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## A Comprehensive Assessment of Rape Myths, Hookup Culture, and Social Structure among Heterosexual Individuals

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**A COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT OF RAPE MYTHS, HOOKUP CULTURE, AND  
SOCIAL STRUCTURE AMONG HETEROSEXUAL INDIVIDUALS**

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the  
Louisiana State University and  
Agricultural and Mechanical College  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

in

The Department of Sociology

by

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May 2020

This dissertation is dedicated  
in loving memory of  
William I. Ebley III and Jacqueline M. Ebley

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If it's time to go, remember what you're leaving. Remember the best. My friends have always been the best of me.

- Matt Smith, Doctor Who

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## DEFINITION OF TERMS

**Heterosexual Dyads** are defined as any dyad consisting of two individuals of different sex designations.

**Non-Heterosexual Dyads** are defined as any dyad consisting of two individuals of the same sex designation.

**Rape Myths** are defined as the false, stereotypical, or prejudicial beliefs held towards rape survivors and offenders.

**Female Rape Myths** are defined as the false, stereotypical, or prejudicial beliefs held towards rape survivors and offenders in circumstances of rape involving *female* survivors. Female rape myths can be divided into two categories: female-on-female rape myths and male-on-female rape myths.

**Male-on-Female Rape Myths** are defined as the false, stereotypical, or prejudicial beliefs held towards rape survivors and offenders in circumstances of rape involving *female* survivors and *male* offenders.

**Female-on-Female Rape Myths** are defined as the false, stereotypical, or prejudicial beliefs towards rape survivors and offenders in circumstances of rape involving *female* survivors and *female* offenders.

**Male Rape Myths** are defined as the false, stereotypical, or prejudicial beliefs held towards rape survivors and offenders in circumstances of rape involving *male* survivors. Male rape myths can be divided into two categories: female-on-male rape myths and male-on-male rape myths.

**Female-on-Male Rape Myths** are defined as the false, stereotypical, or prejudicial beliefs held towards rape survivors and offenders in circumstances of rape involving *male* survivors and *female* offenders.

**Male-on-Male Rape Myths** are defined as the false, stereotypical, or prejudicial beliefs held towards rape survivors and offenders in circumstances of rape involving *male* survivors and *male* offenders.

## **ABSTRACT**

This dissertation study is an examination of the relationship among rape culture, hookup culture, and social structure (i.e. regular and patterned forms of interaction over time which crystalize ideological constructs and channel behavior in specific ways). Since few efforts have examined female-on-female rape myth acceptance, I first explore collegiate perceptions of female-on-female rape to denote the influence of heteronormative discourse in guiding myths regarding survivor culpability, offender culpability, and situational contexts. Second, I develop, pilot, and validate a psychometric instrument to exclusively assess female-on-female rape myth acceptance. Finally, I comparatively assess the mediating influence of heteronormativity on the association between hookup culture endorsement and various forms of rape myth acceptance. This project contributes to the broader knowledge regarding rape culture by examining a historically neglected form of sexual violence, expanding validated psychometric instruments, and providing a comprehensive assessment of the interrelationships among rape culture, hookup culture, and social structures of heteronormativity.

## **CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION**

According to current approximations, 16% to 21% of women experience a completed sexual assault during their college tenure, with approximately 23% to 26% of survivors experiencing repeated sexual victimization (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2016; Daigle, Fisher, & Cullen, 2008; Fisher, Daigle, & Cullen, 2010). Only about 13% of these cases are ever reported to a university or law enforcement official (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2016). Estimating collegiate male victimization has proven difficult, though best approximations suggest 4% to 12% of men will experience a completed sexual assault during their college tenure (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2016). Evidence suggests non-disclosure of sexual violence is at least as prevalent among male survivors as it is for female survivors (Peterson, Voller, Polusny, & Murdoch, 2011).

Given such vast levels of under-reporting, historical attempts to interrogate sexual violence on college campuses have examined not only patterns of victimization (Armstrong, Hamilton, & Sweeney, 2006; Barrick et al., 2012; Daigle et al., 2008; Fisher et al., 2010; Franklin, 2016), but also the mechanisms which enable the cultural normalization of sexual assault, such as rape mythology (Aosved & Long, 2006; Bleecker & Murnen, 2005; Carmody & Washington, 2001; Reling, Barton, Becker, & Valasik, 2018a; Reling, Becker, Drakeford, & Valasik, 2018b; Vonderhaar & Carmody, 2015). The extant literature on rape myths has led to valuable insights regarding barriers to sexual assault reporting procedures on college campuses; however, much of this research centered upon heterosexual rape myths concerning a female survivor and a male offender (Chapleau et al., 2008). Though recent efforts have examined rape myths concerning male survivors, there has been little empirical work to date that examines myths concerning female survivors of non-heterosexual rape (Reiling et al., 2018b). This dissertation bridges this gap by examining collegiate perspectives of female-on-female rape among heterosexual college students

at a large university in the Southeastern United States, while also quantitatively assessing predictors of rape myths across various perceived survivor/offender sex dyads.

Examinations of rape myths (i.e., the false, stereotypical, or prejudicial beliefs concerning survivors/offenders of sexual assault) proliferated in the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and contributed to a theoretical shift from subcultural theories of violence to feminist, social psychological, and socio-cultural explanations of sexual assault (Burt, 1980; Sapp, Farrell, Johnson, & Hitchcock, 1999). Though many social structures (i.e., regular and patterned forms of interaction over time which crystalize ideological constructs and channel behavior in specific ways; see Messerschmidt, 2013) have been linked to rape myth acceptance, scholars have consistently denoted the influence of heteronormative social structures in perpetuating rape myths (Bleecker & Murnen, 2005; Burt, 1980; McMahon & Farmer, 2011; Payne, Lonsway, & Fitzgerald, 1999). As defined by Messerschmidt (2013), heteronormativity consists of the legal, cultural, organizational, and interpersonal practices which derive from and reinforce assumptions three core assumptions: 1) only two naturally opposite and complementary sexes exist; 2) gender is the natural manifestation of sex; and 3) it is natural for two opposite and complementary sexes to be sexually attracted to each other. The transformation of rape myth narratives across history has documented the nature of the pervasive rape culture in the U.S., providing the insight necessary to further develop understandings concerning patterns of under-reporting and survivor stigmatization (Buchwald et al., 2005; Martin & Hummer, 1989; Phillips, 2016; Scully & Marolla, 1995).

The internalization of rape myths by the general population normalizes attitudes towards sexual assault which negatively structure survivors' experiences post-victimization (Reling et al., 2018b). Regardless of gender, survivors are often stigmatized for perceived deviation from

heteronormative sexual scripts, thus decreasing the likelihood they will disclose their experiences (Davies, Gilston, & Rogers, 2012; Doherty & Anderson, 2004; Franiuk et al., 2008; Kassing & Prieto, 2003; Ward, 1995). In drawing upon rape myths which distinguish between “real” rape and other forms of sexual assault, law enforcement and social support services often stigmatize and invalidate survivors’ traumatic experiences (Page, 2008; Sleath & Bull, 2012). Internalization of such myths also contributes to bystanders, friends, and family members reacting to disclosure in ways which may re-traumatize survivors (Ahrens, 2006). Furthermore, survivors’ internalization of rape myths increases self-blame, deepening emotional distress and psychological trauma associated with victimization and leading to unreported (Clay-Warner & Burt, 2005) and unacknowledged rape (Wilson & Miller, 2016).

Rape myths are structured by and reproduce traditional sexual scripts, appealing to and maintaining heteronormative social structures of hegemonic masculinities and femininities (Chapleau, Oswald, & Russell, 2008; Payne, Lonsway, & Fitzgerald, 1999; Reling, 2018a). Female rape myths (i.e., false, stereotypical, or prejudicial beliefs concerning sexual assault featuring female survivors) are most commonly organized around instances of sexual assault featuring male offenders and female survivors. In drawing upon the logic of biological determinism, female rape myths depict men’s sexual appetites as intense, natural, and insurmountable, oftentimes increasing the likelihood offenders’ actions will be sympathetically interpreted as “good guys who were carried away by their instincts” (McMahon & Farmer, 2011; Payne et al., 1999). Female rape myths also simultaneously cast female survivors as inadequate sexual gatekeepers who either failed to vigorously fight back or actively invited their own victimization by means of their attire, body language, or prior sexual consent (Burt, 1980; Ward, 1995). In depicting women survivors as failing to comport to feminine norms, female rape myths

increase the likelihood of stigmatization (Burt, 1980; McMahon, 2010; Payne et al., 1999; Reling et al., 2018a).

Just as female rape myths concerning male-on-female victimization stigmatize survivors for improper comportment to feminine norms, male rape myths (i.e., false, stereotypical, or prejudicial beliefs concerning sexual assault featuring male survivors) concerning female-on-male victimization also reinforce the “innate” nature of heteronormative sexual interaction, delegitimizing female sexual aggression by framing “real” men as impervious to unwanted sexual advances due to their physical stature and congenital sexual aggression (Clements-Schreiber & Rempel, 1995; Chapleau et al., 2008; Stermac, Del Bove, & Addison, 2004; Reling et al., 2018b). Such rape myths reaffirm male dominance in heterosexual interactions, framing male pleasure as inherent and ubiquitous when engaging in sexual intercourse (Smith, Pine, & Hawley, 1988). Male rape myths concerning male-on-male victimization function in a similar manner to discredit male survivors, challenging their masculinity (Davies et al., 2002; Stermac et al., 2004), and sexual identities (Chapleau et al., 2008; Smith et al., 1988). Survivors that experience male-on-male rape are not only seen as emasculated due to their inability to successfully fend off an attacker, but also are often viewed as inherently non-heterosexual, despite their actual sexual orientation (Coxell & King, 1996; Davies & McCartney, 2003; Davies et al., 2006; Walker, Archer, & Davies, 2005).

Researchers have suggested intersecting demographic, social, ideological, and cultural influences contribute to the widespread internalization of rape mythology among college students (Bleecker & Murnen, 2005; Chapleau et al., 2008; Ching & Burke, 1999; Freymeyer, 1997; Grey et al., 1993; Giacomassi & Dull, 1986; Kalof, 1993; McMahon, 2010; Reling et al., 2018a, 2018b; Ward et al., 1999). Along these lines, recent evidence suggests a link between rape myth acceptance and endorsement of collegiate hookup culture (Reling et al., 2018a, 2018b). Often



framed as sex positive, hookup culture signals a social environment encouraging sexual contact free from the binds of relational exclusivity and emotional intimacy (Stinson, 2010; Wade, 2017). However, hookup culture disproportionately benefits privileged individuals (i.e., White, heterosexual, middle/upper class men) and reinforces established power differentials (Allison & Risman, 2014; Currier, 2013; Hamilton & Armstrong, 2009; Rupp, Taylor, Regey-Messalem, Fogarty, & England, 2013; Wilkins, 2012). Hookup culture principles the notion that physical intimacy with a sexually desirable, high-status partner is a means of elevating social status (Wade, 2017). Perceptions of hookups' harmlessness and role in status attainment reflect levels of adherence to heteronormativity and traditional gender roles (Currier, 2013; Kalish, 2013; Stinson, 2010). These factors and endorsement of particular aspects of hookup culture have demonstrable influence on rape myth acceptance (Chapleau et al., 2008; McMahon & Farmer, 2011; Reling et al., 2018a, 2018b).

