Lay, professional, and police rape stereotype acceptance in England and Wales: A

holistic, mixed-methods overview of the Criminal Justice System

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Abstract

This thesis examined rape stereotype acceptance and use in England and Wales, viewed through the lens of Social Representations Theory (SRT). Given the high attrition rate and low prosecution rate for rape, the project was a holistic look at stereotyping and its impacts throughout the Criminal Justice System (CJS). The thesis was a mixed-methods multiphase project. Study One explored rape stereotyping in lay populations, and Study Two explored stereotyping in professional populations, both through survey designs. Study Three, a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) examined rape stereotype use in police interviews with rape complainants. Study One found broadly low acceptance levels but perpetrator related stereotypes slightly more likely to be accepted than any other type, with participants more uncertain about this category. Men and Black and Asian people were significantly more likely to accept rape stereotypes than other demographic groups. Study Two also found a low acceptance rate with a higher acceptance rate for perpetrator related stereotypes. Those who had specialist training were significantly less likely to endorse stereotypes, indicating training as the key difference between lays and professionals. Study Three found two themes within the police interview sample in which the interviewer constructed the perpetrator: misunderstanding, and agentless passives. These constructions obscured Mens Rea and shifted responsibility, possibly widening the justice gap. The value of SRT in understanding rape stereotyping, and the value of socio-cognitive CDA and its compatibility with SRT were discussed. Practice and policy recommendations emphasised viewing the CJS holistically, as its separate parts are deeply linked. Training for police and CPS with a cognitive framework, jury education on perpetrator related stereotypes, and judicial mythbusting enforcement, were recommended. Future

research directions included further research into social representations of rape, and

explorations into ethnicity and stereotype acceptance.

Contents

Chapter 1

General Introduction

This thesis aimed to offer a new contribution to the literature on rape stereotypes using a specific theoretical framework, and to provide recommendations for practice and policy based on new findings. Particular areas of contribution included: developing and updating knowledge on rape stereotypes, especially regarding England and Wales' Criminal Justice System (CJS); the development of a methodologically and theoretically pluralist approach to researching rape stereotypes through the lens of Social Representations Theory (SRT), integrating this theory with discourse analysis approaches; and providing evidence of the use and value of SRT in researching and reducing rape stereotypes for the first time in the Global North. To my knowledge, SRT has only been applied to rape stereotype research in the Global South at the time of the thesis, making this a novel contribution for rape stereotyping in England and Wales. The thesis aimed to explore the current extent and nature of rape stereotype acceptance and uses in lay and professional settings, and within police interviewing, with the aim of making policy, practice, and research recommendations based on a holistic view of the CJS through integrating the findings of three studies.

This chapter of the thesis provides an introductory overview of the research field, the current research problem, the aims and objectives, and the research questions this thesis addressed. It details the history, key studies, and current state of the research on rape stereotype acceptance, going on to present the research problem – the role of rape stereotyping in England and Wales in the high levels of attrition and low conviction rates within the CJS. From there, the overall aim of the thesis, followed by practical objectives and research questions divided by study are discussed, in addition to the real-world and academic significance of the research, minor limitations, and a

brief discussion of the theoretical framework encompassing this body of research. Finally, the chapter ends with a general roadmap of the rest of the thesis.

Rape is currently defined by the Sexual Offences Act (2003) as intentionally penetrating the vagina, anus, or mouth of another person with a penis, without the other person's consent, and when the perpetrator does not reasonably believe that the victim consents. This crime has the highest cost to society of all crimes, both in terms of a high social and economic impact (Burgess & Carretta, 2017; Heeks et al., 2018), but also crucially at an individual level, with consequences such as sexually transmitted disease, pregnancy, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), and high levels of self-blame (Burgess & Carretta, 2017). Despite this, 83% of people who have experienced rape have never reported to the police (Office of National Statistics [ONS], 2020), while only 1.4% of such cases resulted in a charge or summons and 41% of cases resulted in attrition, or victim drop out (Home Office, 2020). This is known as 'the justice gap', with contributing factors such as the vicious cycle of attrition (Munro & Kelly, 2009) and rape stereotype acceptance at all levels of the Criminal Justice System. This thesis, then, aimed to investigate these concerns with mixed-methods studies and recommendations for practice, policy, and research.

Background

Rape myths, although first discussed by Brownmiller (1974) from a feminist sociological perspective, were defined for the first time in the field of social psychology by Burt (1980), as "prejudicial, stereotyped, and false beliefs about rape, rape victims, and rapists", creating "a climate hostile to rape victims" (pg.217). This has been a seminal definition within the field and an equally influential study, as it saw the development of the first Rape Myth Acceptance Scale, with various stereotypes codified within the scale, most pertaining to victim blaming or false allegation

stereotypes, such as "women who get raped while hitchhiking get what they deserve", or "one reason that women falsely report a rape is that they frequently need to call attention to themselves". The study also found strong correlations between attitudinal and demographic variables such as hostile and ambivalent sexism or gender, and rape myth acceptance.

After Burt's (1980) study, the field continued to develop, with further theoretical and practical studies carried out in order to understand the different types of rape stereotype, and the complex factors that impact levels of acceptance and endorsement. Briere et al. (1985) carried out an empirical study to explore this, utilising Burt's (1980) attitude and rape myth scales and including other items measuring attitudes towards sex, sexuality, and pornography, extent of significant relationships with women and sexual inhibitions. After a factor analysis, nine new scales were identified, many of which could be seen as categories of rape stereotypes. These showed a clearer delineation of types of false allegations and victim blaming myths, and the results of the study showed that many of the variables relating to sexuality, i.e., adversarial sexual beliefs, and attitudes towards sex, sexuality, and pornography, were predictive of rape stereotypes and rape-supportive beliefs, however the author recommended further study in the area due to the complex and multidimensional dynamics of the variables and stereotypes.

Much of the research for the following fifteen years focused on further exploring and refining the existing rape stereotype scales and working to understand which attitudes and demographics most strongly predicted rape stereotype acceptance. One of the first studies to examine other categories of stereotype than victim blaming and allegation stereotypes was by McGee et al. (2002), which was a comprehensive report into sexual abuse and violence in Ireland, involving a large-scale ($n = 3,120$)

survey on, amongst other related topics, attitudes towards sexual violence. There were five categories of rape 'beliefs', divided into beliefs about victims; beliefs about perpetrators; beliefs about the causes of sexual violence; beliefs about the consequences of sexual violence; and beliefs about reporting sexual violence.

The previously well-researched victim blaming and false allegation related stereotypes are present within these categories, however, crucial stereotype categories such as beliefs about perpetrators (e.g., "most rapes are committed by strangers"), and beliefs about the nature of rape (e.g., "sexually experienced people are less traumatised by rape") were also included, reflecting a growing awareness of social representations of "real rapists" and "real rape", terms coined by Estrich (1987) to refer to cultural ideas of what a rape or rapist should involve. For example, a real rapist is a stranger, violent and 'other' in some way, while a real rape occurs outside at night, and the victim will likely suffer physical harm such as bruising or cuts. The McGee et al. (2002) study found that overall, there was some awareness of what rape stereotypes are, as much of the sample did not agree with the stereotype items presented. However, some common stereotypes in each category were still believed by up to a third of participants, and men were significantly more likely than women to accept rape stereotypes. This aspect of the report was followed up by the same researchers (McGee et al., 2011), discussing the findings further in a journal article, specifically in relation to real rape and real rapist stereotypes. The article recommended awareness raising and education of the groups most likely to accept stereotypes.

A useful distillation of the different functions of rape stereotype came from Bohner et al. (2009). They identified four broad categories of rape stereotypes: stereotypes that blame the victim ("If the victim drank a lot or took drugs they shouldn't complain if they ended up being raped or sexually assaulted"); disbelieve claims of rape

("most rape allegations are false"); exonerate the perpetrator, ("Once a man is sexually aroused, he absolutely has to have sex and cannot help himself); and suggest that only certain types of women get raped (real victim stereotypes, "A raped woman is not usually an innocent victim"). This was not only a clear explication of what exactly rape stereotypes do in practice, supporting definitions stating that such stereotypes "serve to deny and justify male sexual aggression against women" (Payne et al., 1999), but also acknowledgement of the existence of less well-researched stereotypes around rape perpetrators.

As the thesis focuses most deeply on perpetrator rape stereotypes, it is necessary to go further into detail on this topic. As Bohner et al. (2009) indicated, some rape myths function to exonerate the perpetrator. There are several ways this happens: Firstly, some myths indicate that men have an uncontrollable sex drive, and that rape is biologically inevitable. McMillan and White (2015), in a thematic analysis of medico-legal professionals' views on rape, found that some forensic medical staff expressed sympathy for perpetrators and depicted them as 'nice young lads' as opposed to true rapists. In contrast, they often described stranger rapes, which are closer to the social representation of 'real rape' (Ehrlich, 2003), in a more sympathetic way towards the victim and described the perpetrator in unfavourable and unflattering ways, such as 'dirty', 'smelly', and even 'foreign'. In addition to the reflecting the racialisation of rape myths such as this, this is a demonstration of another form of perpetrator myth: that of othering or monstering rapists. Some of the earliest work on rape myths found that perpetrators tended to be portrayed as 'sex-starved, insane, or both' (Burt, 1980), and much research since has found this to still be the case. For example, Temkin et al. (2018) found in a court observation study that defence arguments sometimes focused on the defendant, suggesting that rape perpetrators were easily identifiable because they

are in some way other and different to normal, respectable men. Similarly, Carline et al. (2018) found in a thematic analysis of several focus groups of young men's views of an alcohol-related rape campaign that rape perpetrators were often constructed as menacing and identifiable (and thus that young 'good' men like themselves could not be the target of the campaign advertisement).

The dominant social representations of rape perpetrators which drive these myths and stereotypes – those of rapist as an outlier and singular problem rather than a symptom of a patriarchal society – are most often expressed and perpetuated through news and other media. For example, Marhia (2008) found in a discourse analysis of 136 newspaper articles from the 2006 British press that three types of narrative appeared in press discourses of rape – the 'sex beast', the 'wronged man', and a third type which lies in between the former two stereotypes (p.34). The 'sex beast' was linked to terms such as predator, evil, or depraved, and construct the perpetrator as an aberrant individual and the rape as pathological. At the same time, the 'wronged man' narrative was often used where a false allegation was suspected. He is often described as innocent, traumatised, a reasonable ordinary person, and the alleged rape constructed as consensual sex. These two narratives – the reasonable man who 'could never rape', and the inhuman depraved monster are two facets of the same social representation of rape perpetrators and serve to enforce each other in a cycle: ordinary men would not commit rape; thus, rapists can only be predators who are abnormal in some way. If rape perpetrators are abnormal and aberrant, then a) 'normal' brothers, fathers, partners, or friends cannot be rapists, and b) it is not a societal problem, simply an individual problem. This circular argument has the consequence of normalising and hiding from view more commonplace experiences of sexual violence and rape which do not fall into real rapist stereotypes, such as sexual coercion, stealthing, or rape by an intimate

partner. This is supported more recently by Harmer and Lewis (2020), who found in a thematic analysis of news websites' comment sections that commenters expressed disbelief in three ways: openly questioning the articles' evidence; dismissing sexism as a causal factor in sexual violence; and questioning the perceived feminist agenda of the author. The second form is the most relevant here - commenters pathologised perpetrators mentioned in the articles and emphasised that the harassment discussed was evidence of 'bad apples' rather than a systemic societal issue, portraying sexual violence as an individual problem in line with news media. The authors also noted the existence of counter-voices, which refuted and challenged the disbelief discourse. These voices and counter-voices can be seen as social representations in action – the visible negotiations of the social representation of perpetrators of sexual violence.

In addition to their nature and function, Bohner et al. (2009) also discussed rape stereotypes in the context of high attrition and low conviction rates, an issue that had come to wider attention in recent years due to the widening justice gap (Temkin & Krahé, 2008). Research into rape stereotypes within the context of the criminal justice system has continued, often with a view to understanding the ways in which stereotypes could negatively impact attrition and conviction rates and how this can be reduced. The next section deals with this problem and the related research.

Research Problem

This section considers and outlines the present literature on the justice gap, then on rape stereotyping within: 1) lay populations, which often represent juries; 2) professional settings including police, lawyers and other occupations which may be involved with rape cases during their career; and 3) police interviews and other legal settings such as court proceedings. At each stage the possible impact on attrition rates and conviction rates, as well as on rape victims, is considered.

The 'Justice Gap': Reporting, Attrition, and Conviction

The justice gap was defined by Temkin and Krahé (2008) as a phenomenon whereby rape reporting rates continue to increase, yet conviction rates remain broadly level. For example, in the year 2019-2020, 56,061 rape reports were recorded by police, while 4,181 (7.45% of all reports) were referred to the CPS and just 1,439 (2.56% of all reports) were successfully prosecuted (Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services [HMICFRS], 2021). It is clear to see from these statistics how wide the gap is, and why a lot of research in recent years has focused on this pressing issue.

One substantial contributor to the justice gap is the high level of attrition. Munro and Kelly (2009) defined attrition as the progress, or lack thereof, of rape complaints through the CJS. They emphasised that rape cases had a high chance of dropping out of the system, especially in the early stages of the investigation. Statistics support this: in the year ending March 2019, only 1.4% of reported rapes resulted in a charge, despite a 9% increase in reporting (Home Office, 2020). According to Murphy and Hine (2019), reasons for this high attrition rate have multiple factors, which can also serve as key points of case drop-out: low reporting levels in the first place; distress caused by the investigation process; low referral rates from police to prosecutors; the trial process; and jury decision-making. The results of a case outcome study within the London Metropolitan Police by Hohl and Stanko (2015) found that the highest attrition rates were at the early police investigation stage. They discovered that the victim withdrawal rate accounted for 48% of attrition, and that the reasons were often related to concerns about feeling judged, revictimized, and feeling that the investigators did not consider them credible. Murphy and Hine (2019) carried out a replication of this study in light of recent policy changes, research findings, and high-profile sexual assault cases, and

found that a there was a concerningly high rate of victim withdrawal overall (51%), with the majority withdrawing during the police investigation process, in line with the previous study.

Using attribution theory, Temkin and Krahé (2008) highlighted that legal professionals' attitudes allowed social representations of real rape and real rapists, thus rape stereotypes, to proliferate amongst lawyers and police, and attributed this issue to heuristics, the attitude- and belief-based mental shortcuts made when making decisions about whether to prosecute. Thus, if a rape complaint does not fit investigators' social representations of a rape, this will potentially negatively impact the case outcome. Munro and Kelly (2009) termed this the vicious cycle of attrition, in which internalising rape stereotypes prevent victims from reporting in the first place; police investigators and prosecutors rely on real rape stereotypes and predict jury decision making to advance only cases they believe have a chance of securing conviction. Consequently, where cases do go to court, they are more likely to fit certain profiles, thus juries are most likely to see cases which conform to rape stereotypes, while those that do not (acquaintance rapes, for example) are subject to lay attitudes towards and beliefs about rape, which will be discussed in the next section. An additional potential influence on juror decision making is the way in which defence lawyers utilise rape stereotypes in order to discredit the complainant or exonerate the perpetrator: Durham et al (2016) found in a court trial observation study that while judges mostly used 'mythbuster' directions, often at the start and sometimes at the end of trials, stereotypes were still used by defence counsels, and only objected to by prosecutors in three trials, potentially being accepted as correct by the jury. In this particular study, 19 out of the 25 resolved trials were acquittals. While it is important to note that other factors in addition to rape stereotype use could play a role in the large acquittal rate – for example, the authors

also spoke about prosecution effectiveness and case strength – Dinos et al.'s (2015) meta-analysis of mock-juror studies found that participants who held erroneous beliefs about rape were more likely to acquit. Overall, the interplay of attitudes between police and prosecutors, lawyers, and juries creates a self-sustaining cycle, and due to its effect on the criminal justice system as a whole, a holistic view is needed in considering how rape stereotyping affects each element of the system.

Lay Rape Stereotype Acceptance

From the beginnings of the social psychological research into rape stereotyping, certain demographic and attitudinal variables have been found to be significant predictors of rape stereotype acceptance. Burt (1980) found that men and those with higher levels of sex role stereotyping, acceptance of interpersonal violence, and adversarial sexual beliefs were significantly more likely to accept rape stereotypes, while more recently, Barnett et al. (2018) and Zidenberg et al. (2021) also found the same gender effect, with additional findings that high religiosity and anti-fatness contributed significantly to higher rates of stereotype acceptance.

Gender has been extensively studied in relation to rape stereotype acceptance – a meta-analysis by Suarez and Gadalla (2010) found that gender was the most studied demographic out of the sample, although only thirty-seven studies were analysed. In addition to gender, there has been some interest in other potential demographic impacts on rape stereotype acceptance such as age, which has mixed findings, and ethnicity, which in relation to rape stereotypes is complex and under-researched (Suarez & Gadalla, 2010).

While rape is indisputably a gendered crime, the fact that the social representation of a 'real victim' is narrowed down to women means that male rape has

historically been ignored, its impact on victims diminished, and the subject made taboo. Men who have been raped are told - directly or through the media - that they are 'weak' for not having defended themselves (Javaid, 2014), homosexual for having 'allowed' it to happen (Graham, 2006), or that it could not have happened because men cannot be raped (Abdullah-Khan, 2008; Lees, 1997), especially not by a woman. These stereotypes are instilled and reinforced through generations of young boys who are led to believe a 'real man' should act and react to situations without emotion or trauma, otherwise they are not valid. As a result, male rape is severely underreported. According to the charity organisation Survivors UK (2018), over a thousand men report a rape to the police each year, but the police and government state that this is likely to be less than 10% of the true figure. Javaid (2015) argues that although rape is a gendered crime, with more women experiencing rape than men, male rape stems from the same patriarchal roots as female rape, relating to values such as toxic masculinity, which is itself one dominant social representation of real manhood. Thus, despite the gendered nature of rape and sexual violence, there is still a need for rape stereotype acceptance research to include male rape.

In regard to age as a contributor to rape stereotype acceptance, there have been mixed findings. Studies such as Adams-Price et al.'s (2004) vignette study and Anderson et al.'s (1997) meta-analysis, in addition to Burt (1980), have found that older participants are significantly more likely than their younger counterparts to accept rape stereotypes, which is often attributed to levels of conservatism and rigidity of thought increasing with age. However, more recent experiments such as Barn and Powers' (2018) and Sazou (2021), both cross-national explorations of rape stereotype acceptance, have found that younger people have shown a higher tendency to accept stereotypes, with Barn and Powers (2018) suggesting a possible cause to be due to lack

of social networks and life experiences. Another potential factor in this finding could be the increased conservatism in general within UK and European society in recent years, affecting both older and younger people's stereotype acceptance.

Much of the research on ethnicity agrees that, broadly, Black and Asian participants are significantly more likely to accept rape stereotypes than White participants, or participants of other ethnicities (Mori et al., 1995, in relation to Asian American participants; Varelas & Foley, 1998 in relation to Black participants). Barn and Powers (2018), while researching Indian and British stereotype acceptance, suggested that the reason for this could be due to cultural and gender norms, upheld through social representations and varying due to cultural context.

Social representations – systems of meaning-making and social practice first proposed by Moscovici (1961) – are the lens through which individuals view and create their social realities (Howarth, 2014). They are complex and dynamic, dependent on sociocultural and temporal factors, and influenced by the way social representations are reified, positioning some as expert knowledge or common sense, which gives them ideological power and legitimises them over other, alternate representations (Howarth, 2006). This means that societal structures and institutions such as patriarchy, which can be defined as "a system of beliefs, relationships and values embedded in political, social, and economic systems that structure gender inequality between men and women" (Nash, 2009, p.43), influence ideology and common-sense ideas and knowledge (Billig 1988), which in turn informs representations of gender norms, and thus representations of ideas such as rape, which are deeply tied into gender and patriarchy. It is important to note that due to the dynamic and social nature of representations, meaning is co-constructed and negotiated and representations can be resisted or contested, which can cause one representation to become privileged over

another. Again, changes over time and within socio-cultural contexts are also elements of tension helping to shape and re-shape social reality through representations, meaning that in addition to sociocultural influences, individuals can hold differing representations across the lifespan and at different ages. This is potentially supported by cross-cultural and cross-generational findings such as Heaven et al. (1998), who found in a cross-cultural comparison of South African and Australian undergraduates that the South African sample was significantly more likely to accept victim blaming stereotypes; and Devdas and Rubin (2007), who found that first-generation South Asian women were more likely to accept rape stereotypes than their second-generation counterparts and European women. It is possible that the latter study is also related to age, and indeed, people hold multiple identities at once, which intersect and define each other (Howarth, 2002). Thus, it is important to take into consideration sociocultural context and intersectional identities where possible when exploring ethnicity, age, and gender in rape stereotype research.

It is important to study these demographics in detail to understand the effects they have on rape stereotype acceptance, as lay populations are broadly representative of juries, who make crucial decisions of guilt, or non-guilt, in court trials (in adversarial legal systems). Thus, it is necessary to consider the ways rape stereotype acceptance impacts jury decision making, and there have been many studies examining this issue. For example, Ellison and Munro (2013) discussed their previous mock-jury trial study of acquaintance rape cases in which they found that, although the majority of mock-jurors understood the fact that most rapes are committed by acquaintances, participants still accepted certain stereotypes around the cases presented to them, such as acquaintance rapes being less 'clear cut' and 'a lot harder [to distinguish from consensual sex]' than stranger rapes. Additionally, sexual miscommunication myths –

the idea that the victim must be the one to communicate their non-consent clearly, otherwise the perpetrator will misunderstand – were expressed, as well as stereotypes around victim resistance. The participants here made apparent their social representations of what a valid rape and correct victim behaviour is, expressing them through well-known stereotypes and patriarchal gender norms. While these are not real court proceedings, it can be extrapolated to some degree that this might be an issue in true cases.

Supporting these findings are several reviews and meta-analyses. Dinos et al. (2015) found in a systematic review and subsequent meta-analysis of nine mock-juror studies that rape stereotype acceptance had a significant impact on juror decision-making, specifically that jurors who held higher levels of stereotype acceptance were significantly more likely to deliver a not-guilty verdict. The authors of this paper discussed the limitations of the studies: for example, most recruited from undergraduate populations, though analyses found that the study characteristics had no bearing on the overall results. It is necessary to note the low number of studies in the analysis ($n = 9$), suggesting that the findings are only indicative, however a more recent article with more studies, authored by Leverick (2020), presented a comprehensive review of both qualitative and quantitative research, finding that 28 out of 29 quantitative studies found a significant relationship between rape stereotype acceptance utilising various different scales and judgements about blame in specific scenarios, while 27 out of 28 studies found a significant relationship between stereotype acceptance and judgements of guilt. In terms of qualitative studies, Leverick (2020) found that the findings included endorsement of stereotypes around 'real' victim behaviours, physical resistance, false allegations, and 'uncontrollable' male sexual urges, and participants often expressed these views during deliberations. These studies provide evidence that rape stereotype

acceptance, while complex, carries a sizable influence on jury decision-making, which may be a contributing factor to the low conviction rates for rape at present in the UK. Systematic, thorough research into lay stereotype acceptance as it relates to jury decision-making and social representations is thus needed, within the context of the criminal justice system (CJS) as a whole, to understand what recommendations can be made in terms of practice and policy. The first study of this thesis (Chapter 3) addresses these concerns and makes useful recommendations based on the findings, in addition to suggestions for future research.

Professional Rape Stereotype Acceptance

Much of the body of research concerning rape stereotype acceptance amongst professional groups focuses on legal and policing professionals, with some fewer studies exploring such stereotypes within other occupations likely to become involved with rape cases professionally, such as educators or social workers in terms of safeguarding and disclosure, or medical professionals in terms of medical examinations. While police and lawyers play a large role within rape cases in terms of evidence gathering and prosecution, other professionals are likely to have some impact on rape reporting and attrition rates if there is a high level of stereotype acceptance.

Within the CJS, despite existing provisions for training (Rumney & Fenton, 2011), and continuing recommendations for further training around rape and rape stereotype acceptance (Angiolini, 2015; Rape Review, 2021), evidence still suggests that both legal and policing professionals accept or utilise rape stereotypes, possibly having a large influence on the high attrition and low conviction rates. Findings in regard to policing professionals indicate the existence of rape stereotype acceptance, however with some complex factors at play: for example, Maddox et al. (2012) found that investigating officers perceived victims to be 'mad disclosers', 'bad disclosers', or

real victims. The former two groups were seen as less credible overall, with more signs of shame, self-blame, and PTSD – in a follow-up study, the authors found that these signs were often misinterpreted as signs of dishonesty, and also that officers attributed a high proportion of the attrition rates to voluntary victim drop out, further indicating deception, or otherwise 'wanting to forget'. These findings are indicative of real rape and real victim stereotypes.

Murphy and Hine (2019), however, discovered that this stereotype use does not exist in isolation, but alongside other factors such as demographics, and attitudinal variables, which are reflective of those factors within lay populations: men, sexist attitudes, and perceived relations between power and sex. The authors, alongside other studies such as Sleath and Bull (2015, 2017) and Denyer, (2019) also found broadly low levels of rape stereotype acceptance, and the latter, in line with the complex nature of the Murphy and Hine (2019) study, also found that perceived credibility was still tied to other negative perceptions such as improperly communicating non-consent, appearing more sexually provocative, and seeming more dishonest. These findings suggest that, like lay populations, rape stereotype acceptance by police is existent and complex, and, given the high attrition rates at the initial police interview level, likely has an impact on the way policing professionals make prosecuting decisions.

Efforts to reduce stereotype acceptance and use within the Crown Prosecution Service have also been made – however, despite this, evidence suggests that stereotype use is still a concern, with court trial observation studies such as Smith and Skinner (2017), and Temkin et al. (2018) finding that rape stereotypes were used by lawyers throughout to oversimplify contexts, frame real rape as the norm, and to undermine the complainant. Often, where 'mythbusting' judicial directions were used, they were either dismissed as irrelevant or undermined during closing arguments. While it is within the

remit of defence lawyers to present a contrary argument or opposing hypothesis to introduce reasonable doubt, stereotypes which are harmful to the complainant are still being used.

Fewer studies have been carried out on other occupational groups likely to become involved with rape victims as part of their profession, however there are several studies exploring different groups. For example, Ward (1988) carried out a comprehensive study of police, lawyers, healthcare workers and social workers, finding that stereotype acceptance was at that time highest in police, followed by lawyers and doctors. Adolfsson (2018) gathered similar findings, with police, younger participants, and respondents with higher levels of stereotype acceptance overall overestimated the rates of false allegations in comparison to lawyers or healthcare workers. In relation to educators and healthcare professionals, the existing literature either indicates very little difference in stereotype acceptance as compared to the general population (Idisis et al., 2007), or there is so little literature that it is difficult to form a general picture, as in the case of educators.

For instance, Finchilescu and Dugard (2021) discovered that university educators had significantly lower rape stereotype acceptance than administrative staff and students; and Nadler (2018) found that sexual violence training significantly mitigated some stereotype acceptance in US college educators. However, these studies are exclusively university based and neither are from the UK, highlighting a need to examine this professional group alongside others within the context of rape cases in a systematic, comprehensive way in order to understand levels of stereotype acceptance, the current state of formal training in rape and rape stereotypes and what effect this may have on stereotype acceptance, and potential effects on attrition and conviction rates. The second study of this thesis (Chapter 4) addresses these issues using a survey design

with a sample of six groups of professionals who may become involved with rape cases as part of their occupation. Based on the findings, recommendations for practice, policy, and future research are made.

Police Interviewing and Rape Stereotype Acceptance

The highest point of attrition is at the initial police investigation stage – 75% of cases are dropped here (Ministry of Justice, 2013). Thus, it is important to consider the research on police interviews with rape complainants, the prevalence and impact of rape stereotype use within these interviews, what effects they have on the victim and on attrition rates, and what needs to be further explored or highlighted within the whole context of the UK criminal justice system. The final study of this thesis (Chapter 5) aims to address this.

It has already been noted that in making decisions on whether to seek guidance from the CPS or to charge for rape, police investigators are likely to rely on real rape or real rapist stereotypes and attempt to predict jury decision-making (Temkin & Krahé, 2008), and there is potential for at least some part of this heuristic process to influence attitudes in police interviews with rape complainants. These interviews are crucial in shaping the rest of the case: Haworth (2006) pointed out that not only are interviewers capable of making crucial decisions whose outcomes affect the interviewees' futures, but also that the interview itself is a complex event as it is an instrument for evidence gathering, and is also evidence itself, used to refer back to when making decisions, and then later on, used at trial when submitted to court. Therefore, the interview is oriented for an overhearing audience, including juries, prosecutors and defence lawyers, which presents issues when rape stereotypes are used in interviews, as they are likely to then be used in court by lawyers.

There are several useful studies exploring the use of rape stereotypes in police interviews with rape complainants. Macleod's (2010) doctoral thesis was a comprehensive critical discourse analysis examining the discursive structures of the interviews, which discussed rape stereotype use within the data. She found that practices reflecting rape-supportive assumptions and rape stereotypes existed, including 'backgrounding' or diminishing the importance of perpetrator actions, or 'foregrounding' or emphasising the importance of certain interviewee actions, such as drinking alcohol. Additionally, Dhami et al. (2020) recently found that interviewing officers were less likely to progress rape cases if they perceived complainants' accounts to be inconsistent. Moreover, there was a lack of congruity between interviewers' self-reported decision-making policies and their statistically captured decision-making policies, suggesting that interviewers' accounts of how and why they progressed a case may be unreliable.

Further explorations by recent official reports have suggested issues at the interview stage. For example, a joint thematic inspection examining both the police and the CPS's response to rape included comments by complainants suggesting that they felt they were under investigation themselves due to unnecessary information being asked for (HMICFRS, 2021). It is clear that Chapter 5's police interview study is timely, and necessary to gain a deeper understanding of both the individual and institutional factors driving these problems.

Aims, Objectives, and Research Questions

This section outlines the overarching aim of the thesis, the main objectives of the thesis, and the research questions.

The broad aim of this thesis was to explore the current extent and nature of rape stereotype acceptance and their uses in England and Wales within various contexts – lay (Study One), professional (Study Two), and within police interviewing (Study Three). This was with a view to making policy, practice, and research recommendations. The research itself was broad in scope, concerning itself with the criminal justice system as a whole, however, the cultural context was limited to England and Wales only. This is due to a different legal system being in use in Scotland.

There are four main objectives this thesis aimed to achieve: First, to explore the extent and nature of rape stereotype acceptance in the general population of England and Wales (Study One); second, to explore the extent and nature of rape stereotypes in professionals who are likely to become involved in rape cases (Study Two); third, to explore rape stereotype use in initial account gathering interviews with rape complainants (Study Three); and fourth, to bring together all of the findings from the three studies in the thesis and make policy and practice recommendations based on a holistic view of the CJS, in addition to future research directions (General Discussion, Chapter 6).

In terms of research questions, this thesis' research chapters comprised three studies, and as such the research questions were split into their component studies, listed below:

1. Study One: What is the extent of rape stereotype acceptance in England and Wales amongst the general populations? How do demographic factors influence stereotype acceptance? It was hypothesised that stereotype acceptance would be widespread in the general population, and that male rape, victim, and perpetrator related

stereotypes would be most widely accepted. Additionally, it was predicted that men and older people would be more likely to accept stereotypes. Study One was a survey design ($n = 1000$), using quantitative analyses such as MANOVAs and descriptive analyses.

2. Study Two: What is the extent of rape stereotype acceptance in England and Wales amongst professional populations who become involved with rape cases? How do training and demographics impact stereotype acceptance? It was predicted that, due to the findings of Study One, rape stereotype acceptance would be broadly low, but perpetrator related stereotypes would be most likely to be accepted. It was also hypothesised that training in sexual violence and rape stereotyping would have a mitigating effect on stereotype acceptance. Study Two utilised a survey ($n = 304$), with descriptive and inferential analyses including ANOVA and T-tests.

3. Study Three: What is the extent of rape stereotype use in police interviews with rape complainants? Specifically, how is the perpetrator constructed during interviews? Study Three was a critical discourse analysis of real-life Achieving Best Evidence police interviews with rape complainants ($n = 10$), drawing from the Socio-cognitive approach and utilising some elements of Conversation Analysis.

Positionality statement

As the research concerns the sensitive and emotive topic of rape, and considering the qualitative element involved in Chapter 5, it is important to situate myself with respect to the topic and programme of research itself. I need to consider who I am, in relation to the topic and the participants, my particular political and social stances and potential biases and lenses through which I may view my findings and the data, and how I came to the research area. One point it is important to begin with is that throughout the thesis I have used the term 'victim' for those who have experienced

rape. This is because at the time, I was unaware of the debate around the terms victim, survivor, and victim/survivor. On reflection, I would have used the term 'victim/survivor', as this term encapsulates much more than just the terms victim or survivor alone, although I acknowledge that even this does not represent a dichotomy of opposites or a single identity (Boyle & Rogers, 2020; Kelly et al., 1996). Thus, in this positional statement and the reflexive piece in my discussion (Chapter 6), I use the term victim/survivor, rather than victim.

My insider-outsider status with regard to the participants for this research is complex, partly due to the multiple-sample nature of the research, but also because of my position at several social intersections. In relation to my samples, I would not consider myself lay (Study One) due to my expertise in rape and rape stereotypes. I am also none of the types of professional in Study Two as I do not come into contact with rape victim/survivors in the course of my work. Neither am I a member of the police, or a rape victim/survivor who has given an ABE interview (both of whom are part of Study Three). This places me as an outsider in relation to the participants for this project. However, I am an insider in some ways: I have experienced the world as a woman and have been socialised as a woman, and given that rape is a gendered crime (ONS, 2020), I am subject to the same myths and patriarchal gazes and structures, and the social representations which uphold them, placing me into alignment with rape victim/survivors. Additionally, although I have never personally experienced rape, like most women and nonbinary people who were assigned female at birth (AFAB) I have experienced public sexual harassment from a young age with no repercussions for those who caused the harm. In terms of intersectionality, I am queer and neurodivergent, placing me in a position of understanding with people similar to me who, due to their similar intersectionality, may not be believed. Negotiating this insider-outsider dual

status is complex and requires me to spend time considering the perspectives of those I am outsider to, as well as those I am insider with. It is additionally crucial to note that I am White, and thus have privilege. Therefore, I hold intentional empathy and consideration for Black and other racialised victim/survivors who are more likely to experience disbelief and rape stereotypes as a further part of systemic oppression, and while I have not had direct contact with victim-survivors during the research project, I have tried to be continually reflexive about the power binaries and the additional struggles racialised victim/survivors face.

Politically, although my theoretical framework is not a feminist framework, I am a leftist feminist who strives to be anti-racist and intersectional, and so I view the participants, findings, and implications, and make my recommendations, through a lens that considers rape not an individual problem, but part of greater systemic and socio-cultural problems which require systemic solutions and social change. As someone in alignment with victim-survivors of rape and considering the research through a feminist lens, it is likely my biases would lean towards victim-survivors during this project, especially in Study Three. However, I have tried to mitigate these biases throughout with robust evidence and literature and, in the case of the Critical Discourse Analysis, data sessions with colleagues and supervisors to sense-check the data and ensure validity.

In relation to how I came to my research area, I have always had a strong sense of justice. This came partly due to being neurodivergent, as people with ADHD or autistic people are often more justice sensitive (Bondu & Esser, 2015), but was also instilled in me from a young age by leftist parents who lived just above the bread line, and who were similarly sensitive to unjust policies, events, and wars. Justice is a broad, sweeping topic with many perspectives and disciplines. For the purposes of this thesis, I

will simply outline my own personal understanding and sense of justice, which is aligned closely to the concept of social justice - doing what is fair and equitable for everybody, striving to eliminate oppression of marginalised people, and allowing victim-survivors to be heard on what reparations they feel they need after experiencing harm. As such, the #MeToo discourse on Twitter captured my interest. I also noted the narratives, myths, and stereotypes around rape that were happening at the same time, particularly in high-profile cases such as Brock Turner's. These narratives were existent not just on social media sites, but were also being driven by those involved with the court case itself. I had also read media articles on attrition (discussed in detail in Chapter 1). I wanted to understand why and to what extent these myths and narratives were occurring, and were the myths related to attrition? Additionally, I wanted to know how could I, as someone in a more privileged position, i.e., a White researcher with access to knowledge and education, help to make it better? These were the driving questions which led me to research in this area.

Roadmap to the Thesis

This section provides an overview of the chapters within the thesis, as well as a summary of the introduction.

Chapter 2 is the Methodology section, and discusses the theoretical framework of the thesis, Social Representations Theory, the research philosophy and design, and study designs and their rationales.

Chapter 3 concerns Study One, discussing the relevant literature, methods, findings, and implications of rape stereotype acceptance within the general population of England and Wales.

Chapter 4 relates to Study Two. This is similar to Study One and examines stereotype acceptance in professional populations. The chapter examines the literature and discusses the methodology and findings of the study.

Chapter 5 is Study Three. This is a Critical Discourse Analysis of police interviews with rape complainants, and as with the previous studies, the chapter concerns itself with considering the relevant literature, discussing the necessary methods and theory around critical discourse, and analysing and discussing the findings.

Chapter 6 is the general discussion. This chapter brings the findings, implications, and recommendations for future research, policy, and practice together in a holistic way to address the overall concerns about attrition rates for rape in the criminal justice system.

To summarise, this chapter provided a general overview of the research problem and the literature around rape stereotype acceptance in the general population, professional populations, and also amongst policing professionals in interview. It then briefly discussed the research aims, objectives, and questions, in context with each study conducted.

Chapter 2

Methodology

Chapter 2 is concerned with the methodologies of the thesis. This chapter contains a detailed discussion of the theoretical framework, social representations; research philosophy, pragmatism; and research and study design, which was a multiphase-multilevel mixed methods design. Also discussed are the rationales for these choices and why they were the best fit for the research questions and theoretical framework.

Theoretical Framework

Social Representations Theory

As indicated in Chapter 1, there are complex dynamics at play between rape stereotypes, the heavy societal and individual price for rape, and the high levels of attrition in the criminal justice system. In order to aid our understanding of these complex factors, it is necessary to position this thesis within an appropriate social psychological framework.

Social Representations Theory (SRT; Moscovici, 1961) focuses on the social nature of communication, and how social representations influence society through the individual. Howarth (2014), while writing about social representations of crowd behaviour, highlighted an interdependence between identity, social representations, and ideology. She indicated that identity, which is an individual's sense of who they are in relation to others around them (Howarth, 2011), is a useful way of explaining how individuals have different perspectives and draw on particular representations or ignore others, as people are more likely to join groups which fit their perspectives and share their representations. Ideology, defined by Van Dijk (1998) as 'clusters of beliefs in our

minds', and in terms of social representations can be seen as 'a system of representations' that are imposed upon us (Howarth, 2006), helps to form and shape the construction of identities, and is in turn maintained and contested by individual identity. Social representations mediate and are mediated by these two ongoing and simultaneous processes (Howarth, 2014), thus individuals take on certain presentations of the world, relate it to past experiences and understandings, 're-present' it to themselves, and position or reposition themselves within social groups to maintain or challenge social representations (Phoenix et al., 2017). This is how social change could occur from the individual to the social level.

In terms of the origin of SRT, Moscovici (2000) considered Durkheim's (1982) concept of collective consciousness, which Durkheim regarded as a 'social fact', and felt it was too static for the dynamism and changeability of contemporary society's social conditions. Representations arise through interaction and communication between individuals and groups, reflecting cultural and historical contexts. Stereotypes, similarly, arise when particular images or stories about social groups are repeated, and when amplified socially – most recently, this is most likely to be through online and print news media – the idea or story becomes a generally accepted belief. Repetition of stereotypes generally begins in childhood and are transmitted through traditional institutions, such as patriarchy (Höijer, 2011).

Critical Evaluation of SRT

Due to the complexity and broadness of Social Representations Theory, it has attracted much critical debate, especially from discursive and conversation analysts. Potter & Litton (1985) carried out a critical examination of social representations theory, identifying four difficulties. The first was related to the relationship between social groups and social representations. The authors pointed out that the consensual

adoption of representations is what establishes a group identity, but group membership for the theory is a psychological phenomenon, and satisfying one index of membership (for example, the existence of a shared representation) does not mean the individual will act in accordance with or identify with the group. Researchers additionally need to be careful to identify/keep in mind their own social representations and positioning. The second problem was level of consensus, or degree of agreement. In the studies cited, consensus was often presupposed at the expense of variation and difference within groups, causing circular arguments when researchers assumed intra-group similarity due to this. Additionally, consensus can be assessed at three levels: mention, use in theory, and use in practice, and the authors emphasised that each of these need to be considered during analysis in order to keep nuances. Further related to nuance, another issue highlighted by the authors was context-specificity: data needs to be analysed in context-sensitive ways. For example, it is crucial to consider the differences in the expression and practice of social representations when in a police interview versus questionnaires or focus groups. Finally, the authors pointed out the issue of language in representation. They claimed that language is representation, however some critiqued studies collapse categories together, losing the original language and causing issues with reductionism. They also emphasised that there is an intimate connection between description, evaluation, and function, and that linguistic nuances must become an essential topic in the study of social representations. However, while they pointed out the lack of clarity in the original concepts, much of the criticism was levelled at the early empirical studies utilising the theory, which had not yet refined or operationalised the concepts, although they considered this proof that the theory itself did not work.

