into how a male victim may be judged as it is more likely that the situation will be perceived as realistic. Despite the limitations highlighted in relation to the use of a hypothetical scenario, it is important to note that this method has been widely used in the attribution research as it enables researchers to control for confounding variables.

### *5.2 Implications and Contributions*

Despite the outlined limitations, this research makes an important contribution to the male rape literature in terms of initiating the investigation of the appearance of male victims on the way they are subsequently judged. The implications of this research are most pertinent for those who come into contact with male victims of sexual assault. This research highlights that negative judgements made towards victims comes in many forms and is reflected in the negative attitudinal biases of others as described by victims themselves (see page 9). For example, the way a victim is judged is dependent on the characteristics of the assault (whether or not it reflects a typical rape scenario, which in the case of male rape it

does not), the characteristics of the victim (e.g. sexual orientation) and the characteristics of the perpetrator (e.g. gender).

Improving understanding of what contributes to victim blaming and increasing awareness of this issue is the first step to developing a supportive structure for victims who choose to disclose their assault (Abdullah-Khan, 2008) and reduce the secondary victimisation which is so often described by victims (Walker et al., 2005). The importance of improving awareness of male rape and how male victims are judged, is highlighted by the comments made by the police officers in Abdullah-Khan's (2008) research (see page 8), which suggests that police officers' experience with male victims is limited, as is their knowledge of how to deal with this type of crime: one officer stated *"I believe male rape is not reported by the victims as they don't trust the police – officers rarely deal with this crime as a result"* and another *"never come across it and wouldn't necessarily know how to deal with it"* (p.131).

This may be particularly important as psychical attributes such as facial appearance are an important factor in our judgements of character when we meet someone new (Liggett, 1974). This has important implications for those who are likely to come into contact with victims who are unlikely to have met the victim prior to the disclosure of the sexual assault. Service providers must be aware of the possibility that a victim's appearance may trigger negative biases to those they disclose to in order to counteract the effect this could have on victims. This would also contribute to a reduction in the secondary victimisation often described by victims where they are left feeling blamed and doubted by those they disclose to (Williams, 1984).

The research also has potential implications for jury selection and the development of training programmes for those who are likely to come into contact with male victims. Establishing a comprehensive understanding of what contributes to negative attributions towards male victims could aid the development of appropriate training programmes aimed at reducing the negative attributional biases of individuals who are likely to have contact with victims. This would contribute to a supportive environment for those victims who are able to disclose. Also, the implementation of a screening process to ascertain whether certain jury members hold particularly biased views should help to provide a fair trial for victims who are progressing through the legal system. This will be more pertinent in a case where the victim, perpetrator and/or nature of the assault are likely to elicit negative attributions (e.g. an assault involving a female perpetrator). Such research could also

contribute to training for those who have been selected to sit a jury to reduce the likelihood that their personal attitudes (see page 16 & 17) and biases affect the way the victim is judged and increase the likelihood that jurors base their decision on the facts of the case.

Overall, in order to continue to develop understanding and awareness of male rape to improve how victims are treated, the literature must encompass all factors that may contribute to victim blaming and other negative judgements. The male blame attribution research thus far has limited its investigation to factors that are described in hypothetical scenarios when investigating attributions of blame and the physical appearance of the victim has been ignored. This research makes an original contribution to the area by considering how appearance may subsequently affect judgements. Although, this research makes important contributions to the male rape attribution literature in terms of investigating the effect of appearance, there is considerable room for future research to continue to develop and explore this area. It is highly likely that a male victim will be judged on his appearance by strangers who have little information about this person or his character (Liggett, 1974), therefore continuing to establish which aspects of appearance effect the way a victim is judged is important if the treatment of male victims is to be improved.

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**Appendix 1 – Pilot Study Questionnaire**

I am a postgraduate student at the University of Central Lancashire conducting a study exploring how facial appearance affects personality attributions. There is no obligation to take part in the study; all responses will remain anonymous and confidential. Only I will see the data and three other tutors who will be assessing my work. Your individual responses will be combined with other data and therefore will not be viewed separately. Please be aware that withdrawal from the study is only possible until the completed questionnaire has been handed back to the researcher.