### **Statement of the Problem**

Despite the wealth of insight regarding female and male rape myths, little emphasis has been placed on distinguishing between the acceptance of rape myths relevant to *heterosexual dyads* (i.e., dyads involving two individuals of different sex designations) and *non-heterosexual dyads* (i.e., dyads involving two individuals of the same sex designation). This limitation stems in part from a lack of refinement among existing validated psychometric scales. Though efforts to expand the vernacular of pre-existing assessment have been undertaken, contemporary instruments often focus upon: a) heterosexual dyads depicting a male offender raping a female survivor (e.g., Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance – Updated Scale); or b) an aggregate of heterosexual dyads and non-heterosexual dyads which respectively depict the rape of a male survivor by a female offender and

a male offender (e.g., Male Rape Myth Scale). Though useful, aggregate rape myth assessments often lack the nuance

Such limitations among existing psychometric scales has resulted in the near-ubiquitous examination of male-on-female rape myths, though there exists a growing body of literature on male rape myths as an aggregate (Chapleau et al., 2008; Reling et al., 2018a, 2018b). There have been no attempts to examine female-on-female rape myths, nor to examine female-on-male or male-on-male rape myths individually. Further, there exists no validated psychometric scale to measure female-on-female rape myths or a psychometric scale to individually assess female-on-male or male-on-male rape myths. As such, the ability to comparatively assess influences of rape myth acceptance are limited.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The primary research objective of this dissertation is the development and validation of a Female-on-Female Rape Myth Scale that allows for an empirical assessment of false, prejudicial or stereotypical perceptions of female survivors/offenders in circumstances of non-heterosexual rape. To this end, this dissertation incorporates a mixed methodology approach using focus groups and large-scale surveys. As is standard practice, qualitative data informed item construction for the proposed measures and quantitative data will serve to assess the reliability and validity of the constructed measures (Nassar-McMillan, Wyer, & Oliver-Hoyo, 2010; Padgett, 1998).

The secondary research objective of this dissertation is the expansion of research on rape myths using validated empirical assessments to examine the influence of factors previously established in the literature (Aosved & Long, 2006; Bleecker & Murnen, 2005; Chapleau et al., 2008; Foubert, Garner, & Thaxter, 2006; Freymeyer, 1997; McMahon, 2010; Reling et al., 2018b; Ward et al., 1999). In addition to substantiating prior research findings, these examinations serve

to assess whether commonly discussed associations hold significance across various forms of rape myth acceptance. Given the interconnection of rape culture and hookup culture, this dissertation will examine the influence of hookup culture endorsement on rape myth acceptance (Kimmel, 2008; Reling et al., 2018a, 2018b; Wade, 2017). Finally, this dissertation will consider the social structural underpinnings of the association of rape myth acceptance with hookup culture endorsement to examine the extent to which hookup culture might reinforce rape culture through similar appeals to heteronormativity.

### **Research Questions**

This dissertation addresses the lack of knowledge concerning female-on-female rape myths, while also seeking to assess the relationship between rape culture and hookup culture. To this end, this dissertation addresses the following inquiries:

- I. How do heterosexual individuals perceive incidents of female-on-female rape and to what extent do these perceptions discursively construct female-on-female rape as a reflection of male-on-female rape myths?
- II. To what extent is hookup culture endorsement associated with various forms of rape myth acceptance?
- III. To what extent do structural indicators of heteronormativity such as sexist attitudes mediate the associations between rape myth acceptance and hookup culture endorsement?

### **Chapter Outlines**

This dissertation addresses gaps in the literature on rape myths over the course of three empirical chapters. The first empirical chapter, “The Discursive Construction of Female-on-Female Rape,” identifies how individuals discursively construct instances of female-on-female rape myths. Extant literature on rape mythology has failed to incorporate discussions of female-

on-female rape into contemporary academic discourse, leaving relatively little indication of how the public conceptualizes this form of sexual assault (Reling et al., 2018b). Thus, this chapter addresses the first research question, “How do individuals perceive female-on-female rape, and to what extent do these perceptions discursively construct female-on-female rape as a reflection of male-on-female rape myths?” Due to the sensitive nature of this topic, focus groups were conducted to allow for multivocal expressions regarding collegiate perceptions of male-on-female and female-on-female rape. Data from the focus groups were used to assess the ways in which survivors, offenders, and situational contexts of rape were discussed to examine public perspectives of female-on-female rape and to verify the alignment of contemporary public discourse on male-on-female rape with extant literature.

The second empirical chapter, “Instrument Development and Validation,” addresses the lack of empirical measures regarding female-on-female rape myths by developing and validating an empirical scale for the assessment of female-on-female rape myths. This chapter undertakes the piloting and validation of the Female-on-Female Rape Myth Scale. The preliminary measure was informed by the qualitative data analysis conducted in the previous chapter and was subjected to standardized pre-testing protocols for assessing the exhaustiveness of the measures and the clarity of individual items. Upon finalizing the preliminary measure, the instrument was piloted among undergraduate students and refined via exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis. The refined instrument served as part of a large-scale study to assess the reliability and validity of the proposed measure prior to engaging in the subsequent analyses in the next empirical chapter.

The third empirical chapter, “Rape Myths, Hookup Culture, and Social Structure,” addresses the second and third research questions by utilizing data from the large-scale survey administered during the previous chapter. In contrast to the robust examination of female rape

myths, extant literature on male rape myths remains relatively sparse (Chapleau et al., 2008; Reling et al., 2018b). Though extant literature has demonstrated the contextual, demographic, and ideological influences on rape myth acceptance, evidence has suggested collegiate hookup culture was linked to rape culture (Kimmel, 2008; Reling et al., 2018a, 2018b; Wade, 2017). This chapter serves to substantiate prior research by addressing the second research question, “To what extent is hookup culture endorsement associated with various forms of rape myth acceptance?” Additionally, this chapter addresses the final research question, “To what extent do structural indicators of heteronormativity (e.g., sexist attitudes) mediate the associations between rape myth acceptance and hookup culture endorsement?” This chapter contributes to the literature by assessing the degree to which sexism, as an indicator of social structures supportive of heteronormativity, mediates the association between rape myth acceptance and hookup culture endorsement.

## CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### Legacy of the Clery Act

Campus crime victimization has received increasing attention from the media, policymakers, and scholars since the 1980s (Sloan & Fisher, 2010). While a substantial amount of academic and popular attention was devoted to the amount of property crime and violent crime occurring on college campuses (Barton, Jensen, & Kaufman, 2010; Fisher, Sloan, Cullen, & Chunmeng, 1998; Hart, 2003, 2007; Hart & Miethe, 2011; Sellars & Bromley, 1996), much of this research has focused on sexual victimization committed against college students. Sexual violence against college women has become a pivotal issue due to consistent approximations that 20% to 25% of women will be victims of attempted or completed sexual assault during their college tenure (Daigle, Fisher, & Cullen, 2008; Fisher, Cullen, & Turner, 2000; Griffin, Pelletier, Griffin, & Sloan, 2017; McCaskill, 2014; Sinozich & Langton, 2014). An ever-increasing stream of media coverage concerning collegiate sexual assaults (Stoeffel, 2014) in addition to efforts by campus administrators to socially construct collegiate crime and sexual violence as a new social problem (Sloan & Fisher, 2010a, b) has resulted in a variety of legislative attempts to mitigate crime on campus (Griffin, Pelletier, Griffin, & Sloan, 2017).

In efforts to address collegiate crime, Congress passed the *Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act* (20 U.S.C. §1092f) (hereafter *Clery Act*) in 1990 which requires Title IV institutions of higher education (IHE) to compile and disseminate annual reports about how sexual assaults are classified and how frequently sexual assaults are committed on campus (Griffin et al., 2017). While the *Clery Act* was initially concerned solely with the public availability of crime statistics, a series of amendments followed that shifted the focus of Title IV IHEs to policy formulation regarding violence prevention and campus safety

(Gregory & Janosik, 2003a; Griffin et al., 2017). The current form of the *Clery Act* maintains that all Title IV IHEs comply with seven disclosure requirements related to crime and security, including: 1) the compilation and dissemination of an annual security report containing three-year crime statistics, policies and procedures explicating rights afforded to victims, and an overview of campus security policies; 2) the maintenance an active public crime log documenting the “nature, date, time, and general location of each crime”; 3) the disclosure of crime statistics for incidents occurring on-campus, at certain non-campus facilities (e.g., Greek housing, remote classrooms), and in unobstructed public areas adjacent to or intersecting with campus; 4) the issuance of timely warnings regarding *Clery Act* crimes which pose a serious or on-going threat to students and employees; 5) the development of policies for emergency response, notification and testing; 6) the compilation and publishing of an annual fire safety report; 7) and the enactment of policies and procedures which process reports of missing students (Gregory & Janosik, 2003a; Griffin et al., 2017).

Despite being conceived as a method of increasing public awareness, there is little evidence to suggest the *Clery Act* achieved the positive impacts that its supporters had hoped for (Fisher, Hartman, Cullen, & Turner, 2002; Gregory & Janosik, 2003a, b; Janosik, 2001, 2004; Janosik & Gehring, 2003). First, though policymakers believed the availability of annual security report information would allow parents and students to make informed decisions regarding college selection, early studies indicated that less than 10 percent of parents and students utilized annual security report information prior to submitting college applications (Janosik, 2004). Evidence not only indicated less than 27 percent of university-affiliated individuals knew of the *Clery Acts* existence, but less than 25 percent of students acknowledged ever reading the annual security report published by their institution (Janosik, 2001; Janosik & Gearing, 2003). Second, while it

was believed the *Clery Act* would reduce collegiate crime, there has been a lack of evidence substantiating this idea. Though evidence aligns with postsecondary institutional constituent perceptions that campuses are at least as safe as the surrounding community (Fisher et al., 2002; Janosik & Gregory, 2003), extant literature has never attributed the lower crime rates of college campuses with early *Clery Act* policies (Gregory & Janosik, 2013). Instead, it was suggested that lower crime rates were a function of personal (e.g., shame and stigmatization), interpersonal (e.g., lack of training among university officials), and institutional barriers (e.g., drug and/or alcohol policies) which lead to underreporting (Fisher, Karjane, Cullen, Santana, Blevins, & Daigle, 2007).

In an effort to move beyond symbolic policies aimed at increasing perceived safety, the *Campus Sexual Assault Violence Elimination Act of 2013* (hereafter *Campus SaVE Act*), as part of the *Violence against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013* (42 U.S.C. §13,701) (hereafter *VAWA*), was enacted as a revision to the *Clery Act* aimed at addressing violence against college women through the incorporation of primary prevention practices at Title IV IHEs (Griffin et al., 2017). Among its various mandates, the *SaVE Act* requires Title IV IHEs to provide information of active bystander intervention efforts, as well as prevention programs that address sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking (Carter & Kirkland, 2013; Griffin et al., 2017; Marshall, 2014). Similar to *Clery Act* requirements, Title IV IHEs are left with the discretion to decide the specific forms of prevention and awareness programs implemented (Carter & Kirkland, 2013; Griffin et al., 2017).

Though the most commonly adopted programs sought to promote capable guardianship through renovating the design of campus structures (i.e., increased lighting, emergency telephone stations, and blue-light alarms) and increasing security presence (i.e., security escort services and campus patrols), many universities also engaged in risk reduction by providing sexual assault



education (Breitenbecher, 2001; Cozens, Saville, & Hillier, 2005; Gidycz, Rich, Orchowski, & King, 2006; Griffin et al., 2017; Levine-MacCombie & Koss, 1986; Lonsway, 1996; Lonsway & Kothari, 2006). Utilizing a lifestyle/routine activities framework, risk reduction programs provide methods of minimizing risk-associated behaviors for potential victims (Griffin et al., 2017). Yet the ostensible benefits of these programs provide no means of reducing potential offender's harmful behaviors, instead insinuating that women have the ability to prevent their own sexual victimization (McCreedy & Dennis, 1996; Griffin et al., 2017; Tomsich, Gover, & Jennings, 2011; Wilcox, Jordan, & Pritchard, 2007). As such, recent efforts have addressed the presence of a rape-supportive culture evident within universities' campus climates (Armstrong, Hamilton, & Sweeney, 2006; Burnett, Mattern, Herakova, Kahl Jr., Tobola, & Borsen, 2009), predominately through addressing the perpetuation of rape mythology (Breitenbecher, 2001; Burnett et al., 2009; Fabiano, Perkins, Berkowitz, Linkenbach, & Stark, 2003; Foubert, 2000; R. M. Hayes-Smith & Levett, 2010; Lund & Thomas, 2015).