Other critiques considered the theory too vague and the mechanisms of anchoring and objectification based more on intuition than empiricism (Jahoda, 1988).

In a response to the early criticism, Moscovici (1988) further defined three types of representation: Hegemonic (uniform and coercive representations); Emancipated (deriving from the circulation of knowledge and ideas within subgroups); and Polemic (expressed as acceptance and resistance, created in social conflicts). This creates the image of a more dynamic concept of the way consensus is created, negotiated, and created again. For instance, social representations of rape could begin as a hegemonic representation, driven and reinforced through patriarchal institutions for hundreds of years; and become, or also be, an emancipated representation, with the circulation of different ideas and knowledge about the reality of rape occurring within, for example, feminist groups, and eventually polemic representations, when these ideas reach wider society, for example the popularisation of #MeToo and the growing conversations around rape myths.

Some of these criticisms are seen as valid by social representations theorists: in a review of criticisms of the theory, Voelklein & Howarth (2005) identified four central issues or controversies: ambiguities in definitions of social representations; social determinism; cognitive reductionism; and the apparent lack of a critical agenda. The authors considered some critiques to be the result of misunderstandings – for example Potter and Litton (1985) claim a lack of definition while definitions exist in the literature (Moscovici, 1963; 1973). Similarly, Wagner (1998) points out that while 'representation' in English is a word implying 'reflection' or 'reproduction', in the original French there is a more active and intentional component to the meaning, possibly causing some misunderstanding in terms of representations as cognitive process and simultaneously as social practice. However, they acknowledge that other criticisms are well-founded constructive points which could help extend the current theory. For instance, while the authors point out the flaws in criticisms that SRT is

socially deterministic, arguing that this critique reduces the theory down to only its cognitive element and does not consider the tension and renegotiations of dynamic social representations, they also concede that conflict and debate are under-theorised within the field, recommending that social representation as dispute and ideological conflict needs to be addressed and developed in the literature. Howarth (2006) further addressed some of these criticisms, particularly those relating to social determinism and acritical agendas. Further developing the theory, she discussed social representations in relation to agency and resistance, psychological processes and social practice, and reification of knowledge systems, placing them within a research context relating to power and ideology, and making further recommendations for the field. This was a seminal study, and served to clarify the framework, positioning it within a critical foundation, laying the groundwork for future modern research and debate within SRT. Debate continues on the theory and its applications, and has expanded to include discussions on whether the Discursive Analytic schools and Social Representations Theory can be integrated, which is crucial for this thesis as I propose to integrate the two schools with a pluralistic approach in Chapter 5.

Gibson (2015) argued that Discursive-Rhetorical Psychology lacked a focus on broader cultural processes, and pointed out that a theory of social representations could provide this. Batel and Castro (2018) then argued that some strands of SRT and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) share several assumptions, such as the acknowledgement of meaning making as an important factor in social psychological research; that meaning-making is variable in inter and intra-subjective ways and is expressed in discourse and communication; and that meaning-making is closely tied to power relations, often working to reproduce them, but also resisting, negotiating, and contesting, creating social change. They also argue that critical and dialogical forms of SRT and discourse

analysis both focus on self-other relations, with SRT theorists claiming that as the self is constructed socially and in relation to others, what begins as external becomes internal, with inner dialogue and tension. Some discourse analysts would disregard the internal elements entirely (Potter & Edwards, 1999), while others consider cognition to be the link between society and discourse (van Dijk, 1993a).

Jovchelovitch (2019) responded to Batel and Castro's (2018) article, agreeing with the authors and expanded on cognition and action, pointing out that the dominant conception of cognition in Western psychology is one that is locked inside an individual's head, and is contextless and separate from the body or social action. She agreed with Discursive schools of thought that action is central, but argued that action is "...the full intentionality and agency of a subject, who knows, feels and understands the object-world cognitively, emotionally, and socially" (pg.4). This indicates that despite historical disagreement based on a limited conception of cognition, discursive analytical schools and SRT are more compatible than previously considered.

Potter (2019) also responded to Batel and Castro (2018), upholding the early Discursive psychology-based critiques of SRT on two major points: methodological issues in their proposed integrative framework, and broad opposition to methodological pluralism. However, this was from a Discursive Psychological point of view, and other discursive schools such as Critical Discourse Analysis are more engaged with issues of power and ideology, as well as potentially taking cognition into consideration, such as the socio-cognitive approach to CDA. Batel and Castro (2019) responded to the criticisms by acknowledging the continuing need for epistemological clarity, but also pointing out that SRT and discourse studies have changed since the earliest debates, as well as the field of social psychology in general, creating space for more critical-focused perspectives, with more openness to interdisciplinarity and methodological

pluralism. Overall, while SRT has in the past been criticised, and its compatibility with discursive methodologies considered unlikely, there has been fresh thought and innovation in both fields, and this thesis hopes to contribute to the integration of CDA and SRT.

The Process of Social Representations

Due to the changeable and dynamic nature of social representations, and the cultural and context-dependent nature of stereotyping and social myths, this is a useful lens through which to study rape stereotypes' influence on society through the individual. Social representations are created through two processes: anchoring, in which unfamiliar concepts are classified into pre-established categories; and objectification, in which those now-familiar concepts are turned into concrete objects. These two major processes can be further broken down and detailed (Moscovici, 1973).

The first, anchoring, has five main subcategories. The three most relevant are naming, emotional anchoring, and thematic anchoring. Naming involves classifying a group or phenomenon by attaching a label to it, which is often begun through the news media. For example, representing victims as either 'virginal' or 'sluts' (Benedict, 1993). Emotional anchoring is also used – a new concept is tied to already familiar, strong emotions. Negative emotional tones used when referring to rape perpetrators may influence public perceptions of what a 'rapist' is, and therefore narrows the definition of rape, which is harmful to victims. Thematic anchoring involves classifying concepts using opposite concepts or metaphors, such as the opposing concepts of 'real' (or stranger) vs 'simple' (or acquaintance) rape. The concept of 'real' rape is anchored to stereotypes that rapes are mainly committed by strangers, at night, outside, and with a weapon. This type is, though comprising only 10% of rapes, overrepresented in the media (Marhia, 2008).

The second process, objectification, happens when an unfamiliar concept has been anchored to a familiar concept. One such category is emotional objectification, where an individual or group conflates a concept with an emotive image. This is perpetuated through the media and court proceedings. For example, a rapist might be represented as an inhuman monster, or foreign, which others the offender and distances them from society, which is harmful in terms of CJS and jury decisions, as it means that perpetrators who do not fit this profile are considered less likely to rape, potentially retraumatising victims. This is a result of naming or emotional anchoring.

Social Representations Theory (SRT) is thus a useful theoretical framework to explore the research questions for the thesis, and to help frame future research directions and practical applications. It is crucial to consider how social representations of rape in various social and professional spheres of England and Wales influence stereotyping and subsequently the real-world issues affecting the criminal justice system and rape victims.

Research Philosophy

It is important in a large undertaking such as a doctoral thesis to consider the philosophy of research, in order to understand researcher assumptions about the research, as well as the justification behind the design choices, analyses and interpretations of the studies. This section deals with my ontology, epistemology, and overall research paradigm.

Ontology is defined as what reality is, or what is known. There are several approaches to ontology, including several viewpoints in the centre of the realist-relativist spectrum, such as critical realism or bounded relativism (Moon & Blackman, 2018), the former of which proposes a 'true' reality that is captured by broad critical

evaluation, and the latter of which argues that shared realities exist within bounded groups (i.e. cultural or moral), but across groups different realities exist. My research is ontologically positioned between these two viewpoints, acknowledging that while much of reality may exist and operate independently of our awareness or knowledge, individuals belonging to different groups construct reality through shared experiences, social representations, and cultural histories. This has informed the research methods for the thesis due to my way of knowing as a more context-dependent one. I have drawn on my ontology to utilise social representations theory – social representations are a dynamic process of negotiation and social change - to explore how rape stereotype acceptance or endorsement changes across and within different social contexts. The critical discourse analysis which included elements of other discursive analytical techniques, conducted later in the thesis (Chapter 5) was also informed by this ontology, which also takes an context-dependent and methodologically pluralist approach. It is important to consider my own understanding of what reality is when undertaking a mixed-methods project in order to ensure that each study is ontologically compatible with the other. Additionally, where critical discourse analysis is involved, the researcher must take an explicit social position, which required me to be additionally aware of my ontology and how the two relate.

Epistemology can be defined as how a researcher understands the world and approaches knowledge. Epistemologically, the thesis is positioned close to a social constructionist viewpoint – meaning is made and knowledge created within social contexts, aligning well with the theoretical framework of the research project – SRT is in itself a system of knowledge creation and perpetuation and a way of making meaning, both socially and individually. It is necessary to understand my own epistemology and how it has influenced my research to ensure that, as a mixed-methods

project, each element was compatible with the others. Social Representations Theory, the theoretical framework of the thesis, has not been historically considered compatible with critical discourse analysis (CDA) due to the former's cognitive approach and the latter's preference for discarding cognitive elements (Van Dijk, 2014a). However, in more recent years there has been a turn towards methodological pluralism and an integration of the two (see pages 32-37 for a critical evaluation of SRT and the debate between discursive analytical schools of thought and SR theorists such as Howarth, 2006). Additionally, a social constructionist epistemology allowed me to consider alternate approaches to CDA such as the socio-cognitive approach (Van Dijk, 1993a), which helped in achieving the knowledge needed to help effect social change.

With a generally interpretivist understanding of reality and knowledge, the overall paradigm of this thesis takes a pragmatist approach, an approach whose central aim is action, applied research, and practical applications. It lends itself well to feminist perspectives – Siegfried (1991) and Gillberg (2012) identified several commonalities between pragmatic and feminist thought, including emphasis on the experience of the person, the goal of the research being to benefit the person and to resolve the problem, community, and the concept of study and action, science, and social reform. A pragmatic paradigm is also compatible with mixed-methods research, given its methodological flexibility. Pragmatism was first founded as a research philosophy by William James, whose definition was that the truth of ideas lies more in their consequences to human experience, and the difference knowledge makes to a person at given points in their lives (James, 1907). This is an important position for research such as the present thesis, which aims to contribute not only to the overall knowledge base, but also aims to propose real world solutions to an ongoing crisis, such as policy change, changes in training, and education initiatives.

Another central figure of pragmatic thought was John Dewey, who believed in a praxis formula for inquiry: The researcher gains experience; the mind acquires knowledge based on their experience which inform their beliefs and actions; then the researcher has a new experience which challenges their previous beliefs. Dewey believed that this is how truth becomes known to the individual (1958). This theory is in line with how we can consider SRT and stereotyping to work, with social representations being reiterated and amplified, potentially changing over time as the individual gains new experience or changes social context. This further supports the pragmatic standpoint of this thesis.

Research Design

The following section details the thesis' overall design, the reasons for the choices made and benefits and limitations.

Mixed Methods

The design of the overall project was a mixed methods approach. Tashakkori and Creswell (2007) stated that "Mixed methods research is defined as research in which the investigator collects and analyses data, integrates the findings, and draws inferences using both qualitative and quantitative approaches or methods in a single study or a program of inquiry" (pg.4). This program included two quantitative survey studies and a qualitative transcription study, discussed in more detail below.

Choice of Mixed-Methods Approach

There are several subcategories of mixed-methods research, and all are useful depending on the aims of the research. The approach I took in my research was multiphase design, which builds on the basic convergent, explanatory, and exploratory design types, and according to Creswell and Plano-Clark (2011), the intent of this

design is to address a set of research questions which advance one overarching research objective. I took this approach as each of the three studies carried out had a separate research question, each building on the main question of the thesis: what is the nature of rape stereotyping in England and Wales at present, and what recommendations need to be made?

There are several benefits to mixed methods research. Firstly, by conducting both qualitative and quantitative research, many of the strengths of both are amplified, while many of the limitations are reduced. For example, the research is able to keep the scientific rigour, generalisability, and measurable nature of quantitative research, and also the rich descriptive understanding of specific social phenomena inherent to qualitative data. Additionally, mixed methods research assists researchers in more deeply and accurately understanding the phenomena being studied (McKim, 2017), while also promoting better understanding by stakeholders on the nature of the research being conducted (Bamberger, 2012). This latter benefit is important to the current research due to its overall aim of giving practical recommendations to stakeholders such as police, legal professionals, and policymakers. Mixed methods research is intrinsically suited to a pragmatic research approach, as mixed methods is a flexible approach to research design, while pragmatism involves a similar concept of using whichever the best methodological tools are that help to create solutions to the research problem. Similarly, the approach is well-suited to the study of social representations and rape stereotypes, as it is a dynamic and context dependent phenomenon, and so requires different tools to understand distinct aspects of the issue in order to make multidimensional recommendations.

In terms of drawbacks, mixed methods research can be time consuming, although this can be offset with proper planning and careful choosing of which type of

mixed methods design to use. Similarly, there can be issues in properly integrating qualitative and quantitative methods due to potential clashes in ontology and epistemology, and again with careful thought given to the narrative and appropriate sequence of the research, this can be reduced: for example, there were some challenges in terms of integrating the social representations theory framework, which aligned well with the survey designs of the quantitative studies, but needed careful consideration with the Discourse Analytical approach of the third study, as cognition is not broadly considered in this approach. This is why van Dijk's (1993a) socio-cognitive approach was chosen for Study Three's critical discourse analysis (Chapter 5), due to its assumptions about mental models, beliefs, and social representations. Additionally, there can be issues in terms of publication if one paper is using a mixed-methods design, as journals can display preference for either qualitative or quantitative methods (Bryman, 2007). However, each of the studies used one design, which offsets this latter issue.

In addition to a multiphase mixed methods design, the thesis also takes a multilevel approach. A multilevel design involves two or more levels of analysis over the course of a research program, and is well suited to the theoretical framework, as Social Representations Theory emphasises its flexibility and dependence upon context, cultural differences, time, and place, all of which can be different at various levels and sections of society. For example, the current research has a survey at a whole population level, a survey at a specific demographic level (i.e., professionals likely to be involved with rape cases), and a transcript study at an institutional level. This is a useful approach to take as the issue of attrition in rape and social representations of rape is a complex, context dependent issue and needs to be addressed on multiple societal levels.

The multiphase-multilevel design also has various benefits. It is useful when creating and synthesising multiple distinct projects over one programme in order to understand and generate potential responses to one overarching problem, and can be flexible, which is helpful with a pragmatist research paradigm, such as mine. In terms of challenges, creating a methodologically diverse research team who work well together despite potential differences in approach and paradigms can be an issue (Creswell, 2012). However, this has been achieved with the thesis' research team, who have drawn disparate research interests and methodologies together to fill gaps in knowledge and skills and help reconcile potential theoretical clashes within the work.

Study Design

The following section contains a detailed discussion of the designs of the three studies conducted during the course of the thesis (See Table 1, Appendix A for a summary of the study designs). As an overview, Studies One and Two were quantitative surveys aimed at the general population and professional populations of England and Wales, respectively, with a questionnaire designed to measure rape stereotype acceptance. Study Three was a critical discourse analysis of real-life police interviews with rape victims. All three studies form a broad picture of the current situation in England and Wales regarding rape stereotyping and related issues, and each study, reflecting the multi-phase, multi-level design of the overall programme, represents an element or elements of the criminal justice system – Study One represents juries and jury decision making; Study Two represents legal and policing professionals, in addition to other professionals who may come into contact with the criminal justice system as part of their occupation; and Study Three is a deep, qualitative exploration of the police at the highest attrition point for victims. The findings for each study were considered using the Social Representations Theory framework. In addition to this, the

social and cognitive processes that perpetuate and drive rape stereotype acceptance and rape stereotype use at each level were examined in order to explain and help to mitigate attrition and the justice gap.

Study One

The aim for Study One was to discover the extent and nature of rape stereotyping among the general population of England and Wales at present, with further questions of whether certain types of stereotype are more likely to be accepted, or if demographics have any significant effect. This study was a large-scale quantitative survey ($n = 1000$), distributed via Qualtrics' panelling service after a smaller pilot study testing and confirming the rape stereotype acceptance scale that was compiled (see Chapter 3 for more information on the pilot study). The sample was representative of the general population of England and Wales, with quotas placed on the demographic groups of age, gender, ethnicity, employment status and education. There were forty statements overall in six categories of stereotype: Beliefs about Male Rape (e.g., men cannot be raped); Beliefs about Perpetrators of Rape (e.g., most rapes are committed by strangers); Beliefs about Consequences of Rape (e.g., date rape is not as traumatic as stranger rape); Beliefs about Rape Victims (e.g., most rape victims are young and attractive); Beliefs about Motives for Rape (e.g., once a man is sexually aroused, he has to have sex and cannot help himself); and Beliefs about Rape Allegations (e.g., allegations of rape are often false). Participants answered on a Likert scale from 1 (Strongly Agree) to 6 (Strongly Disagree), with 7 representing Don't Know and being treated as a missing value. The scores for each statement were combined by median into composite variables by their stereotype category for ease of analysis.

In terms of analysis, frequency analyses were carried out to explore levels of stereotype acceptance for each statement and for each overall category. Missing values

analysis on Don't Know answers was also carried out to explore levels of uncertainty about the statements and for each overall category. In order to explore the potential demographic factors of stereotype acceptance, a multiple analysis of variance (MANOVA) was carried out, as well as a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) to determine any gender related effects. These inferential tests were chosen due to the high number of variables in the analysis: there were six stereotype categories, and five demographic variables. A MANOVA was therefore the most sensible option in order to manage the high number of variables and identify the various possible effects at play. A simple one-way ANOVA was chosen to investigate gender effects as there were only two groups in the gender variable, but still six stereotype categories to consider, ruling out t-tests. The more t-tests that are carried out on a particular independent variable to compare between dependent variables, the higher the likelihood of a type I error. Therefore, ANOVAs, which compare directly within a single test, reduce the likelihood of type I errors and are preferable. In terms of the frequency analyses, no in-depth inferential tests were necessary to determine which stereotype statements and categories were more endorsed than others, as simple percentages and bar charts were enough to gain an understanding of acceptance. Additionally, stereotype acceptance was measured in this study as accuracy levels – based on what myths are 'true' or 'false', based on literature reviews. Descriptive analyses were a useful way to gauge levels of accuracy within the sample. The results of this study were used to make recommendations about jury education and training, and further research regarding professional populations.

Study Two

The aim of this study was to further understand the role of professionals in rape stereotyping and attrition rates, social representations of rape and how they differ from

or align with those of the general population, and additionally whether specialised training in rape stereotypes or length of time in the profession has any impact on stereotype acceptance. The second study was similar to the first and was a smaller scale quantitative survey ($n = 304$) using the same rape stereotype acceptance scale as Study One aimed at professionals who are likely to be involved with rape cases as part of their job. These groups included healthcare, police, legal professionals, social workers, and educators.

In terms of analysis, frequency analyses and missing data analyses were again utilised in order to explore levels of stereotype acceptance and levels of uncertainty. One-way ANOVAs were carried out to examine potential effects of participant age, occupation, and years in the profession. This test was seen as the more sensible option due to the higher number of dependent variables, i.e., the six stereotype categories, but the lower number of independent variables, and reduced the likelihood of type I errors. T-tests were conducted on whether participants had ever received specialised training and were chosen due to the question's dichotomous nature, i.e., it was a yes/no answer. The results of this study were taken in context and comparison with the previous study's results, and recommendations were made on specialised training and future research on specific professions such as educators or healthcare workers.

There were some limitations to the design of studies one and two: I chose the items and decided upon a scale methodology due to the history of item-based scales (Burt 1980, McGee et al., 2011, McMahon & Farmer, 2011, Payne et al., 1999). Upon reflection, it is likely that due to this choice over a vignette-based study which explores stereotype acceptance more covertly, rape stereotype acceptance may appear to be lower in these two studies than actually reflects reality. If carried out again, a mixed-methods vignette/interview approach would be useful, and Zidenberg et al. (2022)

recently carried out a similar study, finding that in a mock-jury exercise, participants endorsed low levels of rape stereotype acceptance on a self-reported scale, while the qualitative responses showed four different types of rape stereotype. Thus, when repeating these first two studies, I would consider using vignettes and open-ended questions to explore stereotype acceptance.

Study Three

The aim of the final study was to discover how police interviewers constructed the alleged perpetrator in initial evidence gathering interviews with rape complainants, and in what way this affected the complainant and their responses. Study Three was a qualitative Critical Discourse Analysis with elements of Conversation Analysis and Discursive Psychology also drawn from, and its direction was informed by the results of the previous two studies. The materials for this study were real life police interviews with rape victims ($n = 10$), wherein the nature of the interviews were initial account and information gathering, generally at the first stage of the victim's reporting process. The interviews were transcribed verbatim, and the analysis was cyclical and iterative, beginning inclusively and becoming more exclusive as themes and research questions were identified. Several close readings of the verbatim transcripts were carried out to find cases utilising the rape stereotype scale from the previous two studies. In line with studies one and two, the most used stereotypes were perpetrator related, especially misunderstanding constructions and agentless passive talk when speaking about perpetrators. These themes were used to develop the research questions of how the perpetrator was constructed within the interview, whether there were differences depending on if the rape was acquaintance, stranger, or partner, and how the complainant responded to these formulations. Once these questions were clearly outlined, significant extracts were identified and transcribed Jefferson-style (See

table 13, Appendix D, for transcription conventions). Jefferson transcription (Jefferson, 2004) was included in order to understand nuance that can be lost in legal transcripts, such as emphasis, tone such as sarcasm, and in order to pick up on distress or emotion that is not always evident within a plain verbatim transcript (Park & Hepburn, 2022). Twenty-five extracts were transcribed, with six eventually used in this thesis.

Due to the overall theoretical framework of Social Representations Theory, and thus emphasis on the cognitive processes behind the acceptance and perpetuation of rape stereotyping, the findings were viewed through a socio-cognitive Critical Discourse approach, of which Van Dijk is a leading proponent. Van Dijk (1993a) proposed that there are three dimensions to the socio-cognitive approach. The first aspect is the societal dimension, in which ideologies are shared by individuals and members of groups or institutions and are related to socioeconomic and political interests of those groups. It is necessary when looking at this dimension to consider issues of power and power abuse; and as mentioned in the introduction, police interviewers have societal and discursive power over interviewees.

The second dimension is that of discourse. Van Dijk considers this the central aim of any CDA school, defining it as "ways of representing aspects of the world: processes, relations and structures of the material world, and mental world of thoughts, feelings & beliefs" (1993a, pg.176). This is essentially different from social structures, as it can only influence or be influenced by text or talk with a mediating mental representation.

The final dimension, the cognitive dimension, provides a mediating link between discourse and society. This dimension influences and is influenced by society and discourse due to mental objects such as ideas, thoughts or beliefs, judgements, and

values, spread via personal cognition such as individual language use or subjective

understanding of text and talk; and social cognition such as social representations of

group members and of issues such as rape (van Dijk, 2014b).

Much of van Dijk's work involves racism and racist propaganda in the media

and in political discourse (1987; 1993b; 2006), however the socio-cognitive approach

will be useful in considering the societal context of the discourse, and in understanding

how discursive and institutional power is applied and certain stereotypical constructions

built in order to uphold societal structures such as patriarchy, and patriarchal

institutions such as the police. It is also useful to consider the mediating link of

cognition, to understand how the identities and roles of the interviewer, and how their

alignments may affect their ideologies and beliefs in a way that affects the discourse of

the interview.

Summary

This thesis has taken a pragmatist view on knowledge and research and has

considered how the knowledge gained in exploring the overall situation of social

representations of rape in England and Wales can have a positive, real-world impact on

policy and practice for juries, professionals, and police interviewing. The multiphase-

multilevel mixed methods design of the program gives the research a broad scope,

helping in this aim. Two quantitative studies and one qualitative study were carried out,

each resulting in recommendations for policy, practice, and education; and additional

suggestions for future research which, it is hoped, will also effect positive change.

Transitional Section 1

The following three chapters are concerned with the analysis, interpretation, and implications of the three studies. These studies were initially written in paper format, and Study One is published with the *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, (Hermolle, M., Andrews, S. J., & Huang, C.Y.S. (2022). Rape stereotype acceptance in the general population of England and Wales. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 37*(23-24), NP23131-NP23155) while Study Two is currently under review with *Psychology, Crime, and Law*. Due to Covid-related delays, Study Three is in a more traditional chapter form, and is currently in preparation for submission to *Critical Discourse Studies*. Due to this intended formatting, in addition to methods and findings, within each chapter is also a literature and a discussion section.

This was the preferred format for the thesis, as it complements the pragmatic research paradigm and mixed-methods multi-study design of the programme. The overall purpose of this thesis was to make actionable recommendations for policy and practice within the CJS in order to address highly relevant and current issues and writing the studies up as papers in the first instance in order to publish and disseminate findings sooner was an appropriate way to achieve this.

In between each paper, there is a transitional section which aimed to bring the three studies together and help provide understanding of how each paper fits together and how each builds on the last. These sections briefly summarise the findings and explain the implications of the previous study, putting them into context, and providing a brief rationale for the next study. The theoretical framework is also briefly discussed in relation to the findings and implications of the previous study and rationale for the next. Thus a narrative thread runs throughout these transitional portions of the thesis.

Chapter 3

Study One: Rape Stereotype Acceptance in the General Population of England and Wales

The extent and nature of rape stereotype acceptance amongst the general public in England and Wales is a topic that needs updating. Current issues of rape attrition, potentially arising from underlying perceptions or stereotyping, drive the need for new, comprehensive research. Rape has the highest cost to society, with a devastating individual impact and a high social and economic impact (Burgess & Carretta, 2017; Heeks et al., 2018), yet one of the lowest prosecution rates. Only 1.4% of rapes in year 2019 to 2020 resulted in a charge or summons (Home Office, 2020), with even fewer resulting in conviction. Due to possible impacts of rape stereotyping by the general public, who represent juries, and also legal professionals, it is crucial to discover the extent of rape stereotyping at present in the UK.

The Cost of Rape and Rape Stereotyping

Burt (1980) first defined rape stereotypes, or rape myths, as "prejudicial, stereotyped or false beliefs about rape, rape victims and rapists" (Burt, 1980, pg.217). This study was the first in social psychology to define rape stereotypes with the 19 item Rape Myth Acceptance Scale. It also found strong connections between different variables, including attitudes towards gender roles, personality traits, personal experiences and individual background and people's acceptance of rape myths. The topic has since been widely researched with new measures created. For example, Briere et al. (1985) conducted an empirical study to assess the complexity of rape stereotypes, creating nine new scales, many of which were significantly associated with stereotype acceptance, while Payne et al. (1999) created and studied the 45-item Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (IRMA) across several studies.

The UK legal definition of rape is intentionally penetrating the vagina, anus, or mouth of another person with a penis. The victim does not consent to the penetration and the offender does not reasonably believe that the victim consents (Sexual Offences Act, 2003). The impact of rape is far-reaching and devastating. Victims may experience physical effects such as sexually transmitted diseases or pregnancy, and psychological consequences such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), depression, anger and feelings of vulnerability, and high levels of self-blame (Burgess & Carretta, 2017). Although the authors were writing from an American perspective, they pointed out that the way culture defines gender roles impacts the perception of rape and cost to the victim. Similarly to the US, the United Kingdom operates from a history of patriarchy and consequently normalisation of rape (Tranchese, 2019), suggesting this is a valuable perspective.

The physical and emotional costs to the individual also contribute to a high economic and social impact. Heeks et al. (2018) carried out a thorough report on the economic and social costs of crime, first estimating the total number of crimes using Home Office and Crime Survey of England and Wales statistics, and then estimating the costs of crime using several criteria. They found that of all non-fatal crimes, rape had the highest estimated cost, at £39,360 per offence. These costs included physical and emotional harms, time taken off work, and preventative measures. The estimated number of crimes was 121,746, leading to a total cost of £4.8 billion for the year. Consequently, up-to-date research on rape and rape stereotyping is needed to explore how these costs to individual and society can be reduced.

Furthermore, this crime has the highest cost to society, yet one of the lowest prosecution rates. The Crime Survey of England and Wales (ONS, 2020) found that .05% of men and 7.1% of women aged between 16 and 59 were victims of rape or

attempted rape. Rape is a highly underreported crime, so these estimates are likely to be less than the true figures: approximately 83% of people who had experienced rape had never reported to the police (ONS, 2020). The widening gap between rapes, their reports, and prosecutions is concerning – the Crime Outcomes in England and Wales Report revealed that in 2019-20, only 1.4% of rapes resulted in a charge or summons, and 41% of cases resulted in the victim dropping out of the case, leading to high attrition rates (Home Office, 2020). Contributing to this concern is that rape stereotypes contribute to poor investigation and outcomes for rape complainants – Hohl and Stanko (2015) carried out a large-scale representative study sampling rape complaints made to the London Metropolitan Police Service. Discussing the range of factors associated with attrition in their literature review, they found that all such factors are bound up in rape stereotypes, with significant evidence suggesting that real rapist, victim resistance and 'respectable woman' stereotypes are considerable factors in attrition.

Another contributing factor to attrition has likely been the digital processing notice, a form victims are often pressured to sign which allows investigators to search their digital devices, often requiring sensitive information involving messages from friends and family on multiple platforms and apps which is beyond the scope of the investigation. Many victims refuse, and consequently, their case is dropped (Justice Inspectorate, 2019), perhaps due to legal officials' victim blaming and rape stereotyping. Additionally, the End Violence Against Women Coalition (EVAW) recently investigated the Crown Prosecution Service's (CPS) failure to prosecute rape and found that there was a growing culture within the CPS of risk-avoidance, suggesting that due to a change in approach, the CPS has only been pursuing 'easy' cases. This could also be related to acceptance of stereotypes within the CPS, and had a

trickle-down effect on the police, causing them to take a similar approach (EVAW Coalition v The Director of Public Prosecutions, 2019).

Social Representations Theory

It is clear that there is a heavy societal, as well as individual, price for rape, likely perpetuated by stereotypes about 'real' rape victims or 'real' perpetrators. To aid in our understanding of these complex dynamics, the present research must be situated within an appropriate social psychological framework. Social Representations Theory (Moscovici, 1961) focuses on the social nature of communication, and how social representations influence society through the individual. Therefore, this is a useful lens through which to study the way in which rape stereotypes are not only generated but also perpetuated by society through the individual.

Stereotypes are created when particular images or stories are repeated. When repeated and amplified socially, the concept becomes a generally accepted belief about members of a social category or group (Taylor & Stern, 1997). According to Höijer (2011), this repetition and amplification of concepts and beliefs about groups begins in childhood and is transmitted through traditional institutions, including family, religion, law, and media. Therefore, within structures such as patriarchy, which influences many cultures, stereotypes about gender and rape are passed down generation to generation. Rape stereotypes have existed for centuries. For example, Lord Justice Matthew Hale in the late 18th century asserted that rape is, "an accusation easily to be made and hard to be proved and harder to be defended by the party accused, tho never so innocent" (Hale, 1778, pg.635). Statements such as this have been repeated, used in legal settings, and become reified as rape stereotypes through social representations.

Social Representations Theory originates from Durkheim's concept of collective representations, a theory of how social reality is navigated. Moscovici (2000) felt this

concept was too static for how dynamic and changeable the social conditions of contemporary society are. He emphasised the way in which representations arise through interaction and communication between individuals and groups, reflecting cultural and historical contexts. This is one likely reason, since the rise of accessible online and print news media, for the media being a substantial agent for perpetuating social representations and stereotypes of real rape and real rapists. For example, O'Hara (2012) carried out a lexical analysis of 124 news articles about three sensationalised rape cases, finding that the perpetrator was often 'othered', and described as a 'beast' or 'freak'. This distances the perpetrator from society, yet approximately 85% of rape perpetrators are known to the victim (ONS, 2020).

Additionally, 'real victim' stereotypes are often perpetuated by the media through representations of young white virginal women, or drunken 'slut' who 'wanted it'. Benedict (1993) suggested that the latter is a classic victim blaming stereotype, while the former is reductive, exclusionary, and dishonest. This influences court proceedings and jury decision-making already affected by long-established patriarchal social representations of rape: while social representations are ingrained in jurors, rape stereotyping is also routinely used by the defence to undermine the victim or exonerate the perpetrator. Temkin et al. (2018) carried out a court observation study and found a wide range of rape stereotypes in use, most often by the defence to discredit the victim or witness. In some cases, the judge agreed with these stereotypes, while in others, 'mythbuster' judicial directions were used. Similarly, Smith and Skinner (2017) carried out a 10-month observation of 18 rape trials and found that mythbuster directions were also sometimes used but often undermined by the defence in closing arguments, rendering them irrelevant to the jury. This interplay between legal professionals and lay decision making necessitates comprehensive research into the social representations of

rape and its current cultural reflections, and how they continue to perpetuate rape stereotypes.

Demographic Factors

Much research has focused on the demographic predictors of rape myth acceptance, although the greater proportion of the literature centres on gender differences. Such studies have found that men tend to be significantly more likely to accept rape stereotypes than women. This was the case in all countries in a cross-national survey carried out by Fakunmoju et al. (2020) in the United States (US), Nigeria, South Africa, and Ghana. Additionally, Zidenberg et al. (2021) and Barnett et al. (2018) both carried out studies in which men were more likely to accept rape stereotypes than women, while other factors additionally had an effect, such as religiosity, anti-fatness, and sympathy for victims. It will be useful to gain a similar understanding of gender and rape stereotype acceptance in the UK.

There are fewer studies on other demographics such as ethnicity, sexual orientation, and age. For example, Suarez and Gadalla (2010) carried out a meta-analysis on rape stereotype studies, finding that while ethnic information was often collected, only 6 out of 37 studies contained any comparison between ethnic groups. Studies that have been carried out have found that Black and Asian participants are more likely to accept rape stereotypes than White participants, but generally do not offer explanations as to why this might be. For example, Barn and Powers (2018) found that both Indian and British participants accepted rape stereotypes, but Indian participants showed significantly higher acceptance. However, the authors expressed uncertainty as to what this could be attributed to.

Similarly, age as a predictor of rape stereotype acceptance has seen mixed findings. For example, some studies have found that older participants show higher rape

stereotype acceptance, such as Adams-Price et al.'s (2004) vignette study, in which the authors attributed the findings to higher levels of conservatism; and Anderson et al.'s (1997) meta-analysis, which also found higher levels of rape stereotype acceptance for older participants. Conversely, Barn and Powers' (2018) cross-national survey found that younger participants were more likely to accept rape stereotypes, attributing this to an expansion of social networks and life experiences. Therefore, it will be interesting to discover any potential effects of ethnicity and age within the current study.

Current Study

The current study assessed the extent and nature of rape stereotyping in the United Kingdom, using an online anonymous survey. The aim was to explore the extent of rape stereotype acceptance in the general population, and also which stereotype categories were adhered to most. The levels of accuracy and uncertainty for the categories as well as individual items were therefore analysed. To gain a deeper understanding of the interplay between demographic factors and rape stereotyping, inferential analyses between the categories and the demographic information from the survey were carried out.

Due to the detrimental impact that rape and the acceptance of related stereotypes have on both individuals and society, there is a need for systematic research focusing on rape stereotypes and on how rape myth acceptance is impacted by demographic factors. While rape myth acceptance as a topic is not under-researched in general, the author undertook literature searches which looked for rape stereotype or rape myth studies that were: conducted in England and Wales; representative of the general population; and conducted within the last 10 years, finding 118 articles with "general population" and "England and Wales" specified and 505 articles with only "general population" specified. Not all of these articles were relevant to the search criteria or topic, either in

terms of sample size or population, location, or topic. Aside from research conducted in Scotland (Prince et al., 2017), there has been no recent, systematic, representative research on rape stereotype acceptance in the UK.

This study tested three hypotheses:

- It was first predicted that rape stereotype acceptance would be widespread in the general population, in line with McGee et al., (2002) and McGee et al., (2011) who found in two large-scale telephone survey studies in Ireland that there was a concerning level of agreement with myth statements.

- It was also predicted that the most accepted categories would be those related to male rape, victims, and perpetrators (McGee et al., 2011).

- Finally, in line with McGee et al. (2011), and also Anderson et al. (1997), whose meta-analysis of 65 articles found that certain demographic variables affected rape stereotype acceptance, it was predicted that men and older people would be most likely to accept rape stereotypes.

Method

Participants

An a priori power analysis was carried out in G*Power using a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) to determine optimal sample size. Given six groups, which were the six stereotype categories (see below), an effect size of .11, and a power score of .80, the sample was calculated to be 1068. For practical reasons, 1000 was taken as the sample size. 1000 participants were recruited via Qualtrics panelling services. Due to quotas being placed on the groups, the sample was representative of the population of England and Wales in terms of Age, Gender, Ethnicity and Employment Status. Demographic statistics were gathered from Qualtrics' Census data, which was sourced from Eurostat (2016) (See Table 2, Appendix B for participant demographics).

Participants were reimbursed for their time via Qualtrics with the equivalent of £5 in incentives (such as prizes, sweepstakes, and points-based reward programs).

Materials and Design

An online questionnaire was created with Qualtrics and was distributed via Qualtrics panelling services. The survey created for the questionnaire was partly based on existing research, such as McGee et al. (2002), who created several survey items that are used in the current survey. The same authors categorised their items into five types in a later study (McGee et al., 2011). These categories were used for the current study. More items were generated by gathering information on popular rape stereotypes from rape support websites (e.g., Nottingham Sexual Violence Support Services' page on rape myths and the 'myths vs realities' page from Rape Crisis England and Wales).

A pilot study was first carried out to test the scale ($n = 290$), with overall results and category results from Cronbach's Alpha tests indicating generally high reliability with some items removed ($\alpha = .89$ overall, with most individual categories showing $\alpha = .72$ or above). Some items were removed (The victim getting aroused or ejaculating during sexual assault means they probably wanted it; rape with multiple perpetrators or 'gang rape' is rare; sexual experienced people are less traumatised by rape; and if two people have had sex before, it is always fine to initiate sex again without agreeing beforehand). Some were also reworded for clarity or to counter potential response bias, such as social desirability, demand bias (where participants presume to know the research agenda), or dissent bias (participants disagreeing with every item on the survey), so further reliability tests were carried out on the final version of the scale. After the pilot study, 40 out of 44 items were used in the main study. A split-half reliability test was carried out on all forty items, resulting in a score of .91, confirming the scale's high internal reliability.

After thorough research into existing rape myth scales and the pilot study, the final scale constituted six categories and forty items: Beliefs about Male Rape (e.g., men cannot be raped) which included five items ($\alpha = .81$); Beliefs about Perpetrators of Rape (e.g., most rapes are committed by strangers) which included ten items ($\alpha = .82$); Beliefs about Consequences of Rape (e.g., date rape is not as traumatic as stranger rape) which included three items ($\alpha = .35$); Beliefs about Rape Victims (e.g., most rape victims are young and attractive) which included nine items ($\alpha = .91$); Beliefs about Motives for Rape (e.g., once a man is sexually aroused, he has to have sex and cannot help himself), encompassing five items ($\alpha = .71$); and Beliefs about Rape Allegations (e.g., allegations of rape are often false), which included twelve items ($\alpha = .92$).

These were compiled into a matrix-style questionnaire (a group of questions displayed in a grid of rows and columns – the rows present the questions or statements, and the columns present the scale along which the participant makes their choice) via Qualtrics online survey software, using a seven-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = Strongly Agree to 6 = Strongly Disagree, with 'Don't Know' as the 7th point (not included in mean calculations and treated as missing data). Demographic information was collected at the beginning of the survey, including age, gender, sexuality, employment status, education, and ethnicity. Although there may have been some risk of response bias such as acquiescence bias when placing demographic questions at the beginning of the survey, Frick et al. (1999) and Teclaw et al.'s (2012) studies indicate that this risk was minimal. It was additionally important to the study to gain a truly representative sample, and placing the demographic items at the end may have led to lower completion, for example, due to fatigue. To determine the extent of rape stereotype acceptance, frequency analyses were carried out to measure levels of accuracy when responding to the items (see Table 2, Appendix B). Participants rated

their agreement with each statement on a Likert scale from 1 = strongly agree to 6 = strongly disagree. A 7th point: "don't know", was included, to measure levels of uncertainty, which were calculated using missing values analyses to study the frequency of "don't know" answers.

The current study uses the term 'accuracy', meaning how correct or incorrect the participants are, to align with participants' rape stereotype acceptance levels. Where participants show lower accuracy when responding to stereotypical statements, for example "rape allegations are often false", this is indicative of higher stereotype acceptance. The reason for this choice was to have an empirical, objective measure of false/true. To measure levels of accuracy, participants who disagreed with false statements and agreed with true statements (reverse coded stereotype statements) were classified as correct. Statements were classified as true or false based on empirical research (McGee et al., 2002) and educational and support websites such as Rape Crisis England and Wales.