I would like to thank you in advance for your participation

Age:

Gender:

Occupation:

**Below are a number of statements which are sometimes used to describe people. Please rate the following images using the scales provided below:**

**1 = Not at all Masculine** **7 = Very Masculine**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

**1= Not Honest** **7 = Very Honest**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

**1 = Not Intelligent** **7 = Very Intelligent**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

**1 = Not Attractive** **7 = Very Attractive**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

**1= Not at all Feminine** **7 = Very Feminine**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

**1 = Not Likeable** **7 = Very Likeable**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

**1 = Not Confident** **7 = Very Confident**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

**1 = Not at all Masculine** **7 = Very Masculine**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

**1= Not Honest** **7 = Very Honest**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

**1 = Not Intelligent** **7 = Very Intelligent**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

**1 = Not Attractive** **7 = Very Attractive**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

**1= Not at all Feminine** **7 = Very Feminine**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

**1 = Not Likeable** **7 = Very Likeable**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

**1 = Not Confident** **7 = Very Confident**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

**1 = Not at all Masculine** **7 = Very Masculine**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

**1= Not Honest** **7 = Very Honest**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

**1 = Not Intelligent** **7 = Very Intelligent**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

**1 = Not Attractive** **7 = Very Attractive**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

**1= Not at all Feminine** **7 = Very Feminine**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

**1 = Not Likeable** **7 = Very Likeable**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

**1 = Not Confident** **7 = Very Confident**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

**1 = Not at all Masculine** **7 = Very Masculine**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

**1= Not Honest** **7 = Very Honest**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

**1 = Not Intelligent** **7 = Very Intelligent**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

**1 = Not Attractive** **7 = Very Attractive**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

**1= Not at all Feminine** **7 = Very Feminine**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

**1 = Not Likeable** **7 = Very Likeable**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

**1 = Not Confident** **7 = Very Confident**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

**1 = Not at all Masculine** **7 = Very Masculine**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

**1= Not Honest** **7 = Very Honest**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

**1 = Not Intelligent** **7 = Very Intelligent**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

**1 = Not Attractive** **7 = Very Attractive**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

**1= Not at all Feminine** **7 = Very Feminine**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

**1 = Not Likeable** **7 = Very Likeable**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

**1 = Not Confident** **7 = Very Confident**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

**1 = Not at all Masculine** **7 = Very Masculine**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

**1= Not Honest** **7 = Very Honest**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

**1 = Not Intelligent** **7 = Very Intelligent**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

**1 = Not Attractive** **7 = Very Attractive**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

**1= Not at all Feminine** **7 = Very Feminine**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

**1 = Not Likeable 7 = Very Likeable**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

**1 = Not Confident 7 = Very Confident**

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

This study was conducted to examine whether facial appearance affects personality attributes. Specifically, the study was concerned with whether the faces were considered masculine or feminine and whether or not they were perceived as attractive.

If you require further information or would like to know more about this study please feel free to email me at jgraham@uclan.ac.uk

## Appendix 4 – Study 1 Questionnaire

### Information Sheet

**My name is Jodie Graham and I am a PhD student at the University of Central Lancashire. I am completing research to explore attitudes towards sexual crime and would appreciate it if you could take the time to complete a questionnaire as part of my research. If you agree to take part in this study, you will be asked to look at a simulated facial image of a male and then to read a hypothetical situation depicting non-consensual sexual behaviour. The face used in this study is hypothetical and not an actual person. The face was created using the EvoFit database, which is a computerised facial composite system developed to assist witnesses of crime. All faces created by EvoFit are not real, they are synthesised. As this questionnaire contains a description of non-consensual sexual behaviour, some people might find the content offensive or distressing. If you are offended by descriptions of sexual behaviour do not continue reading the questionnaire.**

There is no obligation to take part in the study and you have two options in returning the completed questionnaire. Firstly, you can complete the questionnaire and hand it back to the researcher when you have finished if you are happy to do so. If you prefer to not hand the questionnaire back to me now, you can take the questionnaire away, complete it in your own time, and return it to Darwin Building Student Room (room 124). There is a box system in Darwin Building Student Room where you can return the questionnaire to a box labelled with my name (Jodie Graham). Your individual responses could be seen by myself and my tutors, but there is no way we can identify you personally from these scores. The overall scores from the whole study will be viewed by a wider audience in the form of publications and in the final thesis. At no point will you be identified in publications and/or the thesis, as the information will be displayed in numerical form and will be about the group of participants as a whole, rather than you personally. Please be aware that withdrawal from the study is only possible until the completed questionnaire has been returned because your data is anonymous. By returning the questionnaire, you have consented to take part in the research.

Completion of the questionnaire should take around 15 minutes and will involve providing demographic information such as age, gender, and ethnicity: demographic information is being collected to examine whether ratings differ according to gender, age and ethnicity.