### **Rape Myth Acceptance**

Rape myths are broadly defined as the false beliefs, stereotypes and prejudicial thoughts held towards rape survivors and offenders (Burt, 1980). Such narratives reorient explanations of sexual violence from social learning theories to feminist and social psychological theories of cultural normalization (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1999; Sapp et al., 1999). While various iterations of rape myths have existed, each variation of male and female rape myths emphasize key elements of victim blaming, offender exoneration, naturalizing/normalizing male aggression, and situational ambiguity (McMahon & Farmer, 2011). Rape myths derive power from their ability to protect individuals from uncomfortable truths regarding survivors and perpetrators of sexual assault, diverting accountability from the offender while simultaneously denying injury to the survivor and

framing the incident as the result of the survivor's actions (Burt, 1980; Carmody & Washington, 2001; Franiuk et al., 2008; Ward, 1995). In re-framing rape from a violent act into a sexual act, rape myths provide an expansive repertoire of justifications and exonerating narratives for perpetrators (Brownmiller, 1975; Burt, 1980; Franiuk et al., 2008; Scully, 1990).

Though not limited to the general public, the widespread internalization of rape myths negatively structures post-victimization survivors' experiences by perpetuating cultural norms towards sexual assault which stigmatize survivors, regardless of gender, for their perceived deviations from heteronormative gender roles, decreasing the likelihood survivors will disclose their experiences (Davies, Gilston, & Rogers, 2012; Doherty & Anderson, 2004; Franiuk et al., 2008; Kassing & Prieto, 2003; Ward, 1995). Those within the criminal justice system, as well as those who offer social support services, oftentimes assess the validity of survivors' experiences by relying upon rape myths to distinguish "real" rape from other forms of sexual assault (Page, 2008; Sleath & Bull, 2012). Additionally, rape myths contribute to the potential re-traumatization of survivors' when disclosing to friends and family members (Ahrens, 2006). Survivors themselves may also internalize rape myths, deepening the psychological trauma they had sustained and leading to unreported or unacknowledged rape (Clay-Warner & Burt, 2005; Wilson & Miller, 2016).

### ***Female Rape Myths***

Scholars have historically emphasized the importance of male-on-female rape myths (i.e., false, stereotypical or prejudicial beliefs held toward rape survivors and offenders in circumstances of rape involving female survivors and male offenders) in combating unreported and unacknowledged rape (Chapleau et al., 2008; Davies et al., 2012; McMahon & Farmer, 2011). Such narratives appeal to biologically deterministic logic, depicting men's sexual appetites as

intense, innate, and insurmountable for the purposes of lending sympathy to the offender by framing their actions as those of “good men who were carried away by their instincts” (McMahon & Farmer, 2011; Payne et al., 1999). In doing so, such rape myths re-construct instances of male-on-female rape as simple misunderstandings, casting women survivors as poor sexual gatekeepers that actively invited their own victimization due to their attire, body language, or consensual sexual history with the offender (Burt, 1980; Reling et al., 2018b; Ward, 1995). Such narratives stigmatize women survivors for their inability/failure to comport with feminine norms (Burt, 1980; Ward, 1995; Ward et al., 1995). Alternatively, such narratives victim-blame through interrogating the inability of women survivors to successfully fend off an attacker, citing their failure to vigorously fight back as a sign of complicity (Burt, 1980; Payne et al., 1999; Reling et al., 2018a).

**Contextual Factors.** Scholars have suggested the widespread internalization of rape myths among college students to be the product of intersecting contextual, demographic, ideological, and cultural influences (Reling et al., 2018a, 2018b). Regarding contextual influences, male-on-female rape myths normalize men’s use of power and aggression in heterosexual interactions, and consistently demonstrate college students’ attributions for occurrences of unwanted sexual contact to specific locations, occasions, and social relationships (Armstrong et al., 2006; Martin, 2016; Martin & Hummer, 1989; Ward, 1995; Ward et al., 1995). Dorms, off-campus apartments, fraternity houses, and nightclubs/bars were viewed as breeding grounds for circumstances that potentially escalate to sexual violence, specifically due to the lack of institutional oversight and the presence of alcohol in such locations (Kimmel, 2008; Martin & Hummer, 1989; Ward, 1995; Ward et al., 1995). Such spaces normalize the use of male sexual aggression in pursuit of sexual interactions, leading to the perception that male aggression is an inevitable (albeit unpleasant) part of the ambiance in the collegiate party scene (Armstrong et al., 2006; Becker & Tinkler 2015;

Kavanaugh, 2013; Thompson & Cracco, 2008). Though prototypical offenders were often described as “strangers,” evidence suggests the term was not used to describe the offender as an anonymous individual, but rather as a person the survivor knew of and was unfamiliar with in the context of an intimate interpersonal setting (Ward, 1991; Ward et al., 1995).

**Demographic Factors.** Gender is consistently demonstrated as one of the most significant influences of male-on-female rape myth acceptance (Chapleau et al., 2008; Ching & Burke, 1999; Giacomassi & Dull, 1986; Gilmartin-Zena, 1988; Reling et al., 2018b; Sapp et al., 1999). Though neither gender is impervious to the internalization of male-on-female rape mythology, men are particularly susceptible to internalizing such rape myths (Martin & Hummer, 1989; Sapp et al., 1999). Compared with women, men consistently exhibit higher levels of male-on-female rape myth acceptance and hold more tolerant attitudes regarding rape, consequently demonstrating less empathy toward women survivors (Chapleau et al., 2008; Ching & Burke, 1999; Gilmartin-Zena, 1988).

Students affiliated with Greek life also consistently demonstrate greater levels of rape myth acceptance (Reling, Barton, Becker, & Valasik, 2018). Relative to the general male student population, fraternity members endorse male-on-female rape myths at significantly higher rates (Bleeker & Murnen, 2005; Foubert et al., 2006; McMahon, 2010). Sorority members also tend to endorse male-on-female rape myths more frequently than women in the general student population, further demonstrating that neither gender is impervious to rape myth acceptance (Kalof, 1993; McMahon, 2010). Relative to women not in a sorority, sorority women express greater acceptance towards male-on-female rape myths and permissibility towards interpersonal violence (Kalof, 1993). Such acceptance may be the result of the higher rates of alcohol-related sexual victimization and physical coercion that sorority women experience relative to women in

the general student population, which has been attributed to the intense and frequent contact with which sororities engage with fraternities (Armstrong, Hamilton, & Sweeney, 2006; Kalof, 1993; Martin, 2016; Martin & Hummer, 1989; Sweeney 2014a, 2014b).

**Ideological Factors.** Though few studies have empirically examined the association of ideological factors with rape myth acceptance, higher religiosity has consistently been associated with higher levels of male-on-female rape myth acceptance (Freymeyer, 1997; Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994; Reling et al., 2018a, 2018b). In addition to strict adherence to traditional gender roles, highly religious individuals tend to display little empathy for those whose beliefs differ from their own (Finlay, 1985; Wylie & Forest, 1992). Evidence has suggested religiosity directly impacts victim blaming behavior, though some scholars have demonstrated a polarizing effect by gender (Freymeyer, 1997). Men who placed little importance on religion are more likely to disagree that women who dress provocatively are to blame for their own victimization, whereas men with greater religiosity were more likely to blame the woman for her victimization (Freymeyer, 1997). Conversely, women who exhibit higher levels of religiosity are less accepting of rape myths than those who exhibited lower levels of religiosity. However, contemporary evidence has suggested no such polarization, instead demonstrating that men and women with higher degrees of religiosity were more accepting of male-on-female rape myths (Reiling et al., 2018a, 2018b).

As with religiosity, adherence to intolerant belief systems also increases male-on-female rape myth acceptance. While the willingness to discriminate based upon age, sex, social class, and religious affiliation each increase male-on-female rape myth acceptance, evidence has suggested that the adherence to multiple discriminatory ideologies exponentially increases one's susceptibility to such rape myths (Aosved & Long, 2006). Both hostile sexism (i.e., denigrating

attitudes that punish women for failing to conport to traditional gender roles) and benevolent sexism (i.e., reverent attitudes rewarding women for comportment to traditional gender roles) have been associated with higher levels of male-on-female rape myth acceptance, especially with regard to victim-blaming (Abrams, Tendayi, Masser, & Bohner, 2003; Davies et al., 2012; Glick & Fiske, 1997; Viki & Abrams, 2002).

**Cultural Factors.** Though only recently examined empirically, extant literature has provided a multitude of qualitative accounts noting the similarities and linkages between male-on-female rape myth acceptance and collegiate hookup culture with regard to reproducing pre-existing hegemonic power differentials among men and women across status categories (Allison & Risman, 2014; Armstrong, Hamilton, & Sweeney, 2006; Currier, 2013; Hamilton & Armstrong, 2009; Sweeney 2014a, 2014b; Wade, 2017). Though researchers have denoted common contextual, demographic, and ideological underpinnings among rape culture and hookup culture, recent evidence suggests male-on-female rape myth acceptance exhibits a complex association with hookup culture endorsement. Reling and colleagues (2018a, 2018b) found greater endorsement for beliefs that hookups were harmless and elevated an individual's social status were associated with higher levels of male-on-female rape myth acceptance. Conversely, students endorsing the notion that hookups were sex positive and promoted sexual freedom exhibited lower levels of male-on-female rape myth acceptance. Furthermore, endorsement of beliefs that hookups will increase one's own social status was the largest predictor of male-on-female rape myth acceptance, regardless of the respondent's gender (Reling et al., 2018a, 2018b). Evidence has also suggested the endorsement of hookup culture potentially mediates the extent to which factors such as gender, spirituality, and religiosity impact male-on-female rape myth acceptance (Reling et al., 2018b).

## ***Male Rape Myths***

As previously mentioned in Chapter 1, little emphasis has been placed upon examinations of female-on-male rape myths (i.e., false, stereotypical, or prejudicial beliefs held towards rape survivors and offenders in circumstances of rape involving *male* survivors and *female* offenders) and male-on-male rape myths (i.e., false, stereotypical, or prejudicial beliefs held towards rape survivors and offenders in circumstances of rape involving *male* survivors and *male* offenders) relative to the robust examination of male-on-female rape myths (Chapleau et al., 2008; Davies et al., 2012; Kassing, Beesley, & Frey, 2005; Reling et al., 2018b). As with male-on-female rape myths, female-on-male rape myths reinforce the ‘innate’ nature of heteronormative sexual interaction through the use of thematic elements which de-legitimize female sexual aggression and construct masculinity in such a way as to frame “real” men as impervious to unwanted sexual advances (Chapleau et al., 2008; Stermac et al., 2004). Such narratives also appeal to logics of biological determinism by constructing female-on-male victimization as an impossibility due to men’s innate enthusiasm to seize any sexual opportunities (Clements-Schreiber & Rempel, 1995; Stermac et al., 2004). By rejecting potential shifts in gender inequalities, such myths reaffirm male dominance in heterosexual interactions and frame sex as uniformly pleasurable for men (Smith, Pine, & Hawley, 1988).