Procedure

The Qualtrics panelling service carried out a 'soft launch' of the survey, collecting 10% of the total sample size for review, and then fully launched the survey. Recruitment was carried out in April 2019, and initial data collection took one week, from soft launch to full completion. Participants were sent an anonymous link to the survey, which they clicked to see an information sheet and consent form. After giving full informed consent, they filled in the survey with the option to withdraw at any time. At the end of the survey participants saw a debrief sheet, with contact details for support services, which were also available throughout the survey. The full data was then reviewed for low quality responses. Examples of this include participants

intentionally filling out the survey incorrectly by clicking randomly or 'straightlining' answers. Responses such as these were replaced. This process took one week.

Results

Overall Stereotype Acceptance

Overall, levels of accuracy in statement responses were high, indicating low rape stereotype acceptance. Eleven items of the forty were below an accuracy threshold of 75%, while seventeen items were between 75-90% accuracy, and twelve items were responded to with over 90% accuracy (see superscript, Table 2, Appendix B). The least accurate item was "alcohol, drugs, stress or depression can turn people into rapists", while the most accurate item was "if a man pays for a dinner or date, a woman should reciprocate with sex". The former item is related to perpetrators, while the latter relates to victims and definitions of rape.

A missing data analysis was carried out to determine levels of uncertainty with the statements (see Table 3, Appendix B). Twelve of the forty items were above 10% uncertainty. The items of lowest uncertainty were "men cannot be raped", and "if a man pays for a dinner or date, a woman should reciprocate with sex", each at .66% uncertainty. The latter item was also the most accurate, suggesting that accurate participants were more certain.

The items of highest uncertainty were "Sexual abuse rarely happens in same-sex relationships" (18.3%), and "People who are sexually abused as children become abusers themselves" (14%). The former item had a high level of accuracy (76.2%), so the uncertainty may be due to the majority heterosexual sample. The latter had one of the lowest levels of accuracy – 49.6% incorrectly agreed with the statement. A pattern is suggested here, as the least accurate item ("Alcohol, drugs, stress or depression can turn people into rapists", 42.3%) had the next highest uncertainty (13.6%). This

indicates that those items with higher stereotype acceptance appear to also hold the highest uncertainty about the statements.

Accuracy Within Stereotype Categories

Table 3 indicates that the most widely accepted stereotypes were perpetrator related. All but two of the eleven least accurate items (< 75%) were in this category. One of the remaining items, "men who rape other men are usually gay", is in the male rape category, yet could also be construed by participants as perpetrator related, and so fits the pattern. These findings indicate that stereotypes about perpetrators are more widely accepted than those of other categories. Most items with the highest levels of accuracy fell into the victim or allegation categories, including items from the male rape category that could be included in the victim category. This suggests that participants did not tend to endorse stereotypes about rape victims or the nature of consent. Male rape myths in general were not as highly accepted as hypothesised – most items were above 85% accuracy, and the more highly accepted items could be considered to fall within perpetrator or victim related stereotype categories, for example "Men who rape other men are usually gay" (31.5% agreement).

The perpetrator category held the highest uncertainty, with six out of ten items over 10%. The categories with the lowest uncertainty were victim stereotypes, with one out of nine items above 10%, and motives for rape, with all items far below 10%.

Demographic Factors

A Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA), followed by several Univariate ANOVAs, was carried out to determine whether acceptance of rape stereotypes was significantly affected by demographic group (See Table 3, Appendix B). Dependent variables were the stereotype categories, transformed into their

composite scales taken by each item's median. Independent variables were five

demographics: age, education, employment status, sexuality, and ethnicity (see Table 4,

Appendix B). A separate one-way ANOVA was carried out to determine the effects of

gender on stereotype acceptance (see Table 7, Appendix B). A one-way ANOVA was

chosen for gender because this variable only had two groups – the third group,

nonbinary, was excluded due to its low numbers. Thus, the gender variable was not

included in MANOVA, as a post-hoc test to determine which specific groups show

significant effects would be unnecessary in a two-group variable. Age ($F_{(4,24.00)} = 1.04$,

$p = .39.$, $\eta^2 = .01$), education ($F_{(7,42.00)} = 1.24$, $p = .13$, $\eta^2 = .01$), employment status

($F_{(8,48.00)} = .83$, $p = .78$, $\eta^2 = .01$), and sexuality ($F_{(3,18.00)} = .83$, $p = .86$, $\eta^2 = .006$) were

found to have no significant effect on stereotype acceptance. Several significant effects

were found for Ethnicity ($F_{(4,24.00)} = 2.13$, $p = .001$, $\eta^2 = .02$), and Gender (see below).

Gender

A one-way ANOVA with mean plots showed that men were significantly more

likely than women to accept stereotypes in the following categories: consequences of

rape ($F_{(1, 10.68)} = 10.42$, $p = .001$, $\eta^2 = .01$); victim stereotypes ($F_{(1, 12.90)} = 17.29$, $p < .001$

, $\eta^2 = .003$); motives for rape ($F_{(1, 6.47)} = 7.56$, $p = .006$, $\eta^2 = .001$); and allegation

stereotypes ($F_{(1, 12.66)} = 15.99$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .001$).

A follow up crosstabulation was carried out between gender and the items in

these significant categories to further analyse gender differences between endorsement

of certain items (Table 5, Appendix B). The crosstabs found that in all except two

items, men had higher endorsement than women. More women than men agreed with

the items "Once a man is sexually aroused, he absolutely has to have sex and cannot

help himself" (M = 5.8%, F = 6.9%), and "When a woman says no, she is playing hard

to get and generally means yes" (M = 5.2%, F = 8.2%). One item, "Women are most

likely to be raped after dark by a stranger, so shouldn't go out at night alone", had a high level of agreement from both men and women (26.6% and 26.3% respectively), while the highest scoring item was by men: 27.2% agreed that "accusations of rape are often false", compared to 14.6% of women. The lowest scoring item from both men and women was "transgender people can't be raped" (3.4% and 1.7%) respectively. Over 15% of men also agreed with the items, "Women who wear short skirts/tight tops invite rape" (16.3% compared to 11.0% of women), "Rape is only about sex" (16.5% compared to 10.8% of women), "some women have an unconscious desire to be raped" (16.2% compared to 6.5% of women), and "'Real' victims report rape immediately" (17.2% compared to 9.3% of women).

Ethnicity

Post-hoc tests showed that Asian British or Black African/Caribbean British participants were significantly likelier to accept rape stereotypes than other ethnicities in three categories: male rape stereotypes ($F_{(4, 435)} = 5.24$, $p < .001$, $\eta p^2 = .03$); victim stereotypes ($F_{(4, 3.309)} = 5.21$, $p < .001$, $\eta p^2 = .03$); and motives for rape ($F_{(4, 2.690)} = 3.64$, $p = .006$, $\eta p^2 = .02$).

Similar to the gender crosstabs, an ethnicity x items crosstabulation was carried out to further explore the higher-level significant findings and understand which items are more likely to be accepted by certain ethnicities (Table 6, Appendix B). The crosstabs only utilised the significant items from the MANOVA and the ethnicities that showed significant differences (White, Black Caribbean/African British, Asian/Asian British). The crosstabs found that for 14 out of 18 items, Black (B) participants were most likely to accept rape stereotypes, with higher percentages of agreement in general. For the other four items, Asian (A) participants showed the highest stereotype endorsement, while White (W) participants had the lowest levels of agreement of all

three ethnicities analysed and thus showed the least endorsement for rape stereotypes. The highest stereotype endorsements overall were for the items "Men who rape other men are usually gay" (B = 48.5% compared to A = 42.6%, W = 33.3%), and "Women are most likely to be raped after dark by a stranger, so shouldn't go out at night alone" (A = 48.6 compared to B = 42.8%, W = 24.0%). These are high levels of stereotype endorsement across ethnicities in general, however almost half of Black (48.5%) and Asian (48.6%) participants respectively agreed with the items. Ten items were also over 20% agreement for Black participants, for example, "Most rape victims are young and attractive" (21.6% compared to A = 14.5, W = 8.0), "Once a man is sexually aroused, he absolutely has to have sex and cannot help himself" (25.7% compared to A = 14.9% and W = 4.6%), and "Rape is only about sex" (33.4% compared to A = 20.8%, W = 12.3%). The lowest level of stereotype endorsement was from White participants, for the item "If a man pays for dinner or a date, a woman should reciprocate with sex" (1.9%, compared to A = 6.4%, B = 14.3%). This was also the lowest endorsed item for Asian participants, while the item with lowest agreement for Black participants was "Men cannot be raped" (2.9%, compared to A = 15.3%, W = 4.1%). It is noteworthy that this is the only item where White participants show a higher level of agreement than either of the other ethnicities.

These results indicate that some demographic differences in acceptance and endorsement of rape myths exist, most notably in gender and ethnicity, and some complex and interesting item-level demographic differences are also present

Discussion

This uniquely systematic and representative exploration into rape stereotypes across England and Wales' general population produced several findings that contribute to the literature on rape stereotypes, including new knowledge on acceptance of

perpetrator stereotypes, and contribute to the body of work indicating the gendered nature of rape stereotype acceptance. These findings gave rise to various recommendations, including shifting social representations and therefore reducing stereotype acceptance within society: and looking at policy and practice within the police and the CPS, specifically concerning jury education. The findings also open up avenues for future research.

Overall Stereotype Acceptance

In general, accuracy levels were high, with a majority of participants correctly disagreeing with many of the statements, indicating that there was an overall low level of rape stereotype acceptance. This suggests that broadly, social representations of rape are changing in the UK since past studies were conducted here. For example, Prince et al. (2018) discovered high levels of inaccuracy and uncertainty within their sample, indicating higher stereotype acceptance. However, the victimised group in the study was children, potentially making a difference in social representations and stereotype acceptance when compared with adults.

Despite the apparent shift towards attitude change, the levels of inaccuracy and uncertainty are concerning, especially when considering the sample's age of 18-75, a jury-eligible age group. Overall, eleven items were below 75% accuracy, indicating that erroneous beliefs and specific, harmful social representations of rape persist, the most prominent of which was "alcohol, drugs, stress or depression can turn people into rapists". This may be tied to social representations of mental illness, which, despite a more open discourse in recent years, still carries a stigma. Foster (2001) found a general social representation of 'mental illness' existed in the press, expressed through narratives of violence, unpredictability and otherness. This has changed little in the last 20 years: Murphy et al. (2013) found negative representations, including links to

violence and drugs, still existent within the UK media, while Lloyd (2010) discussed deeply held stigma and stereotypes attached to drug users, linking media representations and public beliefs that drug users are unpredictable and criminal, as with mental illness. There is possibly a social representation that mentally ill people or drug users, are unpredictable and 'other', and are therefore likely to transgress social taboos and commit rape. Given that media can be one of many vehicles for expressing and perpetuating social representations (Höijer, 2011), this may be one factor in the high endorsement of that item.

Besides low accuracy, participants also had the second-highest uncertainty for the item linked to mental illness, and many items with the lowest accuracy also had high uncertainty. It is possible that this study captured one moment during a shift in attitudes, at least partly due to the #MeToo movement gaining wider public attention. Social representations of rape are always being negotiated and contested, and one dominant social representation (for example, those related to rape victims) can be changed and transformed in favour of a different and competing social representation (Howarth, 2006). This may be the case for social representations of rape, which would reflect lower levels of rape stereotype acceptance, and during this potential transitional period, possible uncertainty reflecting the shift in dominant representations. Szekeres et al.'s (2020) study in the United States found a similar change in attitudes across six months, likely also reflecting a change in social representations. However, given the current statistics on prosecution and conviction rates, concern remains about jury acceptance of and uncertainty about perpetrator myths – if jurors do not consider a defendant fitting the 'real rapist' stereotype, this could result in erroneous decision making.

Accuracy Within Stereotype Categories

The perpetrator related category had the lowest accuracy, and therefore the highest acceptance of rape stereotypes. One potential contributing factor for this could be the emphasis on minimising victim-blaming and allegation stereotypes in media and societal discourse, with less attention paid to perpetrator-centric stereotypes, possibly causing less resistance and change around the current social representations of rape perpetrators, and so the dominant representation still appears to be based around that of 'real rapist', which involves narratives of otherness and distancing from society. Hindes and Fileborn (2020, in a critical discourse analysis of a high-profile #MeToo case in the Australian press, found the same othering distinction between 'real' perpetrator-monster and perpetrators of coercive rape. This narrative exonerates many perpetrators, and discredits and harms the victims, as narrow social representations of rapists often do not fit the suspect. They do not 'seem' like a rapist; therefore, the victim must be lying or mistaken. Thus, despite broadly high accuracy for the victim blaming or allegation related categories, social representations of rapists which reflect 'stranger' or othering stereotypes may still be harmful to victims of rape.

Other items in the perpetrator category were of low accuracy, most strikingly the item "men of certain races and backgrounds are more likely to be rapists", suggesting that almost a quarter of the sample may still hold harmful and prejudiced beliefs about race and rape. Debauche (2011) suggested that in western society when the rapist belongs to a culturally dominant group, their offence is blamed on their monstrous nature and isolated from the rest of the group. However, when the rapist is part of a minority group within a dominant culture, the rape is blamed on the minority culture. This is seen in the UK media narrative of 'Muslim grooming gangs' which influence social representations of both Islam and rape to the detriment of Muslim communities (Cockbain & Tufail, 2020). Consequently, one dominant social

representation of rapists may include those of ethnic minorities, deepening xenophobia and causing mistrust, which may be harmful to victims of ethnic minorities in the UK when reporting their rape due to their potentially receiving the same xenophobia and mistrust as their perpetrators. Walker et al. (2019) indicates that many UK Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) victims do not report rape, possibly out of fear of further fuelling racism, suggesting that the complex links between the social representations of race and rape warrant deeper investigation.

The items in the male rape related category additionally had a lower level of stereotype endorsement than expected. It was initially hypothesised that due to social representations of manhood and toxic masculinity norms in society, male rape myths would be widely accepted. However, items such as "Men cannot be raped", or Men who are raped must have been acting gay" had very low agreement and could be considered a victim related stereotype, while the most endorsed stereotype in this category, "Men who rape other men are usually gay", could be considered a perpetrator related stereotype, which would fall in line with the levels of endorsement in those categories. There are several possible reasons for the lower acceptance rate for this category than hypothesised: firstly, that the items belong in separate categories which already exist (perpetrator or victim, for example), thus the findings are more accurately reflective of those categories. Another possible reason is the increasing awareness of male rape in the past several years – similar to shifts in social representations of rape victims, there may potentially be tensions and renegotiations of social representations of male rape as a result of ongoing societal change.

Demographic Factors

Significant differences in stereotype acceptance were found to exist between certain demographic groups, in line with previous findings.

The hypothesis that older people would be significantly more likely to accept rape stereotypes was not supported by the findings. Some previous research suggests that older adults are more likely to accept rape stereotypes than younger adults, which may be due to these groups tending to conservatism – Adams-Price et al. (2004) carried out a study in which three age groups (n = 145) read several differing vignettes. They measured levels of victim blaming, finding that older respondents were more likely to blame the victims. They suggested this could be attributed to higher levels of conservatism. Anderson et al.'s (1997) meta-analysis of 72 rape myth studies found higher levels of rape myth acceptance for older people. However, more recent research has found this relationship to be the inverse. For instance, Barn and Powers (2018) carried out a cross-national survey of 693 participants, finding that younger respondents were significantly likelier to accept rape stereotypes. They attributed this finding to an expansion of social networks and life experiences. This expansion in perspective could be happening alongside the tensions, negotiations and shifts in an individual's social practices and thus social representations. The lack of significant effects in this demographic may be due to this, and indeed, although there was no meaningful significance, mean plots illustrated a tendency for those aged 45 and over to accept stereotypes slightly less than those who were younger, potentially lending some small weight to this argument.

Concerning gender differences, men were significantly more likely to endorse stereotypes in consequences of rape, victim related, motive related, and allegation stereotypes. This was in line with the hypothesis regarding gender and is in line with existing research. For example, Adolfsson et al. (2018) found in one of several vignette studies that men were more likely to accept rape stereotypes than women, while McGee et al. (2002) found in their large-scale telephone study that men were more likely than

women to accept rape stereotypes. More recently, a study carried out by Zidenberg et al. (2021) exploring the effects of gender and attitudes towards fatness on rape myth acceptance found that men had the highest mean scores for victim blaming, perpetrator sympathy, and rape stereotype acceptance. It is highly likely that stereotypical beliefs about and social representations of rape which are expressed through victim blaming and perpetrator exoneration are more likely to persist amongst men within patriarchal cultural contexts in which women have been historically considered inferior to men. Barnett et al. (2018) carried out a US study in which men were more likely to accept rape stereotypes than women, while religiosity was also significantly and positively correlated with rape stereotype acceptance. Religion and family, in addition to media, are the most common vehicle for perpetuating social representations, and thus rape stereotypes, potentially accounting for this continuing finding.

The crosstabulation, which further explored specific gender differences in item agreement, found that the types of item most accepted, especially by men, were reflective of disbelief (e.g., "accusations of rape are often false"), and victim blaming and placing the onus and responsibility on the victim, for example "'real' victims report rape immediately". This is possibly an expression of a social representation of the 'real' rape victim as innocent, and yet conflictingly, responsible. This is further indicated in higher levels of agreement with statements such as "women who wear short skirts and tight tops invite rape", and "some women have an unconscious desire to be raped", which further place responsibility on the victim. Men also showed higher levels of agreement with items that absolved the perpetrator and indicated a lack of acknowledgement of wider power structures in society that perpetuate rape culture, such as patriarchy – for example, "rape is only about sex", which may reflect a social representation of the perpetrator as 'one bad individual' apart from society, rather than

indicative of patriarchal societal structures in general – Payne et al. (1999) identified seven different subtypes of rape myth, one of which was Rape is a Deviant Event. Items such as the ones mentioned above would fall under this subtype, which indicates an erroneous belief that rape is a rare, extreme 'event' (O'Connor et al., 2018). Rape is a gendered crime, with men overwhelmingly the perpetrators. It is thus possible that perpetrator-excusing social representations of rape could be a protective mechanism for men who consider themselves 'normal' people who wouldn't rape, but in reality are more aligned with the acquaintance or partner profile of a rape perpetrator. This is supported by Carline et al. (2018). Interestingly, both men and women were equally likely to agree that "women are most likely to be raped after dark by a stranger, so shouldn't go out at night alone", which may indicate a hegemonic or dominant social representation of a "real rapist", less likely to be contested as it is a perpetrator related stereotype. It may indicate an additional social representation for women of traditionally unsafe spaces – although acquaintance rapes are the most common form, those most represented in the media are 'real rape'. It is true that women can be and are attacked outside at night, as evidenced by the sexual assaults and deaths of Sabina Nessa, Zara Aleena, and Sarah Everard, which may have further contributed to the social representation of 'outside at night as unsafe space' in the last several years, and it was recently found that one in two women felt unsafe walking alone after dark in a quiet street near their home, compared with one in seven men (ONS, 2021). However, the item that over a quarter of both women and men agreed with places the onus on women to keep themselves safe, indicating that they "shouldn't go out at night alone" to protect themselves. This again exonerates perpetrators and foregrounds the actions of the victim, ensuring women have felt restricted freedom and the need to do additional safety work (EVAW Coalition, 2021).

Asian and Black participants were significantly more likely to accept rape stereotypes than other ethnicities in the categories of male rape stereotypes, victim stereotypes and motives for rape. This is in line with past research. Mori et al. (1995) carried out a survey-based study with Asian and White university students ($n = 302$), finding that Asian participants were more likely to accept rape stereotypes than men, while Varelas and Foley's (1998) study showed that overall, Black participants were more likely to endorse rape stereotypes than their White counterparts, which was more recently supported by Bowie (2018). Barn and Powers (2018), while writing specifically within the context of Indian and British stereotype acceptance, suggested that this could be due to cultural and gender norms, which are perpetuated and upheld through hegemonic social representations and vary according to cultural context, but expressed that there were other potential attributions such as lack of education that could also be a consequence of these findings.

The crosstabulation which broke down ethnic differences by specific items indicated the presence of similar social representations to that of the gender difference crosstabs. Black British participants had the highest level of stereotype acceptance overall, and many items appeared to express a social representation of 'real rape', or that of a responsible victim – for example, items with high agreement included "women who wear short skirts/tight tops invite rape", and "a person could stop a rapist if they really wanted to". Asian participants had the highest level of agreement in four items. The first two were "men cannot be raped", and "men who are raped must have been acting gay", which may be somewhat reflective of social representations of masculinity and appropriate maleness (Javaid, 2018). The third item was "women who are raped often deserve it, especially if they enter a man's home or car", which, similarly to those items which were most endorsed by Black participants, reflects victim blaming

stereotypes and social representations of victims responsible for their own rape. Some items which were highly endorsed were also the same in the gender crosstabs, including: "Rape is only about sex", and "women are most likely to be raped after dark by a stranger, so shouldn't go out at night" (which was highly endorsed across ethnicities, but most highly by Asian participants), indicating the same presence of a social representation of rape which absolves perpetrators, denies the existence of a wider societal issue and places the burden on women to restrict their own freedoms to stay safe, otherwise they are to blame. It is clear from the crosstabs findings – the similarities in the types of stereotypes being accepted and social representations being expressed across gender and ethnicity – that a more intersectional approach needs to be taken to truly understand how intersecting identities affects the acceptance, negotiation, and contesting of social representations of rape and thus rape stereotype acceptance. As discussed in Chapter 1, people are not one single identity (Howarth, 2002), and it is crucial to consider how the experiences and ways of knowing of a Black woman might influence her social representations of rape in comparison to those of a White woman, an Asian Man, or a White man. Age and LGBTQ+ identities additionally need to be considered as part of a truly intersectional study. The current data could not be broken down any further to ethnicity x gender and rape stereotype acceptance, as the percentages became too minimal to compare effectively, however in the future it would be beneficial to design a similar study specifically with intersectionality in mind.

Further research should thus be undertaken to understand the complex factors at play in this part of the findings, especially in the light of Suarez and Gadalla's (2010) meta-analysis of rape stereotype acceptance studies, in which they found only six studies out of 73 comparing rape stereotype acceptance across ethnic groups.

Implications

  The results raise various implications for society, policy, and practice. A shift in the social representations of rape may be occurring, with less victim blaming and endorsement of 'real victim' stereotypes, making clear the value of social representations theory in this field of research, as well as the impact that factors such as time and place have on social representations and stereotypes. This is a positive finding for victim blaming and secondary victimisation. However, there is still a higher level of endorsement of perpetrator related stereotypes, and those related to 'real rape'. These stereotypes can still be harmful to rape victims. The acceptance of these stereotypes by the media and general population directly influences policy decisions: Aroustamian (2020) carried out a content analysis of media coverage of sexual violence cases, finding that media representations of rape negatively influenced public opinion, while Fox (2013) discussed the various ways that public opinion can affect policymaking, including media coverage, popular blogs, and social media. Thus, if the media and public appear to believe certain stereotypes and see little need for policy targeting the related groups, i.e., rape perpetrators, then policy will reflect this in turn.

  It would be useful to target any educational interventions or campaigns towards the groups most likely to endorse rape stereotypes, including men, and Black or Asian people, although more research, conducted sensitively and with the studied demographics involved in the design and implementation of the study, is needed to understand the factors behind the latter findings. These could come in the form of government media campaigns such as posters or advertisements focusing on the most deeply held stereotypes, that is, the 'real rapist' or 'real rape' stereotypes.

  Practice, in both law and policing, is also affected by public opinion. Flowe et al. (2009) argued that media, when used to perpetuate social representations of rape, can influence whether police and jurors believe the victim and consider the perpetrator

responsible, while Garza and Franklin (2021) found that male police officers in the US were more likely to accept rape stereotypes than their female counterparts, reflecting the overall finding. Consequently, if perpetrator and real rape stereotypes are accepted within the general population, they may also be accepted amongst the police and legal professionals, potentially going on to affect jury decision making. This is reflected in recent police and prosecution practice, in addition to the recent statistic that only 1.4% of rapes resulted in a charge or summons (Home Office, 2020), and the fall in convictions by 26% from 2017-18 to 2018-19, although it is important to acknowledge that other factors could contribute to these statistics, such as differences in the quality of police interviewing of rape victims: Pipe et al. (2013) found that when NICHD protocol was followed while interviewing child witnesses, charges were more likely to be filed and verdicts were more likely to be guilty. While this pertains to child sexual abuse, there may be a similar effect regarding the ABE interview and adult rape complainants.

Efforts to solve the problem with prosecution and conviction are underway - for example, the EVAW Coalition's successful campaign to open an inquest into the low prosecution rate. The resultant reports from this may help the court system, and hence trickle down to the police, although more needs to be known about the nature and extent of stereotype acceptance amongst professionals who deal with rape. It is also vital to change the social representations of rape for potential jurors – the current sample was representative of jurors, and the finding that some demographics were more likely to accept stereotypes, while some stereotypes were more likely to be accepted is a concern. A further initiative to specifically educate juries sitting on rape trials about stereotypes and their impact pre-trial, and possibly utilise handouts for jurors to refer to throughout a trial with the most common or endorsed myths on them may thus be of help.

Future Research Directions

There is much potential for further research, as the results have raised questions about the complex interplay between rape stereotyping, social representations, the media, the general public, and legal practitioners. It would be useful to carry out further research on the general population's social representations of rape. For example, a survey of the general population's social representation of a 'real rapist', in addition to considering how to change such representations. A longitudinal study, or a follow-up questionnaire in one-to-two years, to measure levels of rape stereotype acceptance between this study and then would also be helpful to assess changes in social attitudes and representations.

To further investigate the impact of demographic factors, carrying out research into ethnic and cultural differences of rape perceptions to gain an up-to-date understanding of the issue would be useful. Future research should additionally explore a sexually diverse sample's levels of rape stereotype acceptance, as the current sample was 87.2% heterosexual. This could be useful in targeting education initiatives towards specific groups if necessary

Future research should also encompass the legal system. A survey similar to that of the present research, targeted at professionals who work closely with rape victims and perpetrators, would help gauge stereotype endorsement when compared to the general population. Additionally, investigating UK police stereotype use during interviews with rape complainants to assess stereotyping in this context and the impact this may have on the victim and the case as well as wider societal implications. Results for these studies would help further shape recommendations for legal policymaking and practice.

Conclusion

  The current study highlights that a shift in social representations could be taking place, which may be contributing to lower rape stereotype acceptance. Some rape stereotypes are still accepted by specific demographics, and social representations, perpetuated through long-standing vehicles such as religion, family, and especially media, could be the driving force behind this acceptance. This is especially the case for perpetrator related stereotypes and men. This raises concerns for policy and practice, specifically in terms of juror decision making, and opens up further research directions, such as similar studies in the legal system, which this thesis aimed to accomplish (Chapters 4 and 5), and studies within particular demographic groups.

Transitional Section 2

Study One was a representative survey of the general population of England and Wales (n = 1000), representing jury eligible groups. The aim was to explore the extent of rape stereotype acceptance within this population, measuring levels of accuracy and certainty, and differences in acceptance between demographic groups. It was found that men and Black and Asian people were significantly more likely than other demographic groups to accept stereotypes, in line with previous findings (Barn & Powers, 2018; Burt, 1980). Overall, the sample displayed broadly low levels of acceptance when completing the survey but perpetrator stereotypes were more accepted and showed less certainty than other types. This was concerning as these stereotypes are harmful to many victims who do not fit 'real rapist' stereotypes and narrow social representations of rape.

There is an indication that social representations of rape might be shifting in the wake of #MeToo becoming more widely publicised – representations which reflect the ideal victim may be being contested and negotiated through online discussion, social media, and traditional media. Other phenomena which could be driving this change in a similar way include the September 2018 Brett Kavanaugh hearing relating to the alleged sexual assault of several women in the past, and the 2015 Brock Turner rape trial, both of which sparked protests and caused widespread discussion about both false allegations and victim-blaming. Despite these findings, rape and perpetrator stereotypes are still being endorsed at a higher level. It was necessary to consider the impact of the general population's acceptance of rape stereotypes on the criminal justice system – lay people serve as jury members, and their decision-making in court is influenced by stereotyping (Leverick, 2020), influencing policy decisions and prosecuting decisions in turn (Fox, 2013; Hohl & Stanko, 2015), and perpetuating a 'vicious cycle of attrition'

(Munro & Kelly, 2009). Thus, it is necessary to gain a clearer picture of stereotype acceptance and social representations of rape amongst professionals who may become involved in rape cases as part of their career: not only lawyers and police, but also educators, healthcare workers, and social workers, all of whom can play a role in reporting, conducting medical examinations, and documenting cases of rape and consulting with the CJS. It is also crucial to consider the role of special training and experience in mitigating any stereotype endorsement, so recommendations for practice and policy can be made.

Chapter 4

Study Two: Rape Stereotype Acceptance in Professionals Involved in Rape Cases

The nature of rape stereotype acceptance amongst professional groups has been widely researched. However, these studies often focus only on one or two occupations, such as police and legal workers (Maddox et al., 2012; Smith & Skinner, 2017), with fewer, older studies exploring other groups that may be involved in rape cases such as social (Ward, 1988) or healthcare workers (Alexander, 1980). Only two relevant studies, both conducted outside of the UK, could be found for educators, who are likely to see sexual violence related safeguarding issues during their career (Finchilescu & Dugard, 2021; Nadler, 2018). An individual may become involved in a rape case in a variety of ways. Police investigate rape complaints, interview suspects and complainants, build cases, and make recommendations to prosecutors regarding charges. Legal professionals make decisions on prosecuting rape cases, defend suspects and advocate for complainants, and preside over rape trials. Educators, healthcare workers and social workers may be disclosed to as part of their profession, and may have to make the appropriate safeguarding referrals. Healthcare workers may encounter complainants after reporting or as a first line of assistance after a rape, and administer rape kits and medical assistance. Finally, social workers, in addition to safeguarding and signposting, may work closely with the complainant as Independent Sexual Violence Advisors, more generally counsel and support the complainant during the case, or work with the suspect. The large range of roles for individuals in these occupations before, during, and after a rape case highlights the importance of researching rape stereotype acceptance amongst these diverse groups.

In terms of professionals in the justice system, although there are efforts to mitigate the effects of rape stereotype acceptance using training, rape stereotypes could

still be influential in Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) judgements, and specialist training for prosecutors was inadequately implemented - Rumney and Fenton (2011) reviewed a Judiciary College sexual offences training seminar, observing that genuine efforts were underway on the part of judges to improve decision-making and responses to rape, although the authors emphasised that the issue is complex and involves more factors than simply judicial training. On the other hand, Angiolini (2015) conducted a rape review, finding that training in rape stereotyping and interacting with victims was inconsistent, recommending more thorough and consistent training throughout the Criminal Justice System (CJS). There are also mixed results on the moderating effect of police training on rape stereotype acceptance. For example, Ask (2010) found in a Swedish sample of police officers that participants who had received special training were significantly less likely to believe that victim behaviour was indicative of truthfulness. However, Sleath and Bull (2017) found in a systematic review that many studies found no effect of training on certain aspects related to rape stereotypes such as credibility and blame attributions. These issues are borne in the high attrition rate and low prosecution rate of rape in the UK (Home Office, 2020). Consequently, new systematic research, positioned within social representations theory, was necessary to study professionals' rape stereotype acceptance, which contributed to knowledge through filling gaps in the literature by surveying a diverse set of occupations likely to deal with rape cases during their career. The stereotype categories that are most likely to be accepted, professional groups most likely to accept rape stereotypes, and whether prior rape related training has an influence on rape stereotype acceptance, have been examined in the current study.

Social Representations Theory

This research was positioned within a social representations theoretical framework, to aid in the understanding of the complex dynamics between rape stereotypes, society, time, and the individual. Social Representations Theory (Moscovici, 1961) explores the social nature of communication, social representations' influence on society through the individual. This was therefore a useful lens through which to view rape stereotypes' influence on society via the individual, and to explore whether changes in social representations have occurred over time compared to older research. Social representations are created through two main processes, and since the increase in online, social, and print media, often perpetuated through these vehicles. The first is anchoring, where unfamiliar concepts are classified into pre-established categories. For example, naming is one form of anchoring, in which a phenomenon or group is classified by attaching a label to it. In terms of rape stereotyping, O'Hara (2012) discovered that in sensationalised rape cases, the perpetrator was often 'othered', and considered a monster or evil, despite most perpetrators being known to the victim.

The second process is objectification, which occurs when an unfamiliar concept has been anchored to a familiar concept. One type of objectification is emotional objectification, in which an individual or group conflates a concept with an emotive image. For example, a rapist may be represented as an inhuman monster, or foreign, which continues an 'othering' narrative created by anchoring. This narrative can be seen in other topics, such as social representations of poverty (Chauhan & Foster, 2014). A more detailed review of social representations of rape can be found in Chapter 1 and Chapter 3. Overall, it is clear that Social Representations Theory is a relevant and important framework for rape stereotyping and will be used for the current study in

relation to professionals' stereotype acceptance and subsequent recommendations.

The Cost of Rape: Attrition and Prosecution Rates

The high physical and emotional cost of rape to victims is well-evidenced: victims might experience physical issues such as pregnancy or sexually transmitted diseases, or psychological consequences including post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or high levels of self-blame (Burgess & Carretta, 2017). Male victims may additionally experience self-image problems, anger, vulnerability, and emotional distancing (Walker et al., 2005). Despite these serious ramifications, there is a wide gap between rapes, their reports, and prosecutions - in 2019-2020, only 1.4% of rapes resulted in a charge or summons. Additionally, 41% of cases resulted in the victim dropping out of the case, giving an extremely high attrition rate (Home Office, 2020).

Research into the high attrition and low prosecution rate for rape points to the use of rape stereotypes. The End Violence Against Women (EVAW) Coalition recently brought a case against the prosecution services, citing compelling evidence that the CPS has only been taking on 'easy' cases, with a pattern of risk avoidance (EVAW Coalition v The Director of Public Prosecutions, 2019). These cases have characteristics that seem clear cut to juries, fitting the stereotype of a 'real rape' - those which happened outside at night, the perpetrator was a stranger, and the rape was violent. However, 89% of rape victims know their perpetrators (Office of National Statistics, 2013), making the 'easy case' policy harmful to many victims when they do not fit stereotypical social representations of rape. There have recently been responses to the EVAW Coalition's case – the End-to-End Rape Review (Home Office, 2021) and a joint thematic inspection of the police and the CPS (HMICFRS, 2021) both identified issues with rape stereotyping and made recommendations for more standardised training and improved communication. However, EVAW Coalition published a response advising that to

address the justice gap, the recommendations were too conservative, placing emphasis on societal as well as structural change. They signposted to their report, conducted in partnership with the Centre for Women's Justice (CWJ), Imkaan, and Rape Crisis England and Wales (2020), which included recommendations such as returning the focus of investigations to seeking consent in addition to giving consent; amendment of the law on the use of sexual history evidence in the courtroom; a review of cross-examination rules; and a Special Commission on the efficacy of juries in rape trials.

Hohl and Stanko (2015) found that the highest level of attrition is at the initial stages of police investigations, due to concerns such as feeling disbelieved, secondary victimisation, and reduced perceived credibility through the eyes of investigating officers and prosecutors. Temkin and Krahé (2008) pointed out that legal professionals' attitudes allowed social representations of real rape and real rapists to continue in jurors, lawyers, and police. Munro and Kelly (2009) termed this a 'vicious cycle of attrition' - in which police and prosecutors only advance cases they believe have a realistic chance of securing conviction, due to concerns about resources and performance targets. To do this, they anticipate jury decision-making in court, and the rape stereotype usage that influences this. Police then advance cases that conform to 'real rape' stereotypes. As a result, many victims do not get the justice they seek, and consequently experience secondary victimisation. These real and complex issues further justify the need for the current study on professionals' stereotype acceptance.

Professionals' Stereotype Acceptance

Much of the research on rape stereotype acceptance in professional populations is centred on police and legal professionals. In terms of police, the literature is mixed. Maddox et al. (2012) found that investigating officers' (IOs) perceptions of victims fell into three clusters: 'mad' disclosers, 'bad' disclosers, and real victims. Real victims

were considered by the interviewing officers to be intelligent, vulnerable, and emotionally distressed. 'Mad' disclosers were perceived as having mental health issues, described as presenting irrationally and incongruently, and "more resistant to the questioning" (pg.36). 'Bad' disclosers were those who reported a rape due to ulterior motives, and were considered cold and unemotional. They were often described as noticeably sexual or angry, and like the 'mad' discloser, were emotionally incongruent with the preferred presentation of the real victim. Both latter constructs were perceived as less reliable, and seen to have more signs of shame, self-blame and PTSD, which impedes victims' abilities to give coherent accounts. Signs of trauma and shame in victims were also often misinterpreted as lying, and IOs attributed a high proportion of attrition to victim drop out, relating most frequently to the victim not telling the truth, or wanting to forget the rape (Maddox et al., 2012). These findings are rooted in social representations of 'real rape', and 'real rape victims', which inform stereotypes that insist the only true victims are those that show the appropriate level of distress or are suitably coherent. This is in line with Serisier (2017), who, in a discussion of media representations of rape, highlighted the dichotomous coverage of rape victim-survivors as totally innocent or totally responsible, or Virgins and Vamps (Benedict, 1992). The two behaviours - distress and coherence – are likely to be opposites, suggesting that a complainant of rape would need to walk a fine middle line between the two in order to seem credible enough to investigators. This is also the case for jurors, where credibility is an influencing issue in deliberation: Ellison and Munro (2009) found in a mock-jury study that while calmer and less emotional complainants were perceived as less credible, complainants who did display visible distress were regarded as sometimes being truthful, but sometimes manipulative and misleading, as though putting on a performance, reflecting Maddox et al.'s (2012) finding relating to police officers.

These findings suggest the existence of rape stereotype acceptance within the police, moreover, Murphy and Hine (2019) identified that the issue does not exist in isolation, but alongside other factors. These included demographics, in which men and older officers were more likely to accept stereotypes. However, the main contributing predictors of high rape stereotype acceptance were attitudinal variables, such as hostile and ambivalent sexism, and the perceived relationship between power and sex. The researchers also discovered a lower mean score for stereotype acceptance than in the original scale validation score, conducted in the general population. This general low level of rape stereotype acceptance is supported in other studies such as Sleath and Bull (2015, 2017) and Denyer (2019), although the latter found other contributing elements. For example, the less credible a victim appears, the more negatively they are perceived in other ways, such as not communicating regarding consent, seeming more interested in sex, more sexually provocative and appearing more untruthful. Low victim credibility also made the perpetrator appear more reasonable to the police. Despite overall low levels of rape stereotype acceptance, the links between perceived credibility and other variables are still disconcertingly tied into stereotypes and social representations of real rape victims and perpetrator exoneration.

While there appear to be mixed and complex findings for stereotype acceptance within the police, evidence suggests that rape stereotype acceptance and use within the legal profession is high, despite efforts to reduce it. Smith and Skinner (2017) found that rape stereotypes were used throughout a set of observed trials, with a dyad of abnormal (such as failure to properly resist or delayed reporting) vs. normal (such as proper levels of distress and 'rational' reactions) behaviour used. This binary oversimplifies the context of rape and creates assumptions that people always act consistently and rationally and are lying when acting irrationally.

The same study found that in some trials, 'mythbuster' judicial directions (directions to the jury to avoid assumptions about the demeanour of the complainant or defendant or about the behaviour of the complainant [Crown Court Compendium, 2022]) were used against defence lawyers, who were more likely to employ harmful rape stereotypes to discredit the victim. However, these were often dismissed by the defence lawyer as irrelevant. Consequently, no link was found between mythbuster directions and conviction rates. Supporting these findings are Temkin et al. (2018), who found stereotypes being used in overlapping ways – to frame 'real rape' as the norm, to discredit the complainant, and in relation to specific facts of the case. There were few attempts to give mythbusting directions. These findings suggest that due to tactical use of rape stereotypes and exploitation of social representations of rape, victims who do not fit 'normal' parameters may find it difficult to achieve conviction and could consequently find themselves being discredited.

In a more comprehensive study of police, legal professionals, healthcare workers, and social workers, Ward (1988) predicted that social workers and psychologists would have the lowest stereotype acceptance, while police would have the highest, with lawyers and doctors falling in the middle. The results supported these hypotheses. Similarly, Adolfsson (2018) found that police, respondents with high levels of rape stereotype acceptance, and younger respondents gave higher estimates of false rape allegations than legal professionals or healthcare workers. Additionally, a significant number of police and prosecutors identified practices that could be problematic for the victim, such as treatment in interview, or medical exams, but still saw these practices as inevitable. These findings suggest that the way rape stereotypes are accepted and used in the legal system differs. Police use social representations of real rape victims and real rape to make judgements about victim credibility and truth-

telling, while lawyers use similar stereotypes to influence jury decision-making, the latter of which has been found to be effective (Dinos et al., 2015).