If you would like more information about this research, please feel free to contact me (jgraham@uclan.ac.uk), my supervisor Michelle Davies (mdavies3@uclan.ac.uk), or the school of psychology (the address for the school is included in the final page of the questionnaire). Contact information of organisations that are able to deal with crime victims are provided on the back page of the questionnaire if the issues raised have personal relevance to you. I would like to thank you in advance for your participation

**Please read the following information carefully and then answer the questions on the next page.**

(The facial image and described situation are hypothetical – not real)

The man pictured above is called Michael, a 25 year-old university student in his second year. Michael lives with his partner of 2 years, Sarah. Michael has a large group of friends at university and holds a job in the student union.

Michael had been out with his friends in a local bar, but had decided not to drink alcohol that night due to being in work early the next morning. Later on in the evening, Michael left the bar and began walking the short journey to the train station. When he arrived, he realised that he had missed the last train home. As Michael was stood outside of the train station trying to find a taxi number, a woman pulled up and offered him a lift home. Michael accepted and told the woman, who had introduced herself as Becky, where he lived. After a few minutes of driving, Becky turned down a quiet road, which led onto a dirt track and pulled over. She then told Michael that she wanted to have sex with him. Michael refused and told Becky that he had a girlfriend. Becky persisted and indecently assaulted Michael by placing her hand on his penis. Michael then attempted to get out of the car, but the doors were locked. Michael protested again, but Becky ignored him and started to masturbate him. After a few minutes Becky stopped, told Michael to get out of the car and then drove off leaving him on the dirt track. Michael was in shock at what had happened to him. Once Becky was out of sight, Michael began walking home and made the decision not to tell anybody about what Becky had done.

**Based on the information that you have just read, please answer the following questionnaire by indicating the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements. Please be aware that it is your own beliefs that we are interested in, there are no right or wrong answers.**

| Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Mildly Disagree | Neither | Mildly Agree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Michael was responsible for the incident | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 2 | Michael could have done more to prevent what happened | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 3 | Michael did not put up enough of a fight | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 4 | Michael should have tried harder to resist | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 5 | Michael should be given sympathy for what happened | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 6 | Michael's behaviour was to blame for the incident | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 7 | Michael should have tried harder to escape from the car | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 8 | The incident was Michael's fault | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 9 | Michael enjoyed what happened to him | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 10 | The Police should take this incident seriously | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 11 | Michael will be traumatised by what happened | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 12 | Michaels life will be adversely affected by what happened | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 13 | The incident will have a negative effect on Michael's relationship with his partner | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 14 | The police will believe Michael | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 15 | Michael should report this incident to the police | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 16 | Michael should be offered support in dealing with what happened | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 17 | Becky is to blame for what happened | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 18 | Becky should be punished for what she did to Michael | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 19 | Becky should be sent to prison for what happened | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 20 | Becky should be held responsible for what she did to Michael | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

## Demographic Information

Finally, please complete the following questions. You are reminded that all information will be treated in the strictest confidence and used only for research purposes.

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 01 | What is your gender? (please circle) | male …… | 1 | |
| | | female …… | 2 | |
| 02 | What is your age? | _____ yrs | | |
| 03 | What is your ethnicity? | White - British ……..……..… | 1 | |
| | | White - Irish ……..……..… | 2 | |
| | | White - Other (specify) ……..… | 3 | _____ |
| | | Black - Caribbean ……...… | 4 | |
| | | Black - African ……..…… | 5 | |
| | | Black - Other (specify) ……. | 6 | _____ |
| | | Asian - Indian ……...…… | 7 | |
| | | Asian - Pakistani ……...… | 8 | |
| | | Asian - Bangladeshi ……....… | 9 | |
| | | Asian - Other (specify) ……..… | 10 | _____ |
| | | Chinese ……...…… | 11 | |
| | | Mixed - White & Black Carib.. | 12 | |
| | | Mixed - White & Black African | 13 | |
| | | Mixed -White & Asian ……..… | 14 | |
| | | Mixed - Other (specify) ……. | 15 | _____ |
| | | Other (specify) ……...… | 16 | _____ |

## Debrief Information

Please detach and keep this page if you like.

Thank you for completing the questionnaire and taking part in the research. This study was conducted to examine whether facial appearance affects judgements towards male victims of a sexual crime. The aim of the overall research is to explore the effect of factors such as facial masculinity, sexual orientation and gender on judgements towards male victims of sexual assault.

If you require further information or would like to know more about this study please feel free to contact me (jgraham@uclan.ac.uk) or my supervisor (mdavies3@uclan.ac.uk) by email. Alternatively, you can contact the School of Psychology postal address:

**Jodie Graham**

**School of Psychology**

**Darwin Building**

**University of Central Lancashire**

**Preston**

**Lancashire**

**PR1 2HE**

The following organisations are trained to deal with victims of abuse. If this questionnaire has personal relevance to you and you would like to talk to someone, the following organisations may be able to help:

### Lancashire SAFE Centre 01772 523344

The Lancashire SAFE Centre provides a support for anyone that has experienced sexual abuse or rape.