Conversely, male-on-male rape myths challenge survivors’ sense of masculinity (Clements-Schreiber & Rempel, 1995; Groth & Burgess, 1980; Stermac et al., 2004), as well as their sexual identities (Anderson, 2007; I. Anderson & Doherty, 2004; Chapleau et al., 2008; Mezey & King, 1989; Smith et al., 1988; Washington, 1999). As male-on-male rape is assumed to occur exclusively to gay or queer men (Anderson, 1982; Coxell & King, 1996; McMullen, 1990; Stermac et al., 2004; Struckman-Johnson, 1991), such victimizations are viewed as synonymous

with a loss of masculinity (Davies et al., 2012; Growth & Burgess, 1980; Walker et al., 2005), as “real” men are expected to be capable of fending off potential attackers (Chapleau et al., 2008; Davies & McCartney, 2003; Davies et al., 2006; Davies et al., 2012; Sleath & Bull, 2010; Struckman-Johnson & Struckman-Johnson, 1992). Additionally, survivors’ internalization of male-on-male rape myths can exacerbate the array of psychological issues experienced by men survivors, including depression (Mezey & King, 1989), posttraumatic stress disorder (Coxell & King, 1996; Myers, 1989; Walker et al., 2005), and depreciated self-esteem (Myers, 1989; Walker et al., 2005).

**Contextual Factors.** Most scholars have neglected to disaggregate female-on-male rape myths and male-on-male rape myths, instead choosing to focus upon male rape myths as an aggregated unit due to the lack of available validated psychometric assessments concerning male rape myths. In spite of this limitation, extant literature on male rape myths as an aggregate have demonstrated a large degree of consistency with the literature on male-on-female rape myths (Reling et al., 2018b). Regarding contextual influences, male rape myths reflect heteronormative appeals to biological determinism, as narratives reconstruct female-on-male victimization in terms of a consensual sexual encounter, discrediting harm caused to the survivor through associating the presence of an erection or ability to ejaculate with sexual consent (Anderson, 1999; Miller, 1983). As such, female-on-male victimization is not viewed as upsetting or traumatizing to men survivors (Anderson, 1982) and is thus viewed as rarely occurring (Anderson, 1999; Scarce, 1997). Furthermore, male-on-male victimization is often portrayed as possible only in the context of incarceration (Struckman-Johnson & Struckman-Johnson, 1992). Regardless of the locational contexts, survivors of male-on-male rape are assumed to be homosexual and deserving of less sympathy or assistance (Graham, 2006; Turchik & Edwards, 2012).



**Demographic Factors.** As with male-on-female rape myths, scholars have consistently demonstrated the influence of gender on male rape myth acceptance. Though neither gender is impervious to the internalization of male rape mythology, men remain more likely to accept male rape myths than women (Chapleau et al., 2008; Davies et al., 2012; Struckman-Johnson & Struckman-Johnson, 1992). Furthermore, evidence suggests the intersection of sexuality and gender may moderate this effect, as heterosexual men tend to express greater levels of male rape myth acceptance than heterosexual women or gay men (Davies and McCartney, 2003).

**Ideological Factors.** Similar to male-on-female rape myths, intolerant belief systems emanating from patriarchal systems of oppression, such as sexism and homophobia, increase endorsement of male rape myths (Chapleau et al., 2008; Turchik & Edwards, 2012). Benevolent sexism, rather than hostile sexism, increases male rape myth acceptance for men and women (Chapleau et al., 2008). Benevolent sexism among men increases their proclivity to engage in victim-blaming male survivors, in part due to beliefs that male victimization is the result of improper comportment to masculine gender norms (Reling et al., 2018b). Conversely, benevolent sexism functions more broadly for women by increasing the likelihood of endorsing myths which deny the possibility of male victimization and cast doubt on the legitimacy of the trauma experienced by men survivors (Chapleau et al., 2008). Evidence has suggested homophobia functions in a similar manner (Davies et al., 2012; Donnelly & Kenyon, 1996; Kassing, Beesley, & Frey, 2005). Emanating from adherence to traditional gender roles, homophobic attitudes foster suspicion men survivors, regardless of sexuality, leading to an increased willingness to engage in victim-blaming (Kassing et al., 2005; Scarce, 1997).

**Cultural Factors.** Recent evidence has suggested the association between rape myths and hookup culture extends to male rape myth acceptance as well (Reling et al., 2018b). In examining the associations among male rape myth acceptance and various facets of hookup culture endorsement, Reling and colleagues (2018b) demonstrated consistency regarding the complex associations among rape myths and hookup culture. As with their prior study on male-on-female rape myths, the endorsement of beliefs that hookups were harmless and elevated an individual's social status were associated with higher levels of male rape myth acceptance, whereas endorsing notions that hookups promoted sexual freedom were associated with lower levels of male rape myth acceptance (Reling et al., 2018b). Furthermore, the endorsement of beliefs that hookups will elevate an individual's social status was the largest predictor of male rape myth acceptance among men and women.

### **Structured Action Theory**

From a theoretical standpoint, the intransigence of rape mythology may be better understood through the lenses of Structured Action Theory. Messerschmidt (2013) posited that sex, gender, and sexuality are constructed as situated social, interactional, and embodied accomplishments. As such, gender should be interpreted not merely as a role or individual characteristic, but rather as a mechanism whereby social action reproduces social structure (Giddens, 1984; Messerschmidt, 2013; West & Fenstermaker, 1995). Understood through these contexts, men and women 'do gender' in response to situated normative ideologies surrounding masculinity and femininity (Messerschmidt, 2013; Miller, 2002). As such, performances of gender interact with social structures in such a way that these actions are recognized as an indication of and a reproduction of gendered social hierarchies (West & Zimmerman, 1987). By adopting this view of gender as a situated action, one is capable of overcoming deterministic views of static

social structure which have constructed women (and sometimes men) as passive victims of structural conditions and grounding agency in the contexts of various social structural inequalities (Miller, 2002). Furthermore, viewing gender as a situated accomplishment rejects the static and *a priori* assumptions of gender role theory, allowing for the recognition of multiple forms of masculinities and femininities shaped individually by structural positions (Connell, 1995; Messerschmidt, 2013; Miller, 2002; Schippers, 2007).

According to this perspective, society is composed of multiple distinct social structures that exist at various levels, operate in different modalities, and rely on a wide range of resources (Sewell, 1992). As such, individuals within each society maintain the capacity to draw from a wide array of schemas when participating in social action, including schemas that are incompatible or contradictory to the current situation (Miller, 2002). From this perspective, agency is defined as the capacity of the individual to transpose and apply schemas into new situational contexts (Sewell, 1992). This dynamic conceptualization of agency allows the assessment of differentials of power, access, and exclusion from resources, while developing the role of potentially competing schemas (Miller, 2002; Sewell, 1992). Through this perspective, crime is viewed as a resource for accomplishing gender – i.e. a demonstration of masculinity within a given context – by situating gendered social actions in ways that demonstrate conformity, resistance to, or subversion of culturally appropriate patterns of masculinity and femininity (Messerschmidt, 1993, 2002, 2013; Miller, 2002; Simpson & Elis 1995).

Extending these concepts of situated social actions to behavioral and ideological resources, one is capable of viewing rape myth acceptance and participation/endorsement of hookup culture as resources for accomplishing gender. Relevant to this discussion is the concept of hegemonic masculinities, which Connell (1987, 1995) conceptualized as the forms of masculinity in a given

historical and societal context that structures and legitimates hierarchical gender relations among men and women, masculinity and femininity, and among male peers. Hegemonic masculinities are characterized by their hierarchical relation to hegemonic femininities and pariah femininities at the local, regional, and global levels (Messerschmidt, 2013; Schippers, 2007). The legitimization of the superordinate-subordinate relationship with hegemonic femininity underscores the discursive persuasion of societal values through the embodiment of unequal gender relations. Taken together, the relationship among hegemonic masculinity and hegemonic femininity establishes the legal, cultural, organizational, and interpersonal practices of heteronormativity. Producing an unequal sexual binary, heteronormativity alleges natural sexual attraction of only two opposite and complementary sexes, which in turn construct masculine and feminine differences (Messerschmidt, 2013).

### ***Rape Myths and Hookup Culture***

Utilizing structured action theory, male and female rape myth acceptance may be viewed as gendered actions which are structured by and reproduce social structures of heteronormativity by endorsing unequal gender relations and traditional sexual scripts. Male-on-female rape myths embody the perceived normality of men's sexual aggression, identifying culpable victims as those who stray from the norms prescribed by emphasized femininity while simultaneously exonerating offenders by identifying their strict adherence to the norms of hegemonic masculinity (McMahon & Farmer, 2011; Reling et al., 2018b). Adherence to these beliefs indicates the endorsement of heteronormative sexual interactions and gender power inequalities, as these such myths regularly portray women as poor sexual gatekeepers and attribute blame based upon their mannerisms and attire, while constructing offenders as "good guys" who were carried away by their natural sexual proclivities (McMahon, 2010; McMahon & Farmer, 2011; Reling et al., 2018a). Furthermore,

female-on-male and male-on-male rape myth acceptance embody situated actions which simultaneously accomplish gender and sexuality through the rejection of non-heteronormative female-initiated sexual interaction (for female-on-male rape myths) and homosexuality (for male-on-male rape myths).

Hookup culture endorsement can be viewed in a similar light. Though participation in hookup culture is not as ubiquitous as popularly believed (Kimmel, 2008; Wade, 2017), cultural norms of avoiding commitment and emotional intimacy adhere to traditional perceptions of masculinity (Kalish, 2013), influence young people's identities (Sweeney, 2014), and behaviors (Armstrong, England, & Fogarty, 2012; Currier, 2013). During hookups, traditional sexual scripts are demonstrated in which women act as the sexual gatekeepers and men as the sexual initiators (Armstrong et al., 2012; Bartoli & Clark, 2006; Bernston & Hoffman, 2014; Bogle, 2008; Kalish, 2013). Furthermore, women's pleasure is seen as secondary, devaluing their experiences to elevate those of men (Armstrong et al., 2012; Kimmel, 2008; Wade, 2017).

Research has consistently noted women are less accepting of rape myths (Chapleau et al., 2008; Ching & Burke, 1999; Giacopassi & Dull, 1986; Gilmartin-Zena, 1988; Reling et al., 2018a, 2018b) and were less likely to participate in hookup culture (Bernston & Hoffman, 2014; Bogle, 2008; England, Shafer, & Fogarty, 2007; Holman & Sillars, 2012). Furthermore, research identified a complex association between rape myth acceptance and hookup culture endorsement (Reiling et al., 2018a, 2018b). In understanding rape myth acceptance and hookup culture endorsement as situated actions which embody gender and sexuality, and further viewing these actions as structured by and reproducing hegemonic masculinity and emphasized femininity, gender differences may be accounted for. Given contemporary emphasis on promoting egalitarianism through feminist movements, women's more frequent rejection of rape myths and

lower participation in hookup culture may represent structured actions which function to construct their own gender and sexuality while simultaneously seeking to transform heteronormative social structures. Such logic has been applied previously in explaining the ability of particular forms of hookup culture endorsement to decrease overall acceptance of rape myths (Reling et al., 2018a). Thus, through increased adherence to rape myths and greater participation in hookup culture, men are capable of defining themselves in contrast to femininity by embodying dispositions that reflect heteronormativity and hegemonic masculinity.

### **Chapter Summary**

This chapter described the historical legislative transitions which led to the examination rape mythology as a method of sexual assault prevention, provided an overview of how specific factors (e.g., contextual, demographic, ideological, cultural) influence adherence to various forms of rape mythology, and suggested an explanation for the persistence of rape myth acceptance. Furthermore, this chapter illustrated a gap in extant literature regarding female-on-female rape myth acceptance. This chapter provided a foundation for the study of rape mythology, from which three hypotheses were derived which emphasize female-on-female rape myths and the relationship between rape mythology and social structure.