Despite the existence of other occupational groups that are likely to encounter rape victims during their career – for example educators, healthcare, or social workers – fewer studies have been conducted into their levels of rape stereotype acceptance. The existing literature suggests that there are very few differences in rape myth acceptance levels between healthcare workers and the general population (Alexander, 1980; Anderson & Quinn, 2009; Idisis et al., 2007). Victim blame stereotyping had more to do with perceived victim characteristics and respondent attitudes than professional characteristics, in addition to men being more accepting of stereotypes than women. In terms of educators' stereotype acceptance, following a literature search on Google Scholar using the keywords: stereotypes, OR "teachers", OR "professors", OR "educators", "rape myth acceptance", only 108 results were returned, most of which were outside the scope of the topic – i.e. they referred to students' stereotype acceptance, rape prevention education, or campus sexual violence. Two studies were found which specifically focused on rape stereotype acceptance in educators, neither of which were from the UK. Finchilescu and Dugard (2021) found in a large-scale ($n =$ 1350) sur vey study of university staff and students that university academic staff had significantly lower rape stereotype acceptance than administrative staff and students, while Nadler (2018) found that sexual violence training significantly lowered the acceptance of some rape stereotypes in US college professors. These findings, although sparse and not addressing cultural differences, suggest that healthcare workers and educators do not differ significantly in social representations of rape and rape stereotype acceptance.

Current Study

Due to the harmful repercussions that rape and rape stereotype acceptance has on individuals and society, there is a need for systematic research into the rape stereotype acceptance of certain professional groups who are likely to be involved with rape during their career. This includes professions that might deal with disclosures, tending to medical needs, investigating, and potentially prosecuting and defending. Since there has been no recent systematic research on these groups within one study in the UK, the current study assessed the extent and nature of rape stereotyping amongst professional groups in the United Kingdom, using an online anonymous survey. The study explored the overall extent of stereotype acceptance in and between these groups, which categories of stereotype were adhered to most, and also whether prior training in sexual violence and stereotypes had an effect on acceptance of stereotypes. Therefore, the levels of accuracy and uncertainty for the categories and individual items were analysed, and inferential statistics were carried out to discern any differences in accuracy between occupations, and differences in accuracy between those with and those without specialised training.

This study tested three hypotheses:

- Given previous findings, it was hypothesised that there would be no significant differences between the professional groups and the general population (Alexander, 1980; Anderson & Quinn, 2009; Idisis et al., 2007).
- Study One, conducted within the general population, found that while general rape myth acceptance was low, perpetrator myths were more likely to be accepted than any other type. Given the prediction in hypothesis one that there would be no significant difference between professional groups and the general population in terms of rape stereotype acceptance, it was expected that there would also be a

similar finding regarding broadly low acceptance rates yet higher acceptance of perpetrator related stereotypes in the present study, which is conducted on professionals.

- Finally, based on previous findings, it was expected that training in sexual violence and rape stereotypes would have a moderately mitigating effect on rape stereotype acceptance (Angiolini, 2015; Ask, 2010; Nadler, 2018; Smith & Skinner, 2017).

Method

Participants

An a priori power analysis was carried out in G*Power using a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). Based on a projected effect size of .25, power of .80 and five groups, a sample size of 216 was indicated. Due to recruiting through social media in addition to Prolific, a larger sample of 304 was obtained.

In terms of participant demographics, the sample was 89.5% White British, 82.2% female, and 95.4% were from England while 4.6% were from Wales. Professionally, 32.2% were educators, 31.3% were in healthcare, 14.8% were in social work, 9.5% worked in the legal system, and 3.9% were involved with policing. In relation to training, 89.5% of participants had never received sexual assault or rape stereotype specific training. Participants had been in their occupation for 10.06 years on average, while the most frequent period of time was 0-10 years (62.2%) (See Table 8, Appendix C for further demographic details).

Materials and Design

An online questionnaire, titled 'Your Beliefs About Abuse' was used and distributed via Qualtrics, through social media and Prolific. The survey is a standardised and piloted rape myth scale, adapted from the scale piloted and validated on the general

population in Study One (Chapter 3) to recruit professionals who deal with rape or rape victims. To this end, questions about occupation, years worked in occupation, and whether respondents have had training in sexual violence were added. The questionnaire included four categories and thirty-eight items: Beliefs about Male Rape, which included four items (e.g. men cannot be raped. $\alpha = .60$); Beliefs about Perpetrators of Rape, which included eleven items (e.g., most rapes are committed by strangers. $\alpha = .72$); Beliefs about Rape Victims, which included ten items (e.g., most rape victims are young and attractive. $\alpha = .74$); and Beliefs about Rape Allegations, which included thirteen items (e.g., allegations of rape are often false. $\alpha = .78$). A split half reliability test was also carried out on all 40 items with a score of .78, confirming overall internal reliability. The scale from Study One included two other categories and forty items: Stereotypes about Motives for Rape, and Stereotypes about Consequences of Rape. These had low internal reliability, so items from 'Consequences' were removed, while items from 'Motives' were subsumed into the other categories, due to the higher alphas were these specific items to be moved into other subscales.

The current study uses the term 'accuracy', meaning how correct or incorrect the participants are, to align with participants' rape stereotype acceptance levels. Where participants show lower accuracy when responding to stereotypical statements, for example "rape allegations are often false", this is indicative of higher stereotype acceptance. The reason for this choice was to have an empirical, objective measure of false/true.

Procedure

The sample was recruited from social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter), and the crowdsourcing platform Prolific. For each recruitment method, participants clicked on an anonymous link to get to the survey. After giving full consent, they then filled out

the survey with the option to withdraw at any time. At the end of the survey participants saw a debrief sheet with contact details for support services, which were also available throughout the survey. Prolific's participants were screened using the website's screening mechanism to get the most representative sample possible. There were no differences between the data from Prolific ($n = 290$) and that collected from social media ($n = 14$), apart from the sample size difference, and subsequently the samples were analysed together. Prolific participants were reimbursed for their time with £2, the equivalent of £8 per hour.

Results

Overall Stereotype Acceptance

To determine the extent of rape stereotype acceptance within professional populations, frequency analyses were conducted to measure levels of accuracy when responding to the items (see Table 9, Appendix C). Participants rated their agreement with each statement on a Likert scale from 1 = strongly agree to 6 = strongly agree. A 7th point: "don't know" was included to measure levels of uncertainty of belief (Table 9). To measure accuracy levels, participants who disagreed with false statements and agreed with true statements were considered correct. Items were classified as true or false based on academic literature reviews and educational and support websites such as Rape Crisis England and Wales.

Overall, levels of accurate responses were high, indicating low rape stereotype acceptance. Seven items were below 75% accuracy, five items fell between 75-90% accuracy, and 28 items were above 90% accuracy. The least accurate item was "Alcohol, drugs, stress or depression can turn people into rapists" (46.5%, almost half of the sample, disagreed with this incorrect statement), while the most accurate item was "A woman cannot be raped by her husband" (100% of the sample disagreed with

this untrue statement). The former is related to perpetrators of rape, while the latter is related to rape victims (Table 9).

A missing data analysis was conducted to determine levels of uncertainty in responses. Five items were above 10% uncertainty. The items of highest uncertainty were "alcohol, drugs, stress or depression can turn people into rapists" (13.8%), while the items of lowest uncertainty were "a woman cannot be raped by her husband", and "when a woman says no, she is playing hard to get and generally means yes" (both 0%). This suggests that less accurate respondents were also less certain and vice versa. Items of higher and lower certainty had corresponding levels of accuracy. For example, "People who were sexually abused as children become abusers themselves" has the third lowest level of accuracy (54.5%), and the third highest level of uncertainty (10.9%); while "women who are raped often deserve it, especially if they enter a man's home or car" has the third highest level of accuracy (99.4%), and the third lowest level of uncertainty (.3%) (Table 9).

Accuracy Within Stereotype Categories

The frequency analysis indicated that the most widely accepted stereotypes were perpetrator related. The seven lowest accuracy items were from this category. The other perpetrator related items fell slightly above 75% accuracy but were the next lowest items. The other perpetrator related items fell slightly above 75% accuracy but were the next lowest items. These findings indicate that even within professions who are likely to deal with rape and sexual violence often, harmful perpetrator stereotypes are present. Most of the categories fell into the highest accuracy group (> 90%). These categories included victim, allegation, male rape, and motive related items, suggesting that participants held accurate beliefs about these topics, and broadly did not endorse stereotypes (Table 9).

The perpetrator category had the highest levels of uncertainty overall, with three items over 10%, including the item "men who rape other men are usually gay". In contrast, "a woman cannot be raped by her husband" (Victims); "when a woman says no, she is playing hard to get and generally means yes" (Allegations); "men cannot be raped" (Male Rape); and "it is only rape if someone is physically forced into sex and has the injuries to show for it" (Allegations), were all between 0-0.7% uncertainty (Table 9). These categories were also all high in accuracy, further supporting the finding that participants who were less accurate were also less certain, while those who were more accurate had higher certainty. This supports the conclusion that inaccurate perpetrator-based stereotypes are more widely accepted within certain professions, while other stereotypes such as allegation-based or victim-based beliefs are much less so.

Demographic and Occupational Factors

A two-way ANOVA was carried out to determine whether acceptance of rape stereotypes was significantly affected by occupation, or number of years in a profession, and whether there was a significant interaction between occupation and number of years in relation to stereotype acceptance. A Welch's t-test was conducted to determine whether acceptance of rape myths was significantly affected by whether respondents had training in understanding sexual violence. Dependent variables were the stereotype categories, transformed into composite scales taken by each item's median. Independent variables were three groups: occupation, years in profession, and training in sexual violence.

Type of Occupation

Type of occupation had no significant effect on rape stereotype acceptance in all categories: male rape stereotypes, $F(5,283) = .33$, $p = .88$, $\eta^2 = .006$; allegation stereotypes, $F(5,283) = 1.24$, $p = .22$, $\eta^2 = .24$; perpetrator stereotypes, $F(5,283) = 2.05$, $p = .07$, $\eta^2 = .03$; and victim related stereotypes, $F(5,283) = .32$, $p = .89$, $\eta^2 = .006$.

A crosstabulation analysis was additionally carried out to analyse the breakdown of occupation by stereotype acceptance descriptively. It was found that all occupational groups were most likely to accept stereotypes in the perpetrator category (Table 10, Appendix C).

Years Worked in Profession

Groups of years in respondents' professions did not have a significant effect on acceptance of rape stereotypes: male rape stereotypes, $F(3,283) = 1.51$, $p = .21$, $\eta^2 = .01$; allegation stereotypes, $F(3,283) = .76$, $p = .51$, $\eta^2 = .008$; perpetrator stereotypes, $F(3,283) = .96$, $p = .41$, $\eta^2 = .010$; and victim related stereotypes, $F(3,283) = .07$, $p = .97$, $\eta^2 = .001$. Additionally, there were no significant interactions between the effects of occupation type and years in occupation: male rape stereotypes, $F(12,283) = .37$, $p = .97$, $\eta^2 = .01$; allegation stereotypes, $F(12,283) = 1.09$, $p = 36.$, $\eta^2 = .04$; stereotypes related to motives for rape, $F(12,283) = .60$, $p = 84.$, $\eta^2 = .02$; perpetrator stereotypes, $F(12,283) = .97$, $p = 47.$, $\eta^2 = .04$; and victim related stereotypes, $F(12,283) = 84.$, $p = 60.$, $\eta^2 = .03$.

Training in Rape Stereotypes

A Welch's t-test found a significant difference in the scores for training ($M = 5.25$, $SD = .80$) and no training ($M = 4.78$, $SD = .90$) in the perpetrator stereotype category ($t(40.86) = 3.07$, $p = .004$). The Hedge's correction was taken as the effect size for this

test, due to the unequal sample sizes in each group, and was .52, indicating a medium effect size. These findings suggest that those with training in rape stereotypes are significantly less likely to accept perpetrator related stereotypes than those without training (Table 12).

Additionally, a crosstabulation analysis was conducted to provide a breakdown of occupational groups and training. It was found that social workers were most likely to have had some specialist training, at 26.7%, while three out of the twelve participants in the policing group had done so. Least likely to have had training was the 'other' category at 0%, and legal work, at 3.4% (Table 9).

Discussion

This study has contributed to the existing body of work on rape stereotype acceptance in professionals through key findings that professionals accept much the same stereotypes as the lay people in Study One, and that training appears to be the mitigating factor in reduction of stereotype endorsement. Additionally, the similar apparent change in social representations of rape indicates that professionals are as sensitive to social change as the general population.

Overall Stereotype Acceptance

Generally, levels of accuracy across the sample were high with most participants disagreeing with many of the items. This indicates that rape stereotype acceptance was low, in line with the hypothesis. It is also in line with the previous findings within the general population (Chapter 3), in which it was suggested that due to the popularisation of the MeToo movement, there is a broad shift in social representations of rape taking place amongst the general population, with people less likely to accept well-known rape stereotypes. It is possible that a similar shift is taking place amongst professionals likely

to become involved with rape cases, especially those less involved in legal and policing work, such as educators and healthcare workers.

Although there seems to be a shift towards social representations change, there are still some concerning levels of inaccuracy and uncertainty. It is especially concerning as the sample could represent those groups that are most likely to encounter rape victims and perpetrators, and in the case of police and lawyers, have major influence on the investigation and potential prosecution of an alleged rape. In all, seven items were below 75% accuracy, indicating that some erroneous beliefs do persist within these groups. The most prominent of these was "Alcohol, drugs, stress or depression can turn people into rapists", while other endorsed stereotypes involved mental illness or paedophilia. This was a perpetrator related stereotype which was also the least accurate item in Study One. The next least accurate item was "rapists are mostly psychotic or mentally ill", also a perpetrator related stereotype. In addition to real rapist stereotypes, these items also incorporated harmful social representations of drug addiction and mental illness, which imply that people with mental illnesses or drug users are unpredictable, violent, and therefore likely to rape. This is in line with previous research on social representations of mental illness, such as Murphy et al. (2013), who found that the mentally ill were represented as violent and unpredictable in UK mainstream newspapers over a period of ten years.

In terms of alcohol-related stereotypes, Grubb and Turner (2012) carried out a literature review on attributions of blame in rape cases, and in a discussion of the effects of alcohol consumption on blame, highlighted that that rape victims are seen as more responsible if they had been drinking. Conversely if perpetrators had been drinking, they were deemed less responsible, and thus were exonerated. This is supported by Starfelt and White (2015), who found in a vignette study that intoxicated perpetrators

were perceived as not fully aware of the nature and consequences of their actions. These findings, placed in context with the high agreement with the item, could indicate that certain professionals may be more likely to believe that alcohol and other substances can 'turn people into rapists', thus perpetuating the othering social representation of real rapist stereotypes. At the same time, they may be exonerating the behaviour if the perpetrator was intoxicated. This could have concerning implications for the investigation and prosecution of rape cases where the perpetrator was intoxicated, as professionals may consider them less responsible while placing responsibility onto the victim, especially if they had also been drinking.

Levels of uncertainty were high for these low-accuracy items, with the alcohol and drug related item scoring the highest level of uncertainty, suggesting that in line with the previous study in Chapter 3 and the current hypothesis, there appears to be a shift in attitudes occurring amongst these professional populations, possibly due to the wider publicisation of the #MeToo movement changing social representations of rape. The high levels of uncertainty for lower accuracy items may represent a transition between higher and lower levels of acceptance of rape stereotypes. This is supported by Szekeres et al.'s (2020) study, which found comparable results in a US lay sample. However, despite this apparent ongoing shift in attitudes amongst professionals, there are still real concerns for policy and practice, which is reflected in attrition and prosecution rates.

Accuracy Within Stereotype Categories

The category with the lowest accuracy levels overall was perpetrator related stereotypes, supporting the second hypothesis. Almost all the items in this category had the lowest accuracy scores of the survey, indicating that even professionals who are likely to be involved with sexual violence and rape cases often still accept social

representations of 'real rapist', endorsing stereotypes that are narrow, reductive, and harmful to most victims whose perpetrator does not fit the norm. These social representations cause 'othering' and distancing from society, suggesting that a 'real rapist' is not a normal person, or is foreign and not part of the dominant culture - Hindes and Fileborn (2020) conducted a critical discourse analysis of coverage of a #MeToo case in Australia, and found a similar othering narrative between 'real rapists' and perpetrators of coercive rape. Thus, where alleged perpetrators do not fit social representations, 'real rapist' stereotypes serve to exonerate most perpetrators and discredit victims, as blame shifting narratives are created that suggest the victim was lying, or the perpetrator must have misunderstood any refusals.

In terms of a narrative of misunderstanding, Orchowski et al. (2013) found that the greater a victim's acquaintance with their rapist, the higher their self-blame and likelier they were to label the rape as a 'serious miscommunication'. This suggests that even some victims apply rape stereotypes to their experiences. Kitzinger and Frith (1999) criticised the 'miscommunication theory' of accounting for rape, finding that women often found it difficult to directly refuse sex and preferred to use indirect refusals, while O'Byrne et al. (2018) found that men in a focus group often claimed misunderstanding when discussing rape. Studies have found little evidence for miscommunication between sexual partners when talking about sex and sexual refusals (Beres 2012; 2014) further indicating that existing social representations of who is a 'real' rapist are erroneous and harmful, especially when endorsed and used by professional groups such as lawyers or police.

Despite the sample's inaccuracy in determining perpetrator stereotypes, high accuracy levels were present in other categories. The victim related category had the highest accuracy levels overall, with one item, "a woman cannot be raped by her

husband", reaching 100% accuracy. Allegation related, male rape related and motive related stereotype categories also mostly attained above 90% accuracy scores, indicating that participants did not generally accept these stereotypes, holding accurate beliefs about these subjects. Despite this finding, there still exists the problem of prosecution and attrition rates, with some evidence of rape stereotyping in the legal system, particularly police and lawyers (Denyer, 2019; Murphy & Hine, 2019; Smith & Skinner, 2017; Temkin et al., 2018). This contradiction indicates that while social representations and beliefs in rape stereotype may be shifting, actual use of rape stereotypes for the purposes of a rape investigation and prosecution may still be a large concern. This is supported by Smith and Skinner (2017), who observed the same barrister in both a prosecution and a defence role. The barrister used 'mythbuster' directions when arguing for the prosecution, but when acting as defence, utilised victim-discrediting rape stereotypes, suggesting that within the legal system, there could be a culture of discarding or utilising harmful rape stereotypes when it suits the occasion, regardless of beliefs, although it is important to note that this was a single barrister, and more research should be carried out to confirm or refute this.

Demographic Factors

There were no significant effects found for type of occupation on rape stereotype acceptance. Additionally, time spent in respondent's professions had no significant effect on acceptance on rape stereotypes. The crosstab analysis carried out (Table 10, Appendix C) confirmed the hypothesis that perpetrator stereotypes would be the most accepted type. Additionally, the police were slightly likelier to accept this category of stereotypes than other professions, suggesting that police officers' social representations of rape centre on the perpetrator and their 'otherness', which could raise concerns when working with victims.

Also, in line with the hypothesis, a significant difference was found in perpetrator stereotype acceptance between participants who had had training and those who had not, suggesting that those with sexual violence or rape stereotype training are significantly less likely to accept perpetrator stereotypes than those without. This is an encouraging finding, although 89.5% of the sample had no training at all, with 96.6% of the legal worker group having had no training, which raises concerns regarding the standardisation, normalisation and availability of training for any profession that may become involved with rape victims, from educators to lawyers (See Table 11, Appendix C). Additionally, type of occupation and years worked in occupation made no significant difference in stereotype acceptance, suggesting that certain types or longer experience with rape and rape victims are no less likely to prevent stereotypical beliefs, further supporting the finding that training is key. It was additionally found that social workers and police were the most likely to receive training regarding rape stereotypes, yet the police were also slightly more likely to accept perpetrator stereotypes than other groups, raising questions in relation to whether current training for police is working.

Implications

These findings raise various implications for policy and practice amongst professional groups likely to become involved with rape cases at various stages, as well as implications for society. The results support previous findings that indicate an ongoing shift in the social representations of rape and acceptance of rape stereotypes, with less victim blaming and endorsement of victim-related stereotypes. This makes the value of social representations theory in this field of research clear and continues to show the impact of time and place on both stereotypes and social representations. Although these are promising findings overall, other issues such as the higher level of perpetrator related stereotype acceptance, the fact that usage of other stereotypes is

ongoing despite evidence of less belief in stereotypes, and a lack of standardised widespread training on stereotypes, are cause for concern. It is likely that they contribute to the high attrition and low prosecution rates (Munro & Kelly, 2009), and thus to secondary victimisation. Compounding these issues are the inconsistent use of 'mythbuster' judicial directions and allowing stereotype use to go unchallenged during trials (Smith & Skinner, 2017; Temkin et al., 2018), influencing juror decision-making.

Several recommendations for policy and practice can be made to address these concerns. Efforts should be made to continue the change in social representations of rape, particularly perpetrator related stereotypes and real rapists. To facilitate this, jury education oriented towards certain stereotypes would be useful. This could involve consistently briefing a jury before a trial begins rather than afterwards, priming them to reject rape stereotypes and think in a non-prejudiced way (Jones, 2021), which are tailored to the complainant's behaviours in context (Ellison, 2019). Additionally, it may be useful to include handouts of the most common myths and misconceptions, especially relating to perpetrators, for jurors to keep with them as a reminder, and possibly additionally placing a plaque or sign of the same in the jury waiting area, so it is visible at all times. Conducting trials of standardised sexual violence and stereotype training across all the studied professional groups is also needed. These trials should be longitudinal, to ensure that the training is being understood correctly and is effective over the long-term, as training has not been adequately implemented in the past (Angiolini, 2015), and has sometimes given the incorrect message – Smith (2009) noted that a barrister had seen his training that not all victims would be visibly distressed as teaching him to doubt any victim who was emotionally distressed.

Additionally, Sleath and Bull (2012) found no significant difference in overall rape stereotype acceptance between police officers who had training and those who did

not, recommending further research be done to identify why training was not having a positive effect on stereotype acceptance. Murphy and Hine (2019) suggest a possible cause: the research on rape stereotype acceptance to date lacks a broader cognitive framework around which to fit both attitudinal and demographic factors. The current study and previous research (Chapter 3) have used social representations theory as a lens through which to view rape stereotype acceptance and returned interesting findings. Thus, social representations theory would be a fitting cognitive framework for explaining the existence and continued perpetuation of rape stereotypes as reflective of broader social constructs amongst both the general population and professional groups, which would aid understanding when trying to reduce use of these myths.

It is equally important to address the legal system's reliance on rape stereotypes when investigating and prosecuting rape. Reliance on stereotypes to discern a 'real victim' or 'real rapist' at the investigative stage in order to decide which cases go on to be prosecuted, and to discredit a victim or exonerate a perpetrator at the trial stage to influence jury decision-making, is a consequence of perceiving these practices as harmful to victims yet in some way inevitable or intrinsic to the process (Adolfsson, 2018), and related to resource limitations and performance targets within policing (Munro & Kelly, 2009). With these factors in mind, each legal stage needs to be addressed. Policy change is recommended to ensure investigators rely less on stereotypical representations of rape to make decisions, and to ensure that mythbuster directions be more strictly enforced and challenged if undermined, while rape stereotype use in court must be challenged each time. To assist with this, CPS' policy of taking on only 'easy' cases, which it believes are the only cases juries would convict, should be changed to reflect a more realistic view of rape. Change is already underway in this area, for example the joint thematic inspection (HMICFRS, 2021) made several

recommendations for change, including better data on attrition, better understanding of rape victims, and increased capacity of service staff, with the police and CPS working jointly and cohesively. However, consultations and continuing work with Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) Sector groups such as End Violence against Women (EVAW), Imkaan, or Rape Crisis, open communication and dialogue between the CPS and these groups in addition to including the lived experience of rape victims, will help provide another perspective for the CPS.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

The findings have left several questions which give rise to the potential for future research. There were some sampling limitations that should be addressed in future research: partly due to the sensitivity of the subject matter, and partly due to the recruitment time being during the first COVID lockdown in April 2020, it proved difficult to recruit policing participants - the policing group had $n = 12$ (3.9% of the sample), which may have affected the statistical power of the analyses, meaning a higher likelihood of a Type II error (a false negative) with the null findings. However, effect sizes were included to further ensure validity. Many of the null findings had small effect sizes, indicating that the lack of significance was more likely due to no link between the variables than to low statistical power. Similarly, Welch's t-test was used to offset the power issue, and both significant results and a moderate effect size was found. However, future studies on professionals' stereotype acceptance should endeavour to obtain a sample with equal numbers of professional groups to ensure equality of sample sizes and robust analyses. Additionally, the hypothesis that this sample would be no different from Study One's lay sample in terms of low overall rape myth acceptance and higher levels of perpetrator acceptance was the case. However, it is important to note that due to the topic, social desirability bias may have been a

contributing factor, and some professionals may have answered the way that looked the most socially acceptable, despite possibly believing otherwise. This could, apart from the 'use without belief' theory posited in the discussion, be one potential reason for the low acceptance rates here despite previous research (Maddox et al., 2012; Smith & Skinner, 2017), and the reality of the attrition problem (Hohl & Stanko, 2015; Munro & Kelly, 2009). If replicated in the future, it would be useful to either use vignettes, or design a mixed-methods study, such as in Zidenberg et al.'s (2022) study on rape stereotype acceptance, in which the authors found that while participants showed lower endorsement in the quantitative portion, they expressed four distinct rape stereotypes in the qualitative segment.

In terms of research following from these findings, it would be useful to conduct a follow-up survey on the same populations in one-to-two years' time, to assess any further changes in stereotype acceptance and social representations and to confirm the findings of a potential social representations shift. Additionally, there is little research into educators' and social workers' acceptance of rape stereotypes. These groups are likely to be disclosed to during their career, and possibly carry out safeguarding and support duties, so it is important to properly gauge stereotype acceptance levels and stereotype training efficacy, where training exists, so proper recommendations for policy and practice can be made where necessary.

Finally, as the highest level of attrition is at the police investigation stage, and as police tend to utilise stereotypes when deciding which cases to take forward, it would be useful to carry out qualitative research into the way police use stereotypes during initial fact-gathering interviews with rape victims, and how any stereotype use affects the victim. Recommendations for policy and practice could then be made at this level to reduce the attrition rate.

Conclusion

Encouragingly, the current findings showed that within several professional groups, there appears to be a shift in social representations taking place, with less acceptance of rape stereotypes. This is in line with the findings from Study One. However, the evidence suggests that stereotypes are still being used despite less belief to achieve certain outcomes in rape investigations and trials. This includes deciding which cases to refer to the CPS and influencing jury decisions by exonerating the perpetrator and discrediting the victim. These concerns give rise to a number of recommendations for policy and practice, including policy change to reflect the reality, not stereotypes, of rape, and more strict enforcement of mythbuster directions and challenges of stereotype use in court. Future research including potential training interventions and further studies within particular professional groups are still needed in order to further improve rape victims' access to justice.

Transitional Section 3

Study Two was a survey of professional groups who were likely to be involved with rape cases as part of their occupation ($n = 304$ – Educators; Healthcare workers; Social Workers; Legal Workers; Policing). The overall extent of stereotype acceptance in and between the groups, which categories of stereotype were adhered to most, and whether prior training in sexual violence had an effect on stereotypes was explored. The findings were comparable to Study One: broadly low levels of acceptance across the sample, except in perpetrator stereotypes. There were no significant differences between any of the occupational groups. It was found that those with specialised

training were significantly less likely to accept perpetrator stereotypes than those without.

These are important findings, displaying a natural continuation from Study One - there are few differences between the general population and professionals in levels of acceptance and uncertainty, and also in *what* is more likely to be accepted, supporting the possible ongoing shift in social representations of rape across both lay and professional populations. Training was the only significant factor in reducing stereotypes, which appears to be the only factor differentiating professionals from lay people. Additionally, while overall there was a low level of rape stereotype acceptance in this sample, much existing research on legal and policing practice suggests that the criminal justice system still utilises these stereotypes, either in police-prosecuting decisions (Hohl & Stanko, 2015), or where lawyers influence jury decision-making (Smith & Skinner, 2017). This helps to maintain the vicious cycle of attrition (Munro & Kelly, 2009) and indeed, crosstabs suggested that police were slightly more likely to accept stereotypes. Considering this and that the highest level of attrition is at the initial police investigation stage (87%: Hohl & Stanko, 2015), an institutional-level study was important to explore the factors behind this: how police interviewers use stereotypes during interview, and the potential impact this has on victims and the overall CJS. A transition from quantitative methods to qualitative methods was needed for this study, due to the narrower and more specific scope of the design, and additionally because of the focus on interviews, which are a rich source of qualitative data.

Chapter 5

Study Three: *"Are we sure that he knew that you don't want to have sex?"*:
Discursive constructions of the perpetrator in police interviews with rape victims

Thus far in the thesis, I have examined the nature of rape stereotype acceptance in lay and professional populations through quantitative methods. I found that perpetrator related stereotypes are the most accepted type, and found several significant demographic and training-related effects. The thesis now moves onto an in-depth qualitative and discursive examination of rape stereotype use in Achieving Best Evidence (ABE) police interviews with rape complainants, with the aim of exploring perpetrator constructions and the issues of consent, doubt, and disbelief such constructions bring about.

Introduction

Previous research relating to rape stereotype use amongst legal professionals has highlighted the complexity of the issue, while recent reports and statistics suggest problems in the way the criminal justice system treats rape victims who wish to pursue legal action. Over the past several years, considerable attention has been given to the increasingly high attrition and low prosecution rates for rape and the possible factors for these two issues This chapter has adopted a qualitative approach in order to explore the ways in which police interviewers use rape stereotypes in interviews with rape complainants, and does this from a critical discourse perspective to understand the balance of power within an interview, and how this might impact attrition from the victim's perspective, in addition to prosecution decisions. Some research related to this includes Haworth (2006, 2010), who explored stereotype use, although specifically oriented towards police-suspect interviews. MacLeod (2010) analysed the way police interviewers formulated questions in interviews with rape complainants; and Antaki et

al. (2015) explored how interviewers expressed doubt and disbelief when questioning complainant conduct in relation to complainants with additional vulnerabilities such as intellectual disabilities, implicitly illustrating the power and control the questioner has in such interactions. As the attrition rate for rape is highest at the initial police investigation stage, in addition to evidence of higher acceptance of 'real rapist' or perpetrator stereotypes amongst legal and policing professionals, as was shown in Chapters Three and Four, this study examined interviewers' discursive constructions of rape perpetrators in police interviews with rape victims.

Background

There is an increasingly wide gap between rapes, their reports, and prosecutions - 1.4% of rape cases resulted in a charge or summons, while 41% of cases resulted in victim withdrawal, contributing towards an extremely high attrition rate (Home Office, 2020). Existing research suggests that this is due to the criminal justice system utilising rape stereotypes when making decisions. For example, the End Violence Against Women (EVAW) Coalition (2019) found that the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) had been following a policy of risk aversion, only taking on 'easy cases', containing features which are more likely to fit juries' social representations of real rape – stereotypes such as the perpetrator was a stranger or 'other' in some way, there was physical violence, or the rape took place outside at night. However, this approach means that many rape victims slip through the cracks, as 84.7% of victims know their rapists so do not fit real rapist or real rape stereotypes (Office for National Statistics, 2020. Munro and Kelly (2009) coined the term 'vicious cycle of attrition' arising from this policy, in which police and prosecutors only advance cases they believe have a realistic chance of securing conviction. To do this they anticipate jury decision making, relying on lay stereotype usage that influences this. Police then advance cases that

conform to 'real rape' stereotypes, and it is possible that the initial evidence gathering interview with the complainant reflects this stereotype use, leading to a need for research at this attrition point.

Further complicating these challenges is evidence, as indicated in Study Two (Chapter 4), that legal professionals are potentially using rape stereotypes without necessarily having individual belief in them, which is a likely reflection of the wider societal and institutional structures these stereotypes are perpetuated within: those of patriarchy and upholding existent power structures (Brownmiller, 1975). For example, Kim and Santiago (2020) found that US prospective criminal justice professionals, especially males, held higher patriarchal as well as conservative beliefs. Additionally, findings from Study Two indicated that amongst professionals likely to be involved in rape cases, rape stereotype acceptance was low overall, although 'real rapist' or perpetrator related stereotype acceptance was much higher. This suggests that social representations of rape and belief in rape stereotypes are shifting. However, in addition to the ongoing attrition problem, there is still evidence of rape stereotyping in the legal system. For example, Murphy and Hine (2019) carried out a questionnaire study designed to examine the contributions of several demographic and attitudinal variables to rape stereotype acceptance and found that, while rape stereotype acceptance was generally low, supporting Study Two, certain attitudinal variables such as hostility towards women and the relationship between power and sex were still significantly predictive of stereotype acceptance, and training was significantly likely to mitigate acceptance. This suggests that stereotypes are being used in conjunction with patriarchal and gender-role based attitudes; and placed in context with Munro and Kelly's (2009) observations, used as a decision-making shortcut. In terms of stereotype use at the prosecution level, Smith and Skinner's (2017) court observation study

discovered that rape stereotypes were routinely used at trial, while 'mythbuster' judicial

directions were sometimes used, but often resisted or undermined by closing arguments.

Temkin et al. (2018) carried out a similar court observation study and found that

stereotype use by the defence was frequent, with use of 'real rape' stereotypes, myths

used to discredit the complainant, and invoking myths specific to the facts of the case.

There were very few instances of challenges by the prosecution or mythbuster

directions from the judge, despite the Crown Court Compendium (2022) guidance

stating that the jury needs to be alerted to guard against unwarranted assumptions,

including those related to delays in reporting, inconsistent accounts, intoxication, or

lack of any use of force. These studies indicate that while beliefs may be changing, use

of stereotypes for the purposes of decision making and jury influence for the purposes

of investigation and defence are still an issue, as they are live features of discourse

around sexual assault, and negatively impact the victim.

Efforts are additionally underway to shift the focus from the rape victim to the

suspect in the Criminal Justice System (CJS). Operation Soteria Bluestone is a large-

scale police-academic collaboration, launched in 2021 by the Home Office. The Year

One report was recently published (Home Office, 2022), with a wealth of findings

across six different pillars of research. One important finding was from Pillar One:

Suspect focused investigations: investigations were disproportionately victim-focused,

in terms of complainants having to prove credibility and integrity in addition to

investigations and interviews often being driven by social representations of rape that

reflect real rape stereotypes. The researchers concluded that the suspect's behaviour and

choices need to instead be the main focus of rape investigations, with one police force

already beginning to take positive steps to shift the focus in this direction.

Discursive Features of the Police Interview

        It is clear that the criminal justice system as a whole still faces challenges in mitigating the cycle of attrition, and the current study aimed to contribute to the body of knowledge on rape stereotype use in police interviewing in order to make some timely recommendations for policy and practice. As attrition rates are highest at the police interview stage – 80% of cases are dropped at this point (Home Office 2006), and complainant withdrawal is also predominant at this stage (63%, Home Affairs Committee, 2022), the current research will focus on the initial evidence gathering interview with the rape complainant, using a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) methodology. I chose this approach due to its focus on the way language is used to display and communicate ideologies, as well as perpetuate power structures. CDA was a good fit for the current study due to the inherent power imbalances in an investigative interview, in addition to the potential for problematic ideologies becoming evident in questioning. According to Wodak (2004), CDA is a 'research programme' which comprises various different theoretical backgrounds and frameworks depending on the data and methodologies used. There are also several differing definitions of key terms: Van Dijk (1998, pg.26-46) considers ideologies to be 'clusters of beliefs in our minds', which are general, abstract, socially shared, and context-independent. He differentiated between sociocultural knowledge, which is shared by community members; and ideologies, which is shared within subgroups in a community. Examples include specific ideologies shared by white nationalists, feminists, or indeed, members of the police. Chiapello and Fairclough (2002, pg.187) defined an ideology as 'a system of ideas, values, and beliefs', which legitimise and perpetuate hierarchies and power relations, and aim to preserve group identities. In either definition, such ideologies – relating to gender and rape, in the case of this research – can be considered as social representations around rape and violence against women giving rise to rape stereotypes.

In the context of the UK police institution, the ideology could be said to be in line with other dominant patriarchal social structures such as central government.

The concept of 'power' is another key term used throughout CDA and has different definitions. For example, Fairclough (1995) conceptualised power as asymmetry between participants in discourse, and also as an inequality in the ability to control how the discourse is produced, disseminated, and used. Van Dijk (1993b) more broadly defined 'social power' as special access to resources which are socially valued, such as wealth and income, position, force, knowledge, or forms of discourse and communication. He suggested that power necessitates control by one group over another, but distinguished between legitimate and acceptable forms of power, and dominance, which he defined as power abuse – breaches of laws, equality, and justice by power-wielders. This latter definition will be used for the current study, as its recognition of the difference between legitimate and accepted power and dominance is useful in understanding and acknowledging the complex nature of the police institute, the way it has and wields power, and its effects on interactions with complainants. Additionally, the emphasis on power as not only an issue of asymmetrical access to discourse, but also unequal access to social resources such as education, group membership, or position, will highlight the ways in which police practice in interviews is linked to wider societal issues.

Despite the differing approaches to power and ideology, some general principles are shared. CDA assumes discourse to be a form of social practice (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997) – language use shapes and is shaped by social structures, institutions, and specific situations. This is important when considering how language is used and wielded in an institutional context such as the police interview, and how that affects and is affected by existing social structures.

Police interview materials are useful for their complexity and richness, and this can help in beginning to solve the challenges facing the Criminal Justice System (CJS) through gaining a greater understanding the issues that arise in police interviews with rape complainants, in order to make appropriate recommendations to address them. One notable feature of interviews is their example of institutional discourse. There have been several definitions of institutional talk: for example, Drew and Heritage (1992) described institutional discourse as characteristically asymmetrical – by its nature there is an imbalance of turn-taking between participants as opposed to that of everyday conversation between equal participants. Although as conversation analysts, the issue of power is not discussed, asymmetry in discourse can expose power relations, as the interviewer (the individual with power) asks questions, while the interviewee (the individual without power) must answer the questions. Habermas (1984) proposed an alternate definition, suggesting that institutional talk was strategically asymmetrical – less related to unequal turn distribution and more related to unequal levels of social power and status between participants. It is worth noting that in either of these definitions, whether strategic or characteristic, or both, the person with the power (i.e., the police interviewer) is the person asking the questions. However, Thornborrow (2002), dissatisfied with reductive points of comparison between institutional talk and 'ordinary conversation', defined institutional discourse as "a form of interaction in which the relationship between a participant's current institutional role ... and their discursive role ... emerges as a local phenomenon which shapes the organisation and trajectory of the talk" (pg.5). This means that participants' talk in institutional settings is influenced by the interaction between their interactional and discursive role (i.e., as interviewee), and their institutional status (i.e., as rape complainant or witness). This definition is aware of context, discursive practices and social power, and their interplay,

so will be used for the purposes of the research. Additionally, the consideration of inherent asymmetry within police interviews is in line with some Critical Discourse theory on power (Fairclough, 1995).

In addition to asymmetry, Haworth (2006) pointed out that interviewers also have institutional power and are capable of making crucial decisions whose outcomes affect the interviewees' futures. She also suggested that adding to this complexity is the fact that the police interview is not an isolated discursive event, but part of a much wider process – while it is an instrument for evidence gathering (Achieving Best Evidence [ABE], Home Office, 2021), it is also evidence itself when submitted to court and used at trial. Thus, not only is the interview for the benefit of the police interviewer to aid decision making, but also for an overhearing audience, including lawyers and Crown Prosecution Service decision-makers, and potentially eventually a jury (Haworth, 2010). Consequently, this presents issues when real rape and real rapist stereotypes are used in interviews which then go on to be presented by lawyers to juries, and there is evidence that such stereotypes are used in police interviews: MacLeod (2010) conducted a CDA of police interviews with rape complainants, finding that some discursive features such as formulations (rewording immediately prior talk) had the surface function of clarifying details for the overhearing audience, but also foregrounded elements of the complainant's account while backgrounding others – this included foregrounding complainant behaviour while backgrounding that of suspect. Antaki et al. (2015) also found in a police interview study with rape complainants with intellectual disabilities that interviewers tended to build up a pattern of accountability, asking conduct-related questions ("how come you didn't...?"; "why did/didn't you...?"). Although the aim for interviewers is to test alternate theories, these questions reflect victim blaming stereotypes, and when the conduct in question is related to struggle or

visible distress, real rape stereotypes. This caused distress on the part of the complainants, and there is evidence that why/how come questions can imply doubt, disbelief, and that there is no adequate account when the asker is in a position of epistemic strength (Koshik, 2005), which can intensify feelings of self-blame. This returns again to the asymmetry characteristic of police interviews, and the current study aims to address this and recommend ways to ask such questions without invoking stereotypes.