### Survivors UK (www.survivors.org) 0845 122 1201

Survivors UK provide information, support and counselling for men who have been raped or sexually abused (open Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays 7pm - 10pm).

### The Samaritans 01772 822022

The Samaritans provides confidential non-judgemental emotional support.

**Appendix 9 – Study 2 Questionnaire**

## Information Sheet

**My name is Jodie Graham and I am a PhD student at the University of Central Lancashire. I am completing research to explore attitudes towards sexual crime and would appreciate it if you could take the time to complete a questionnaire as part of my research. If you agree to take part in this study, you will be asked to look at a simulated facial image of a male and then to read a hypothetical situation depicting non-consensual sexual behaviour. The face used in this study is hypothetical and not an actual person. The face was created using the EvoFit database, which is a computerised facial composite system developed to assist witnesses of crime. All faces created by EvoFit are not real, they are synthesised. As this questionnaire contains a description of non-consensual sexual behaviour, some people might find the content offensive or distressing. If you are offended by descriptions of sexual behaviour do not continue reading the questionnaire.**

There is no obligation to take part in the study and you have two options in returning the completed questionnaire. Firstly, you can complete the questionnaire and hand it back to the researcher when you have finished if you are happy to do so. If you prefer to not hand the questionnaire back to me now, you can take the questionnaire away, complete it in your own time, and return it to Darwin Building Student Room (room 124). There is a box system in Darwin Building Student Room where you can return the questionnaire to a box labelled with my name (Jodie Graham). Your individual responses could be seen by myself and my tutors, but there is no way we can identify you personally from these scores. The overall scores from the whole study will be viewed by a wider audience in the form of publications and in the final thesis. At no point will you be identified in publications and/or the thesis, as the information will be displayed in numerical form and will be about the group of participants as a whole, rather than you personally. Please be aware that withdrawal from the study is only possible until the completed questionnaire has been returned because your data is anonymous. By returning the questionnaire, you have consented to take part in the research.

Completion of the questionnaire should take around 15 minutes and will involve providing demographic information such as age, gender, and ethnicity: demographic information is being collected to examine whether ratings differ according to gender, age and ethnicity.

If you would like more information about this research, please feel free to contact me (jgraham@uclan.ac.uk), my supervisor Michelle Davies (mdavies3@uclan.ac.uk), or the school of psychology (the address for the school is included in the final page of the questionnaire). Contact information of organisations that are able to deal with crime victims are provided on the back page of the questionnaire if the issues raised have personal relevance to you. I would like to thank you in advance for your participation

# Please take a few moments to look at the image and answer the question below

**(The facial image is hypothetical – not real)**

The man pictured below is called Michael, a 25 year-old student in his second year at Manchester University. Michael lives with Sarah, his partner of 2 years, and has a large group of friends who he socialises with regularly.

**What type of personality do you think Michael has?**.....

**Please turn over and read the short story about Michael**

**Please read the following information carefully and then answer the questions on the following pages.**

**(The scenario below is hypothetical – not real)**

Michael had been out with his friends, but had decided not to drink that night due to being in work early the next morning. Later on in the evening, Michael left the bar to travel home on the 23:59 train from Manchester to Warrington. After boarding the train Michael fell asleep. Not long after, Michael was approached by Becky, an individual unknown to him. Becky sat down next to Michael, undone his trousers and sexually assaulted him. Michael woke up and challenged Becky, but she continued to sexually assault him. Soon after, the train stopped Becky got up and left the train. Michael was in shock at what had happened to him and made the decision not to tell anybody about what Becky had done.

**Based on the information that you have just read, please answer the following questions by indicating the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements. Please be aware that it is your own beliefs that we are interested in, there are no right or wrong answers.**

| Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Mildly Disagree | Mildly Agree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Michael was responsible for the incident | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 2 | Michael could have done more to prevent what happened | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 3 | Michael did not put up enough of a fight | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 4 | Michael should have tried harder to resist | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 5 | Michael should not be given sympathy for what happened | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 6 | Michael's behaviour was to blame for the incident | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7 | Michael should have tried harder to escape from the car | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 8 | The incident was Michael's fault | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 9 | Michael enjoyed what happened to him | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 10 | The Police should take this incident seriously | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 11 | Michael will be traumatised by what happened | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 12 | Michaels life will be adversely affected by what Happened | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

| Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Mildly Disagree | Mildly Agree | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 13 | The incident will have a negative effect on Michael's relationship with his partner | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 14 | The police will believe Michael | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 15 | Michael should report this incident to the police | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 16 | Michael should be offered support in dealing with what happened | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 17 | Becky is to blame for what happened | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 18 | Becky should be punished for what she did to Michael | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 19 | Becky should be sent to prison for what happened | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 20 | Becky should be held responsible for what she did to Michael | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