### **CHAPTER 3. THE DISCURSIVE CONSTRUCTION OF FEMALE-ON-FEMALE RAPE**

This chapter fulfills the primary and secondary research objectives of this dissertation by examining collegiate discourse regarding female-on-female rape. This chapter provides the initial qualitative basis for the development of a validated psychometric assessment of female-on-female rape myth acceptance in the subsequent chapter. To date, no empirical assessments have been published due in part to the broader historical emphasis on male-on-female rape (Reling et al., 2018b). Though scholars have increasingly demonstrated that the lifetime prevalence of sexual assault and rape for queer, lesbian, and bisexual women is greater than that of heterosexual women due to victimization occurring by men and women, little is known regarding societal reactions to such victimization (Martin, Fisher, Warner, Krebs, & Lindquist, 2011; Rothman, Exner, & Baughman, 2011; Schulze, Koon-Magnin, & Bryan, 2019; Walters, Chen, & Breiding, 2013). This remains particularly disconcerting as evidence suggests queer survivors are less likely to report sexual assaults and rape relative to their heterosexual cisgender counterparts due to additional barriers faced by the queer community (Todahl, Linville, Bustin, Wheeler, & Gau, 2009). The current chapter expands upon prior research by addressing Research Question I, “How do individuals perceive female-on-female rape, and to what extent do such perceptions discursively construct female-on-female rape as a reflection of male-on-female rape?”

#### **Method**

To initiate the process of scale development, the current study utilized focus groups to allow participants the opportunity to express their own subjective attitudes and perceptions towards female-on-female rape, as well as to elicit interpretations of how their peers and society would view female-on-female rape. Furthermore, focus group settings provided an opportunity to triangulate responses through multivocal expression, allowing for the assessment of assenting and

dissenting views and rationales to lead to a deeper understanding of female-on-female rape myths (Barbour, 2007, 2014; Bauer & Gaskell, 1999; Caillaud & Flick, 2017; Charmaz, 2014; Halkier, 2010).

### ***Participants***

Due to the inability to obtain a comprehensive list of undergraduate and graduate enrollment for the current study, a convenience sampling strategy was used to recruit participants from sociology courses at a southern flagship university. The sample consisted of seven undergraduate students and five graduate students. At the time of the four focus groups, the undergraduate participants ranged from 18 to 22 years of age while the graduate participants ranged from 22 to 45 years of age. Overall, the sample consisted of one Latinx woman, one Latinx man, one Asian woman, four Caucasian women, and five Caucasian men. Participants represented a variety of academic disciplines. All participants self-identified as heterosexual.

Participants for the study were recruited through email solicitation during the Spring 2018 and Spring 2019 semesters to allow participants enough time to potentially acclimate to collegiate subcultures, ensuring freshman participants would obtain some degree of familiarity with sexual assault discourse as it pertains to a collegiate context. At their discretion, instructors provided extra credit to participants as compensation. All participants were notified of their ability to withdraw from the study at any time without forfeiture of said compensation. To mitigate psychological harm, participants were provided with a list of local mental health services to contact should the need have arisen. To ensure anonymity, participants were assigned a unique identification number during the focus group session, which was later assigned a pseudonym during the transcription process.



## *Procedures*

Data collection for this study was approved by the Louisiana State University Institutional Review Board (IRB #E10821) (Appendix A). To control for the effect of interviewer sex on participation and disclosure, the current study utilized two sets of focus groups: one male-moderated and one female-moderated. Each set consisted of one focus group comprised of male participants and one focus group comprised of female participants. Each focus group consisted of three-to-four participants that attended two sessions to assess: a) perceptions of non-heterosexual rape involving female and male survivors; and b) perceptions of heterosexual rape involving female and male survivors<sup>1</sup>. Each focus group session was recorded with the consent of the participants and lasted approximately 45 to 90 minutes. A semi-structured interview guide (Appendix B) was used to facilitate progressive conversation with participants regarding personal and societal perspectives held regarding survivor culpability, offender exoneration, and situational contexts perceived as contributing towards victimization.

To establish rapport, focus groups began by asking respondents a series of general questions regarding each participant's level of university engagement. Participants shared details regarding their age, academic classification, field of study, long-term goals, and university organizational participation. After background questions, participants were asked to describe their perspectives regarding the prevalence of and contextual factors surrounding sexual assault. This section of the focus group session included questions asking about perceived lifetime prevalence, period prevalence restricted to college tenure, and the locations and social occasions in which they could envision such an assault occurring on a college campus. The next section of the focus group

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<sup>1</sup> Though the present study collected data regarding both male and female victimization within the contexts of heterosexual and non-heterosexual rape, the present study limits its analytical discussion to participant views of female victimization within the contexts of non-heterosexual rape.

covered participant descriptions of prototypical survivors and offenders, including questions regarding survivor/offender characteristics, survivor/offender behavior, and the relationship between the survivor and offender. The final section of the focus group covered participant descriptions of prototypical situations leading to the rape, including questions regarding interactions among the survivor and offender, the intentions of the survivor and offender prior to the rape, and which party would be attributed fault. Each session was audiotaped, independently reviewed, and transcribed verbatim for subsequent analysis.

### *Analyses*

Analyses for focus group were conducted based upon a grounded theory approach (Charmaz, 2014). Initial analysis was conducted through three stages: open coding, focused coding, and conceptual network mapping. Using ATLAS.ti 8, a qualitative data analysis software, open line-by-line coding was performed to group participant responses into broad categories describing the general purpose of each statement. General descriptive categories which emerged included but were not limited to: “Navigation of Sex Roles”, “Relationship to the Offender”, and “Reasons for Non-Disclosure”. Next, focused coding was conducted within each category to identify more nuanced sub-codes. For example, within the topic of “Navigation of Sex Roles,” sub-codes such as “Experimentation”, “Feminine Comportment”, and “Obligational Pressure” emerged. Finally, conceptual network maps were created to determine the broader relationships among co-occurring codes and sub-codes.

Upon examining the conceptual network maps for each category, the relationships among codes and sub-codes revealed three interesting patterns surfaced that warranted a return to sentence-by-sentence open and focused coding. Capitalizing on the flexibility of qualitative data (Charmaz, 2014), data was reorganized by participant discussions regarding the social construction

of survivor and offender sexual/gender identities. Through this process, a new series of open codes emerged describing the manner in which heteronormative evaluations of non-heteronormative sexual/gender identities formed the foundation of female-on-female rape myths. The new series of open codes described the general function of each rape myth emerged, including “Victim Blaming,” “Harm Mitigation,” and “Situational Redefinition.” Further, newly derived focus codes were developed to describe the specific manner in which each of the aforementioned functions was legitimated. For example, within the topic of “Victim Blaming,” sub-codes such as “Alcohol Consumption,” “Promiscuity,” and “Prior Consent” emerged. In addition, a conceptual network map was created to determine the relationships among each form of female-to-female rape myth acceptance through the co-occurrence of codes and sub-codes.

## **Results**

Discussions of female-on-female rape were permeated by heteronormative overtones, providing a façade by which female-on-female sexual violence resided within the shadows of heterosexual hegemony. Throughout each focus group, participants emphasized that perceptions of victimization would be regulated by appraisals of gender performativity and embodiment referent to the heterosexual matrix and gender hegemony, illustrating the social rigidity of hierarchical relations among masculinities and femininities (Butler, 1990; Messerschmidt, 2014; Schippers, 2007). In highlighting the centrality of sexual/gender identities to discourse on female-on-female rape, participants illustrated that society draws upon heteronormative textual relations of power (i.e., masculine dominance/feminine submission) to evaluate survivors and offenders for any perceived deviations from the sex-gender-heterosexuality structure (Messerschmidt, 2014).

## *The Social Construction of Identity*

Schulze and colleagues (2019) contend, “gender and sexual orientation of both the victim and offender are vital at every level of understanding sexual assault (pg. 168).” Throughout the focus groups, participants described the ways in which society interprets and reacts to the perceived sexual and gender identities of survivors and offenders. As the vast majority of participants ( $n = 11$ ) shared they had never been exposed to an account of female-on-female rape, they instead discussed how they envisioned society reacting to such a victimization. Although each participant expressed personal beliefs that sexuality shares no intrinsic association with victimization, a sizable majority of participants ( $n = 9$ ) envisioned society would disregard the lived sexual identities of survivors and offenders, opting instead to view each party as non-heterosexual. For example, though Geoffrey (24, white) had never personally heard of an instance of female-on-female rape, he adamantly maintained: “From the general public’s perspective, *if that were to happen*, then they would automatically assume that the women were lesbian.” Though victimization was believed to occur within a wide variety of non-heterosexual gender identities, all participants ( $n = 12$ ) envisioned female-on-female rape as occurring most frequently within the contexts of butch/femme gender identities<sup>2</sup>. Although butch/femme gender identities are fluid and reflect varying degrees of masculine bodily practice, heterosexual textual relations of power were drawn upon to privilege the *female masculinity* of butch offenders as superordinate to the *pariah femininity* of femme survivors (Maltry & Tucker, 2002; Maltz, 1998; Messerschmidt, 2014; Schippers, 2007)<sup>3</sup>. In other words, participants believed the offender, as a result of their masculine-

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<sup>2</sup> Participants often invoked various terminology interchangeably with butch/femme identities when discussing survivor/offender sexual/gender identity, including: “butch lesbian,” “femme lesbian,” “feminine non-heterosexual,” “masculine non-heterosexual,” “feminine homosexual,” and “masculine homosexual”.

<sup>3</sup> Schippers (2007) argues the reductionistic logic of subordinate masculinities and femininities fails to account for the manner in which such embodiments reassert the idealized relationships of masculinities and femininities. Instead, Schippers (2007) proposes the notion of pariah femininities (i.e., characteristics or practices that, when embodied by women in the setting, are simultaneously stigmatized and feminized) in relation to hegemonic

embodiment, would be viewed as above reproach while the survivor, as a result of their feminine-embodiment, would be subject to scrutiny. For instance, when prompted to discuss societal attributions of fault for a hypothetical female-on-female rape, Katie (18, white) contended:

I think it also depends on the characteristics of each person...because you have, like, the “Butch-Femme” instance, where you have a relationship between two girls where one dresses more masculine and the other dresses more feminine...I mean it varies across all spectrums, but I feel like in those situations, they start asking the questions to the more feminine woman about, like, the way she was dressing and how much she had to drink...because when women start dressing or showing more masculine characteristics, they put them into the more “manly” category.

In making this comment, Katie illustrates how gender hegemony and the heterosexual matrix structure societal understandings of female-on-female victimization. Butler (1999) describes the heterosexual matrix as the manner by which gender is dichotomized to map out corresponding characteristics, embodiments, and desires with regard to masculinity and femininity. Rather than critically engage with the gender troubles posed by butch identification (i.e., the citation of masculine identification against a culturally intelligible female body), society reduces female-on-female rape to an artificial reproduction of the heterosexual paradigm (Butler, 1999; Crawley, 2002; Crawley & Willman, 2018; Maltry & Tucker, 2002; Schippers, 2007). In situating the pariah femininity of femme identities as subordinate to the female masculinity of butch identities, society reaffirms gender hegemonic relations by relying upon heterosexist stereotypes to police the gender of survivors (Crawley & Willman, 2018; Hoskins, 2019; Laporte, 1992; Schippers, 2007; Walker, Golub, Bimbii, & Parsons, 2012). As such, participant discussions of female-on-female rape were consistent with male-on-female rape myths across three broad themes: victim-blaming, harm mitigation, and redefinition of sexual violence.

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masculinities and femininities. Schippers (2007) asserts, “There are neither pariah masculinities nor subordinate masculinities,” instead maintaining female masculinity is the female embodiment of hegemonic masculinity.

## *Victim-Blaming*

Many of the discussions regarding survivor culpability drew upon heteronormative discourse regarding feminine passivity, sexual submission, and physical vulnerability. Although every participant spoke about victim-blaming to some degree, half ( $n = 6$ ) believed society would cite survivor alcohol consumption as precipitating sexual victimization. When prompted to discuss the typical ways in which society would attempt to delegitimize survivor's experiences, Patrick (45, white) articulated:

To me, the alcohol aspect always gets played. If alcohol is present, it becomes, "Oh, well that is why it occurred," or "Maybe that's why she changed her mind. She wanted to do it at first, but then maybe she sobered up, realized she'd regret it, and then that's when changed her mind."