Achieving Best Evidence

Achieving Best Evidence in Criminal Proceedings: Guidance for vulnerable or intimidated witnesses including children (2022), or ABE, is official police guidance which outlines best practice for interviewing victims and witnesses and in preparing them to give best evidence in court and was developed and refined through collaboration between psychologists and practitioners to improve overall interviewing, reliability, and detail (Milne & Bull, 2006; Oxburgh & Dando, 2011). According to the ABE guidance, interviews should comprise four stages. The first is rapport building, in which the interviewer needs to establish trust by communicating empathy, introducing themselves by name, presenting themselves as an identifiable person, and reducing anxiety by asking unrelated questions that can be answered positively. The interviewer then opens the interview and explains the ground rules. The interviewer explains the reason for the interview, the outline of the interview, and that witnesses should report everything, even if it seems unimportant. Witnesses should also be told that if they need clarification, they should ask, and that if the interviewer misunderstands the witness or summarises incorrectly, they should point this out. The second stage is the uninterrupted free narrative account, in which the witness provides an account of the event in their own words. Interviewers need to use non-specific prompts such as "is

there more that you can tell me?". There is an emphasis on active listening in this stage, and appropriate non-verbal behaviour is recommended, including allowing pauses and reducing interruptions during pauses, offering simple utterances ("mmm, mm-hmm), and also speaking in a calm even manner. The interviewer should also encourage the witness to reconstruct the context of the event in their minds to aid in memory recall. The third stage is the questioning phase, in which the interviewer asks appropriate questions that help in further recall of events. Several different techniques are recommended here, including using different senses or different temporal order to help recall, changing perspectives, and using memory prompts to aid in details concerning people, for example, a perpetrator or suspect. Finally, the fourth stage involves closing the interview. Interviewers should briefly summarise what the witness has said, using the witness' own words, and allowing the witness to correct them if they are incorrect. The guidelines emphasise that care should be taken not to convey disbelief. In the closing phase, the interviewer should ensure that the witness is not distressed - the neutral topics discussed in the rapport phase may help with this - and that they are thanked for their effort. The interviewer should also explain what will happen next, in addition to appropriately answering any questions the witness might have and giving advice on seeking help and support.

Much of the literature on the ABE guidelines focuses on elements of the guidance that involve proper establishing of the ground rules, and rapport and empathy rather than the questioning itself. One study, Webster, Oxburgh, and Dando (2020) found in an analysis of interviews with rape complainants that interviewers were more likely to ask appropriate rather than inappropriate questions, following the guidance. Additionally, a Joint Inspection relating to ABE in child sexual abuse cases (HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate & HM Inspectorate of Constabulary

[HMCPSI/HMIC], 2014) noted that while interviewers were adept at identifying salient events and incidents and encouraging witnesses to provide more details, they were less effective in probing these described incidents to obtain more information. The inspection also indicated that open-ended questions were used usefully, but closed-ended questions, and those with forced-choice responses were used very frequently, eliciting much shorter responses with less detail. Leading questions were also common. While this inspection was focused on child witnesses, it is still relevant for adult rape complainants, as these issues in questioning could still lead to the similar issues of additional distress, lack of detail, and eventual attrition. It is important to add that police interviewers' social representations of rape may reflect rape stereotype acceptance, in terms of ideal victim and real rapist stereotypes, which may in turn affect the interview. Rich and Seffrin (2012) found that rape stereotype acceptance was detrimental to complainant interviewing skill – this was a US study, however rape stereotype acceptance is still prevalent within the police in England and Wales (Gekoski et al., 2023), and it is possible that the same effect is present, highlighting the importance of exploring ABE interviews in relation to rape stereotype acceptance.

Discursive Constructions of Rape

Two main discursive constructions are discussed in this chapter through a CDA perspective of power and ideology: miscommunication, and passive and agentless talk. This section outlines some definitions and literature on the concepts.

The miscommunication model of rape is the theory that acquaintance rape is the result of miscommunications and misunderstandings between partners (Tannen, 1992). This theory was heavily criticised by Kitzinger and Frith (1999) and O'Byrne et al. (2008), who found that while women found it difficult to directly refuse sex, and men claimed to misunderstand indirect refusals, men could actually understand a variety of

sexual refusals. More recent studies support this, such as Marcantonio et al. (2018),

who found in a survey of 773 college students on sexual communication that a variety

of sexual refusals were used; and Beres et al. (2014), who found in a thematic analysis

of participant responses to ambivalent sexual situations that participants did not rely on

miscommunication stereotypes to resolve the situation. Despite this criticism, the data

shows that miscommunication related stereotypes are still used in police interviews,

putting the burden on the victim to refuse properly, and where the victim has given

clear nonverbal consent, to still show signs of distress to clearly communicate their non-

consent.

Ehrlich (2003) coined the term 'agentless passives', arguing that grammatical

choices are 'potentially important social acts' – for example, in an example from

Henley et al. (1995), she pointed out that one could use the sentence "in the U.S., a man

rapes a woman every six minutes", putting full agency and activity on the 'man'; or the

sentence "in the U.S., a woman's rape occurs every six minutes", completely removing

the 'man', or any action on his part. Ehrlich (2003) also pointed out that suspect and

legal professionals utilise these agentless passives to diminish perceived responsibility

and shift blame onto the victim. The same usage is reflected in more recent studies such

as Tranchese (2019), who found in a thematic analysis of rape coverage in UK

newspapers that there was a general use of passive terms and agentless grammar,

obscuring the perpetrator.

Each of these discursive constructions, through deleting or diminishing agency

and backgrounding and exonerating the perpetrator, serves to obscure the Mens Rea

element of rape. Mens Rea is defined by the Sexual Offences Act (2003) as the suspect

having "no reasonable belief of consent". It is often easy to prove the Actus Reus

element of rape – the intentional penetration of the vagina, anus, or mouth of another

person with his penis without consent – but harder to prove Mens Rea. This is likely the reason constructions which diminish any suggestion of 'no reasonable belief of consent' are used.

Current Study

Due to previous research indicating that perpetrator stereotypes are more likely to be utilised than any other type (Chapter 3, Chapter 4), including 'real rapist' stereotypes indicating social representations of othering such as "most rapes are committed by strangers" or "rapists are mostly psychotic or mentally ill", this stereotype category was focused on for the present research. The current study utilised Socio-Cognitive Critical Discourse Analysis (van Dijk, 1993a) due to the technique's good fit with the SRT theoretical framework. The study also used some conversational analytical techniques to capture nuances that could be lost within a higher-level analysis (such as tone of voice which might communicate sarcasm or disbelief), in order to discover how police interviewers constructed the alleged perpetrator in initial evidence gathering interviews with rape victims, and in what way this affects the victim and their responses.

Method

Ethics

Given the sensitive, real-life nature of the data, it is important to include an ethics section here. The data was considered low-risk, as it was secondary data and the complainants were not contacted and were not involved with the project. Ethical approval was obtained from the Keele University School of Psychology's Ethics Committee (Appendix D5), and a data agreement between the participating police force

and the researcher was signed. The interviews were transcribed and anonymised on-site in order to fully ensure the security of the data.

Data and Preliminary Analyses

The sample analysed was ten real-life initial evidence gathering video recorded police interviews with rape complainants, conducted in the West Midlands of England in accordance with ABE Guidelines (Home Office, 2011). The interviewees were all women and all white, with age ranges from eighteen to forty-five. Three cases were stranger profile rapes, four cases were acquaintance rapes – ranging from less well known to close friend – and three cases were partner rapes. Three interviewers were male, while seven were female. Some interviews were conducted in a Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC), others in a police station. The interviews were recorded between 2015 and 2017, by one police force, and lasted between 24 minutes and 1 hour and 55 mins.

The interviews were transcribed verbatim initially, followed by a close reading of the verbatim transcripts to find examples of rape stereotypes. Utilising the rape stereotype scale from the previous two studies (See Chapters 3 and 4), the most common rape stereotype themes within each interview were identified. One transcript, a stranger rape, was eliminated from the analysis as it had no examples of rape stereotype use at all. In line with the two previous studies, while some other stereotype use was found within the interviews, the most consistent and widespread stereotype use in the rest of the transcripts were discovered to be perpetrator related, especially misunderstanding constructions and agentless or passive talk around the perpetrator.

From these themes, research questions were developed: How are perpetrators constructed within the interviews? How do these constructions differ with the different

relationships between victim and perpetrator (i.e., stranger, acquaintance, partner)? How are these construction formulations responded to by the victim?

Following this, salient extracts were identified for Jefferson transcription – a conversational analysis transcription system used to look at speech patterns (Jefferson, 2004) to understand nuance within the constructions, especially in terms of emphasis, tone, and picking up distress or emotion not evident in the spoken word (See Appendix D1, Table 13 to see Jefferson Transcription Conventions). Twenty-five extracts were identified and transcribed overall, with six key examples utilised in the final study. The analysis was continuous and cyclical throughout the process from the first step. It began inclusively and became more specific and precise as a systematic exploration of the cases, and eventually, extracts, unfolded. While the analysis was ongoing, data sessions were held with other qualitative researchers, in which potential extracts or examples of stereotyping I identified were discussed and crosschecked with colleagues across the university who did not know the data or topic in great detail, in order to ensure reliability of interpretation. These were in addition to regular discussions with the methods supervisor, which also assisted in this.

Theory and Methodology: An Integrated Approach

In order to comprehensively explore the sorts of features used in police interviews, and how they affect the participants and reveal what kinds of social representations interviewers and institutions have around rape, an integrated, multi-perspective and bottom-up approach to the data was used. This means that some micro-level features drawn from conversation analysis and discursive psychology, such as interruptions (Goldberg, 1990), reported speech (MacLeod, 2010), the use of justifications (Potter & Wetherell, 1987), and interpretative repertoires in regards to reliance on neutralising language and 'appropriate resistance' related terms (Wetherell

& Potter, 1988; Coates et al., 1994) are discussed in combination with a macro-level analysis: the socio-cognitive approach to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). This placed the micro-level features in the wider context of power and asymmetry, disbelief and doubt, and social representations of rape reflected within the institution and in individual interviewers. This approach was used by MacLeod (2010), who conducted a similar CDA on a similar sample, and van Dijk (2001) suggested that a CDA should be diverse and multidisciplinary, integrating the 'best work of many people'. His further proposal that CDA should involve examination of interactional control and interactional content also lends credence to the current study's multi-perspective approach.

The Socio-Cognitive Approach to CDA was first proposed by van Dijk (1993a), who proposed a three-dimensional 'triangle' model of CDA. These dimensions are society, where groups and their shared ideologies exist with or without power; discourse, which are ways of representing aspects of the world; and cognition, which provides the mediating link between discourse and society, influencing and being influenced by society and discourse with ideas, beliefs, and values, spread though phenomena such as social representations (van Dijk, 2014b).

Much of van Dijk's work involves racism and racist propaganda in the media and in political discourse (1987; 1993b; 2006), however the socio-cognitive approach will be useful in considering the societal context of the discourse, and in understanding how discursive and institutional power is applied and certain stereotypical constructions built in order to uphold societal structures such as patriarchy, and patriarchal institutions such as the police. It is also useful to consider the mediating link of cognition, to understand how the identities and roles of the interviewer and their alignments may affect their ideologies and beliefs in a way that affects the discourse of the interview.

This integrated approach is additionally a good fit for the theoretical framework, Social Representations Theory, due to recent theorists' emphasis on understanding the different levels of representation and meaning-making, i.e., at individual, relational, and cultural-institutional levels. An integrated discursive approach allows for the understanding of individual meaning-making (Jefferson-level analysis), relational dialogue (what business is happening in the interview and what the effects are on the complainant), and what kinds of power relations are happening at institution level which are also affecting the interview (such as pressures on the interviewer to ask inappropriate questions which could be asked in court, for example). This helps to further understand how social representations of rape are negotiated, resisted, and perpetuated within the police interview and to a certain extent within the wider police and CJS culture. Much thought was additionally given to the most appropriate school of Critical Discourse Analysis, both situated within the rest of the integrated approach and within the SRT framework. As Van Dijk's (1993a) Socio-Cognitive approach to CDA's mediating link between society and discourse is cognition, it was considered the most appropriate approach for this analysis.

Defining Victim-Perpetrator Relationships

This study analysed the findings across a spectrum of perpetrator acquaintanceship, from 'stranger' to 'partner'. This is due to the differences in misunderstanding constructions and use of agentless passives depending on the victim-perpetrator relationship. Thus, it is necessary to establish a formal definition of a stranger rape, an acquaintance rape, and a partner rape, in order to understand which category each extract falls into.

Stranger Profile

The definition of stranger rape used by UK police forces is offences "where the victim and perpetrator are stranger or unknown to each other" (Serious Crime Analysis Section [SCAS], 2011). Cases in which very limited legitimate contact or previous non-legitimate contact (i.e., grooming actions) are included in this definition. Although stranger rapes are thought of as the most common type by the general public, in reality only approximately 16% of rapes are by strangers (ONS, 2021). This is reflected in the makeup of the current data, in which only three interviews, two of which were used in the analysis, could be defined as stranger rapes.

The type of perpetrator constructions most utilised in these interviews was agentless passive talk, giving the effect of backgrounding the perpetrator, diminishing autonomy and obscuring Mens Rea, which in rape involves the intent to penetrate along with the lack of reasonable belief of consent.

Acquaintance Rapes

This rape profile is defined by SCAS (2011) as one in which "the victim and perpetrator are known to each other but have not had a previous sexual relationship". Three types differing in levels of closeness to the victim have been identified in the current data: cases where they have known each other for just a few days; a case where the perpetrator is a friend of the victim's boyfriend, and a case where the perpetrator is a friend of the victim.

Partner Rapes

The National Policing Improvement Agency [NPIA] (2010) defines this as "offences committed by people who are, or have been, intimate partners". They include this in the category of Domestic or Relationship Rapes, under which heading family

members also falls. However, for the purposes of the current study, family members are not discussed. The nature of the rapes in the study's interview data either includes coercive control in order to commit sexual violence, or physical and sexual violence. the former is more common than the latter in the data, although sometimes the two are combined.

Slightly more examples of misunderstanding constructions than agentless passives can be found in this section, possibly due to the likelihood of coercive control, and interviewers' apparent ignorance of types of non-consent other than 'outright no' – for example, 'worn down yes', 'not fighting back', 'not saying anything' are all examples of non-consent simply by the lack of presence of positive and enthusiastic consent.

Findings

The two main themes found in the transcript extracts were 'interviewer constructs perpetrator as misunderstanding or missing non-consent', and 'interviewer uses passive or agentless talk to refer to the perpetrator's actions'. Both of these perpetrator constructions obscure Mens Rea – misunderstanding constructions by assuming the perpetrator did not have 'reasonable belief' in the victim's non-consent, and passive/agentless talk by removing agency and autonomy from the perpetrator, shifting attention and responsibility onto the victim.

The findings section explores the two themes along a spectrum of alleged stranger rape to acquaintance rape. This structure works well for the analysis as the less 'simple' and stereotypical the rape is, i.e., the more well known to each other the victim and perpetrator are, the more complex the questioning becomes. For example, in partner rapes, more of the focus is on the perpetrator's understanding of consent, coercion

versus force (and often, the interviewing officer's ignorance of this distinction), verbal versus nonverbal non-consent, and the 'rough' sex narrative. Passive talk consists of agentless talk and nominatives, and an increased level of neutral and nonviolent reformulations of violent acts. In acquaintance rapes, the focus for misunderstanding constructions is likely to be on visible signs of distress, the state of lighting at the time of the rape and how much the perpetrator could see, and potential 'mixed signals', while passive talk centres on bodily autonomy and the victim being 'done to' instead of the perp 'doing'. In stranger rapes, there is a much larger focus on agentless and passive talk, with some examples of mistranslation constructions. An additional observation is that the more acquainted the victim and perpetrator are, the more examples there are of misunderstanding and passive talk as a whole.

In all extracts, I0 stands for the interviewing officer, while W0 stands for the complainant. INT[number] identifies different interviews; see the Appendix for transcription conventions).

Misunderstanding Constructions

This section concerns the constructions of misunderstanding within the interviews, including potential mistranslation and miscommunication, or the suspect missing the complainant's nonconsent altogether due to the complainant not properly communicating it.

Stranger Profile

The following extract (01) is an example of a stranger rape – however, it was not a 'perfect' real rape – the complainant and suspect had never met before the previous two hours, and the suspect followed the complainant to her room, but the rape occurred at the complainant's home after socialising in a friend's home in the same

block of flats. The talk during this extract is related to another person who was present

before the rape, who was translating between the complainant and the suspect.

Extract 01:Int04 *so you don't think there was any miscommunication going on*

```
1    I04: Okay,.hhh How good is his english i've spoken to M1 erm
2         (0.5) her english is uh ((sharp inbreath through teeth))
3         limited i think's the [best thing to say isn't it.]

4    W04:                       [        M1::'s           ] is (.)
5         better than C1's and [this V]1=

6    I04:                      [right.]

7    W04: =he- his english was next to no:thing really,

8    I04: Oka:y?

9    W04: Erm anything that he did want to say his cousin- er- J1 (0.7)
10        or M1 were translating it for me,

11        (.)

12   I04: R[ight,  ]

13   W04:  [And the]n they were translating what i'd said (.) back to
14        him,

15   I04: Were they translating the bit where he's saying you-you'd-
16        you haven't >got a< bo:yfriend and everything or(.) was he
17        say[ing that to you,]

18   W04:    [No,   he-he    ] can s- he can speak some e:nglish, but
19        (0.8) for somebody that (1.7) is not very good with accents
20        it'd be very hard for them to understand,

21   I04: °Right°,=

22   W04: =Erm (0.4) i (.) i only pick up some bits cause of (0.2) how
23        M1 talks to me and what she says to me,

24   I04: Yeah.

25   (.)

26   W04: Erm (.) so that's the only reason that i pick them up but
27        when he was trying tell me i was beautiful (0.4) and i'd got
28        nice eyes he didn't know how to say tha:t (.)
29        in [engli]sh, (0.3) So then J1 was=

30   I04:    [Yeah,]

31   W04: =translating things like that_

32   I04: Right.

33   W04: And then when i was saying i'd got a boyfriend and i was
34        happy J1 was translating that to him to let him know what i
35        was saying,

36   I04: Oka:y, .hhh So (.) here's the thing then i >mean i-< (0.9) i
37        don't speak Slovakian, i don't suppose (0.2)
```

```
38        you do e:ith[er. D'you TH]Ink J1=
39  W04:              [(hh)No(h)o. ]
40  I04: =was translating the correct things to you did you get the
41       impression that J1 was telling him
42       (.) [the   correct   things_ ]
43  W04: Yeah [because he was saying so]me of the things in E:nglish
44       as w[ell,  ]
45  I04:     [Right.]
46  W04: So i knew what- i kinda knew what he was sa:ying,
47  I04: Yep,
48  W04: Cause he'd say it in his language and then he'd tell me what
49       he'd just said to him in english and so would M1.
50  I04: .hhh Right, so you don't think there was any
51       miscommunication [going on.]
52  W04:                  [No      ]definitely not, cause M1, she
53       .hhh (0.7) sh-she'd tell 'em straight really she'd tell them
54       that i didn't say that o:r what i did say (.) d'you know what
55       i mean, [she'll-]=
56  I04:         [Yeah.  ]
57  W04: =she'll tell 'em.
```

In this extract, the interviewer asks multiple questions in order to set up a misunderstanding construction of the perpetrator. She first asks, 'how good is his English' (line 01), comparing it to another non-English speaker who was with the complainant. After several turns, she then asks a so-prefaced question, "so" (line 36) indicating that they are getting to the true reason she asked about the suspect's English ability. The interviewer momentarily steps outside of her identity as the interviewing officer and fact-gatherer to shift footing and align herself with the victim, saying "here's the thing then I mean I (0.9) I don't speak Slovakian, I don't suppose you do either.' This is a presupposition, as it is made clear earlier on that the complainant does not speak Slovakian, which is likely a formulation for the benefit of the overhearing audience. This footing shift towards conversationalisation (Fairclough, 1994) and relatability is likely the interviewer following the Enhanced Cognitive Interview training, which recommends interpersonal communication (Milne & Bull, 1999).

However, there may be a secondary function to this: to soften any implications of challenge or disbelief, given the interviewer is in a position of discursive power, and thus may be attempting to avoid the complainant being led into specific answers or feeling disbelieved. There is a 0.9 second pause during this utterance (line 36), suggesting that the interviewer is struggling to formulate the sentence in an appropriate way. The following question was 'do you think *J1* was translating the correct things to you' (lines 40-42), a question that carries an implication of miscommunication. Thus it is likely that, placed in context with the formulation difficulty and repetition of information already known, the interviewer had a certain mental model of events – that of mistranslation and miscommunication, and in the wider context of the police institution, possibly felt that this would be challenged in court. This indicates that the interviewer was ideologically aligned with the wider criminal justice system at this point in the interview, providing a further power asymmetry as she has access to and use of institutional knowledge that the complainant does not. The complainant aligns with and resists the implication of miscommunication, providing further explanation to defend her account: 'he'd say it in his language and then he'd tell me what he'd just said to him in English and so would *M1.*' (Lines 48-49). The interviewer uses another so-prefaced question to sum up, with a declarative formulation – 'so you don't think there was any miscommunication going on.' (line 50). At surface level, this is likely a summary for the benefit of the overhearing audience (although it could also function as a summation or clarification for the benefit of the interviewer), and a so-prefaced question such as this could be an invitation for the interviewee to take a turn, or a discourse marker to indicate an upcoming change in topic (Schiffrin, 1987, pg.225). However, it was the interviewer who brought the topic of miscommunication up, and implied it was the victim's idea: 'so you don't think...' and Johnson (2002) suggests

that so-prefaced questions in police interviews can function to label and evaluate prior

utterances and direct the interviewee towards reformulation. Thus, it is possible that the

interviewer is dissatisfied with the victim's previous response or is expressing some

disbelief. The same question is also a highly neutral formulation with no agents, which

has the effect of removing responsibility from the suspect and his friend, and also to

introduce responsibility on the part of the victim (Ehrlich, 2003).

Acquaintance Profile

Moving on to an example of acquaintance rape, the misunderstanding

construction becomes one of 'visible distress', rather than the slightly shallower and

less victim-blame related mistranslation construction. The following extract (02) is

from an interview in which the complainant had been to a university event, and the

suspect had assaulted her there after around 48 hours of socialising in a group. The

questioning in this extract is about specifically when the complainant began to visibly

cry.

Extract 02:Int 10 *could he have seen tears in your eyes would you say*

```
1    I10: >Okay< (.) how long were you in the bed, .hhh Before he then
2         left would you say,

3    (.)

4    W10: Erm, (1.3) Not long (.) like (0.3) two three minutes.

5    I10: Okay. .hhh (0.7) Did you (0.9) again this is impo:rtant,
6         (0.2)Did you .hhh (.) have any tears before you said you
7         started crying (.) in the bed,=

8    W10: =Yea- (0.2) erm (.) i had (0.3) >sort of< (0.6) it wasn't (.)
9         proper tears but my eyes (0.2) i think (0.2) my eyes were
10        quite watery and sort of (0.7) some tears (.) but .hhh
11        (0.3) [it was when-   ]

12   I10:       [Would you look-] could he-could he have seen .hhh
13        tears in your eyes (.) would you say,

14        (.)

15   W10: Erm,

16        (0.5)
```

```
17  I10: And y'[ave to be honest about that, ]

18  W10:       [   I th-   (0.5)   i th-   ], °i-i-i think° so erm
19        (0.4) i-i wuh- i didn't- couldn't see my face so (0.2) i'm
20        not sure but i think so, .hhh [but there's- ]

21  I10:                              [Were you were] you v- .hh you
22        know obviously when someone visibly
23        crie[s you know, D-were you-]=

24  W10:     [   Mhm   (0.4)   yeah, ]

25  I10: =did you cry .hhh (0.4) you s- you said you cried in the bed
26        but did you (0.2) did you cry visibly (1) uh-up to that point
27        at any time,=

28  W10: =Em (1.4) noh- (1.5) °a l-° (.) lit>tle bit< but not (0.5)
29        really, (0.2) Erm (0.2) sort of- (0.2) i had like a >couple
30        of< tears but not (0.3) loads .hhh (0.2) it was- .hhh when he
31        sort of pinned me down (0.2) and (0.4) i kind of (0.4) had a
32        realisa:tion, .hhh (0.5) i just (.) sort of (1) i panicked
33        cause I just thought he was (0.3) bout to (.) rape me >and i
34        just< (1.4) .hhh (0.2) °°i just°° (0.4) like (0.2) sort of
35        (0.2) started (.) sort of shakin:g, quite (0.7) drastically
36        and just (0.6) cryin:g,

37        (0.3)

38  I10: Mkay. .hhh

39  W10: .shih
```

The interviewer begins setting up for a misunderstanding construction when he asks, "did you have any tears before you said you started crying in the bed". He uses a reminder of importance – "did you (0.9) again this is important (0.2)" (lines 5-7). This reminder is redundant for the complainant, as from a socio-cognitive perspective, she is likely aware of how important the interview and getting the facts right is: this is her experience and her account, which she specifically came to engage in discourse about. Therefore, while this could be a way to seek clarity, this is possibly a challenge to the victim's account and an expression of disbelief, especially when placed in context with an utterance by the interviewer several turns later when he says, "and y'ave to be honest about that" (line 17). This further implies disbelief in the complainant's account, and also implies adherence to the real rape stereotype of "visible distress is necessary to communicate clear non-consent". The interviewer holds institutional power in this

setting, and thus can decide what is relevant in any particular context. Therefore, he is foregrounding the complainant's visible distress and truthfulness about her crying, making it more significant than the suspect's behaviour during this exchange. The complainant is clearly uncomfortable here, as shown by the pauses and stuttering throughout the extract, indicating that she may have aligned to the interviewer's questions as an expression of disbelief. She also challenges the difficulty of being unable to put herself in the suspect's shoes in response to the interviewer asking a hypothetical question on lines 12-13 ('could he have seen tears in your eyes (.) would you say?'): 'I didn't-couldn't see my face so (0.2) I'm not sure but I think so...'. The interviewer interrupts this utterance, ending her turn. This could be categorised as a 'power' type interruption, as opposed to a 'rapport' type (Goldberg, 1990), and takes discursive control back from the victim, asking her if she cried visibly 'at any point in time', with a pseudo-example: 'you know when someone visibly cries...' (lines 21-23). This suggests that the interviewer perceives visible crying and distress as a performative act for the perpetrator to show that she did not consent, despite verbal non-consent, in order to avoid misunderstanding, implying that if she had not cried, even performatively, then she had not communicated her non-consent correctly. In the wider institutional context, this is supported by studies such as Maddox et al. (2012), who found that an 'appropriate' amount of distress was more credible to investigators than too much or too little distress, indicating that this interviewer was aligning to the institutional ideologies of the criminal justice system.

Partner Profile

As the analysis moves into partner rapes, the construction of misunderstandings on the perpetrator's part becomes yet more complex and is often further related to communicating non-consent properly, even when the complainant has affirmed and

reaffirmed her verbal non-consent. The extract below (03) is an interview with a complainant who was in an abusive relationship with the suspect, who had a history of sexual, physical, and emotional violence against the complainant, which was ongoing almost up to the date of the interview, and the way the complainant describes the incidents in question suggests she felt coerced. An appropriate adult was also present, indicating she is additionally vulnerable in some way. The line of questioning in the following extract is about the complainant's understanding of rape and consent, and about the suspect's understanding of non-consent.

Extract 03: Int 05 *And are we sure that L knew that you don't want to have sex?*

```
1    I05: Okay. .hhhh So what's your understanding of rape now_ (0.2)
2         Wha what d'you think rape is now_

3    (0.9)

4    W05: Literally if a wo:man says n:o (0.6) and then (0.3) then a
5         man's got obv'sly take that as a no or othe:rwise it's (0.9)
6         obv'sly classed as rape,

7    I05: °Yeah° (0.7) °That's it°, .hhh And that man's got to know that
8         you mean no,

9    W05: M [:    :    mm.   ]

10   I05:   [and that you d]on't want sex. .hhh An:d (0.6) are we sh-
11        are we- sure that L1 knew that you don't want to have sex.

12   (0.9)

13   W05: I think he knows that. .hh He knows but (1.5) he's >one uh
14        th<em people who will not- he won't take no f'r an answer off
15        anybody,

16   I05: °Okay°, .hhh So (0.8) we've briefly spoke abou- >is there
17        anythin< else that you can think abo:ut, because obviously I
18        appre:ciate when you're in a relationship and you're sayi:ng
19        .hhh what- you know- someti:mes (.) what's in our he:ad and
20        w- an you d- an you're thinkin i don't want to have sex, .hh
21        That person that you're having sex with in- L1 in this case
22        always wanting sex, .hh he's got to know that you don't want
23        to,

24   (5.6)

25   W05: N:o, (7.4) It's just he ne:ver knows he-he (0.3) he always
26        (1.1) no matter f'r how much I say no it doesn't go >through
27        he'll< just carry o:n,
```

28 I05: Okay

The interviewer initially asks the complainant what her current understanding of rape is (lines 1-2). It is worth noting here that Hohl and Stanko (2015) found evidence that the likelihood of case dropout raised significantly if a complainant was deemed to have a 'lack of understanding of consent'. The victim's definition is a general, but overall correct, lay definition, and the victim has expressed that she verbally non-consented many times. The interviewer goes on to use this definition against the victim, saying 'and that man's got to know that you mean no', with emphasis on many words in this utterance (lines 7-8, 10-11). Her wording of '...that you mean no', instead of any mention of the validity of verbal non-consent implies not only some disbelief in the complainant's account on the part of the interviewer, but also the existence of adherence to stereotypes such as 'secretly wanting it' or 'he didn't mean to'. Higher levels of acceptance in these particular stereotypes have been found in UK police populations (Sleath & Bull, 2012). This utterance also places the burden of communicating non-consent squarely onto the complainant, an implication which is further reinforced later in lines 17-23 when the interviewer expresses doubt that the complainant has verbally consented at all and has only said no in her head: '...I appreciate when you're in a relationship and you're saying what- you know- sometimes, what's in our head and you're thinking I don't want to have sex...'. At one point in this utterance the interviewer shifts footing, using 'our' to align with the complainant, likely to create a sense of relatability (Milne & Bull, 1999) and imply a shared understanding that not saying 'what's in our head' is common and relatable, which could be one possible way to prompt the complainant into admitting she did not verbally consent. More problematically, the interviewer appears to be implying that a relationship in which not communicating non-consent is normal. The interviewer seems

aware of the issues around this utterance, as shown by the fillers and pauses. Some interactional difficulty on the part of the victim also follows, as the interviewer's utterance was confusing and indirect – it was not formulated as a question, but as a declarative 'B-event' statement, which is a statement where information is known to B (the complainant), but not to A (the interviewer), and is heard by the answerer as a request for confirmation (Labof & Fanshel, 1977). The implication was 'did you think 'I don't want to have sex' but did not say it aloud?'. The result of this, and of the B-event statement, is a long pause before the answer, indicating an upcoming dispreferred response (Pomerantz, 1984), and indeed the complainant reverts to her affirmation of her verbal non-consent and his continuing regardless. In this sequence, the interviewer is speaking from a position of discursive power, encouraging the complainant to respond in a specific way. She is additionally speaking from a position of epistemic strength, with claim to more knowledge of consent than the complainant, and imposes this position upon her.

Further evidence of misunderstanding construction occurs where the interviewer says, 'and are we sure that *L1* knew that you don't want to have sex.' (lines 10-11). This question has an interesting formulation – when dealing with the suspect, it shifts into past tense, implying that the suspect's actions are done with, thus backgrounding and reducing any current responsibility on him; however when dealing with the victim, the wording is in present tense, implying that a certain amount of responsibility still rests upon her for communicating non-consent, and foregrounding this for the overhearing audience, in addition to the continuing underlying implication of disbelief that is present. The complainant responds by doing some minor dispositional work – 'he's one uh them people who will not – he won't take no for an answer off anybody'. She places his actions in a context wider than herself by appealing to consensus,

implying his actions would be a problem with anybody, not just her. She also uses the present tense 'knows', treating the suspect's actions as ongoing in contrast to the interviewer, thus refusing to background his responsibility. Overall, this extract has many discursive features which add up to suggest that the interviewer has a different mental model of events than the complainant, and given the complainant's profile as a victim of partner rape and someone who is extra-vulnerable, is likely aligning to wider institutional and societal ideologies and practices around real rape victims and credibility.

Passive and Agentless Constructions

This section deals with constructions which use passive voice in the talk, i.e. "the ball was kicked" instead of "he kicked the ball", and also talk which removes the agent or actor – in the example above, it is not clear who kicks the ball, and similarly when the agent is removed from talk around rape, it is not clear who is doing the action.

Stranger Profile

The interview the following extract (04) is from is almost a 'perfect' stranger rape – the complainant was walking home alone at night and was followed. As a result, the only constructions present in this interview are agentless passives, however these, and violence-neutralising language, are used to the extent that it causes confusion on the part of the complainant.

Extract 04: Int07 *What was that action doing*

```
1   I07: So you know >when you were< talking about your He:ad,=
2   W07: =Yeah.
3   I07: .hhh How many ti:mes (0.3) d'you think that (.) your head's
4        been banging,
5   (3.5)
```

```
6    W07: °say about four ti:mes°,

7    (0.4)

8    I07: .hh And whe:re has your head been banging,=

9    W07: =Like twice on my front and twice on my back, .hh Not sure if
10        it was any mo:re I was just (0.6) I think it was about four
11        times,

12   I07: .hhh Okay, (2.1) AND HOW'S YOUR HEAD BEEN BANGING (.) how has
13        that come to be,

14   (0.4)

15   W07: °Mm cause I° wouldn't let him do anything so (.) like .hhh I
16        remember on my front, he kept like grabbing my ha:ir, (.)
17        ((grabs own back of hair with hand))

18   I07: Yeah,=

19   W07: =And like was (0.3) like (1.2) just (.) doing that kinda
20        thing ((makes hitting motion with hand)) with my head cause I
21        could feel him gripping my he:ad,

22   (.)

23   I07: Ye:ah,

24   W07: And then (0.3) >all of a sud<den my face was on the floor,
25        (0.8) So he just was (0.5) I think it was just that kind of
26        (0.3) action kinda thing. ((repeats hitting motion))
27        (0.3) .shIH [>and then-<]

28   I07:             [   So     ] that action- what's that action-
29        (.) what was that action do:ing? ((copies hitting motion))

30   (0.9)

31   W07: what d'you mean, Like (0.2) ((repeats previous motions))
32        gripping my hair and (0.2) pu[shing me to the] floor_

33   I07:                              [    yeah_      ] (0.6) Yeah_=

34   W07: =Yeah. (1) I don't know how like
35        [explain that,]

36   I07: [S- and your f]ace where's-where's that hi:tting
```

The interviewer asks a series of questions oriented to a passive agentless grammar – there is no actor in the talk, and the questions are in the passive voice (lines 3-4, 8, and 12-13). She asks how many times, where, and how 'has your head been banging?' The perpetrator is not present as an actor in any of these formulations, although the complainant stated previously that the perpetrator was the one who carried out this action towards her. This has the effect of backgrounding the perpetrator and reducing his role in what happened (Ehrlich, 2003), which serves the ideological

function of hiding the actor, who as a man is an ingroup member of a patriarchal society (van Dijk, 2005). The interviewer could have asked instead: 'how many times did he bang your head', where or whereabouts did he bang your head', or 'how or why did he bang your head?' These would not have been likely to be considered leading questions, as the complainant has already stated it was the perpetrator who 'banged' her head. The complainant responds by reaffirming her physical non-consent: 'I wouldn't let him do anything' (line 15) and goes into further detail on how he banged her head on the floor. She uses active formulations in her response, centring the perpetrator throughout. This is a possible response and resistance to a perceived challenge to her account, as the agentless talk not only removes responsibility from the perpetrator but also introduces the possibility of responsibility on the part of the complainant.

Later, removing the agent from the talk becomes an obstacle to understanding: The interviewer asks in lines 28-29, 'so that action- what's that action (.) what was that action doing?', regarding the perpetrator pushing her to the floor. The self-repairs and cut-offs indicate that the interviewer is endeavouring to formulate the question a certain way, with the result that the question is so passive that it causes confusion, and the complainant needs clarification. Even with gestural context and Jefferson transcription, along with further clarification, it is difficult to understand what is being asked here. There is no true agent in the question, as this is a form of nominalisation that presents "that action" as the agent, and so this completely deletes the suspect from the talk. Hence, it is understandable why the complainant's response is 'Yeah. (1) I don't know how like explain that' (lines 34-35). This could mean she does not know how to explain what happened. However, given the context and ambiguity of the question, in addition to the long pause, which signalled a dispreferred response that came in the form of a question back to the interviewer, could also be a response to the difficulty of the

question itself. The difficulty and obfuscating nature of the question, whether intentional or not, is also an exercise of the interviewer's discursive power over the complainant – the interviewer chooses how to ask the question, and the interviewee must find a way to understand what she is being asked, and either align to the question or resist and challenge it. If it is formulated in a confusing way, this could impact the complainant negatively. Overall the removal of the suspect as a participant in the rape, along with further use of non-violent terminology 'hitting, banging' rather than 'bashing' used by the complainant in earlier parts of the interview, gives the overhearing audience the ability to further obscure the Mens Rea of the act – this has also been found in MacLeod (2010), who discovered that some interviewers would restate complainants' words in more neutral, less violent terms, despite the ABE (Home Office, 2011) guidelines recommending that when interviewers restate a complainant's account, they should be as close to the original words as possible. The interviewer is thus aligning with the ideologies of the institution and wider society, which exonerates perpetrators both literally and through rape stereotypes and social representations (Murphy & Hine, 2009).

Acquaintance Profile

Moving on to an example of acquaintance rape, the extract below (05) is from the same university related rape as in Extract 02, and while the talk in the extract above included many examples of passive talk reducing agency, the talk here is mostly active, but still prescribes to a grammar of nonagency, backgrounding the perpetrator and removing autonomy. The line of questioning is about the perpetrator's body and actions, removing his decisions and mind from the talk.

Extract 05: Int 10 *what was his body doing at that time*

```
1    I10: =.hhh How- how many- you know how long was it befo:re (0.2)
2         his penis entered your mouth_

3    W10: Erm (0.5) °there's° (.) literally straightaway
4         (0.4) °cause° [after] I told him to (0.2) stop=

5    I10:                [Okay,]

6    W10: =and I was >trying to tell him to stop< and get off and_

7    I10: Yeah.

8    (.)

9    W10: As my (0.2) m- (.) as I was talking he (0.4) sort of-

10   (0.3)

11   I10: Right_

12   W10: (°°Put it in,°°)

13   I10: And how long was his penis inside your mouth for would you
14        say,

14   (0.9)

15   W10: Maybe like, erm .hhh (0.3) like three or four minutes   16
         (0.2) maybe?

17   (0.4)

18   I10: Okay. (1.8) Okay, (0.5) And (0.3) what was (1.2) you know ha-
19        (0.2) was he motion (.) motion at all during this time,
20        anything you know, what were you- what you- what was his body
21        doing at that time_

22   (.)

23   W10: Erm: (1.5) er: (0.6) I didn't really >notice °his°< (0.5)
24        >body doing anything< I just (0.3) remember his (0.2) head
25        (0.5) >sort of< (0.3) not his head his hands sorry (.) moving
26        my head (0.3) .shihh em (0.3) back and forth,
```

The interviewer uses a grammar of nonagency throughout this sequence (Ehrlich, 2003; Melluzzi, 2021), and chooses formulations such as 'his penis entered your mouth' (line 2). As in the previous extract, no autonomy or responsibility is assigned to the suspect, and particular emphasis is placed on 'your', implying a certain amount of agency or capability to resist on the part of the victim. The complainant responds with some difficulty, possibly because of the neutral, non-agentic nature of the question, and says 'literally straightaway cause after I told him to stop and I was trying to tell him to stop and get off... as I was talking he (0.4) sort of (0.4) put it in' (lines 6-

12). The complainant clarifies her verbal non-consent here twice, and additionally refuses to orient to the non-agentic grammar with which the interviewer began the sequence, using active formulations: 'he put it in'. However, the interviewer continues to be highly neutral in his questions: 'how long was his penis inside your mouth for...' (line 13), and the even more carefully formulated, 'what was his body doing at that time' (lines 20-21), with an emphasis on the word 'body', suggesting a lack of mental autonomy and a focus particularly only on the actions, or Actus Reus (albeit somewhat unattached to the suspect). In addition, these neutral formulations serve to normalise the actions of the suspect, making them seem usual and everyday, which is an alignment with the wider patriarchal ideology of the institution and of society. The complainant does begin to align to these passive formulations, but seems to be uncomfortable with it, as from this point onwards there are some markedly faster and quieter portions of talk, pauses, fillers such as 'er', and self-correcting ('Erm (1.5) er (0.6) I didn't really >notice °his°< (0.5) >body doing anything< I just (0.3), lines 23-24) This sequence as a whole shows the interviewer utilising his discursive and institutional position of power in the interview to erase any indication of Mens Rea from the suspect and removing his thinking actions from the situation – the overhearing audience will likely use this backgrounding of perpetrator autonomy, possibly to benefit the suspect (Haworth, 2020). The existence of further power asymmetry between interviewer and complainant, where the interviewer is male, and the complainant is much younger and additionally vulnerable (she mentions that she is autistic early in the interview), appears to have the effect of causing the complainant further discomfort. This power difference shows in her attempt to align with the interviewer's nonagentic grammar, but the pauses and difficulty that ensue indicate her discomfort. Like the previous extract, the interviewer is aligning with the goals and ideology of the institution, which includes

placing responsibility and agency onto the victim while exonerating and erasing

perpetrators using agentless and passive talk, a pattern that has been identified by,

amongst other organisations and researchers, the End Violence Against Women

Coalition (EVAW, 2019), and which is also reflected in, and reflects, wider societal

practices such as media reporting of rape (Tranchese, 2019).