**Please turn over to answer the remaining questions**

**Please read the following statements and indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement using the following scale:**

**1 = Strongly Disagree  6 = Strongly Agree**

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | It is a terrible experience for a man to be raped by a woman | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 2 | The extent of a man's resistance should be a major factor in determining if he was raped | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 3 | Any healthy man can successfully resist a rapist if he really wants to | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 4 | If a man obtained an erection while being raped it probably means that he started to enjoy it | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 5 | A man can enjoy sex even if it is being forced on him | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 6 | Most men who are raped by a woman are very upset by the incident | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7 | Many men claim rape if they have consented to homosexual relations but have changed their minds afterwards | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 8 | Most men who are raped by a woman are somewhat to blame for not escaping or fighting off the woman | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 9 | If a man engages in kissing and petting and he lets things get out of hand, it is his fault if his partner forces sex on him | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 10 | Male rape is usually committed by homosexuals | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 11 | Most men who are raped by a man are somewhat to blame for not escaping or fighting off the man | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 12 | A man who has been raped has lost his manhood | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 13 | Most men who are raped by a woman are somewhat to blame for not being more careful | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 14 | If a man told me that he had been raped by another man, I would suspect that he is homosexual | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 15 | Most men who have been raped have a history of promiscuity | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 16 | No self-respecting man would admit to being raped | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

**1 = Strongly Disagree  6 = Strongly Agree**

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 17 | Women who rape men are sexually frustrated individuals | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 18 | A man who allows himself to be raped by another man is probably homosexual | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 19 | Most men would not enjoy being raped by a woman | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 20 | Men who parade around nude in changing rooms are asking for trouble | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 21 | Male rape is more serious when the victim is heterosexual than when the victim is homosexual | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 22 | I would have a hard time believing a man who told me that he was raped by a woman | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

## Demographic Information

Finally, please complete the following questions. You are reminded that all information will be treated in the strictest confidence and used only for research purposes.

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 01 | What is your gender? | male …… | 1 | |
| | (please circle) | female ……. | 2 | |
| 02 | What is your age? | _____ yrs | | |
| 03 | What is your ethnicity? | White - British ……..……..… | 1 | |
| | | White - Irish ……..……..… | 2 | |
| | | White - Other (specify) ……..… | 3 | _____ |
| | | Black - Caribbean ……..…. | 4 | |
| | | Black - African ……..…… | 5 | |
| | | Black - Other (specify) ……. | 6 | _____ |
| | | Asian - Indian ……..…… | 7 | |
| | | Asian - Pakistani ……..… | 8 | |
| | | Asian - Bangladeshi ……..…. | 9 | |
| | | Asian - Other (specify) ……. | 10 | _____ |
| | | Chinese ……..…… | 11 | |
| | | Mixed - White & Black Caribbean | 12 | |
| | | Mixed - White & Black African | 13 | |
| | | Mixed -White & Asian ……..… | 14 | |
| | | Mixed - Other (specify) ……. | 15 | _____ |
| | | Other (specify) ……..… | 16 | _____ |

# Debrief Information

Please detach and keep this page if you like.

Thank you for completing the questionnaire and taking part in the research. This study was conducted to examine whether facial appearance affects judgements towards male victims of a sexual crime. The aim of the overall research is to explore the effect of factors such as facial masculinity, sexual orientation and gender on judgements towards male victims of sexual assault.

If you require further information or would like to know more about this study please feel free to contact me (jgraham@uclan.ac.uk) or my supervisor (mdavies3@uclan.ac.uk) by email. Alternatively, you can contact the School of Psychology postal address:

**Jodie Graham**

**School of Psychology**

**Darwin Building**

**University of Central Lancashire**

**Preston**

**Lancashire**

**PR1 2HE**

The following organisations are trained to deal with victims of abuse. If this questionnaire has personal relevance to you and you would like to talk to someone, the following organisations may be able to help:

## Lancashire SAFE Centre 01772 523344

The Lancashire SAFE Centre provides a support for anyone that has experienced sexual abuse or rape.

## Survivors UK (www.survivors.org) 0845 122 1201

Survivors UK provide information, support and counselling for men who have been raped or sexually abused (open Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays 7pm - 10pm).

## The Samaritans 01772 822022

The Samaritans provides confidential non-judgemental emotional support.