Through his explanation, Patrick argues that society views alcohol consumption prior to victimization as a sufficient condition to disregard survivor experiences. Though society views alcohol consumption alone as reason enough to engage in victim blaming, Patrick contends that such an aspect of victimization often is used as compounding evidence that the survivor engaged in poor sexual gatekeeping. Each participant who explicitly discussed the role of alcohol in victim-blaming shared similar sentiments; however, the participants themselves were not immune from internalizing such rape myths. For instance, when asked to describe the typical interactions between a survivor and offender that would initiate a female-on-female rape, Julie (22, Asian) explained:

I'd say the survivor in my scenario would most likely be drunk...I don't know...when I think of girls being drunk, I just think of slutty behavior. So, like, maybe she just kind of, like, kissed a friend or made some comment that gave off the wrong idea...

In addition to denoting the role of alcohol consumption in victim-blaming, Julie's explanation demonstrates the constraining influence of gender hegemony on feminine expressions

of sexuality. In compliance with heteronormativity, traditional sexual scripts dictate that women are to serve as the sexual gatekeeper *regardless of their lived sexual identities* (Attwood, 2007; Armstrong et al., 2012; Bernston & Hoffman, 2014; Bogle, 2008; Currier, 2013; Wade, 2017). As such, women perceived as feminine are expected to carefully navigate a fine line between possessing “enough” sexual experience to be desirable, but not so much to be perceived as “easy”, “loose”, or “slutty” (Attwood, 2007; Currier, 2013; Wade, 2017). Embodied by a feminine subject, traits characteristically interpreted as masculine (e.g., sexual assertiveness, sexual desire) threaten gender hegemonic relations by subverting notions of feminine passivity (Hoskin, 2019; Kavanaugh, 2013; Schippers, 2007; Yarovskiy & Sayer, 2013). Deemed as culturally unacceptable behavior for feminine embodied woman regardless of lived sexual identity, transgressions of feminine passivity are typically met with societal stigmatization which labels the individual as a “slut” or “whore” (Currier, 2013; Hoskin, 2019; Wade, 2019).

Many participants ( $n = 8$ ) acknowledged the practice of slut-shaming was an integral component of feminine gender policing used to establish survivor culpability in male-on-female rape and female-on-female rape. For a majority of participants ( $n = 7$ ), survivors were not only expected to be stigmatized based upon their number or prior sexual partners, but also for any prior sexual contact with the offender. Participants frequently envisioned female-on-female rape as occurring within the contexts of sexual experimentation wherein the survivor was attempting to explore her sexuality. Nearly every participant ( $n = 11$ ) expressed that the survivor would have had some degree of familiarity with the offender prior to the rape due to either: a) the social stigma which LGBTQ+ individuals experience; or b) gendered expectations that women seek emotional intimacy from sexual encounters. When prompted to discuss the implications of such a relationship on establishing survivor culpability, Patrick stated:

See...when Geoffrey said they (most likely) knew each other, my mind went to, “Well, she must have consented to having sex before. That means she consents to every other episode afterwards.”

Through this comment, Patrick denotes heteronormative views concerning sexual consent are often used to delegitimize survivor’s accounts of victimization. As with male-on-female rape myths, there remains an underlying assumption that if a woman engages in any consensual physical activity with an individual, she is unable to withdraw consent due to perceived sexual obligations (Armstrong et al., 2006; Jozkowski & Peterson, 2013; Muchlenhard, 1988; Muchlenhard, Friedman, & Thomas, 1985). Further, participants described the ability to revoke consensual relations lied in the hands of the masculine-embodied individual, as previous consensual encounters were viewed as implying future consent (Jozkowski, 2011; Jozkowski & Peterson, 2013).

### ***Harm Mitigation***

In contrast with discussions about survivor culpability, those emphasizing offender culpability as a means of harm mitigation frequently drew upon heteronormative discourse regarding masculine aggression, sexual assertion, and physical dominance. Many participants ( $n = 9$ ) felt an offender’s gender and sexual identity would serve as the foundation for determining their intentions prior to the assault. These participants frequently expressed the offender would be subject to sympathetic interpretation, whereby their actions would be viewed as helping the survivor come to terms with their own sexuality. In discussing the role of the offender as a sexual initiator, Bill (38, white) drew upon his own exposure to first-hand accounts of female-on-female rape to articulate:

There’s the assumption of sexuality as an invitation...for instance, the victim told the offender that she was bisexual, lesbian, questioning, etc. And so then, the offender took that as an invitation because of the view that, “If



you're questioning, you might be timid" or "You might just need a little push...I want to give you this opportunity to experiment."

Through his statement, Bill illustrates how heteronormative notions of sexual passivity and sexual assertion are used to define feminine-embodied survivor in opposition to masculine-embodied offenders. In addition to serving as the sexual initiator, masculine-embodied offenders are afforded the role of determining the duration and intensity of sexual interactions (Gomez, 1998; Levitt, Gerrish, & Hiestand, 2003; Levitt & Hiestand, 2004; Singh, Vaduarri, Zambarano, & Dabbs, 1999). As such, offenders may rely upon perceived token resistance as sufficient justification to dismiss any sexual refusal and engage in non-consensual sexual activity (Armstrong et al., 2006; Jozkowski & Peterson, 2013; Muehlenhard & Hollabaugh, 1988; Muehlenhard & Rodgers, 1998). In utilizing such a scenario as the basis of their interpretations, these participants often expressed two additional harm mitigation sentiments which mirror male-on-female rape myths: 1) the offender misunderstood how for the survivor would like to pursue sexual experimentation; and, 2) the offender was overly excited and became carried away. Though male-on-female rape myths invoke such sentiments by appealing to biological determinism and the offender's moral foundation, participants ( $n = 5$ ) who personally expressed such sentiments regarding female-on-female rape often cited gender hegemonic notions of feminine passivity and nurturement as a mechanism to discursively establish the offender's intentions. In discussing the role of the offender's gender and sexual identities, Clara (18, white) and Sasha (18, Latinx) explained:

Clara: Like I said, I know that there are obviously plenty of women who do horrible things every day. But it is very difficult for me to sit here and imagine women plotting to physically hurt anyone. Like, the way we raise men versus the way we raise women, it's just not ingrained in us (women) to be aggressive or prove our dominance in any way. So, it's hard for me to imagine the offender does what they do, coming from a place of planning to hurt at all...I think it's just things going too far because they themselves

want this person (the survivor), and don't know what to do about that affection.

Sasha: I feel like it's what you said earlier. Like...they're just trying to experiment, and they (the offender) don't realize they're actually going too far. And in that moment, they both may seem like they agree on what they want with it, even though they really may not.

Clara: Exactly! I just can't imagine the aggression of it. I think it's like, "Oh, she likes me! I really wanted her to like me!" And then some things, you know, continued on more than they were supposed to.

The interaction between Clara and Sasha highlights the complexities which gender hegemonic essentialism and female masculinity pose for determining offender culpability. Though each previously envisioned societal interpretations of butch-femme relations as an artificial reproduction of gender hegemonic relations, Clara and Sasha argue the embodiment of masculinity does not inherently preclude the embodiment of femininity. According to Nyugen (2008), "butch as a means of rendering the body intelligible as sexed and gendered involves the mobilization of masculinity in a dynamic tension with femininity and the female body (pg. 671)." As such, offenders may be afforded leniency for their transgressions due to feminine-embodiment and the cultural intelligibility of female bodies, allowing the invocation of heteronormative discourse regarding feminine passivity and nurturement to provide justification for the intentions of the offender (Levitt & Hiestand, 2004; Rifkin, 2002).

### ***Situational Redefinition***

Related to conceptualizations of survivor and offender culpability, discussions emphasizing situational redefinition as a means of mitigating the severity of female-on-female rape frequently drew upon heteronormative sexual scripts. As noted by many feminist scholars, heteronormative sexual scripts perpetuate societal definitions of sex which reflect essentialist notions of compulsory heterosexuality (Foucault, 1990; Irvine, 2002; Fields, 2008; Pham, 2016).

Throughout the focus groups, many participants ( $n = 8$ ) envisioned that society views female-on-female rape as an impossibility due to perceived deviations from heterosexist conceptualizations of sex, instead labeling the circumstances leading to victimization as “non-sexual.” For instance, while discussing societal reactions to survivors, Katie explained:

They (society) don’t really view girl-on-girl as sex. Like, since we live in a very heteronormative society, we think sex is just guy-on-girl penetration...we would think, “Oh, they were just fooling around, and one person regretted it. Just get over it.”

Through her explanation, Katie implies the embeddedness of the traditional model of sex (i.e., penile-vaginal penetration) is not only used to delegitimize female-on-female sexual relationships, but also to establish the impossibility of female-on-female rape. According to feminist scholars, despite evidence regarding the expansion of sexual definitions over the past few decades, heteronormativity structures and sustains the “common-sense” definitions of sex as penile-vaginal penetration that privileges male heterosexuality (Bogle, 2007; Carpenter, 2005; Jackson, 2006; Laumann, Ellingson, Mahay, Paik, & Youm, 2004). In describing the manner in which the traditional model of sex informed female-on-female rape myths, Geoffrey explained:

I think that a lot of people believe that women can’t be raped by another woman...because they “can’t physically dominate someone” or “You can’t rape someone without male genitalia.”

Through his articulation, Geoffrey argues heteronormative sexual scripts inform the broader rape scripts embedded in society. As with male-on-female rape myths, heteronormative sexual scripts are perceived as inextricably linked to biological sex and inform societal distinctions between “real” rape and other forms of sexual assault (Dellinger-Page, 2008; Reling et al., 2018a, 2018b; Sleath & Bull, 2012). To this end, survivors and offenders are evaluated against prototypical social constructs of “genuine survivors” (i.e., heterosexual, cisgender females) and “genuine offenders” (i.e., heterosexual, cisgender males) within the contexts of traditional sexual

interactions (Chapleau et al., 2008; Dellinger-Page, 2008; Sleath & Bull, 2012; Payne et al., 1999). As female-on-female rape transgresses heteronormative sexual scripts, as well as rape scripts, any sexual violence is deemed as non-sexual. Whereas male-on-female rape myths redefine sexual violence as a consensual sexual interaction gone awry, female-on-female rape myths redefine sexual violence as experimentation gone awry, denoting experimentation does not equate to sexual interaction.

## **Discussion**

The current chapter examined heterosexual collegiate perceptions of female-on-female rape. The findings contribute to the broader understanding of rape culture by highlighting the social structural influences which guide and reinforce heterosexual collegiate perceptions of a historically neglected form of sexual violence (Reling et al., 2018b; Schulze et al., 2019). Though evidence suggests queer, lesbian, and bisexual women experience greater rates of sexual victimization relative to their heterosexual counterparts due to victimization by men and women, few efforts have examined societal reactions to female-on-female victimization (Martin et al., 2011; Rothman et al., 2011; Schulze et al., 2019; Walters et al., 2013). Data collected from four focus groups suggest heteronormative discourse structures heterosexual collegiate perceptions of female-on-female rape by establishing three broad categories of rape myths: 1) Victim-Blaming; 2) Harm Mitigation; and 3) Situational Redefinition. Collectively, these findings suggest female-on-female rape broadly reflects similar thematic elements present within male-on-female rape myths. Such findings substantiate recent qualitative efforts suggesting prevailing notions of hegemonic masculinities and femininities reflect the oppositional sexism inherent across male-on-female and female-on-female rape myths (Schulze et al., 2019).

Determining heterosexual collegiate perceptions regarding female-on-female rape holds several notable benefits for future research. First, the examination of female-on-female rape myth acceptance bolsters the ability of future research to advance theoretical understandings of rape culture in relation to social structure. Though prior evidence has suggested an association between rape culture and heteronormativity, such efforts have often failed to account for how heteronormative social structure influences perceptions of female-on-female rape (Kimmel, 2008; Reling et al., 2018a, 2018b, Schulze et al., 2019; Wade, 2017). Efforts to address this issue remain important as heteronormative social structures have been noted to construct additional barriers for non-heterosexual survivors to access social support services (Ristock, 2005; Schulze et al., 2019; Todahl et al., 2009). The findings of Chapter 3 engage with this issue by illustrating similar heteronormative discourse prevalent in male-on-female rape myths is used to evaluate the legitimacy of female-on-female rape.