Partner Profile

Similarly to the acquaintance rape example above, this extract uses little passive

talk, but a grammar of nonagency in order to obscure perpetrator autonomy and agency.

This is a violent partner rape, and in addition to the non-agentic language used,

neutralising and non-violent language is used. The line of questioning pertains to

positioning and exact facts of the account.

Extract 06: Int 09 *So his penis went into your vagina.*

```
1    I09: Oka:y? (0.2) Er: and you said he put hi:s (.) er dick inside
2         you,

3    W09: .HHHH

4    I09: Inside you where.

5    W09: Inside my vagi:na,

6    I09: Okay? [So his ] pe:nis= (0.2)

7    W09:       [.hhSHih]

8    I09: =went into your vagina.=

9    W09: hYeah,

10   I09: Yeah? [Oka:y?]

11   W09:       [.SHIH ]

12   (0.3)

13   I09: Tell me about the: (0.3) posi:tioning in relation to where
14        you were lay (.) [or- or standing_          ]

15   W09:                  [>I was< on my back, hhu.hh]

16   I09: You were on your ^back^ o:kay?

17   W09: .SHHIH=
```

```
18  I09: =Er:m (0.3) and he's taken your pyjamas and your pants off
19       (.) yeah?

20  W09: >.SHUHH< Yeah_

21  I09: An:d (0.3) and then he: (0.7)
22       what climbs on top of you, [or,]

23  W09:                            [he ]climbs on top,

24  I09: [yeah?] (0.6) [Okay, ]

25  W09: [.SHIH]       [tkhuhh]

26  I09: And he's holding your shoulders [down,]

27  W09:                           [he's ] got me pinned down so
28       I can't move he had (.) his hands like that on me so I
29       couldn't move my arms or no:thing, hhh [.shIH]

30  I09:                                        [Okay?]

31  (0.7)

32  W09: Euhh [  .hhh    ]

33  I09:      [And what's] being said.

34  W09: .shUh (.) He was saying I'm just gonna be his dirty slag and
35       his bitch (.) I'll do what he (.) do what he says, .hshihhh
36       (0.2) And I couldn't say nothing cause I had a sock in my
37       mouth, .shih
```

The interviewer begins this extract by confirming the exact details of the

incident, and summarises the information gained by reformulating reported speech of

the victims: 'you said he put his er dick inside you' (lines 1-2), into a version on lines 6-

8 which is agentless and passive: 'so his penis went into your vagina.' (MacLeod,

2010). This is also a much more neutral formulation, and while medical terms are

preferred in police interviews, the use of 'went' instead of 'put' diminishes the violence

in the alleged act, and similarly to the previous two extracts, removes the suspect as an

agent in the action. Further use of agentless talk can be seen on line 33 when the

interviewer asks, 'and what's being said.'. This appears to be a reasonable question –

the complainant could be saying no, or the suspect may be speaking. However, the

complainant has stated earlier in the interview that she could not speak, as she had a

sock in her mouth, so this has the effect of backgrounding and removing the perpetrator,

while placing equal emphasis on the complainant as a participant in the rape. The

complainant reaffirms the fact that she could not speak in her response to the interviewer, alongside confirming what the suspect was saying to her (lines 34-37). This effect of obscuring the suspect while at the same time foregrounding the potential actions of the complainant again indicates the interviewer's use of his discursive power in the interview to display alignment with the institution's ideology, which could have harmful effects on the complainant's case. For example, an overhearing audience may find more about the complainant to focus on rather than meaningful details about the suspect.

Additionally, the interviewer uses neutral language in place of more violent words. For example, where the complainant says, 'he's got me pinned down', which she has stated previously in the interview, the interviewer reformulates this in line 26 to 'and he's holding your shoulders down'. The complainant reiterates the word 'pinned' in line 27, not orienting to the neutralising language. It is also worth noting that she reiterates, having mentioned this earlier in the interview, that she couldn't move her arms at all. This could potentially indicate the complainant resisting the interviewer expressing disbelief or doubt in her account, which is present throughout the notably short interview, including in his tone of voice, and later in the interview where he asks her three different ways if she had definitely expressed non-consent, and if what she told him was the truth. Along with the agentless passives used, the neutralising language creates a 'rough sex' narrative and obscures Mens Rea, as well as trivialising the rape, which could also be what the complainant is resisting in her response. An Italian study by Gribaldo (2014) studying courtroom questioning reflects this, finding that the defence replaced terms such as 'violence' or conflict' with words such as 'squabble' or 'predicament'.

Like the previous extracts, this interviewer aligns with the institutional goals and ideologies of patriarchy, doubting women, and 'real rape' stereotypes (Maddox et al., 2012). Supporting this is that the interviewer displays no obvious empathy towards the complainant's clear distress, despite the guidelines of the enhanced cognitive interview recommending interviewers show empathy: this emphasises the complainant's distress and their discursive inequality – the interviewer is clearly in control of the questioning and wields and displays that power through his refusal to stop for displays of sympathy (Ministry of Justice, 2011).

Examples of Good Practice

It is important to consider where pockets of good interviewing practice existed within these interviews, in order to understand how far the use of rape stereotypes exists alongside the use of ABE guidance. Within the interviews collected, despite the widespread existence of rape stereotype use through passive talk and miscommunication narratives, there are examples of good practice and adherence to the ABE guidance. As only the extracts were Jefferson transcribed, the following examples are simply verbatim transcriptions and are presented as examples of best practice, rather than as part of the main CDA. Broadly, preliminaries and ground rules were adhered to in all of the interviews, as was the reporting of the interview end-time. However, compliance with the guidance in between was less consistent. This section will not go into great depth on every interview's compliance with every step of the ABE guidelines, as that could constitute a research paper in itself; however, some parts of each interview will be presented as good practice for major points of the guidance.

Establishing rapport

One example of good practice for the rapport building phase was in Interview 3. The interviewer spoke about neutral topics, to set the interviewee at ease, and set down ground rules to explain what is expected of the complainant and help them understand the interview process.

Extract 7:Int 3 *Neutral Topics*

```
1  I03: Erm, tell me a little bit about yourself because I've never
2       met you before.

3  W03: erm, 21, work at nightclub in [place] as a hostess, erm live
4       at home with my dad.

5  I03: Right, okay. Have you always lived in [place]?

6  W03: Erm, I did when I was younger, erm, and mum and dad split up,
7       moved away to [place] when mum met her new husband, erm, lived
8       there for about 8 months and came to [place] about a year ago.

9  I03: Oh right, okay. Like it here?

10 W03: Yeah.

11 I03: Yeah? God knows why.

12 W03: (laughs)
```

The interviewer begins with an open question, which is the preferred type of question to ask during the questioning phase of an ABE interview. Where the complainant lives and where she works, whether she likes it in the town she lives in, are all neutral topics which should help to reduce the complainant's anxiety. The joke at line 11: "Yeah? God knows why." Elicits a laugh from the complainant, which suggests that it is helping to create a positive mood despite the difficulty of the interview.

The interviewer then sets down ground rules to prepare the interviewee for the rest of the interview.

Extract 8: Int 3 *Ground Rules*

```
1  I03: Erm – this is your interview, W03, and, you can stop the
2       interview at any time if you want to do so, if you feel as if
3       you need a break or you need the loo or if you need a drink or
4       anything, if you - if it all gets a little bit too much just
5       tell me, and I can stop the interview, we can- have five
6       minutes, come back in, do it at your pace, however you feel,
7       y'know, feel you want to go at. Once you've talked today, you
8       don't need to have to talk about this again, unless the matter
9       goes to court, then, as i've just mentioned to you before, you
10      may be asked some more questions,  if it were to go to court
11      that's a long long way off at the moment. Erm - I want you to
12      be as descriptive as you can be. We are here to talk about
13      something of a sexual nature, okay? i've been doing this job
14      for 17 years now, and there is nothing anybody can ever say to
15      me that's gonna make me think, oh my god, believe me, I am
16      beyond being shocked, and I don't judge people. don't think
17      I'm just gonna sit here thinking you're a bad person because
18      of things that you're going to tell me. I'm sure you can
19      imagine we  meet a massive variety of people in life, some
20      people who - we find people who are sex workers who talk to us
21      and want to tell us about things that have happened to us and
22      they think - she's just gonna think I'm a bad person. we
23      don't, it doesn't work like that, okay? we're here for you,
24      and that's the whole reason behind what's going on today.
25      alright?
26 W03: Yeah.
```

In this portion of talk, the interviewer reassures the complainant that she is in control of proceedings (line 1: "this is your interview..."), and explains that she can have a break at any time she needs (lines 2-7). She also explains the importance of supplying detail in lines 11-12: "I want you to be as descriptive as you can be.", then goes on to reassure the interviewee that she is not here to judge, to help ease the complainant into providing as much detail as possible without anxiety over being blamed.

Free Narrative

The free narrative phase was adhered to well in many of the interviews. One particular example of good practice is in Interview 6, which had a good initiation phase, examples of active listening, and reassurance when the complainant displayed distress.

Extract 9: Int 6 *Initiation*

```
1  I06  ...I'm gonna hand over to you now, is that alright?

2  W06: Mmhmm.

3  I06: So in your own time W06, I want you to have a think about why
4       we're here, think about - what is it that's happened, think
5       about who you want to talk about, and I want you to get them
6       clear pictures in your mind, and when you're ready, I want
7       you to tell me everything.
```

This short extract shows the interviewer's initiation of the free narrative phase of the interview. The interviewer expresses that this is in the complainant's own time, and delineates the boundaries of what to talk about: why they're there, who she wants to talk about. Then ends with an open prompt based on the previous subjects: "I want you to tell me everything." (lines 6-7). This prompt is a useful way to elicit more detail.

Throughout the free narrative section, the interviewer shows signs of active listening and reassurance when the complainant becomes distressed, as shown in the following two extracts respectively.

Extract 10: Int 6 *Active Listening*

```
1  W06: [...]he just said weird things like, kind of spit in me mouth
2       and stuff and I - it's just - strange like - why would
3       somebody say that to someone's - his best mate's girlfriend?

4  I06: mmm.

5  W06: erm - just like made me feel uneasy and like[...]
```

Line 4's "mmm." from the interviewer indicates an acknowledgement that she has been listening to the complainant, and additionally an acknowledgement of the question, which was likely rhetorical. This suggests the presence of active listening techniques.

Extract 11: Int 6 *Reassurance*

```
1  W06: ...and then - obviously I keep telling him no stop it and he -
2       he like puts his hand over my mouth just says like - stop it
3       like be quiet, cause his friend was downstairs, (15)
```

```
4  I06: Y'alright?
5  W06: Cause his friend was downstairs or whatever,...
```

In this extract, the interviewee is describing the most difficult part of the incident to recall. She becomes reticent, with a notably long 15 second gap (line 3). After this, the interviewee says 'Y'alright?' (line 4), which could have a dual purpose: asking if the complainant is okay, but also reassuring her that it is okay to carry on whenever she is ready. This prompts the complainant to continue where she left off, indicating this technique was effective.

Questioning Phase

This phase, despite the prominence of rape stereotype use within them, showed some examples of good practice in terms of the ABE guidance. One particular interview, interview 8, appeared to follow the guidance in this phase perfectly, avoiding the use of present-tense, forced-choice questions, and why-questions (which can result in a feeling of blame), and used open-ended and specific-closed questions to good effect. These latter two elements of the guidance will be the focus of this section.

Extract 12: Int 8 *Open-ended Questions*

```
1  I08: so tell me bit more about that evening then, what-what
2       happened?

3  W08: it was great, we were all having a just a family time, wih-he-
4       M's a very touchy-feely person he loves cuddling and kissing
5       and I'm not, it gets caused lot of arguments, I'm not a, I
6       tell you I love you, give you a cuddle that'll do you for the
7       day, sorta person. I show it in other ways by doing - fetching
8       and carrying you doing all the housework and whathaveyou.

9  I08: mmhmm.
```

This extract displays a good example of an open question, prompting the complainant to talk in more detail about the evening in general, positive and negative. The interviewer asks, "tell me a bit more about that evening then, what happened?", which is the preferred format and framing for questions in an ABE interview as it

allows the interviewee to give an unrestricted answer and control the flow of information.

Extract 13: Int 8 *Specific-closed Questions*

```
1  I08: no, okay. So - you've put your pyjamas on at that point, and -
2       turned over.

3  W08: turned over so so that I wa-wasn't looking at him.

4  I08: okay. was there any kind of discussion about what had just
5       happened between the two of you?

6  W08: no I just remember thinking I - I don't want to speak to him
7       so - if he was talking to me I w- being a mum you've got the
8       art of, learning how to switch off
```

The specific-closed question in this extract at line 4: "was there any discussion about what had just happened between the two of you?" is technically a yes or no question, but by implication invites further elaboration on the answer – if yes, then what the discussion was and if no, then why and other details. The complainant aligns to this implication and answers no, and further elaborates by speaking about her state of mind at the time (lines 6-8).

Closing the Interview

This phase was the most inconsistent in terms of the guidelines. Most interviewers simply expressed that this was the end of the interview unless there was anything more, and stated the end time of the interview, before leading the complainant out of the room. It is advised in the guidelines to return to the neutral topics discussed in the rapport phase, however none of the interviews did this. Giving a brief summary of what the complainant has said is optional in the guidance due to the potential additional distress and fatigue for the complainant, thus no interviews did this. Several interviews thanked the complainant for their time and acknowledged the difficulty of what the complainant had had to go through, including Interview 3.

```
1 I03: Okay. Alright. Okay, thank you for that, thanks W03. That's
2      grand, right - is there anything you think we've missed,
3      anything we haven't covered?

4  W03: No.

5  I03: think we've pretty much got everything, haven't we? Thank you
6      for that, I know it wasn't easy, and it's, um, hopefully
7      you'll never have to do this ever again. But, erm, I did need
8      all that information, so. I'll take you back out to G, eh?

9  W03: Yeah, thank you.
```

In the last minute of the interview, the interviewer makes sure to ask if there is anything else that they may not have covered, another example of good practice from the ABE guidance. She then goes on to thank the complainant and say "I know it wasn't easy, and ... hopefully you'll never have to do this ever again." (lines 5-7). This could help the complainant feel that their distress is acknowledged and validated, and that their account of events is important. The interviewer does not explain what (if anything) should happen next, but this further explanation and debriefing may have occurred after the recording stopped.

Overall, there are examples of good practice and compliance with the ABE guidance throughout the interviews, although there are still problematic constructions and rape stereotype usage, as well as inconsistencies and gaps in adherence, and I have not included every step of the guidance as this was not meant to be an exhaustive comparison of the guidance against the interviews. It is possible that one reason stereotype use exists alongside pockets of good practice is that the ABE guidelines are another institutional and discursive tool for the interviewer to draw on alongside stereotypes, to utilise or discard when the interview demands it.

Discussion

This section will discuss the implications of the different constructions that were utilised in the interview extracts, the potential impacts on the complainant, and how

these impacts could be mitigated. The broader adherence to the ABE interview guidance is also discussed, in the context of the stereotypes utilised in the interviews. Finally, some recommendations for future research and practice are made based on the findings of the analysis.

The CDA demonstrated that in each extract the interviewer was using the institutional power asymmetry and discursive power as an interviewer to construct the perpetrator as either someone who has innocently misunderstood, or who is without agency or autonomy altogether, an alignment with wider institutional and societal ideologies of sexual violence.

It is clear from these findings that there is an ongoing construction of rape perpetrators as having missed or misunderstood non-consent in some way. This is usually in relation to what the complainant did or did not say, or did or did not do, thereby causing the misunderstanding or failing to prevent it. This is a form of covert complainant blaming where the responsibility of making clear their non-consent, and 'doing everything they can' is placed on the complainant, despite the fact that reactions and levels of resistance vary for rape complainant – some freeze and feel unable to physically do anything (Möller et al., 2017).

In all interviews the complainant verbally expressed non-consent beforehand and were often still asked about physical resistance, visible signs of distress, and whether they believed the perpetrator knew they did not want sex. This became more common the more intimately the complainant and perpetrator knew each other, with questions in partner rape cases centring often on understanding consent and being certain that the complainant was clear towards the perpetrator. This shifting of responsibility indicates both a somewhat individual level in addition to an institutional

level of disbelief of rape accounts, which becomes stronger the more likely complainants are to be 'complex' rapes – partner or acquaintance profiles, for example. This supports previous evidence that victims of stranger rape are the least likely to be blamed, while victims of marital rape are the most likely, with acquaintance rape victims blamed less than those of marital rape (Grubb & Harrower, 2009; Ferro et al., 2008; Pederson & Stromwall, 2013).

Additionally, passive, agentless and violence-neutralising language was commonplace when speaking about the perpetrators. For the stranger rapes, these instances were frequent and centred often on body parts and perpetrator actions towards the complainant, while for acquaintance and partner rapes, these were less frequent, but when they did occur, were more likely to be in the form of neutralising language such as 'have sex with', or 'held down'. Similarly to the misunderstanding construction, this is another way of shifting responsibility away from the perpetrator, by removing intent and thoughts and making body parts autonomous, and in some cases, act also as a way of expressing disbelief. This construction is also in line with previous research, which has found that agentless passives are used in the media (Henley et al, 1995; Meluzzi et al., 2021), and in legal settings (Ehrlich, 2003; Aldridge & Luchjenbroers, 2007), while evidence suggests that use of this grammatical device to obscure perpetrator agency affects observer attributions of responsibility and harm (Henley et al., 1995; Bohner, 2001), which could be detrimental in the legal context.

Implications

In terms of theoretical implications, this study used an unusual bottom-up approach not generally used in qualitative studies relating to the legal system, drawing from micro-level conversation analysis and discursive psychology in order to gain an understanding of conversational nuance such as tones of sarcasm and disbelief, which is

often lost in legal transcripts, and interruption and justification, and to place these features within the wider context of the interview participants, power and asymmetry, and social representations of rape via the macro-level socio-cognitive approach to critical discourse analysis. This combination, utilised to capture conversational and discursive tools in the context of power and ideology, has worked well for the analysis and has helped to obtain some valuable findings – the use of emphasis on certain words to help validate expressions of disbelief, for example – and supports van Dijk's (2001) proposal that CDAs should be diverse and multidisciplinary. Thus, more research should be carried out within the CJS using this approach.

An additional theoretical implication is the use of Van Dijk's (1993a) socio-cognitive approach to CDA. This was a useful approach to take, as due to its inclusion of the cognitive dimension, it links well with the overall theoretical framework of social representations theory, and the findings indicate that the cognitive dimension of the CDA is necessary, as certain social representations of rape (i.e. real rapist) are possibly displayed through expressions of disbelief and doubt, although other factors such as institutional and societal contexts are also existent. Overall, the study lends support to the argument that social representations theory and critical discourse analysis are not necessarily incompatible.

With respect to practical and real-world implications, the constructions used throughout the dataset often cause distress and confusion to the complainant in their initial formulations, however, the wider impact of these findings are the way in which responsibility is being shifted from perpetrator to complainant, and perceived harm and Mens Rea is being negated and diminished with suggestions that the complainant could have done more to avoid the rape. In most cases, the interviewer appears ideologically aligned with the institution, displaying their particular mental models of rape through

the questions asked and the way questions are formulated (van Dijk, 2006). This is likely due to multiple factors, such as the general patriarchal values of society perpetuating social representations of rape throughout institutions; and also possibly the adversarial justice system's reliance on 'innocent until proven guilty' influencing social representations in ways which emphasise innocence for the defendant to the detriment of the complainant (Smith & Skinner, 2012). For example, if the defendant is innocent, the complainant must be lying or not credible in some way. Even if individual interviewers' personal beliefs are not rape-supportive or high in rape stereotype acceptance (Study Two's findings suggest that the interviewers could be using rape stereotypes without necessarily believing them), both Antaki et al. (2015) and MacLeod (2010) noted that the presence of rape stereotypes in their respective data were likely symptomatic of a larger problem: they are still aligning themselves with the overall ideological goals of the police force and the CPS, which has recently been to take on only the 'easiest' cases. Thus, these interviews are used to decide whether or not the case should go on to be prosecuted, and the real rapist stereotypes inherent within them could create a bias in decision making. Additionally, should the case go on to court, defence lawyers may use the constructions and stereotypes within the interview as evidence (or lack therein), possibly harming the complainant's credibility and affecting jury decision making. This is especially true for acquaintance and partner rapes, where there are more real rapist stereotypes and more construction of misunderstandings. This could be a consequential contributor to the 'vicious cycle of attrition' in the UK (Munro & Kelly, 2009), causing many rape victims to fall through the cracks.

It is important to point out that there were examples of good practice in terms of compliance with the Achieving Best Evidence Guidance (Home Office, 2021). While inconsistent, most interviews had most of the elements of the guidance that had been

focused on for the purposes of this study. However, despite this, rape stereotype use around perpetrators was still widespread, which could possibly be indicative that despite some adherence to the guidance (i.e., use of open questions or closed-specific questions), interviewers still find ways to utilise these stereotypes. It is notable that one particular interview, Interview 2, was not used in the main Critical Discourse Analysis, as no examples of rape stereotypes or particular constructions of perpetrators could be found throughout. This interview was a stranger rape, and there was video evidence, although the complainant remembered nothing of the incident itself due to potential spiking and was fuzzy about the time around the incident. It is possible that due to the video evidence and memory loss, in addition to being an 'ideal' stranger-type rape, there was less room overall for the use of rape stereotypes in the interview. Overall the interviewer complied well with the ABE guidelines. There was good rapport building and narrative initiation, and an excellent questioning phase, with the exception that she used present tense, which should be avoided. She also thanked the complainant for her time at the end. It would take much additional analysis to determine whether more adherence to the ABE guidelines may be related to less stereotype use and perpetrator related constructions and vice versa and could be an interesting future research paper. However, this interview was a good example of an interviewer who treated the complainant fairly, asked the right kinds of questions, and listened with empathy.

Recommendations

In light of the findings for this study taken into context with the findings of Studies One and Two, it is crucial to make some ambitious, practical recommendations for policy and practice to mitigate the cycle of attrition. It is clear from the criminal justice system's decision-making process that the CPS, police, and juries are deeply interlinked, with each affecting the other's decisions, so it is important to address each.

Further training and education for juries on rape stereotyping is necessary in terms of lay decision making, particularly targeted towards perpetrator and real rapist stereotypes, in order to mitigate the effect of juror decision making based on erroneous beliefs about stranger rapes. As suggested in Chapter 4, these could include initiatives such as handouts, wall plaques and signs for the jury waiting area, and more consistent pre-trial briefing on rape stereotypes.

These initiatives should be followed by widespread, standardised, and longitudinally tested training with an evidence based theoretical framework for professional populations to help reduce stereotype usage in courts and police interviews. Murphy and Hine (2019) suggested that it is necessary to utilise a cognitive framework when training police officers, in order to address the mechanisms behind attitude change, stereotypes, and prejudice. In light of the socio-cognitive approach to CDA the present study took, it is recommended that Social Representations Theory be the cognitive framework around which training interventions are built. However, it is important that any training encompasses the multiple factors surrounding police rape stereotype acceptance, including possible unconscious biases potentially caused by sexism or traditional views on women (Lee et al., 2012), and allows for understanding how good investigative decisions can be made without over reliance on cognitive 'shortcuts' and social representations of rape (Roach & Cartwright, 2021).

Finally, policy change within the CPS is crucial, shifting from the policy of taking on 'easy', stereotype-based cases that appear more likely to gain conviction, to one of taking cases on fairly and without risk-aversion. These changes should overall have a positive impact on police interviewing, as there should be less need for stereotypical formulations and constructions, and cases should be able to be prosecuted on a fairer basis.

In terms of interviewing, while the ABE Guidelines (Home Office, 2011) are theoretically useful and indicated for rape victims, they are not always adhered to in terms of their structure or question types asked, as demonstrated in this study and in Webster et al., 2021. Recently, an interview framework, the Mendez Principles (Anti-Torture Initiative, 2021), was developed for the purposes of replacing coercive interrogations of suspects with rapport-based interviews. Although this framework was initially developed to reduce coercive interrogation in suspect interviews, its 2021 published version makes it clear that it also applies to victim interviews. Thus, due to its focus on rapport, empathy, and non-coercion, in addition to evidence-based interviewing, and comprehensive training, it is proposed that it could be useful to consider utilising these principles alongside the ABE for interviewing rape victims and other vulnerable witnesses.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

This study presented some challenges which could be addressed in future research. For example, the interview sample consisted of White rape complainants only. This is discussed in further detail in the General Discussion (Chapter 6), but given that Black and Asian women are at highest risk of sexual victimisation, it would be useful to conduct sensitive, Black-centred research to further understand cultural differences and issues in police interviewing of rape complainants.

An argument that could be made that one limitation of this study is its lack of generalisability due to using only nine interviews. This is a small sample size for a quantitative study, but a normal sample size for a qualitative design, depending on the precise qualitative methodology to be utilised and the research question being asked. Additionally, it is important to point out that the point of qualitative research is the richness and depth of the data, which is supported by the two more generalisable studies

that came before – one distinct advantage of mixed-methods research. Zidenberg et al. (2022) explains that the goal of quantitative research is not to test hypotheses, but to "shed light on an aspect of the social or psychological world in a way that preserves the context and acknowledges that human experience is necessarily embedded in the sociocultural and historical world" (pg.183). I must of course acknowledge that these were indeed only nine interviews, done within one police force, thus they cannot be generalised to all police forces everywhere in England and Wales – but they are a snapshot of real sociocultural and psychological processes, as well as real victims' experiences with police interviews, and so they were valuable. They were also bolstered and validated by the findings from the previous two studies, which were somewhat more generalisable.

Additionally, I was unable to gain any case outcome information – i.e., whether police had made the decision to take no further action, take the case forward, or whether the complainant withdrew at this or a future stage. If this study were to be replicated in the future, this outcome data would add further understanding to the impact of interviewing and stereotype use on the victim. For example, Pipe et al. (2013) found in a study of child witness interviews that there was a possible link between following the interview protocol and better case progression, i.e., more guilty verdicts and more charges filed.

It would be useful to further explore the interviewers' ABE compliance in a future research project such as a content analysis along with analysing examples from the transcript of good or poor practice, comparing these with the presence or quantity of rape stereotype usage, could help to provide more insight into how or whether ABE compliance mediates rape stereotype usage.

Finally, due to the sensitivity of the data in this study, only the lead researcher was allowed to go into the police facility to transcribe the interviews. This could present an issue with validation, however transcription training sessions, data sessions, and regular meetings with the methodology supervisor mitigated this, and the supervision team felt confident in the validity and reliability of the transcripts and analyses.

Conclusion

The current study, analysed using a socio-cognitive critical discourse analysis, found an ongoing theme within the data of shifting responsibility away from the suspect and onto the complainant, by either constructing him as having misunderstood or missed non-consent, which was generally verbal, or by using passive and agentless talk that reduced his autonomy and removed his agency. There was also a secondary effect of expressing disbelief in the complainants' accounts. This is concerning and could be a large contributor to the high attrition rate at this stage of the investigation. Recommendations for policy and practice include training at all stages of the criminal justice system, including the CPS, police, and juries, and policy change to ensure rape cases are taken on more fairly.

Chapter 6

General Discussion

This final thesis chapter provides a general summary and synthesis of the key findings in the three studies that were conducted, in the context of existing literature and the theoretical framework (Social Representations Theory). Implications for the different elements of the Criminal Justice System are discussed, as well as recommendations for the CJS as a whole. In addition, this thesis' contribution to both theory and practice, limitations and reflections, and suggestions for future research are explored.

Contribution to Theory and Practice

This section discusses the thesis' overall contribution to theory, in terms of the theoretical framework, outputs, scales and research gaps; and practical applications, in relation to how it addresses the vicious cycle of attrition, rape stereotyping, and recommendations at each level of the CJS.

Theory

Social Representations Theory was the theoretical framework throughout the programme of research, and the thesis has demonstrated its value as a helpful way to analyse harmful stereotypes and attitudes around rape, rape victims, and rape perpetrators, and has demonstrated the continuing relevance of SRT as a social psychological theory, as society, media trends, and other factors change and shift, all of which impact on social representations. It is hoped that this thesis and its related outputs will encourage further research to be carried out on rape stereotypes using Social Representations Theory.

The approach taken to the thesis' methodologies was a novel one. I took a pragmatic, mixed-methods approach to the overall research programme, which was effective as each study built upon the previous one, and each study's findings appeared to be in line with the previous. I also engaged in theoretical and methodological pluralism within Study Three: social representations theory has not historically been considered an appropriate framework for discourse studies, which is a debate that still continues, however more recent research and discussion advocates for the potential of SRT as a useful framework that could be integrated with discourse analysis (Batel & Castro, 2018; Howarth, 2006). Utilising van Dijk's (1993a) socio-cognitive approach to critical discourse analysis made integrating the two theoretical perspectives simpler, as both have a cognitive and societal element, while the Discourse element could be considered as similar to the negotiating and resisting of social representations. I also integrated multiple approaches to discursive analysis within Study Three, taking elements from conversation analysis, discursive psychology, and critical discourse analysis in order to gain a nuanced understanding of what was happening in the interviews and effectively answer the research question: the micro level interactions that are normally missed in verbatim transcripts of these interviews (such as volume and tone, distress, expressions of doubt and disbelief), and macro level interactions such as question type and content that could be critically analysed in the context of institute and socio-cultural influences. Overall, these theories and methods turned out to be valuable for the analysis and worked well together, helping greatly to form a more complete picture of the ABE interview and the stereotype use within them, in addition to the effects that the stereotype-driven perpetrator constructions had on the complainant. Thus, this is a useful contribution to the theory as it demonstrates the value of an integrative, holistic approach to discursive analysis within legal settings, the

value of social representations theory as applied to rape stereotypes, and the value and possibility of situating SRT alongside discursive analysis, when done with care and thought.

The thesis is expected to have several research outputs. Study One has been published with the *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*; Study Two is under review with *Psychology, Crime, and Law;* and Study Three is now in preparation for submission to *Critical Discourse Studies*. These journals are high impact and have both national and international reach, as well as being interdisciplinary. It is hoped that the diverse publication and broad reach of these outputs will give them higher visibility and thus a higher possibility of their recommendations being considered.

In terms of novelty, there are several ways this thesis contributed to the current research. Firstly, a new scale was developed and piloted, which was synthesised from existing research (McGee et al., 2002; 2011), and from sexual assault support websites. Further refinement is needed for some aspects of the scale: for example, the findings of Study One suggested that many of the stereotypes in the male rape category would fit well in either the victim or the perpetrator categories, which was borne out in Study Two. However, this scale is comprehensive, up to date, and, on the whole, reliable. In addition to this, the research has also filled a gap in the literature. Much of the research has addressed the components of the criminal justice system separately, in terms of jury decision-making and stereotypes, CPS judgements and rape stereotype acceptance, and police training and the impact of stereotype acceptance. With the understanding that the working parts of the CJS are not disparate and rely on each other to continue working, this thesis explored the system holistically, considering how the stereotype acceptance and use of each level of the system affects each other level, the issues it causes for victims and for society, and how to effectively mitigate these issues. Also, many of the

individual findings for each study support existing literature within the topic, and thus contribute to and strengthen the field overall.

Future theoretical directions arising from this thesis might include further work on the integration of different discursive schools, where appropriate and when done with proper thought and care. Additionally, it would be useful to continue utilising social representations theory when studying rape stereotypes, both in the criminal justice system and also within wider society, as well as further exploration on the integration of discourse analysis and social representations theory, a debate to which I am delighted to have contributed.

Practice

With respect to contributions to practice and policy, many recommendations have been made in light of concerns around the vicious cycle of attrition and the justice gap. Recommendations were made to address stereotyping at each stage of the criminal justice system, with a mixture of education and training, and policy change. The most ambitious recommendations made were those of policy change within the CPS, involving more firmly enforced mythbuster directions and challenges to stereotype use in court; standardised training for police and lawyers around rape stereotypes, with a cognitive framework, i.e., social representations theory, to assist with deeper understanding; and the recommendation that the Mendez Principles be considered for adaptation for use with rape complainants and other vulnerable witnesses.

Given that the most common stereotypes found throughout each study were perpetrator related, it is important to make some recommendations relating to how to deal specifically with these across the system. Soteria Bluestone (2022) has already begun efforts to change this with their recommendations for a suspect-focused

investigation, including foregrounding the actions of the suspect and their explanations for the actions; the circumstances and context of the offence, including coercion and control; the suspect-victim relationship; and remaining aware that the suspect may manipulate or coerce investigating officers. In terms of lay education, particular emphasis on perpetrator-related stereotypes such as othering myths and the 'respectable man' stereotype when using items such as handouts with common rape stereotypes or pre-trial debriefs would be useful to help with fairer jury decision making. Within the CPS and also in the police, further efforts to avoid risk-averse decision making when progressing cases could help non-stereotypical cases progress through to trial, especially those which are acquaintance or intimate partner rapes.

Summary of Key Findings and Implications

Studies One and Two were quantitative survey-based explorations into the general population of England and Wales's and professionals' stereotype acceptance respectively, with a particular view to discovering any particular stereotype category acceptance, demographic effects, training, occupation, and length of time in a profession. These studies were viewed through the lens of social representations theory due to social representations' dynamic, changing nature. The studies produced interesting findings. Overall stereotype acceptance amongst both the general population and professionals who were likely to become involved with rape cases was broadly low, but there were still concerningly high levels of acceptance for some particular forms, such as perpetrator, or 'real rapist' stereotypes amongst each sample. While not directly comparable, this suggests that professionals are similar to lay people in terms of extent and type of rape stereotype acceptance. Despite the fact that most rape perpetrators are acquaintances, perpetrator stereotypes were tied specifically to social representations of perpetrators as being strangers, foreigners or 'other', as the most highly accepted

statements were related to race, mental illness, or addiction, which is harmful to victims who do not fit this narrow representation in relation to jury and CJS decision making. This finding is in line with studies such as Foster (2001), who found othering social representations of mental illness in British media, which is where much perpetuation of social representations and rape stereotypes, as well as linking of mental illness and violence, occurs (Murphy et al., 2013; O'Hara, 2012). Professionals' acceptance of these myths overall is harmful for educators and healthcare workers, but for those working in the CJS, such as lawyers or police, this could directly contribute to the justice gap, as stereotypes will be used in court to influence juries and mythbuster directions often either undermined or not used (Smith & Skinner, 2017; Temkin et al., 2018), and to make judgements about whether to move cases forwards to court, especially related to victim credibility, which can be argued to be related to social representations of the ideal rape victim (Sleath & Bull, 2017).

Another related finding was that of uncertainty. The analyses in both studies found that participants with higher rape stereotype acceptance showed less certainty, marked by 'don't know' answers. Conversely, those with the lowest levels of acceptance had more certainty of belief, although overall the Study Two sample showed less uncertainty overall. Broadly, these findings could possibly be due to higher awareness of rape stereotypes amongst the general population, especially those relating to victims and allegations, which is supported by the data as these two stereotype categories were the least accepted, while the professionals' higher certainty could be related to their occupational status. This raised awareness, likely due to the wider publicisation of #MeToo, and more coverage in the media of the attrition and conviction problems in addition to campaigns and awareness-raising initiatives by groups such as the EVAW Coalition, could be causing a shift in the social

representations of what constitutes a real rape, rape victim or perpetrator. The data may have captured a moment in time where social representations of perpetrators are in the midst of changing, which could explain the higher levels of uncertainty where there are higher acceptance levels. A similar study by Szekeres et al. (2020), with several surveys conducted before, during, and after the peak of #MeToo bears this out and emphasises the dynamic nature of social representations: the importance of time, social change, and cultural context.

Separate findings in each study were related to demographics and occupation. A MANOVA for Study One found that in line with the great majority of the research, men were significantly more likely than women to accept rape stereotypes, particularly stereotypes related to rape victims and rape allegations. Burt (1980) in her influential study had similar findings, while more recent studies have found other related factors in addition to gender such as religiosity (Barnett et al., 2018), and anti-fatness (Zidenberg et al., 2021). Putting the current findings in context with these studies, it is likely that the patriarchal cultural context in which women have historically been considered inferior to men has had great influence upon men's stereotypical beliefs about and social representations of rape. This is supported by research such as Rudman and Mescher's (2012) two studies, which found that men who were more likely to objectify women were also more likely to accept rape stereotypes and score higher on rape-behaviour and rape proclivity scales. (It is worth noting that the study found strong correlations but would not draw conclusions regarding causation).

Ethnicity was also a significant finding in this study: Black and Asian participants were significantly more likely than their White counterparts to accept rape stereotypes. Mori et al. (1995) and Varelas and Foley (1998) have obtained similar findings, while more recently, Barn and Powers (2018) found that Indian participants

were more likely than British participants to accept stereotypes, and within the British sample, non-White participants (no further breakdown of ethnicity was available) were more likely to accept stereotypes than White participants. These findings are highly likely to be based in social and cultural change, and in their discussion they suggest that their findings could be due to both cultural and gender norms, perpetuated through social representations and vary from culture to culture. They also indicated that there may be other contributing factors, such as lack of awareness or education.

These findings were obtained from the general population but could nevertheless have an impact on the criminal justice system. The sample was jury eligible, and evidence suggests that rape stereotype acceptance has a considerable effect on juror decision making – Leverick (2020) found in a meta-analysis of mock-jury studies that jurors often expressed rape stereotypical views, mainly about real rape and real rape victims. It is likely that these views reflect social representations of rape, which are perpetuated through the media and amongst communities. For example, Flowe et al. (2009), found that the media negatively influences jurors and police in terms of rape stereotyping, while Aroustamian (2020) recently found similar results. In real-world terms, this is reflected in attrition and prosecution rates, in addition to conviction rates – the EVAW Coalition's (2019) case against the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) presented evidence that both police and prosecutors were making decisions on which cases to take forward based on what they believed a jury would convict – i.e., based on stereotypes around real rape and real rapists.

In terms of the separate findings in Study Two, the only significant result in this study was related to training: those with specialist training in rape or rape stereotypes were significantly less likely to accept perpetrator related stereotypes than those without such training. In light of the previous non-significant results, it could be inferred that

specialised training on rape and rape stereotypes makes a greater difference to acceptance than which occupation (or what kind of exposure to the rape case participants have), and length of time (i.e., experience), which may be supported by the similarity in rape stereotype acceptance levels to the lay sample in Study One. There is some support for this: Sleath and Bull (2012) found significant differences between training and no training in police in relation to perpetrator blaming (although not for victim blaming), but no significant relationship between police experience and victim or perpetrator blaming. Similarly, Murphy and Hine (2019) found that specialist training significantly reduced rape stereotype acceptance, but attitudinal variables were also influential. This lends support to the idea that without specialist training, professionals who may come into contact with rape victims over the course of their career in some capacity are no different in terms of their social representations of rape than the general population – and only 10% of the overall sample had any kind of specialist training, with evidence suggesting that training for those in the criminal justice system has been inadequate or fraught with misunderstandings (Angiolini, 2015; Smith, 2009), while there is little to no training for other professions who may become involved in rape cases.

To summarise, these studies found similar levels of overall stereotype acceptance in the lay population and in professional populations: broadly low, but still concerningly high levels of acceptance and uncertainty of belief around perpetrator related stereotypes. Additionally, men and Black and Asian participants were significantly likelier to accept myths than other demographics, while specialist training was a mitigating factor in stereotype acceptance for the Study Two sample. Consequently, recommendations were made for jury education initiatives (such as handouts, visible wall signs and reminders, and pre-trial debriefs), targeting social

representations of and stereotypes around rape perpetrators. A recommendation for a similar study into professionals' rape stereotype acceptance was also made, which gave rise to Study Two, whose recommendations were policy change to reflect rape reality, not rape stereotypes; and more consistent enforcing of mythbuster directions and judicial directions around rape stereotyping. Additionally, given rape stereotype acceptance was slightly (although not significantly) higher for police, and the attrition rate being highest at the initial investigation stage, deeper study was recommended at the police interview stage to understand rape stereotype use and the role of social representations in police interviews with rape complainants. These two first studies were a heavy influence on Study Three.

The final study of the thesis further built on the previous two studies and was a critical discourse analysis. As attrition rate is highest at the police interview stage (Hohl & Stanko, 2015), one aim was to understand rape stereotype use in initial evidence-gathering interviews with rape complainants. Considering the higher levels of perpetrator stereotype acceptance in Studies One and Two, the study also focused on the way alleged rape perpetrators were spoken about and discursively constructed during the interviews, and how social representations of rape may be negotiated or resisted within the interviews.

Two ways in which the interviewer tended to construct the perpetrator were discovered. The first of these was through narratives of miscommunication – the idea that the perpetrator had missed or misunderstood the complainant's non-consent in some way. The miscommunication model of consent has been criticised and evidence suggests that this concept is not an accurate explanation of rape (Kitzinger & Frith, 1999; Beres, 2014), however, police interviewers' reliance on it, especially in acquaintance and partner rapes, reflects 'real rapist' stereotypes as found in Studies One

and Two, and is concerning as it obscures Mens Rea and shifts responsibility from the perpetrator to the complainant.

The second theme was use of agentless passives – shifting the grammar of the talk to a passive form, and either reducing or removing the person carrying out any action so their agency is obscured or removed completely (Ehrlich, 2003). This happened throughout, but most frequently in stranger cases, often to the extent that it caused confusion for the complainant. This had the effect of completely backgrounding the autonomy and agency of the perpetrator, and often putting any burden of action on the complainant. Similar constructions have been found in the media (Tranchese, 2019), which helps to perpetuate social representations of real rape perpetrators and other rape stereotypes.

Many of these findings are in line with MacLeod (2010), with use of agentless passives, misunderstanding constructions and many related discourse features such as so-prefaced questions as challenges, and violence-neutralising language to further diminish perpetrator culpability. The findings are also in line with Studies One and Two, which also found lower acceptance of stereotypes such as victim blaming, false allegation related myths, but higher acceptance of perpetrator related stereotypes, which were mirrored in initial readings and annotations of the transcripts. Additionally, throughout the two themes, especially the miscommunication theme, there were consistent expressions of doubt in complainant accounts. This, along with the clear asymmetry of power in the interviews, which some interviewers tried to redress using Achieving Best Evidence (ABE) guidelines (building rapport, displaying empathy, etc.), but others did not, indicates interviewer alignment to the institution of which they are a part, and whose ideology is tied strongly into upholding the state and its laws, which are decidedly patriarchal. In addition to this, it is likely that despite the overall

low stereotype acceptance levels found in Study Two (although police had the highest levels of those higher categories), there are still some individual interviewers with harmful social representations of rape, which are influencing their interviews with rape complainants and thus their decision-making process. This is likely to have a meaningful effect on the attrition rate and on rape victims' feelings of trauma and secondary victimisation (Jeffrey, 2021).

In addition to these issues of institutional power, ideology, and individual beliefs, MacLeod (2010) and Antaki (2015), while discussing their findings on police interviewing of rape complainants, have both correctly pointed out there is also a wider issue around resource and time scarcity which contributes greatly towards the vicious cycle of attrition (Hohl & Stanko, 2015; Munro & Kelly, 2009), which needs to be taken into consideration alongside the issues of jury, courts and other professionals, and police stereotype use on an individual level.

To summarise, Study Three found stereotype use reflecting harmful social representations of real rape perpetrators within police interviews of rape complainants, in the form of narratives of misunderstanding or miscommunication, especially regarding acquaintance or partner rapes; and use of agentless passive talk and violence-neutralising language. This is in addition to general expressions of disbelief in claims of non-consent and other accounts, and lack of full adherence to the ABE guidelines to redress the characteristic power imbalance present in police interviews with rape complainants. Overall, this may help further explain the high rate of attrition at the initial investigation stage, and one potential recommendation included a fully developed and preferably longitudinally tested training course, with a cognitive framework in order to help interviewers understand the underlying mechanisms - such as social representations theory - which perpetuate rape stereotyping. Powell (2008) supports this

in her review on training for interviewers of child witnesses, recommending that investigative interview training must be continuous and tailored to the skill level of the interviewer. She also recommended that training needed to include key beliefs underpinning effective interviewing (which could be encompassed by social representations theory), an interview framework which emphasises narrative detail and clear instruction on the application of the framework, effective ongoing practice, feedback from experts and regular performance evaluation. All of these are valuable elements that should be considered for the training of adult rape complainant interviewers that is recommended as a result of the findings in this thesis.

Overall, the three studies together have effectively answered the research questions and aims laid out at the beginning of this thesis: I have successfully explored the extent and nature of rape stereotype acceptance and use in England and Wales within lay, professional, and policing contexts, and through each study building upon the last, found interesting and useful results, from which I have made policy, practice, and future research recommendations. Collectively, the studies have aimed to take a holistic view of the CJS' rape stereotype acceptance and use (including lay members such as juries), arguing that each part of the criminal justice system relies on the others. As a result I have made a joined-up set of policy and practice recommendations, encompassing jury education, policy change, and police interview training and practice changes.

Future Research Directions

Several questions have arisen from the findings of these studies. Firstly, due to the dynamic and spatio-temporal nature of social representations, it would be beneficial to conduct a follow up survey on the general population of England and Wales and on a sample of the same professions, in order to confirm the findings of a potential shift in

social representations of rape. In addition to this, there appears to be a lack of research into educators' and social workers' acceptance of rape stereotype acceptance, and the impact this might have on rape disclosures and safeguarding issues. It is important to carry out systematic research studying these groups to understand training, practice, and policy needs.

In terms of ethnicity, Study One found that Black and Asian participants were the most likely group to accept rape stereotypes. This must be placed into context with Study Three's data demographics: The sample was 100% White women, reflecting the fact that Black women are less likely to be believed and less likely to report, despite the fact that they are the highest at risk for rape (ONS, 2021). The issue of culture and ethnicity in relation to rape stereotyping is clearly highly complex, and it is crucial to conduct further research around these demographics to understand what drives the ethnic and cultural differences between stereotype acceptance, in addition to exploring Black women's lived experiences of rape and sexual victimisation. It is equally important to collaborate with Black academic experts in sexual violence, centring their voices in order to carry out this research sensitively and safely, so people of colour are benefitted, and the harms that scientific and academic institutions have carried out on people of colour are not repeated.

Limitations

It is important to consider the limitations of the thesis, giving a balanced overview of the research project as a whole, in addition to how those challenges were dealt with. The primary limitation encountered during the course of the research was the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Interview data collection for Study Three was due to start in early March 2020, and this was postponed due to the first UK lockdown until October 2020. This caused delays and gave less time to conduct the initial analysis and

extract identification stages of the CDA, which was further complicated by the lockdown in Winter 2020/2021. However, extracts were identified during lockdown and the initial stages of analysis were completed, and further transcription was completed when the second lockdown was lifted.

As a result of being unable to do any field work and uncertainty about when lockdowns would be lifted, the professionals' stereotype acceptance study (Study Two) was designed and carried out during the lockdown. This survey experienced some sampling issues: partly due to the timing, as the police were extremely busy during the first lockdown, and partly due to the sensitive subject matter, it proved difficult to recruit policing professionals, both on social media and on Prolific. In addition, after the data had been collected, it was observed that an 'other' category was kept in from the social media recruiting, giving a high number of participants in this category and funding restrictions that meant recruitment had ended. However, this was mitigated by recoding the occupation variables: many of the 'other' participants fit into the main occupational groups, such as healthcare, education, social work, or law. This gave a more balanced dataset.

In all, although there were some challenges during the course of the research programme, these were adapted to and dealt with in a timely manner to produce the findings and recommendations.

Reflexivity

Similarly to the positional statement I set out in the introduction of this thesis (Chapter 1), as the programme of research draws to a close and I drew the threads of each study together, it is important to consider how my values and assumptions have influenced my interaction with and interpretation of the research. As discussed in

Chapter 1, there are multiple lenses through which I view my research: as neurodivergent and queer, as a feminist, a leftist, as someone aligned to rape victim-survivors but not an insider with them, and as a White person who is aware of their privilege and strives to be anti-racist and anti-colonialist. The multiple intersections and viewpoints I hold, including the privilege, have helped me create a more holistic thesis which has begun to consider a whole-systems approach rather than the parts alone. I have additionally been aware throughout the research project of my likely biases towards rape victim-survivors, however in addition to mitigating these biases with a robust evidence base in the case of the quantitative studies and validity checking in the case of the CDA, I have also kept in mind that in terms of the overall project, believing victim-survivors when they allege rape also has an evidence base: false allegations are much rarer than often thought to be, and in fact men appear to be statistically more likely to be victims of rape than to be falsely alleged against. For example, in the CSEW (2017), 0.3% of men had been victims of rape at some point as adults, while CPS data (CPS Equality and Diversity Unit, 2011) indicated that 0.62 of all cases are false allegations. This data is not directly comparable and does not necessarily provide the full picture. However, it is illustrative of why it is important not to immediately dismiss victim-survivors, and why I paid careful attention to their lived experience and their treatment by interviewing officers during the analysis of the qualitative data, even while I also sense-checked my extracts and preliminary analysis through data sessions.

My thesis is situated within a social representations theoretical framework, a theory that emphasises social co-construction and re-presentation of meaning through cognition and dialogue. Thus, the following questions must be asked: what about my own social representations? Even before I began this research programme, my social representations of rape were aligned closer to the non-hegemonic, feminist viewpoint:

that most rapes are by acquaintances, and that no matter what they wear or drink or how they behave, victim-survivors are not responsible. These representations were likely constructed through close observation of the #MeToo movement, and online interaction with and reading of feminist discussion. Then as I progressed through my PhD studies, wide reading of the literature and findings from the project served to reify these representations of rape, positioning them as expert knowledge (Howarth, 2006) – although it is important to acknowledge that it is simply my expert knowledge, and could be contested by others with different social representations. Overall, then, my social representations of rape may have impacted the research in the sense that I approached it from the perspective of somebody who already 'knew' that rape myths were simply myths, and this was a potential bias I was aware of throughout, mitigating it through attempting to instil a correct/incorrect dichotomy of the stereotypes I was measuring in the quantitative studies, and use as objective a reference point as possible in determining what stereotypes were being used in Study Three, which were the stereotype categories from Studies One and Two.

Conclusion

In closing, it is clear that there is still some rape stereotype acceptance and harmful social representations of rape existent at all levels of the criminal justice system in addition to amongst the general population, and usage of these stereotypes - in court, in interviews, and in decision making - is having a negative impact on the attrition rates of rape, and on rape victims. The findings open up new avenues for research, including Social Representations research, ethically and inclusively conducted ethnicity research, and further studies on non-legal and policing professionals' stereotype acceptance. Recommendations for policy and practice revolve around mitigating harms to victims

and reducing the attrition rate, including policy change, standardised training, better communication, and education at all levels.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Methodology

Project	Research Type	Study Type	Data Generation Method	Data Analysis Method
Study One	Quantitative	Survey	Online Questionnaire via Qualtrics panelling service	Inferential and frequential analyses (MANOVA, ANOVA)
Study Two	Quantitative	Survey	Online Questionnaire via prolific	Inferential and Frequential analysis (ANOVAs, T-Test, Crosstabs)
Study Three	Qualitative	Transcript Analysis	Real-life initial account gathering police interviews with rape victims	Extract identification, Jefferson transcription, Socio-cognitive Critical Discourse Analysis; elements of Conversation Analysis and Discursive Psychology

Table 1

Summary of projects and design breakdown

Appendix B: Study One

B1: Tables

Table 2

Participant Demographics

	n (%)
Gender	
Male	515 (49.0%)
Female	534 (50.9%)
Non-Binary	1 (0.1%)
Ethnicity	
White British	902 (85.9%)
Asian/Asian British	79 (7.5%)
Black/African/Caribbean British	35 (3.3%)
Mixed/multiple Ethnic Groups	23 (2.2%)
Other Ethnic Groups	11 (1.0%)
Employment Status	
Employed Part Time	158 (15.0%)
Employed Full Time	428 (40.8%)
Self Employed	109 (10.4%)
Unemployed	48 (4.6%)
Student	60 (5.7%
Retired	148 (14.1%)
Looking after Home or Family	48 (4.6%)
Long-Term Sick or Disabled	44 (4.2%)
Other	7 (0.7%)
Sexual Orientation	
Heterosexual	916 (87.2%)
Gay	33 (3.1%)
Lesbian	21 (2.0%)
Bisexual	63 (6.0%)
Pansexual	6 (0.6%)
Other	11 (1.0%)
Education	
None	21 (2.0%)
GCSEs	279 (26.6%)
A Levels	244 (23.2%)
HNC/HND	82 (7.8%)
Bachelor's Degree	257 (24.5%)
Master's Degree	116 (11.0%)
PhD	16 (1.5%)
Other	35 (3.3%)
Nationality	
England	997 (95.0%)
Wales	53 (5.0%)

Table 3

% agreement, disagreement and 'don't know' answers to statements

Item	Agreed (%)	Disagreed (%)	Don't Know (%)	Correct (%)
Male rape myths				
Men cannot be raped	5.1	94.2	.7	94.2[35]
Men who are raped must have been acting gay	3.7	94.6	1.7	94.6[38]
Men who rape other men are usually gay	31.5	57.6	11.0	57.6[5]
Male victims are generally less emotionally affected by rape than female victims	6.9	89.6	3.6	89.6[27]
Men are physically strong, so can fight off any rape or sexual assault if they really wanted to	10.4	87.9	1.8	87.9[24]
Perpetrator myths				
Most rapes are committed by someone unknown to the victim	10.1	62.3	16.9	62.3[7]
Women do not commit rape	9.7	84.1	6.3	84.1[18]
People who were sexually abused as children become abusers themselves	36.3	49.6	14.2	49.6[2]
Alcohol, drugs, stress, or depression can turn people into rapists	44.0	42.3	13.6	42.3[1]
There is often a 'type' of person that commits rape	28.0	59.2	12.8	59.2[6]
Most rapes are committed by strangers	19.3	67.0	13.6	67.0[8]
Rapists are mostly paedophiles, animals or evil	35.6	55.0	9.3	55.0[3]
Rapists are mostly psychotic or mentally ill	34.9	56.8	8.4	56.8[4]
Men of certain races and backgrounds are more likely to be rapists	22.4	67.0	10.5	67.0[9]
Myths about consequences of rape.				
Date rape is not as traumatic as stranger rape	6.4	89.1	4.4	89.1[26]
It is only rape if someone is physically forced into sex and has the injuries to show for it	11.9	85.4	2.7	85.4[21]
Victim myths				
A woman cannot be raped by her husband	3.8	95.3	.8	95.3[39]
A person could stop a rapist if they really wanted to	8.8	88.3	3.0	88.3[25]
A raped woman is not usually an innocent victim	6.0	90.2	3.7	90.2[29]
Most rape victims are young and attractive	9.5	93.0	5.8	93.0[33]
Women are most likely to be raped after dark by a stranger, so shouldn't go out at night alone	25.4	69.6	5.1	69.6[11]

Item	Agreed (%)	Disagreed (%)	Don't Know (%)	Correct (%)
Women who are raped often deserve it, especially if they enter a man's home or car	4.7	94.1	1.2	94.1[34]
Some women have an unconscious desire to be raped	10.0	78.5	11.4	78.5[14]
The victim getting aroused or ejaculating during sexual assault means they probably wanted it	7.2	85.0	7.8	85.0[19]
Prostitutes cannot be raped	4.1	94.5	1.4	94.5[36]
Myths about motives for rape				
Women who wear short skirts/tight tops invite rape	13.4	85.2	1.5	85.2[20]
Rape is only about sex.	12.6	81.4	5.9	81.4[15]
Once a man is sexually aroused, he absolutely has to have sex and cannot help himself	6.1	91.9	1.9	91.9[31]
If a man pays for a dinner or date, a woman should reciprocate with sex	2.7	96.6	.7	96.6[40]
Myths about allegations				
When a woman says no, she is playing hard to get and generally means yes	4.3	94.6	1.0	94.6[37]
If a rape victim isn't visibly upset by the experience, it probably wasn't rape	5.4	92.8	1.8	92.8[32]
Accusations of rape are often false	17.7	69.1	13.2	69.1[10]
If the victim drank a lot or took drugs they shouldn't complain if they ended up being raped or sexually assaulted	8.2	89.9	1.8	89.9[28]
'Stealthing' is just a sex trend and is not sexual assault or rape	10.5	75.0	14.5	75.0[12]
'Real' victims report rape immediately	12.4	82.7	4.9	82.7[16]
If the case didn't go to court, the accuser was probably lying	5.8	85.8	4.3	85.8[22]
Abuse in same sex relationships tends to be mutual and both partners' fault	5.7	83.8	10.5	83.8[17]
Sexual abuse rarely happens in same-sex relationships	5.6	76.2	18.3	76.2[13]
If the person initially consented to sex, but changed their mind and their partner carried on, then it's not rape	7.1	85.8	5.9	85.8[23]
Transgender people can't be raped.	2.7	91.5	7.0	91.5[30]

Note: Superscript numerals denote item response accuracy from least accurate at [1] to most accurate at [40]. 11 items were at >75% accuracy, 17 items were at 75-90% accuracy, and 12 items were at >90% accuracy.

Table 4

Multivariate and Univariate ANOVA statistics for stereotype endorsement by demographics.

Variables	Wilks' Lambda	*F*	*df*	Error *df*	Sig.	ηp^2
Age	.96	1.04	24.000	2111.803	.39	.01
Male Rape Myths		2.24	4	1.858	.06	.01
Perpetrator Myths		1.24	4	1.554	.29	.008
Myths about Consequences of Rape		.57	4	.500	.68	.004
Victim Myths		1.66	4	1.053	.15	.01
Myths about Motives for Rape		1.02	4	.758	.39	.007
Allegation Myths		1.88	4	1.376	.11	.01
Education	.91	1.24	42.000	2841.154	.13	.01
Male Rape Myths		2.24	7	1.560	.07	.02
Perpetrator Myths		.80	7	.767	.74	.007
Myths about Consequences of Rape		2.75	7	1.858	.03*	.02
Victim Myths		.45	7	.474	.63	.009
Myths about Motives for Rape		1.31	7	1.448	.05	.02
Allegation Myths		1.02	7	.693	.46	.01
Employment Status	.93	.83	48.000	2980.916	.78	.01
Male Rape Myths		1.29	8	1.073	.24	.01
Perpetrator Myths		2.62	8	3.292	.008**	.03
Myths about Consequences of Rape		.40	8	.348	.92	.005
Victim Myths		1.26	8	.801	.26	.01
Myths about Motives for Rape		.81	8	.602	.58	.01
Allegation Myths		1.30	8	.954	.23	.01
Sexual Orientation	.98	.83	18.000	1711.684	.86	.006
Male Rape Myths		.49	3	.406	.68	.002
Perpetrator Myths		.46	3	.584	.70	.002
Myths about Consequences of Rape		1.48	3	1.291	.21	.007
Victim Myths		.28	3	.179	.83	.001
Myths about Motives for Rape		.32	3	.241	.80	.002
Allegation Myths		.50	3	.366	.68	.002
Ethnicity	.91	2.13	24.000	2111.803	.001**	.02
Male Rape Myths		5.24	4	4.350	.000***	.03
Perpetrator Myths		2.14	4	2.682	.07	.01
Myths about Consequences of Rape		1.42	4	1.239	.22	.009
Victim Myths		5.21	4	3.309	.000***	.03
Myths about Motives for Rape		3.64	4	2.690	.006***	.02
Allegation Myths		1.26	4	.926	.28	.008

*p < .05. **p <.01. ***p < 001.

Table 5

Crosstabulation of item agreement by gender of participant

Item	Male		Female	
	% Agree	% Disagree	% Agree	% Disagree
Myths about consequences of rape.				
Date rape is not as traumatic as stranger rape	8.4	91.5	5.0	95.0
It is only rape if someone is physically forced into sex and has the injuries to show for it	13.5	86.5	10.6	89.5
Victim myths				
A woman cannot be raped by her husband	4.2	95.7	3.4	96.6
A person could stop a rapist if they really wanted to	12.3	87.7	6.1	91.0
A raped woman is not usually an innocent victim	8.0	91.9	4.6	95.5
Most rape victims are young and attractive	11.9	88.2	8.0	92
Women are most likely to be raped after dark by a stranger, so shouldn't go out at night alone	26.6	73.4	26.3	73.7
Women who are raped often deserve it, especially if they enter a man's home or car	6.0	94.0	3.7	96.3
Some women have an unconscious desire to be raped	16.2	83.8	6.5	93.5
The victim getting aroused or ejaculating during sexual assault means they probably wanted it	8.7	91.3	6.3	93.7
Prostitutes cannot be raped	4.6	95.4	3.3	96.7
Myths about motives for rape				
Women who wear short skirts/tight tops invite rape	16.3	83.7	13.2	86.8
Rape is only about sex.	16.5	83.5	10.8	89.2

Once a man is sexually aroused, he absolutely has to have sex and cannot help himself	5.8	94.2	6.9	93.1
If a man pays for a dinner or date, a woman should reciprocate with sex	3.4	96.6	2.0	98.0
Myths about allegations				
When a woman says no, she is playing hard to get and generally means yes	5.2	94.8	3.0	97.0
If a rape victim isn't visibly upset by the experience, it probably wasn't rape	6.2	93.8	4.4	95.6
Accusations of rape are often false	27.2	72.8	14.6	85.4
If the victim drank a lot or took drugs they shouldn't complain if they ended up being raped or sexually assaulted	9.9	90.1	6.7	93.3
'Stealthing' is just a sex trend and is not sexual assault or rape	14.3	85.7	10.5	89.5
'Real' victims report rape immediately	17.2	82.8	9.3	90.7
If the case didn't go to court, the accuser was probably lying	8.5	91.5	3.6	96.4
Abuse in same sex relationships tends to be mutual and both partners' fault	7.6	92.4	4.9	95.1
Sexual abuse rarely happens in same-sex relationships	7.9	92.1	5.6	94.4
If the person initially consented to sex, but changed their mind and their partner carried on, then it's not rape	8.9	91.1	6.4	93.6
Transgender people can't be raped.	3.4	96.6	2.2	97.8

Table 6

Crosstabulation of item agreement by ethnicity of participant

Item	White British		Black/African/Caribbean British		Asian/Asian British	
	% Agree	% Disagree	% Agree	% Disagree	% Agree	% Disagree
Male Rape Myths						
Men cannot be raped	4.1	95.9	2.9	97.1	26.8	73.2
Men who are raped must have been acting gay	3.0	97.0	5.8	94.2	9.1	90.9
Men who rape other men are usually gay	33.3	66.6	48.5	51.5	42.6	57.4
Male victims are generally less emotionally affected by rape than female victims	5.1	94.9	30.4	96.6	17.6	82.4
Men are physically strong, so can fight off any rape or sexual assault if they really wanted to	8.7	91.3	29.4	70.6	22.3	77.7
Victim myths						
A woman cannot be raped by her husband	3.0	97.0	11.5	88.5	8.2	91.8
A person could stop a rapist if they really wanted to	8.0	92	20.5	79.5	14.5	85.5
A raped woman is not usually an innocent victim	5.4	94.7	14.6	85.4	10.1	89.9
Most rape victims are young and attractive	8.4	91.6	21.8	78.2	21.4	78.6
Women are most likely to be raped after dark by a stranger, so shouldn't go out at night alone	24.0	76.0	42.9	57.1	48.6	58.4
Women who are raped often deserve it, especially if they enter a man's home or car	3.8	96.2	8.6	91.4	11.8	88.2

Some women have an unconscious desire to be raped	10.9	89.1	9.4	80.6	13.0	87.0
The victim getting aroused or ejaculating during sexual assault means they probably wanted it	6.8	93.2	22.6	77.4	12.9	87.1
Prostitutes cannot be raped	3.6	96.4	11.5	88.5	6.5	93.5
Myths about motives for rape						
Women who wear short skirts/tight tops invite rape	11.6	88.4	30.3	69.7	29.9	70.1
Rape is only about sex.	12.3	87.7	33.4	66.6	20.8	79.2
Once a man is sexually aroused, he absolutely has to have sex and cannot help himself	4.6	95.4	25.7	74.3	14.9	85.1
If a man pays for a dinner or date, a woman should reciprocate with sex	1.9	98.1	14.3	85.7	6.4	93.6

Note: Ethnicity categories have been aggregated for ease of analysis; some nuance and cultural context may be lost, especially in relation to minoritised groups

Table 7

One-way ANOVA statistics for Stereotype Endorsement by Gender.

Variables	F	df	Error df	Sig.	η^2
Male Rape Myths	3.03	1	2.99	.08	.001
Perpetrator Myths	.48	1	.64	.48	.000
Myths about Consequences of Rape	10.42	1	10.68	.001**	.01
Victim Myths	17.29	1	12.90	.000***	.003
Myths about Motives for Rape	7.56	1	6.47	.006**	.001
Allegation Myths	15.99	1	12.66	.000**	.001

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

B2: Ethics and Recruitment advertisement

Ethics favourable opinion letter

Keele
UNIVERSITY

14/02/2019

Dear Megan

Project Title:	*Your Beliefs about Abuse*
REC Project Reference:	PS-190005
Type of Application	Main application
Amendment Reference:	
Amendment Date:	

Keele University's Psychology Research Ethics Committee (PSY-FREC) reviewed the above application.

Favourable Ethical opinion
The members of the Committee gave a favourable ethical opinion of the above research on the basis described in the application form, protocol and supporting documentation, subject to the conditions specified below.

Conditions of the favourable opinion
The favourable opinion is subject to the following conditions being met prior to the start of the Study.

1.	The first sentence in the Information Sheet, section "Do I have to take part?" should be modified from "If you do decide not to take part you will be asked…" into "If you decide to take part you will be asked...".
2.	Response options should include "I prefer not to answer", for instance combining this option with the already included option "I do not know".
3.	Provide information about support resources at the beginning (e.g., end of info sheet) of the study and to those withdrawing before completion as well as at the end for all participants. Those who decide not to participate or withdraw before completion may be amongst the most vulnerable and need support.

Pilot recruitment advertisement

For those aged 18-75, if you could please spare 15-20 minutes to complete this survey, "Your Beliefs on Abuse", that would be incredibly valuable for my research. (Please note that as the survey is about abuse, it may cause some feelings of distress. With this in mind, please consider carefully if you want to participate before consenting.)

B3: Information Sheet, Consent Form, Debrief Sheet, and Questionnaire

Information Sheet

Information Sheet

Study Title: Your Beliefs about Abuse

Aims of the Research
The purpose of this research is to gain a better understanding of the general population's beliefs about abuse.

Invitation
You are being invited to consider taking part in the research study 'Your Beliefs about Abuse'. This project is being undertaken by Megan Hermolle, a PhD candidate in the School of Psychology, Keele University, supervised by Dr Samantha Andrews and Professor Claire Fox.

Before you decide whether or not you wish to take part, it is important for you to understand why this research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read this information carefully and discuss it with friends and relatives if you wish. Ask us if there is anything that is unclear or if you would like more information.

Why have I been chosen?
You have been chosen to take part by Qualtrics due to your demographic profile, as the study must be reflective of the general population's demographic profiles.

Do I have to take part?
You are free to decide whether you wish to take part or not.

If you decide to take part you will be asked to give informed consent by stating that you have understood what is required of you as well as any issues concerning confidentiality and anonymity. To complete the survey you must answer all of the multiple-choice questions, however you are free to withdraw from this study and without giving reasons by exiting the browser. If you do decide to withdraw from participating, you will need to do this before you have submitted the questionnaire. At the bottom of each page of the questionnaire, there is an option enabling you to continue taking part by going to the next page. If you do get to the end of the survey, please be aware that once you are at this point, it will be impossible to retrieve your data because all responses are anonymous. If you exit the survey before reaching the end and/or submitting your responses, your data will be automatically recorded within Qualtrics, but will not be used for analysis.

What will happen if I take part?
You will fill in an online survey relating to abuse beliefs, which will take approximately 20 minutes.

If I take part, what do I have to do?
If you decide to take part, you will be asked to indicate that you give your consent. You will then be asked to complete some demographic questions for data analysis purposes. You will then be presented with a survey with questions on abuse (70 items over 12 sections, which will take approximately 20 minutes to complete). You will be asked to mark your level of agreement or disagreement on these items on a scale including: 'strongly disagree', 'moderately disagree', 'slightly disagree' 'slightly agree', 'moderately agree', 'strongly agree', and 'don't know'.
 You will also be given a free response question. If you complete the questionnaire, you will then be shown a debrief page.

What are the benefits (if any) of taking part?
In addition to Qualtrics' points system, in which you will be provided with points for participating, you will also be helping researchers gain a wider understanding of beliefs about abuse in England and Wales.

What are the risks (if any) of taking part?
As the survey is about abuse, it may cause feelings of distress and may be upsetting, especially if you have experience with this sensitive topic. With this in mind, please consider carefully if you want to participate before consenting. However, as already indicated, you do not have to take part if you do not want to and can stop taking part if at any time you feel too distressed. A list of support services is provided at the end of this information page, on the debrief page, and at the bottom of each page of the survey, just in case you decide to exit early.

How will information about me be used?
Data will be collected through Qualtrics, and information will be used for Miss Megan Hermolle's PhD, and Dr Samantha Andrews' and Prof. Claire Fox's research. Data will be used in conference presentations and published articles, however, no participant will be individually identified. Responses will be gathered and stored for a minimum of 10 years from data collection (and 5 years post publication) within Qualtrics for the purposes of potential future data analysis, after which it will be disposed of. The data from Qualtrics will be downloaded into SPSS – a computer software programme used for analysis of statistical data. Any identifying information given in the open-ended comments will be removed before saving within SPSS.

Who will have access to information about me?
Access to the information provided within Qualtrics will be restricted to the research team: Miss Megan Hermolle (PhD Candidate), Dr. Samantha Andrews (lead PhD Supervisor), and Prof. Claire Fox (2nd PhD Supervisor). The data will be stored securely within Qualtrics and accessible only to the research team with passwords. Following the publication of the research, the anonymous SPSS data file may be uploaded to an online open access professional repository. Researchers in psychology are being encouraged to make their data 'open' in this way, so that other researchers can check the accuracy of published analytical findings independently, ensuring our research is reproducible and verifiable. However, since the data will be anonymous there will be no risk of participants being identified.

Who is funding and organising the research?
The project is funded by the Keele University Faculty of Natural Science's Research Development Fund.

What if there is a problem?
If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, you may wish to speak to the researcher who will do her best to answer your questions. You should contact Megan Hermolle on m.f.v.hermolle@keele.ac.uk. Alternatively, if you do not wish to contact the researcher you may contact the PhD supervisors: Dr. Samantha Andrews on s.j.andrews1@keele.ac.uk, or Prof. Claire Fox on c.fox@keele.ac.uk.

What if I have further concerns?

If you have further concerns or complaints that cannot be addressed by the investigative team, please feel free to contact Psychology Research Ethics Committee by email at psychology.ethics@keele.ac.uk; Tel: 01782 733583. If you need further support or advice, help and support can be found at https://www.survivorsuk.org/ or www.rapecrisis.org.uk.

Consent Form

CONSENT FORM

Please tick box if you agree with the statement

    I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study   □
and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

    I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw up until   □
the end of the survey.

    I agree to take part in this study.   □

    I understand that to complete this survey I must answer all of the multiple-choice   □
questions.

    I understand that data collected about me during this study will be anonymised before   □
it is submitted for publication.

    I agree to allow the dataset collected to be used for future research projects   □

Questionnaire

Demographic information.
1. Age (18-24) (25-39) (30-34) (35-39) (40-44) (45-49) (50-54) (55-59) (60-64) (65-69) (70-74)
2. Gender (Male; Female; Non-binary, Prefer to self-describe)
3. Are you trans/transgender? (yes; no)
4. Ethnicity (White: English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British) (White: Irish) (White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller) (White: Other White) (Mixed/multiple ethnic groups: White and Black Caribbean) (Mixed/multiple ethnic groups: White and Black African) (Mixed/multiple ethnic groups: White and Asian) (Mixed/multiple ethnic groups: Other Mixed) (Asian/Asian British: Indian) (Asian/Asian British: Pakistani) (Asian/Asian British: Bangladeshi) (Asian/Asian British: Chinese) (Asian/Asian British: Other Asian) (Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: African) (Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Caribbean) (Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Other Black) (Other ethnic group: Arab) (Other ethnic group: Any other ethnic group
5. Employment Status (Employed part time/full time) (Self-employed) (Unemployed) (Student) (Retired) (Looking after home or family) (Long-term sick or disabled) (Other)

6. Occupation (Professional occupations) (Associate professional and technical occupations) (Skilled trades occupations) (Elementary occupations) (Administrative and secretarial occupations) (Caring, leisure and other service occupations) (Managers, directors and senior officials) (Sales and customer service occupations) (Process, plant and machine operatives)

7. Sexual Orientation (Heterosexual, Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Pansexual, Other [please specify])

8. Education (None, GCSEs, A Levels, HNC/HND, Bachelors degree, Masters degree, PhD, Other [please specify])

9. Nationality/country of residence (England, Wales, Other [Please Specify])

7 point Likert scale: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = moderately disagree, 3 = slightly disagree, 4 = slightly agree, 5 = moderately agree, 6 = strongly agree, 7 = don't know.

* = reverse code items

Split half reliability score = .91

Overall Cronbach's Alpha = .96

Male Rape Myths

1.1 Men cannot be raped*

1.2 Men who are raped must have been acting gay

1.3 Men who rape other men are usually gay

1.4 Men are generally less affected by rape than women

1.5 Men should be able to defend themselves against rape.

1.6 Please provide any other thoughts or comments on this section [free response].

Perpetrator Myths

2.1   Most rapes are committed by someone unknown to the victim

2.2   Women do not commit rape*

2.3   People who were sexually abused as children become abusers themselves.

2.4 Alcohol, drugs, stress or depression can turn people into rapists.

2.5 There is often a 'type' of person that commits rape.

2.6 Most rapes are committed by strangers.

2.7 Rapists are mostly paedophiles, animals or evil.

2.8 Rapists are mostly psychotic or mentally ill.

2.9 Men of certain races and backgrounds are more likely to be rapists.

2.10   Rape with multiple perpetrators, or 'gang rape', is rare.

2.11   Please provide any other thoughts or comments on this section [free response].

Consequences of Rape

3.1 Date rape is not as traumatic as stranger rape*

3.2 Sexually experienced people are less traumatised by rape

3.3 It is only rape if someone is physically forced into sex and has the injuries to show for it.

3.4 Please provide any other thoughts or comments on this section [free response].

Victim Myths

4.1 A woman cannot be raped by her husband*

4.2 A person could stop a rapist if they really wanted to

4.3 A raped woman is not usually an innocent victim*

4.4 Most rape victims are young and attractive

4.5 Women are most likely to be raped after dark by a stranger, so shouldn't go out at night alone.

4.6 Women who are raped often deserve it, especially if they enter a man's home or car.

4.7 Some women secretly want to be raped.

4.8 The victim getting aroused or ejaculating during sexual assault means they probably wanted it.

4.9 Prostitutes cannot be raped.*

4.10   Please provide any other thoughts or comments on this section [free response].

Motives for Rape

5.1 Women who wear short skirts/tight tops invite rape

5.2 Rape is only about sex.

5.3 Once a man is sexually aroused, he absolutely has to have sex and cannot help himself.

5.4 If a man pays for a dinner or date, a woman should reciprocate with sex.

5.5 If two people have had sex with each other before, it is always fine to initiate sex again without agreeing beforehand.

5.6 Please provide any other thoughts or comments on this section [free response].

Allegation Myths

6.1 When a woman says no, she is playing hard to get and generally means yes.

6.2 If a rape victim isn't visibly upset by the experience, it probably wasn't rape.*

6.3 Accusations of rape are often false.

6.4 If the victim drank a lot or took drugs they shouldn't complain if they ended up being raped or sexually assaulted.*?

6.5 'Stealthing' *(when the use of a condom is agreed before intercourse, but the wearer takes it off during intercourse without the partner's knowledge)* is just a sex trend, and is not sexual assault or rape.

6.6 'Real' victims report rape immediately.

6.7 If the case didn't go to court, the accuser was probably lying.

6.8 Abuse in same sex relationships tends to be mutual and both partners' fault.

6.9 Sexual abuse rarely happens in same-sex relationships.

6.10   Transgender people can't be raped.*

6.11   If the personal initially consented to sex, but changed their mind, then it's not rape.*

6.12   Being pressured into sex (with no physical force) is not rape*

6.13   Please provide any other thoughts or comments on this section [free response].

Other

7.1 Estimate percentage of adult women raped or sexually assaulted per year

7.2 Estimate percentage of adult men raped or sexually assaulted per year

7.3 Please provide any other thoughts or comments on your beliefs about sexual

abuse and rape [free response].

7.4 Please provide any other thoughts or comments on your own experiences with

sexual abuse, or victims/perpetrators of sexual abuse [free response].

Domestic Abuse half of Questionnaire (Unused in analysis)

Category 2: Domestic Abuse
Section 1
1.1 Men cannot be victims of domestic violence.

1.2 Men who are victims of domestic violence are weak.

1.3 Men are generally less affected by domestic violence.

1.4 Men should be able to defend themselves against domestic violence.

1.5 Please provide any other thoughts or comments on this section [free response].

Section 2
2.1 Women do not perpetrate domestic violence.

2.2 Women are just as abusive as men.

2.3 Please provide any other thoughts or comments on this section [free response].

Section 3
3.1 People who perpetrate domestic violence have witnessed or experienced abuse

as a child.

3.2 Perpetrators of domestic violence are mentally ill.

3.3 Alcohol and drugs are a main cause of domestic violence.

3.4 Domestic violence usually happens in poor families.

3.5 Perpetrators can easily change their behaviour.

3.6 Perpetrators just need to learn how to control their anger better.

3.7 Perpetrators are violent to others, not just their partner.

3.8 Please provide any other thoughts or comments on this section [free response].

Section 4

4.1 Victims of domestic violence who stay are bad parents.

4.2 A victim of domestic violence usually deserves it.

4.3 A victim of domestic violence has usually provoked it in some way.

4.4 A victim of domestic violence unconsciously likes it or wants it.

4.5 Victims of domestic violence would leave if it was that bad.

4.6 Victims of domestic violence usually lie about the abuse.

4.7 Please provide any other thoughts or comments on this section [free response].

Section 5

5.1 Telling a partner what not to wear is not domestic violence.

5.2 Domestic violence always involves physical violence.

5.3 Domestic violence is a private matter and other people should not get involved.

5.4 Domestic violence is not very common.

5.5 Being told who you can see and where you can and cannot go by a partner is not domestic violence.

5.6 Domestic violence is a crime of passion, usually involving a loss of control in the moment.

5.7 Domestic violence is an adult problem; teenagers do not experience domestic violence.

5.8 The abuse stops as soon as the victim leaves.

5.9 Forced sex between two people in a marriage is not rape.

5.10 Most domestic violence is mutual violence between two partners.

5.11 Please provide any other thoughts or comments on this section [free response].

Section 6

6.1 Estimate percentage of adult women victimised by domestic violence per year.

6.2 Estimate percentage of adult men victimised by domestic violence per year.

6.3 Please provide any other thoughts or comments on your beliefs about domestic violence [free response].

6.4 Please provide any other thoughts or comments on your own experiences with domestic violence, or victims/perpetrators of domestic violence [free response].

Debrief Sheet

Debrief

Your Beliefs on Abuse

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this study on beliefs about abuse.

This is a study that is being conducted in order to gain a better understanding of the general population's beliefs about rape and domestic violence, and your responses will be incredibly helpful and informative. In the #MeToo era, it is more important than ever that we seek to understand the concept of rape and abuse myths and their impact on society. Although rape and abuse are becoming less taboo to discuss, false beliefs surrounding these topics are no less prevalent (Quas, Thompson & Stewart, 2005), and reliance on these beliefs can have devastating effects such as underreporting (Aherne and Lamb, 2016), and lawyer cross-examination tactics that further victimise abuse survivors (Prince, Andrews, Lamb & Foster, 2018). Although many studies have been conducted in other countries years ago, there has been no recent systematic, representative research on rape and domestic violence myth acceptance in the UK.

We are using Qualtrics to recruit 1000 participants in order to determine the presence and strength of rape and DV myth acceptance, and whether demographic factors such as age, ethnicity or occupation influence these beliefs.

If you have been affected by the nature of the questions asked in this survey in any way, help and support can be found at https://www.survivorsuk.org/ or www.rapecrisis.org.uk.

If you would like to stay updated with the project and the research findings, or if you simply have any questions or concerns about the survey, please email Miss Megan Hermolle (m.f.v.hermolle@keele.ac.uk); Dr Samantha Andrews (s.j.andrews1@keele.ac.uk) or Prof. Claire Fox (c.fox@keele.ac.uk) with the subject heading "Your beliefs about abuse". Please note that contacting the research team reduces your anonymity by providing your email address to the researchers. However, your email address will not be linked to your survey responses when the data has been collected and is stored offline.