Drawing upon heteronormative textual relations of power (i.e., masculine dominance/feminine submission), survivors and offenders were evaluated for any perceived deviations from the sex-gender-heterosexuality structure (Burt, 1980; Chapleau et al., 2008; Messerschmidt, 2014; Schippers, 2007; Schulze et al., 2019). As with male-on-female rape myths, survivors were viewed as poor sexual gatekeepers who failed to properly embody the norms of hegemonic femininity, precipitating their own victimization due to their body language, sexual history, or consent prior to the assault (Becker & Tinkler, 2015; Burt, 1980; McMahon & Farmer, 2011; Reling et al., 2018a, 2018b; Schulze, 2019). Likewise, offenders were sympathetically interpreted as unintentionally causing harm as a result of being carried away with excitement or misunderstanding the extent to which the survivor wanted to experiment (McMahon & Farmer, 2011; Schulze et al., 2019). Furthermore, in relying upon the traditional model of sex, instances of

female-on-female rape were redefined as non-sexual as a result of lacking penile-vaginal penetration (Bogle, 2007; Jackson, 2006; Laumann, Ellingson, Mahay, Paik, & Youm, 2004).

Second, these findings provide the qualitative foundation for the development of the first multidimensional, validated psychometric instrument to exclusively assess female-on-female rape myth acceptance. Though recent efforts have sought to develop an identity inclusive validated psychometric instrument, such efforts treated male-on-male and female-on-female rape myths as an aggregate without interrogating the fit of each as an individual multidimensional construct (Schulze et al., 2019). Such efforts miss the potential nuance of each form of rape myth acceptance by reducing items relevant to a single individual non-heterosexual dyad. The findings of Chapter 3 present the first step to overcoming such issues by suggesting female-on-female rape myth acceptance is comprised of three distinct, yet interrelated dimensions to be utilized in future instrument development: 1) Victim-Blaming; 2) Harm Mitigation; and 3) Situational Redefinition. Each of these implications will be further addressed in the subsequent dissertation chapters.

## **CHAPTER 4. INSTRUMENT CONSTRUCTION AND VALIDATION**

This chapter fulfills the primary research objective of this dissertation by addressing the lack of empirical measures for female-on-female rape myth acceptance. At present, no psychometrically validated measures of female-on-female rape myths exist, limiting the ability of this dissertation to provide a comprehensive assessment of the associations among rape myth acceptance, hookup culture endorsement, and social structure. This chapter discusses the development, piloting, and validation of a psychometric assessment among heterosexual college students which will aid in comprehensively addressing secondary research questions highlighted in the subsequent chapter. Expanding upon Burt's (1980) conceptualization of female rape myths, female-on-female rape myths are defined as false, prejudicial, or stereotypical beliefs held towards survivors and offenders in circumstances of rape/sexual assault involving female survivors and female offenders. The preliminary instrument, entitled the Female-on-Female Rape Myth Scale (FFRMS), was informed by the results of the previous empirical chapter and subjected to standard scale development protocols to assess item quality and clarity (Czaja & Blair, 1995; DeVellis, 2003).

The first part of this chapter (Study 1) assesses factor structure of the preliminary instrument through exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses to reduce the initial battery of items and produce interpretable factors. The second part of this chapter (Study 2) utilizes an independent sample to assess factor structure of the refined instrument in order to establish generalizability and criterion validity of the FFRMS.

## **Study 1. Reliability and Factor Structures**

### ***Aim/Goal***

Due to the lack of empirical measures for female-on-female rape myth acceptance, Study 1 began the process of psychometric evaluation for the FFRMS. To this end, the present study examines the factor structure of the preliminary FFRMS instrument to reduce the number of items and produce an interpretable factor structure. The overall reliability of the preliminary instrument was assessed to ensure that the measure contained an adequate degree of internal consistency among items. Additional analyses (such as confirmatory factor analysis) were conducted to assess the goodness-of-fit between the observed factor structure and the proposed theoretical model to determine which would serve as the final factor structure for the FFRMS.

### ***Development of the FFRMS***

The preliminary FFRMS instrument was constructed as a vignette and accompanying scale to allow implementation in conjunction with existing empirical measures of rape myth acceptance (e.g., *IRMA-U*, McMahon & Farmer, 2011; *MRMS*, Melanson, 1999). Results from Chapter 3 were used to develop a modified version of the vignette developed by Piatak (2015) to depict a scenario of sexual assault arising from the casual sexual interactions of two women following a college party. The narrative was adjusted to elicit recurrent thematic elements previously described by focus group participant discussions on female-on-female rape (e.g., sexual experimentation, pressure to escalate sexual interactions, presence of alcohol). The original 18 item measure for the FFRMS captured three broad themes present during such discussions: 1) beliefs that the survivor was asking for it (Victim Blaming); 2) beliefs that the offender didn't mean to commit rape/sexual assault (Harm Mitigation); and, 3) beliefs that the events described do not constitute rape/sexual assault (Situational Redefinition). Consistent with prior scale development research (Aubrey &



Smith, 2011; Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1999; McMahon & Farmer, 2011), the initial measure proposed a multidimensional factor structure to allow for the possibility that respondents might endorse certain forms of female-on-female rape myths more than others.

Prior to piloting the preliminary FFRMS instrument, a purposive sample of eighteen heterosexual respondents ( $n = 18$ ) was drawn from a single SOCL 2001 course within the LSU Department of Sociology during the Spring 2019 semester to conduct pre-testing assessments ascertaining item clarity. The sample was composed of 11 (61.1%) women and 7 (38.9%) men, with an average age of 18.78 years ( $S.D. = 0.73$ ). The majority of respondents were white (77.8%), with the remainder identified as Black (11.1%) and Latino/a (11.1%). Respondents were presented with the preliminary FFRMS instrument to assess the clarity of the vignette and accompanying items. Respondents indicated the initial measure was clear and concise, but did suggest minor linguistic changes to a few items which would allow for more subtle measurement for female-on-female rape myths. For example, respondents suggested changing the initial phrase “wearing *slutty* clothes” to “wearing *revealing* clothes”. Upon adjusting the preliminary FFRMS instrument to reflect the linguistic changes suggested during pre-testing, the present study transitioned into the pilot phase.

### ***Method***

**Respondents.** Respondents in Study 1 consisted of 298 heterosexual undergraduate students actively enrolled in four-year universities and colleges across the United States<sup>4</sup>. An online survey was developed and administered to respondents through Qualtrics (Qualtrics, Provo, UT), an online survey platform utilized by many universities. The sample was composed of 217 (72.82%) women and 81 (27.18%) men, with an average age of 26.2 years ( $SD = 12.06$ ). Forty-

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<sup>4</sup> This sample consisted of 145 respondents from a southern Flagship university (48.66%) and 153 respondents from other four-year universities and colleges across the United States (51.34%).

five (15.10%) respondents reported Greek affiliation and 93 (31.21%) had previously participated in rape education programming. The majority (61.38%) of respondents identified as White with the remainder identifying as Black (20.30%), Latino/a (9.10%), Asian (4.78%), and other racial groups not listed (4.43%). Nearly half (47.99%) respondents were single at the time of the study. Of those who were not single, 113 (37.92%) were in a committed relationship, 26 (8.72%) were married, and 16 (5.37%) were widowed, separated, or divorced. Regarding academic classification, 101 (33.89%) were freshman, 82 (27.52%) were sophomores, 60 (20.13%) were juniors, and 55 (18.46%) were seniors.

**Procedure and Measures.** Respondents were recruited during the Spring 2019 semester to allow time for acclimation to university culture. All respondents participated voluntarily. For the purpose of mitigating psychological harm, respondents were administered a list of national mental health services to contact should the need have arisen. The survey consisted of seven sections which included: 1) the initial FFRMS; 2) the IRMA-U (McMahon & Farmer, 2011); 3) the MRMS (Melanson, 1999); 4) the ASI (Glick & Fiske, 1996); 5) the EHCI (Aubrey & Smith, 2011); 6) the SASRV (Zullig et al., 2006); and, 7) demographic information.

*Initial Female-on-Female Rape Myth Scale (FFRMS).* The initial FFRMS (see Table 4.1; Appendix C) assessed respondents' adherence to female-on-female rape myths across 18 original items of three proposed subscales: 1) Victim-Blaming (e.g., "Emily should not have been surprised Nicole assumed she wanted to go further since she agreed to experiment"); 2) Harm Mitigation (e.g., "Nicole probably just misunderstood how far Emily wanted to go"); and 3) Situational Redefinition (e.g., "It shouldn't be considered sexual assault because Emily and Nicole were experimenting"). All responses were on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 5 (*Strongly Agree*).

Table 4.1. Initial Items of the Female-on-Female Rape Myth Scale

Item	Description	Proposed Factor
NH1.	Since Emily was drinking, she was at least somewhat responsible for letting things get out of hand.	VB
NH2.	Nicole didn't do anything wrong. Emily just changed her mind in the middle of everything.	HM
NH3.	Nicole didn't mean to make Emily uncomfortable, but she just got a little carried away.	HM
NH4.	Emily should have been clearer in the way she said "no".	VB
NH5.	Nicole probably just misunderstood how far Emily wanted to go.	HM
NH6.	Emily was asking for trouble going to Nicole's apartment alone.	VB
NH7.	Nicole didn't do anything wrong. She was only trying to help Emily explore her sexuality.	HM
NH8.	Nicole was probably just excited to have someone interested in her and unintentionally took it a little too far.	HM
NH9.	It can't be considered sexual assault if it was a misunderstanding.	SD
NH10.	Emily should not have been surprised Nicole assumed she wanted to go further since she agreed to experiment.	VB
NH11.	Nicole wasn't trying to be overly aggressive.	HM
NH12.	It wasn't really sexual assault because Emily and Nicole didn't have sex.	SD
NH13.	Since Emily was wearing revealing clothes to the party, she was asking for trouble.	VB
NH14.	Since both Emily and Nicole were drunk, it can't be sexual assault.	SD
NH15.	It shouldn't be considered sexual assault because Emily and Nicole were experimenting.	SD
NH16.	Emily probably didn't want to admit to people that she was a lesbian.	VB
NH17.	It shouldn't be considered sexual assault since Nicole was drunk and probably didn't realize what she was doing.	SD
NH18.	In general, a woman can't rape another woman.	SD

VB = Victim-Blaming; HM = Harm Mitigation; SD = Situational Re-definition

*Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (IRMA-U*; McMahon & Farmer, 2011). The IRMA-U (Appendix D) assesses respondent's adherence to male-on-female rape myths, across the original 22 items of four IRMA-U subscales: 1) She Asked for It (e.g., "If a girl goes to a room alone with a guy at a party, it is her own fault if she is raped"); 2) He Didn't Mean To (e.g., "Rape happens when a guy's sex drive gets out of control"); 3) It Wasn't Really Rape (e.g., "A rape probably didn't happen if the girl has no bruises or marks"); and, 4) She Lied (e.g., "Rape accusations are often used as a way of getting back at guys"). All responses are on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 5 (*Strongly Agree*). Each subscale is additive so that higher scores indicate stronger beliefs for each subscale. Alphas from the original study demonstrated strong internal reliability for the overall measure ( $\alpha = .89$ ), as well as acceptable reliability for each subscale ( $\alpha$  ranges from .64 to .80).