Appendix C: Study Two

C1: Tables

Table 8

Participant Demographics

	n (%)
Gender	
Male	52 (17.1%)
Female	250 (82.2%)
Non-Binary	2 (0.6%)
Ethnicity	
White British	272 (89.5%)
Asian/Asian British	11 (3.6%)
Black/African/Caribbean British	7 (2.3%)
Mixed/multiple Ethnic Groups	11 (3.6%)
Other Ethnic Groups	3 (1%)
Occupation	
Legal Work	29 (9.5%)
Policing	12 (3.9%)
Social Work	45 (14.8)
Education	98 (32.2%)
Healthcare	95 (31.3%)
Other	25 (8.2%)
Nationality	
England	290 (95.4%)
Wales	14 (4.6%)
Training in Sexual Assault/Rape Stereotypes	
Yes	32 (10.5%)
No	272 (89.5%)
Length of time in Occupation	*M* = 10.06
0-10	189 (62.2%)
11-20	86 (28.3%)
21-30	23 (7.6%)
31-40	6 (2.0%)

Table 9

% agreement, disagreement, and 'don't know' answers to statements

Item	Agreed (%)	Disagreed (%)	Don't Know (%)	Correct (%)
Male rape myths				
Men cannot be raped	1.3	98.4	.3	98.4[28]
Men who are raped must have been acting gay	.3	99.4	.4	99.4[37]
Male victims are generally less emotionally affected by rape than female victims	.7	98.3	1.0	98.3[27]
Men are physically strong, so can fight off any rape or sexual assault if they really wanted to	2.0	97.3	.7	97.3[23]
Perpetrator myths				
Most rapes are committed by someone unknown to the victim	15.0	74.8	10.2	74.8[7]
Women do not commit rape	5.1	91.9	3.0	91.9[14]
People who were sexually abused as children become abusers themselves	34.3	54.8	10.9	54.8[3]
Alcohol, drugs, stress, or depression can turn people into rapists	39.7	46.5	13.8	46.5[1]
There is often a 'type' of person that commits rape	26.9	64.9	8.2	64.9[6]
Most rapes are committed by strangers	10.2	80.3	9.5	80.3[8]
Rapists are mostly paedophiles, animals or evil	36.5	58.2	5.3	58.2[4]
Rapists are mostly psychotic or mentally ill	38.3	54.5	7.2	54.5[2]
Men of certain races and backgrounds are more likely to be rapists	12.7	80.7	6.6	80.7[9]
Men who rape other men are usually gay	25.6	63.2	11.2	63.2[5]
Once a man is sexually aroused, he absolutely has to have sex and cannot help himself	0	99	1.0	99[34]
Victim myths				
A woman cannot be raped by her husband	0	100	0	100[40]
A person could stop a rapist if they really wanted to	1.3	97.4	1.3	97.4[24]
A raped woman is not usually an innocent victim	1.0	97.7	1.3	97.7[25]
Most rape victims are young and attractive	1.7	94.4	3.9	94.4[19]
Women are most likely to be raped after dark by a stranger, so shouldn't go out at night alone	9.6	89.7	.7	89.7[12]

Item	Agreed (%)	Disagreed (%)	Don't Know (%)	Correct (%)
Women who are raped often deserve it, especially if they enter a man's home or car	.3	99.4	.3	99.4[38]
Some women have an unconscious desire to be raped	3.1	92.0	4.9	92.0[15]
The victim getting aroused or ejaculating during sexual assault means they probably wanted it	.7	96	3.3	96[21]
Prostitutes cannot be raped	0	98.7	1.3	98.7[31]
Women who wear short skirts/tight tops invite rape	1.0	98.7	.3	98.7[32]
If a man pays for a dinner or date, a woman should reciprocate with sex	0	99.7	.3	99.7[39]
Myths about allegations				
When a woman says no, she is playing hard to get and generally means yes	.7	99.3	0	99.3[36]
If a rape victim isn't visibly upset by the experience, it probably wasn't rape	.7	98.6	.7	98.6[30]
Accusations of rape are often false	10.2	83.2	6.6	83.2[10]
If the victim drank a lot or took drugs they shouldn't complain if they ended up being raped or sexually assaulted	.3	99.0	.7	99.0[35]
'Stealthing' is just a sex trend and is not sexual assault or rape	3.5	90.9	5.6	90.9[13]
'Real' victims report rape immediately	3.4	93.6	3.0	93.6[17]
If the case didn't go to court, the accuser was probably lying	.3	98.7	1.0	98.7[33]
Abuse in same sex relationships tends to be mutual and both partners' fault	.7	93.7	5.6	93.7[18]
Sexual abuse rarely happens in same-sex relationships	.4	89.1	10.5	89.1[11]
If the person initially consented to sex, but changed their mind and their partner carried on, then it's not rape	1.0	97.7	1.3	97.7[26]
Transgender people can't be raped.	0	98.4	1.6	98.4[29]
Rape is only about sex.	4.1	92	3.9	92[16]

Note: Superscript numerals denote item response accuracy from least accurate at [1] to most accurate at [40]. 7 items were at <75% accuracy, 5 items were at 75-90% accuracy, and 28 items were at >90% accuracy.

Table 10

Percentage Stereotype Acceptance by Occupation.

Occupation/ Stereotype	% Disagree (Accurate)	% Agree (Inaccurate)
Male Rape		
Legal	100	0
Policing	100	0
Social Work	97.8	2.2
Education	99	1
Healthcare	100	0
Other	100	0
Perpetrator		
Legal	98	2
Policing	75	25
Social Work	95.6	4.4
Education	85.7	14.3
Healthcare	87.3	12.7
Other	84	16
Consequences		
Legal	100	0
Policing	91.7	8.3
Social Work	97.8	2.2
Education	99	1
Healthcare	97.9	2.1
Other	96	4
Victims		
Legal	100	0
Policing	100	0
Social Work	100	0
Education	100	0
Healthcare	100	0
Other	100	0
Motives		
Legal	100	0
Policing	100	0
Social Work	100	0
Education	99	1
Healthcare	100	0
Other	100	0
Allegations		
Legal	100	0
Policing	100	0
Social Work	100	0
Education	100	0
Healthcare	100	0
Other	100	0

Table 11

Training in sexual assault/rape stereotypes by occupation

		Do you have training in sexual assault/rape stereotypes?	
		Yes	No
Occupation	Legal Work	3.4%	96.6%
	Policing	25.0%	75.0%
	Social Work	26.7%	73.3%
	Education	9.2%	90.8%
	Healthcare	7.4%	92.6%
	Other	0.0%	100.0%

Table 12

T-test results comparing training and no training on rape stereotype acceptance

	Training		No Training					
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*df*	*t*	*p*	Hedge's *g*
Male Rape Myths	5.87	.33	5.82	.49	48.62	.71	.47	.09
Perpetrator Myths	5.25	.80	4.78	.90	40.86	3.07	**.004	.52
Victim Myths	5.90	.39	5.86	.37	37.88	.53	.59	.10
Allegation Myths	5.90	.29	5.81	.40	46.01	1.55	.12	.22

*Note: Welch's t-test was used due to unequal sample sizes, Hedge's correction was also used to measure effect size for this reason. **$p < .01$*

C2: Ethics and Recruitment Advertisements

Ethics favourable opinion letter

Keele University FNS Psychology Faculty Research Ethics Committee
psychology.ethics@keele.ac.uk

Dear Megan

Project Title:	Professionals' beliefs about rape and rape stereotypes
REC Project Reference:	PS-200131
Type of Application	New Application

Keele University's Psychology Research Ethics Committee (PSY-FREC) reviewed the above project application

Favourable Ethical opinion

The members of the Committee gave a favourable ethical opinion of the above research on the basis described in the application form, protocol and supporting documentation, subject to the conditions specified below.

Conditions of the favourable opinion
The favourable opinion is subject to the following conditions being met prior to the start of the project

1	The application indicates that participants will be given a unique ID that will keep them anonymous. Please ensure that this ID is random and does not contain complete or parts of (e.g., initials) identifying information.
2	The proposed end date was listed as 1 June 2020 but this seems unnecessarily short. We grant approval for 2 years in the first instance.
3	There is currently a mismatch in the stated duration of the study. The participant information sheet states that the survey will take 5 – 10 minutes; Appendix C (ppt invite) states 15 – 20 minutes, and the ethics application form states 25 – 30 mins. Please ensure that the information sheet provides an accurate estimate.
4	Please make it clear on the consent form which boxes ppts do / do not have to consent to, to be able to take part. For example, ppts may want to take part in this project but not want their data to be used for future research projects.

Reporting requirements

The University's standard operating procedures give detailed guidance on reporting requirements for studies with a favourable opinion including:

- Notifying substantial amendments
- Notifying issues which may have an impact upon ethical opinion of the study
- Progress reports

Advertisements for recruitment (all and police only, respectively)

Are you a lawyer, judge, police officer, social worker, teacher or correctional officer?

-If you are a professional who has regular contact with rape victims through the course of your work, it would be incredibly valuable for my research if you could please spare 5-10 minutes to complete this survey, "Your Beliefs about Abuse". (Please note that as the survey is about abuse, it may cause some feelings of distress. With this in mind, please consider carefully if you want to participate before consenting.)

-If you are a police officer, it would be incredibly valuable for my research if you could please spare 5-10 minutes to complete this survey, "Your Beliefs about Abuse". (Please note that as the survey is about abuse, it may cause some feelings of distress. With this in mind, please consider carefully if you want to participate before consenting.)

C3: Information sheets, consent forms, questionnaire, and debrief sheet

Information sheet

Information Sheet

Study Title: Your Beliefs about Abuse

 Aims of the Research

The purpose of this research is to gain a better understanding of professionals' beliefs about abuse.

 Invitation

You are being invited to consider taking part in the research study 'Your Beliefs about Abuse'. This project is being undertaken by Megan Hermolle, a PhD candidate in the School of Psychology, Keele University, supervised by Dr Samantha Andrews.

 Before you decide whether or not you wish to take part, it is important for you to understand why this research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read this information carefully and discuss it with friends and relatives if you wish. Ask us if there is anything that is unclear or if you would like more information.

 Why have I been chosen?

You are being asked to take part due to your profession, as this is a key part of the study.

 Do I have to take part?

You are free to decide whether you wish to take part or not.

If you do decide to take part you will be asked to give informed consent by stating that you have understood what is required of you as well as any issues concerning confidentiality and anonymity. You are free to withdraw from this study and without giving reasons. If you do decide to withdraw from participating, you will need to do this before you have submitted the questionnaire. At the bottom of each page of the questionnaire, there is an option enabling you to continue taking part by going to the next page. If you do get to the end of the survey, please be aware that once you are at this point, it will be impossible to retrieve your data because all responses are anonymous. If you exit the survey before reaching the end and/or submitting your responses, your data will be automatically recorded within Qualtrics, but will not be used for analysis.

What will happen if I take part?

You will fill in an online survey relating to abuse beliefs, which will take approximately 5-10 minutes.

 If I take part, what do I have to do?

If you decide to take part, you will be asked to indicate that you give your consent. You will then be asked to complete some demographic questions for data analysis purposes. You will then be presented with a survey with questions on abuse (44 items over 6 sections, which will take approximately 5-10 minutes to complete). You will be asked to mark your level of agreement or disagreement on these items on a scale including: 'strongly disagree', 'moderately disagree', 'slightly disagree' 'slightly agree', 'moderately agree', 'strongly agree', and 'don't know'.

You will also be given a free response question. If you complete the questionnaire, you will then be shown a debrief page.

What are the benefits (if any) of taking part?

You will be helping researchers gain a wider understanding of beliefs about abuse in England and Wales.

What are the risks (if any) of taking part?

As the survey is about abuse, it may cause feelings of distress and may be upsetting, especially if you have personal experience with this sensitive topic. With this in mind, please consider carefully if you want to participate before consenting. However, as already indicated, you do not have to take part if you do not want to and can stop taking part if at any time you feel too distressed. A list of support services is provided on the debrief page, and at the bottom of each page of the survey, just in case you decide to exit early.

How will information about me be used?

Data will be collected through Qualtrics, and information will be used for Miss Megan Hermolle's PhD, and Dr Samantha Andrews' research. Data will be used in conference presentations and published articles, however, no participant will be individually identified. Responses will be gathered and stored for a minimum of 10 years from data collection (and 5 years post publication) within Qualtrics for the purposes of potential future data analysis, after which it will be disposed of. The data from Qualtrics will be downloaded into SPSS – a computer software programme used for analysis of statistical data. Any identifying information given in the open-ended comments will be removed before saving within SPSS.

Who will have access to information about me?

Access to the information provided within Qualtrics will be restricted to the research team: Miss Megan Hermolle (PhD Candidate), and Dr. Samantha Andrews (PhD Supervisor). The data will be stored securely within Qualtrics and accessible only to the research team with passwords. Following the publication of the research, the anonymous SPSS data file may be uploaded to an online open access professional repository. Researchers in psychology are being encouraged to make their data 'open' in this way, so that other researchers can check the accuracy of published analytical findings independently, ensuring our research is reproducible and verifiable. However, since the data will be anonymous there will be no risk of participants being identified.

What if there is a problem?

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, you may wish to speak to the researcher who will do her best to answer your questions. You should contact Megan Hermolle at m.f.v.hermolle@keele.ac.uk. Alternatively, if you do not wish to contact the researcher you may contact the PhD supervisor: Dr. Samantha Andrews at s.j.andrews1@keele.ac.uk.

What if I have further concerns?

If you have further concerns or complaints that cannot be addressed by the investigative team, please feel free to contact Psychology Research Ethics Committee by email at psychology.ethics@keele.ac.uk; Tel: 01782 733583.

Consent form

CONSENT FORM

Please read the statements and tick the boxes to consent (please note: to continue with the survey, you must consent to all statements).

I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study ☐
and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw up until ☐
the end of the survey.

☐

I agree to take part in this study.

I understand that to complete this survey I must answer all of the multiple-choice ☐
questions.

I understand that data collected about me during this study will be anonymised before ☐
it is submitted for publication.

I agree to allow the dataset collected to be used for future research projects ☐

Questionnaire (since adapted for internal reliability)

Demographic information.

10. Age (18-24) (25-39) (30-34) (35-39) (40-44) (45-49) (50-54) (55-59) (60-64) (65-69)

    (70-74)

11. Gender (Male; Female; Non-binary, Prefer to self-describe)

12. Ethnicity (White: British, Asian/Asian British, Black/African Caribbean British,

    Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups, Other ethnic Groups)

13. Occupation (Lawyer, Judge, Police officer, Social worker, Teacher, Prison officer)

14. How many years have you spent working in your profession? (0-5) (6-10) (11-15) (16-20) (21-25) (26-30) (31+)

15. Have you ever worked in any of the other professions mentioned in question six previously? (yes;no)

16. If yes, which profession? (Lawyer, Judge, Police officer, Social worker, Teacher, Prison officer)

17. Do you have training in sexual assault and rape stereotypes (Yes, No)

18. Nationality/country of residence (England, Wales)

7 point Likert scale: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = moderately disagree, 3 = slightly disagree, 4 = slightly agree, 5 = moderately agree, 6 = strongly agree, 7 = don't know.

Sexual Abuse Stereotypes

Section 1

1.1 Men cannot be raped*

1.2 Men who are raped must have been acting gay

1.3 Men who rape other men are usually gay

1.4 Men are generally less affected by rape than women

1.5 Men should be able to defend themselves against rape.

1.6 Please provide any other thoughts or comments on this section [free response].

Section 2

2.1 Most rapes are committed by someone unknown to the victim

2.2 Women do not commit rape*

2.3 People who were sexually abused as children become abusers themselves.

2.4 Alcohol, drugs, stress or depression can turn people into rapists.

2.5 There is often a 'type' of person that commits rape.

2.6 Most rapes are committed by strangers.

2.7 Rapists are mostly paedophiles, animals or evil.

2.8 Rapists are mostly psychotic or mentally ill.

2.9 Men of certain races and backgrounds are more likely to be rapists.

2.10   Rape with multiple perpetrators, or 'gang rape', is rare.

2.11   Please select 'strongly disagree' [attention check]

2.12   Please provide any other thoughts or comments on this section [free response].

Section 3

3.1 Date rape is not as traumatic as stranger rape*

3.2 Sexually experienced people are less traumatised by rape

3.3 It is only rape if someone is physically forced into sex and has the injuries to show for it.

3.4 Please provide any other thoughts or comments on this section [free response].

Section 4

4.1 A woman cannot be raped by her husband*

4.2 A person could stop a rapist if they really wanted to

4.3 A raped woman is not usually an innocent victim*

4.4 Most rape victims are young and attractive

4.5 Women are most likely to be raped after dark by a stranger, so shouldn't go out at night alone.

4.6 Women who are raped often deserve it, especially if they enter a man's home or car.

4.7 Some women secretly want to be raped.

4.8 The victim getting aroused or ejaculating during sexual assault means they probably wanted it.

4.9 Prostitutes cannot be raped.*

4.10   Please provide any other thoughts or comments on this section [free response].

Section 5

5.1 Women who wear short skirts/tight tops invite rape

5.2 Rape is only about sex.

5.3 Once a man is sexually aroused, he absolutely has to have sex and cannot help himself.

5.4 If a man pays for a dinner or date, a woman should reciprocate with sex.

5.5 For quality purposes, please select 'Agree' [attention check]

5.6 If two people have had sex with each other before, it is always fine to initiate sex again without agreeing beforehand.

5.7 Please provide any other thoughts or comments on this section [free response].

Section 6

6.1 When a woman says no, she is playing hard to get and generally means yes.

6.2 If a rape victim isn't visibly upset by the experience, it probably wasn't rape.*

6.3 Accusations of rape are often false.

6.4 If the victim drank a lot or took drugs they shouldn't complain if they ended up being raped or sexually assaulted.*?

6.5 'Stealthing' *(when the use of a condom is agreed before intercourse, but the wearer takes it off during intercourse without the partner's knowledge)* is just a sex trend, and is not sexual assault or rape.

6.6 'Real' victims report rape immediately.

6.7 If the case didn't go to court, the accuser was probably lying.

6.8 Abuse in same sex relationships tends to be mutual and both partners' fault.

6.9 Sexual abuse rarely happens in same-sex relationships.

6.10　Transgender people can't be raped.*

6.11　If the personal initially consented to sex, but changed their mind, then it's not rape.*

6.12　Being pressured into sex (with no physical force) is not rape*

6.13　Please provide any other thoughts or comments on this section [free response].

Section 7

      7.1 Estimate percentage of adult women raped or sexually assaulted per year

      7.2 Estimate percentage of adult men raped or sexually assaulted per year

      7.3 Please provide any other thoughts or comments on your beliefs about sexual abuse and rape [free response].

      7.4 Please provide any other thoughts or comments on your own experiences with sexual abuse, or victims/perpetrators of sexual abuse [free response].

Debrief Sheet

Debrief

Your Beliefs on Abuse

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this study on beliefs about abuse.

This study is being conducted in order to gain a better understanding of professionals' beliefs about rape and domestic violence, particularly those who are often in contact with rape victims and perpetrators in the course of their work. Your responses will be incredibly helpful and informative. In the #MeToo era, it is more important than ever that we seek to understand the concept of rape and abuse myths and their impact on society. Although rape and abuse are becoming less taboo to discuss, false beliefs surrounding these topics are no less prevalent (Quas, Thompson & Stewart, 2005), and reliance on these beliefs can have devastating effects such as underreporting (Aherne and Lamb, 2016), and lawyer cross-examination tactics that further victimise abuse survivors (Prince, Andrews, Lamb & Foster, 2018). Although many studies have been conducted in other countries years ago, there has been no recent systematic, representative research on rape and domestic violence stereotype acceptance in the UK.

We are recruiting 300 participants, and are using the survey you have just completed, along with the demographic information you included in order to determine the presence and

strength of rape and DV myth acceptance, and whether demographic factors such as specific training or occupation influence these beliefs.

If you have been affected by the nature of the questions asked in this survey in any way, help and support can be found at https://www.survivorsuk.org/ or www.rapecrisis.org.uk.

If you would like to stay updated with the project and the research findings, or if you simply have any questions or concerns about the survey, please email Miss Megan Hermolle (m.f.v.hermolle@keele.ac.uk) or Dr Samantha Andrews (s.j.andrews1@keele.ac.uk) with the subject heading "Your beliefs about abuse". Please note that contacting the research team reduces your anonymity by providing your email address to the researchers. However, your email address will not be linked to your survey responses when the data has been collected and is stored offline.

Appendix D: Study Three

D1: Table

Table 13

Jefferson Transcription Conventions

Transcription feature	Meaning
[word]	Overlapping talk
word=words	Latched utterances
(0.5), (2.4)	Longer pause in seconds
(.)	Micropause, considered >0.2 seconds
Wo:rd	Extension of the sound or syllable
Wo::rd	A more prolonged stretch
W<u>o</u>:rd	Downwards intonation in the middle of a word before rising again at the end
Wo<u>:</u>rd	Upwards intonation in the middle of a word before falling again at the end
.	Falling final intonation
,	Continuing intonation
?	Rising final intonation
?	Medium final intonation
WORD/WOrd	Loud talk
<u>Underline</u>, <u>und</u>erline/	Emphasis on all or part of a word
°word°	Passage of talk that is quieter than surrounding talk
<word>	Passage of talk that is slower than surrounding talk
>word<	Passage of talk that is faster than surrounding talk.
hh	Audible aspirations
.hh	Audible inhalations
(hh)	Laughter within a word
.huhh huh (huh)	Crying or sobbing
.shuhh/.shih	Sniffing
((gesture))	Transcriber's comments, usually visual notes

D2: Analysis Protocol Notes (for Researcher's Reference throughout)

Collection Building

- An iterative process – include all the possibilities
- Include description (could it be a construction?)
  - Consider what counts and what doesn't count
  - What's being managed, what dispositional work is being done
  - Why is this extract a yes? Why is that extract a no?
- System for recording yes' and no's
  - Transcript in word, find case
  - Note whether yes/no then note why/why not
  - In spreadsheet, note:
    - Which interview, line nos., small description, in/out, reasoning.
- Can then cross reference
- Case by case process – start by being inclusive
- Physical descriptions – how was the interaction structured to make these descriptions possible/useful?
- First round of annotations: Annotate each transcript with each stereotype category from the previous two studies in mind.
- Second round of annotations: Perpetrator stereotypes were the most widespread and consistent form of stereotype found in the interviews – began to revisit the transcripts to consider potential cases.
- Case building phase: created a table to work out the nature of perpetrator stereotypes, found salient extracts from the transcripts to use in analysis **(D3).**
- Jefferson Transcription of extracts begun, analysis of texts with reference to CA/DP/CDA and social representations theory in an iterative and circular process started.

D3: Case Building for Jefferson Transcription

**Table 14**

Case Building for Jefferson Transcription

extract no. Overall	Interview no.	Obscuring/deleting Mens Rea (guilty mind) in Interviewers' perp constructions	
		'Misunderstanding'	*Agentless passives/nominatives*
1.	01	Questions about lighting. Begins with question about how W01 knew it was A. Then 'state of room', implication W01 could not see if dark. (weak case, some implied challenge here but too minor a part of the sequence to get anything useful out of)	Same sequence. After lighting, moves on to shorts. Agentless passives used, context perp's physical actions (more useful part of the sequence) Agentless passives – still related to shorts, context perp's actions. Interviewer says "how've they come down" but perp's action was responsible.
2.	01		Agentless passives – Interviewer prompts this grammar from W01 due to use of sensory based question. Then uses same to describe perp actions and body part autonomy (his penis went inside you)
3.	03	Sequence is have you ever had sex with him -> have you ever told him you'd have sex with him -> then leads to who have you had sex with, and -> 3 part misunderstanding construction related question w/preconditions/assumptions. When answer from W01 not satisfactory, parameters widen "anything at all?" – given context, possibly meaning 'anything at all that could be misconstrued as consent'	
4.	03	Preamble/pre-questions asked before actual construction begins. You've asked him to come round (responsibility on W03), your dad was out -> was there any talk of sex going to happen beforehand. Slightly later in sequence, asks why W03 was in bed when perp first came round. Uses preapologies and justifications for question, softening action. Misunderstanding construction of perp evident here – "if no talk of sex before, why in bed?" or "perp might have seen as invitation if in bed".	Some agentless passives used in 'was there any talk of sex...' question. Very minor case.
5.	03	Talk about consent: W03 affirms perp understanding of consent before I03 can ask. I03 then asks about when nonconsent was expressed – before first time or after. Seems related to perp understanding, but possibly just a need for clarification – weak case?	

6.	03	Lighting question: I03 doesn't directly ask whether perp could see whether W03 was awake or not, but asks pre-questions: was there a light -> how much can you see -> could he see your face. Begins building misunderstanding construction of perp. W03's answers not satisfactory enough, so I03 widens parameters: were lights still on when wake up -> don't get turned off at any point. W03's answers same. I03 then asks questions about distance: how close -> pretty close up (confirmation) -> then a final confirmation 'and the lights were on. Multi-question construction, all implying/constructing the same thing	
7.	04	Minor subset of misunderstanding construction: mistranslation – possibly not frequent enough to warrant inclusion on its own? Still follows multi-question construction: how good was English -> were they translating what was being said -> was translator telling him correct things. Placing blame on somebody else, causing misunderstanding.	
8.	04	Lighting questions: multi-question construction. Is light on in room -> how was lighting at that point? No presence of final part "how well could perp see face", but in context of other similar lines of q, possibly doing same action. Possibly I04 was satisfied with answer.	
9.	05	Questions around W05's consent and perp's understanding of such. Multi-question construction used. Begins with info-seeking (self-repair from 'so why-' -> what did you say about that -> does perp know you don't want to. After W05's affirmative answer, further multi-questions: so x happened even though you said no -> what made perp then do y. W03's answers mostly 'don't know based', and questions from there are how long-> why -> why did he stop? Unsatisfied with 'don't know' or 'just did' answers, so reformulated. All constructing a perp who misunderstood/missed nonconsent, implying W05 did something to allow/invite.	Some agentless talk used – perp actions made passive, only mention is of W05's body and actions. Nominatives used.
10.	05	Very long sequence. All questions relate to consent and build up construction of perp misunderstanding. W05 expresses uncertainty about 'unwanted sex' vs 'rape', or coercion and force – has only recently known	

		what's happened to her. I05 exploits this, asks how perp knows difference between her wanting/not wanting, then ignores insistence that she never wants it. Continues misunderstanding construction by drawing distinction between coercion (keep the peace) and force. Challenges by asking why W05 feels she has to have sex with him when doesn't want to.	
11.	05	Talk is about understanding of what rape is. Multi-question sequence set up to build construction of perp who misunderstood. I05 says what did you think rape was -> W05 says I thought it was x -> what do you think it is now -> now I think it is y -> I05 exploits this: he has to know you mean no, did he definitely mean no? Then after W05 responds in the affirmative (with some dispositional work done on perp), I05 does not ask a question, but says (in more roundabout way) sometimes we think no but don't say it out loud, he has to know you don't want sex.	
12.	06	Minor subset of misunderstanding construction: mistranslation. W05 has expressed she said stop it, no. Does not follow multi-question build-up like prev mistranslation construction, but does have 3 part precondition to question – with all the time you've known him -> and with all the conversations you've had with him -> d'you think (including this as condition) -> he understands what stop it means? Does build construction of perp as misunderstanding/missing nonconsent. Explicitly limiting question to W06's experience. Uncertain what this means.	
13.	06	Multi-question build-up. Do you know what demeanour means (referring to perp) -> clarifying it means reactions/emotions -> what about yours at this point -> were there any visible signs to him of how you were feeling -> was anything happening that would have given him signs that you were upset. Builds up from general question about demeanour to constructions of perp as misunderstanding/missing nonconsent due to lack of correct reaction in W06.	
14.	07		Talk is about positioning of perp and W07. Plenty of agentless passives evident here, also uses of mitigating/neutral verbs such as 'banging vs more aggr.

			'bashing'. Active/agentive formulations only used when referring to 'what W07 said'.
15.	07		Talk is about what happened when perp kept banging W07s head against ground. Passive/agentless talk used throughout by I07, to the extent that causes confusion for W07. 'banged' vs 'bashed' again.
16.	07		Line of questioning about how perp took W07's underwear off/how his penis came out. Passive/agentless formulations used throughout, but some active formulations used when referring to 'what W07 said'.
17.	07		Questions were about how long penetration lasted for/what made perp stop. I07 very careful to use passive formulations, goes to a lot of effort to be neutral and agentless in wording.
18.	08	Talk is about W08's thoughts/reactions, what she said during the rape to perp. Evidence of misunderstanding construction present – burden on W08 to make perp understand she didn't want to, despite repeated verbal nonconsent previously. I08 repeatedly asks if W08 is happy she made nonconsent clear to perp.	Some neutral formulations – 'having sex' rather than rape.
19.	08	Talk is about other similar occasions where this may have happened. I08 mentions other occasions that count as coercive rape, I08 seems to dismiss these incidents. Misunderstanding construction – reasking 'are you happy you made it clear..." – covering the same ground.	Use of 'have sex with' again, neutral or even positive connotations
20.	08	Talk is again on consent. Questions around whether W08 verbally expressed nonconsent on other occasions, or whether she just 'let him get on with it'. Spoke about visible signs of distress (crying). Misunderstanding construction evident throughout with both questions around verbal vs nonverbal consent (and one being clearly more valid/understandable by perp than the other), and visible signs of distress being missed by perp. I08 draws a clear distinction between sexual coercion and 'recognisable' rape.	
21.	09	Detailed discussion about facts of incident, with questions of positioning and whether/why W09 didn't fight perp off. Misunderstanding construction potentially evident here, with line of questioning incl:	I09 uses word 'holding' rather than W09's word 'pinned' in relation to her being pinned down by perp. much more neutral, less violent connotations.

		What's being said? -> after made clear again that W09 was rendered nonverbal, shifts to -> what were you doing with your body -> after made clear W09 was pinned down by perp, shifts to -> could you do anything with arms/hands. Implication of: did you do everything you could to show you didn't want to.	Some passive/agentless formulations, "his penis went into your vagina", when active formulations used, they are in conjunction with 'you said' reminders of W09's account.
22.	09	Talk is about the moment of the rape and nature of consent. Misunderstanding construction evident here – I09 asks three times whether W09 consented in three different ways: he puts his penis in your vagina when you didn't want to (v simple definition of rape) -> W09 says yeah, I09 responds with -> are you consenting to this sex or not (framing it as rough sex, W09 has expressed that verbally nonconsented before) -> when W09 says no, I09 shifts to -> explain to me how he would know you weren't consenting (continuing rough sex framing, misunderstanding narrative). 'Rough sex' narrative erases mens rea.	
23.	10		Talk is about critical moment during incident. Agentless/passive formulations evident here – 'what was his body doing', 'his penis entered your mouth', 'how long was his penis in your mouth for'. W10's use of word 'shoved' vs I10's use of 'moved'.
24.	10	Talk is about visible signs of distress on part of W10 – were you crying, did you have any tears, was it visible. Constructs a perpetrator who misses nonconsent unless he sees visible signs of upset. W10 buys into this slightly: "I don't think he understood or realised, that he was upsetting me."	
25.	10		Talk is about whether they were fully clothed, whether perp was aroused. Passive/agentless talk used – 'what state was his penis in', 'when his penis was in your mouth', 'did you feel anything from his penis'.

D4: Flow Chart of Study Three
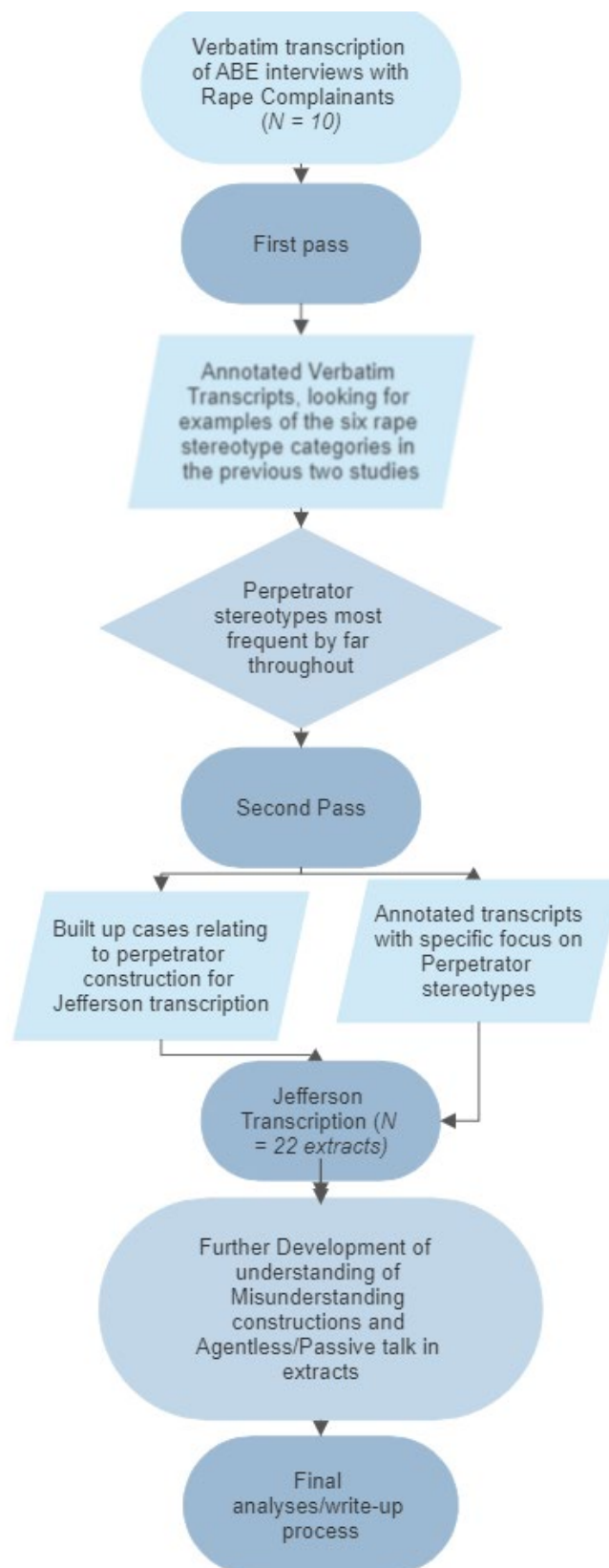
D5: Ethics Favourable Opinion Letter

Keele University FNS Psychology Faculty Research Ethics Committee
psychology.ethics@keele.ac.uk

01.08.19

Dear Samantha Andrews,

Project Title:	Evaluating the quality of forensic questioning
REC Project Reference:	PS-190059
Type of Application	Main application

Keele University's Psychology Research Ethics Committee (PSY-FREC) reviewed the above project application.
Favourable Ethical opinion

The members of the Committee gave a favourable ethical opinion of the above research on the basis described in the application form, protocol and supporting documentation, subject to the conditions specified below.
Conditions of the favourable opinion

The favourable opinion is subject to the following conditions being met prior to the start of the project.

1.	● Initial approval is granted for 4 years. Extensions for further 4 year periods canbe sought by the applicant via the standard amendment process.
2.	● Research assistants who work on the project must be made aware of the potentially upsetting material that they could process before beginning their position.
3.	● If requirements of any of the data providers require changes to any of your procedures, you must apply for an amendment to this application through the standard amendment procedures.
4.	● Given the potentially severe consequences for mishandling data (potential career and criminal implications) we recommend that when data needs to beanonymised, this is done by the applicant, and the research assistants are handed the anonymised data only. If research assistants must do this, then they must be made aware of the potential consequences and be given appropriate training ahead of working with the non-anonymised data.

Yours sincerely,

Joseph Brooks

Chair / Lead Reviewer

D6: Police data gathering proposal

Police Visual-Audio Recording Proposal

My study is part of a wider programme of doctoral research which aims to explore the extent and impact of rape myth acceptance and use in the United Kingdom. So far, I have carried a survey among the general population of England and Wales in order to measure the extent of rape myth acceptance in lay groups. Using a representative sample, I asked participants (aged 18-75) to indicate their level of agreement with five sets of rape myth statements, such as "most rapists are paedophiles, animals or evil", or "men cannot be raped" along a seven-point scale. I then carried out inferential statistical analyses, including Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), and found that those aged 45-55 years; women; those who were unemployed or long-term sick and disabled; and white British participants were significantly likelier than other groups within their demographics to accept rape myths.

These findings are to inform the upcoming phases of my research, which will explore the ways in which lay beliefs affect the use of rape myths in court and police proceedings and how this, in turn, affects lay (jury) decision making and case outcomes.

My research questions for this study are:

- To what extent do police attitudes in interviews affect interview dynamics? Do police bring acceptance of rape myths into their interviews?

- To what extent do paralinguistic elements such as tone of voice, laughter, body language, pauses, and facial expressions if possible etc. influence interviews?

  - Do interviewing officers' pair dynamics (i.e. their tone, body language around each other) affect the interview/complainant? To what extent do dynamics change between pairs and when pairings change?

- To what extent do interviewing officers treat different types of complainants differently?

In terms of overall research outcomes, police are required to evidence gather and hypothesis test during interview of witnesses and suspects, while also remaining neutral and sticking to facts. I intend to explore to what extent this is truly the case.

I aim to investigate the extent of rape myth usage in police interviews of rape complainants, exploring which myths are used most by police officers in the course of the interview, if any, and the effects this has on the complainant and the case going forward.

I intend to carry out Jefferson transcription of audio-visual recordings of complainant interviews, which will be adapted for visual data, using standardised procedure, and in addition I will be undertaking training on this form of transcription to ensure the data is as reliable as possible.

In terms of anonymisation, I will code using letters and numbers. For example, interview 1 would be referred to as I1, officer 1 as O1, and complainant 1 as C1. In addition, any demographic and broad background information used in the analyses and

written up in the results will remain separate from any specific quotes used in the write-up in order to preserve anonymity.

I will then code transcripts for discourse analysis. This will help me discern what language and tone is being used in interviews, to gain a deeper and richer understanding of what types of myths are being utilised and how this affects the dynamics of the interview. Current coding categories, which will be as standardised as possible using previous literature, include:

- Each category of rape myth, using my previous scale and previous research

- Different tones of voice (sarcastic, friendly, aggressive, reassuring, etc.)

- Body language (closed, open etc.)

- Facts of the case

There are several potential benefits to this research. Existing guidelines for best practice in interviewing rape complainants include rapport building, approaches to questioning such as cognitive interviewing techniques, and special measures for vulnerable witnesses. However, rape stereotyping and how to avoid allowing stereotypes to influence or bias interviews is not encoded in the guidelines. There is very little research on how paralinguistic communication is used in interviews, such as tone of voice, body language, or pauses. It is an overlooked area in terms of how stereotyping and rape myth acceptance might come out through these forms of communication, which could influence the interview, and in some cases the complainant's decision to take the case further. The rate of attrition for rape is very high, partially due to complainants deciding not to proceed due to the use of rape myths in questioning (Office of National Statistics, 2018; Hohl & Stanko, 2015). Therefore, if it is found that these areas of communication are affecting the interview and preventing

neutral evidence gathering and hypothesis testing, there is potential for the findings of the research to assist in taking such cases further.

This research can directly benefit participating forces through evidence-based, independent recommendations for best practice regarding further understanding of rape myths and their impact, and also why and how best to minimise myth usage, especially in relation to non-verbal aspects of communication during interview. More guidance on these aspects of interviewing will lead to more comprehensive training for participating forces. Making meaningful additions to the guidelines which encompass these factors and further assist interviewers in achieving best evidence could also have a positive impact on overall public relations, and perceptions of participating forces from the perspective of rape complainants.

In terms of resources, if possible, I require 50 audio-visual recordings of interviews with rape complainants, split as evenly as possible by gender. Although I recognise the gendered nature of this crime and its reporting, I am striving to be as inclusive as possible in my research to acknowledge the male experience of rape and surrounding myths.

I would prefer to consider the legal definition of rape: "penetration with a penis of the vagina, anus or mouth of another person without their consent", however for inclusivity purposes would also like to include the definition of assault by penetration.

I would like to include both stranger rapes and acquaintance rapes to consider comparisons, although I am aware there may be data skew due to the scarcity of the former, this would still be representative of overall cases.

In addition, I would like broad demographic details for complainants, i.e. socioeconomic background, age group, gender, etc. in order to gain a richer

understanding of power dynamics between interviewer and complainant. However, apart from gender, these do not need to have a specific quota.

A favourable ethical opinion has been given for this study through my supervisor, Dr. Samantha Andrews' umbrella application which covers my research. Regarding data collection and protection, I am willing to carry out anonymisation and any other necessary coding at force headquarters.

Additionally, all cases will be rendered anonymous by assigning them a unique number and removing any identifying information and will remain on a password-protected computer in a locked office, and on a password protected USB stick that will be on my person at all times. The data will only be used for the purposes of answering the above research questions, which will lead to a deeper understanding of power dynamics and how potential interview dynamics can influence a complainant interview, and also lead to the potential for more up-to-date training on the area and updated ABE guidelines in the future.

References

Office of National Statistics (2018). *Sexual offending: Victimisation and the path through the criminal justice system.* Retrieved from: https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/articles/sexualoffendingvictimisationandthepaththroughthecriminaljusticesystem/2018-12-13#convictions

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Appendix E: Social Representations Theory and Rape Stereotypes Concept Map