*Male Rape Myth Scale (MRMS*; Melanson, 1999). The MRMS (Appendix E) assesses respondents' adherence to male rape myths as a unidimensional factor across 22 original items (e.g., "A man who allows himself to be raped by another man is probably a homosexual"). All responses are on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 5 (*Strongly Agree*) and were additive so higher scores indicated greater levels of male rape myth acceptance. The original study indicated strong internal reliability ( $\alpha = .90$ ).

*Ambivalent Sexism Inventory (ASI*; Glick & Fiske, 1996). The ASI (Appendix F) assesses respondents' levels of adherence across two dimensions of sexism: Hostile Sexism and Benevolent Sexism. The Hostile Sexism scale is a unidimensional assessment of sexist antipathy consisting of 11 items (e.g., "Women are too easily offended"). The Benevolent Sexism scale is an 11 item multidimensional assessment of subjectively positive sexist orientations adopted towards women across three separate subscales: Protective Paternalism (e.g., "Women should be cherished and

protected by men”), Complementary Gender Differentiation (e.g., “Many women have a quality of purity that few men possess”), and Heterosexual Intimacy (e.g., “Every man ought to have a woman whom he adores”). All responses are on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 5 (*Strongly Agree*), and each scale/subscale is additive so that higher scores indicate stronger beliefs for each scale/subscale. Alphas from the original study demonstrated strong internal reliability for the overall measure ( $\alpha = .92$ ), as well as for each scale: Hostile Sexism ( $\alpha = .92$ ) and Benevolent Sexism ( $\alpha = .85$ ).

*Endorsement of Hookup Culture Index (EHCI; Aubrey & Smith, 2011).* The EHCI (Appendix G) assesses respondents’ endorsement of collegiate hookups across five separate subscales: Harmless (e.g., “Hooking up is not a big deal”), Fun (e.g., “I hook up to have a good time”), Status (e.g., “Hooking up is a way for me to make a name for myself”), Control (e.g., “I feel powerful during a hookup”), and Sexual Freedom (e.g., “Hooking up allows me to be sexually adventurous”). Each subscale was composed of four such questions, and respondents rated each of the 20 items on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 5 (*Strongly Agree*). Responses to items on each subscale were additive so that higher scores were indicative of stronger beliefs on that particular subscale. Alphas from the original study demonstrated strong internal reliability for the overall measure ( $\alpha = .91$ ), as well as moderate-to-strong internal reliability for each subscale: Harmless ( $\alpha = .84$ ), Fun ( $\alpha = .88$ ), Status ( $\alpha = .90$ ), Control ( $\alpha = .79$ ), and Sexual Freedom ( $\alpha = .86$ ).

*Self-Ascribed Spirituality and Religiosity Variables (SASRV; Zullig et al., 2006).* The SASRV (Appendix H) is a 6-item measure assessing respondents’ perceptions regarding their personal experiences with religion through two subscales: Spirituality (i.e. “I am very spiritual”; 3 items) and Religiosity (i.e. “How often did you typically attend religious services in the past

year?"; 3 items). Consistent with prior research, spirituality was conceptualized as "one's search for the sacred that occurs internally and is pursued through seeking a relationship with whatever one holds sacred", while religiosity was conceptualized as "the rituals and organization traditions that one practices in a group setting and that guides one's behavior" (Hyman & Handal, 2006). Responses across items were summed so higher score were indicative of stronger beliefs on each particular subscale. Alphas from the original study demonstrated strong internal consistency for each subscale: Spirituality ( $\alpha = .88$ ) and Religiosity ( $\alpha = .91$ ).

*Control variables.* Selection of control variables was informed by previous research and included gender (Ching & Burke, 1999; Gilmartin-Zena, 1988; Reling et al., 2018a b) and Greek organization affiliation (Bleecker & Murnen, 2005; Foubert et al., 2006; Kalof, 1993; McMahon, 2010; Reling et al., 2018a , 2018b). Relationship status was controlled to assess the influence of intimate interpersonal commitment on rape myth acceptance and hookup culture endorsement. Previous exposure to rape education and training are controlled for to assess the effects of such education/training on rape myth acceptance and hookup culture endorsement because research has demonstrated exposure to these types of programs was negatively associated with rape myth acceptance (Anderson & Whiston, 2005; Hertzog & Yeilding, 2009; McMahon, 2010).

**Data Analysis.** Data collection for this study was approved by the Louisiana State University Institutional Review Board (IRB #E11650) (Appendix I). As with prior research, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy<sup>5</sup> and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity<sup>6</sup> were conducted to determine the appropriateness of exploring factor structures for the initial FFRMS

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<sup>5</sup> The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy indicates the proportion of variance among items which may be explained by underlying factors. KMO statistics close to 1.0 generally indicate factor analyses should be undertaken, while KMO statistics less than .5 deem factor analysis to be inappropriate.

<sup>6</sup> Bartlett's Test of Sphericity tests the null hypothesis that the correlation matrix is an identity matrix, indicating items are unrelated and ill-suited for factor analysis. Rejection of this hypothesis denote factor analysis would be appropriate.

instrument (Bartlett, 1954; Kaiser, 1970, 1974; Kaiser & Rice, 1974). Results of the preliminary assessments indicated support for the use of a factor analytic model ( $KMO = .95$ ;  $\chi^2 (279) = 3224.02, p < .001$ ).

First, an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted on the initial battery of 18 items to produce an interpretable factor structure. Consistent with prior research (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988; Hair et al., 1995, 2010; Le et al., 2014; Shan et al., 2014), items were retained that exhibited salient factor loadings (i.e., primary loadings greater than .50 with no secondary loadings greater than .40). As categorical indicators inherently violate assumptions of univariate and multivariate normality held by traditional approaches to EFA, principal axis factoring utilizing promax rotation<sup>7,8</sup> was conducted to assess the asymptotic, polychoric correlation matrix.

Second, a series of asymptotic distribution free confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) were conducted utilizing diagonally weighted least squares estimation<sup>9</sup> to assess the dimensionality of the initial FFRMS instrument. Though EFA serves as an initial point of assessing the factor structure of an instrument, CFA was necessary to test whether alternative models were more appropriate. To this end, goodness-of-fit was comparatively assessed for unidimensional and multidimensional solutions to determine the final factor structure of the FFRMS instrument.

## ***Results***

The initial EFA produced a satisfactory single-factor solution which exceeded the eigenvalue criterion, suggesting the items reflect a single dimension of female-on-female rape myth acceptance. Results of the rotated pattern matrix (see Table 4.2) were assessed for the

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<sup>7</sup> Tabachnick and Fidell (2007) advocate for the use of non-orthogonal rotations in preliminary assessments to determine if factor structures are non-orthogonal, nearly orthogonal, or orthogonal.

<sup>8</sup> As noted by Brown (2015), oblique rotations are generally preferred in applied research to provide a more realistic representation of how factors are interrelated.

<sup>9</sup> As noted by Kline (2005), asymptotic distribution free estimation methods (e.g., diagonally weighted least squares) are necessary to estimate models containing categorical indicators, due to the nature of such indicators to violate assumptions of univariate and multivariate normality.

purpose of item reduction based upon non-salient factor loadings. However, item reduction was deemed unnecessary because the single-factor solution produced salient factor loadings among all items (i.e., primary loadings greater than .50 with no secondary loadings greater than .40). The single-factor solution was robust with a high eigenvalue of 10.8 and accounted for 82.7% of the variance within the model. Furthermore, the single-factor solution demonstrated strong internal reliability ( $\alpha = .93$ ). Though interpretation of the factor structure differed from the original three-factor conceptualization, this indicates that each conceptual factor reflected more generalized sentiments regarding female-on-female rape.



Table 4.2. Rotated Factor Loadings for the Female-on-Female Rape Myth Scale

Item	Description	Factor Loading
NH1.	Since Emily was drinking, she was at least somewhat responsible for letting things get out of hand.	.68
NH2.	Nicole didn't do anything wrong. Emily just changed her mind in the middle of everything.	.80
NH3.	Nicole didn't mean to make Emily uncomfortable, but she just got a little carried away.	.61
NH4.	Emily should have been clearer in the way she said "no".	.73
NH5.	Nicole probably just misunderstood how far Emily wanted to go.	.77
NH6.	Emily was asking for trouble going to Nicole's apartment alone.	.68
NH7.	Nicole didn't do anything wrong. She was only trying to help Emily explore her sexuality.	.86
NH8.	Nicole was probably just excited to have someone interested in her and unintentionally took it a little too far.	.72
NH9.	It can't be considered sexual assault if it was a misunderstanding.	.79
NH10.	Emily should not have been surprised Nicole assumed she wanted to go further since she agreed to experiment.	.79
NH11.	Nicole wasn't trying to be overly aggressive.	.61
NH12.	It wasn't really sexual assault because Emily and Nicole didn't have sex.	.87
NH13.	Since Emily was wearing revealing clothes to the party, she was asking for trouble.	.82
NH14.	Since both Emily and Nicole were drunk, it can't be sexual assault.	.87
NH15.	It shouldn't be considered sexual assault because Emily and Nicole were experimenting.	.91
NH16.	Emily probably didn't want to admit to people that she was a lesbian.	.69
NH17.	It shouldn't be considered sexual assault since Nicole was drunk and probably didn't realize what she was doing.	.83
NH18.	In general, a woman can't rape another woman.	.82

Though EFA provides an appropriate venue for evaluating the dimensionality of a set of multiple indicators, such analyses inherently seek to uncover the smallest number of interpretable factors necessary to explain inter-item correlations (Brown, 2006). As such analyses place no *a priori* restrictions upon patterned relationships among observed and latent variables, confirmatory factor analysis is required to comparatively assess factor models (Brown, 2006; Kline, 2005). In determining the final factor structure of the FFRMS, a series of confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) utilizing diagonally weighted least squares estimation were conducted to compare goodness-of-fit among the observed single-factor solution and the conceptualized three-factor solution. The fit of the single-factor model (see Figure 4.1) was deemed adequate:  $\chi^2 (135, 298) = 313.32, p < .001$ <sup>10</sup> ([CFI]<sup>11</sup> = .993, [TLI]<sup>12</sup> = .993, [RMSEA]<sup>12</sup> = .07, [SRMR]<sup>13</sup> = .07). In other words, the goodness-of-fit statistics suggest the single-factor model represents an acceptable approximation of the data.

Comparatively, the three-factor model (see Figure 4.2) demonstrated a close fit:  $\chi^2 (132, 298) = 187.45, p < .001$ , ([CFI] = .998, [TLI] = .998, [RMSEA] = .04, [SRMR] = .05). Each item exhibited significant loadings with the designated factors. Furthermore, the fit indices were stronger than desired according to the traditional thresholds (Kline, 2005; Hu & Bentler, 1999), suggesting the three-factor model represents a good approximation of the data. Consistent with prior research (see Aubrey & Smith, 2011; McMahon & Farmer, 2011), direct comparison of each

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<sup>10</sup> Within structural equation modeling, a significant  $\chi^2_M$  statistic indicates a failure to reject the null model. However, Kline (2005) notes the  $\chi^2_M$  statistic is an inappropriate measure of fit for sample greater than 200 observations, as larger sample sizes lead to improper rejection of the model even though differences in observed and predicted covariances are minimal.

<sup>11</sup> The Comparative Fit Index (CFI) and Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) represent incremental fit indices assessing relative improvement compared to the baseline model. Many scholars (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Kline, 2005; Marsh et al., 1996) assert incremental index values greater than .90 indicate reasonably good fit.

<sup>12</sup> The Root Mean Squared Error of Approximation (RMSEA) is reflective of lack of fit with the model and the population covariance matrix. Various scholars (Browne & Cudeck, 1993; Kline, 2005) suggest RMSEA > .10 indicates poor fit, RMSEA < .08 indicates reasonable error of approximation, and RMSEA < .05 indicates close approximate fit.

<sup>13</sup> The Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) assesses the mean absolute correlation residual. Kline (2005) suggests SRMR values less than .10 are generally considered favorable.

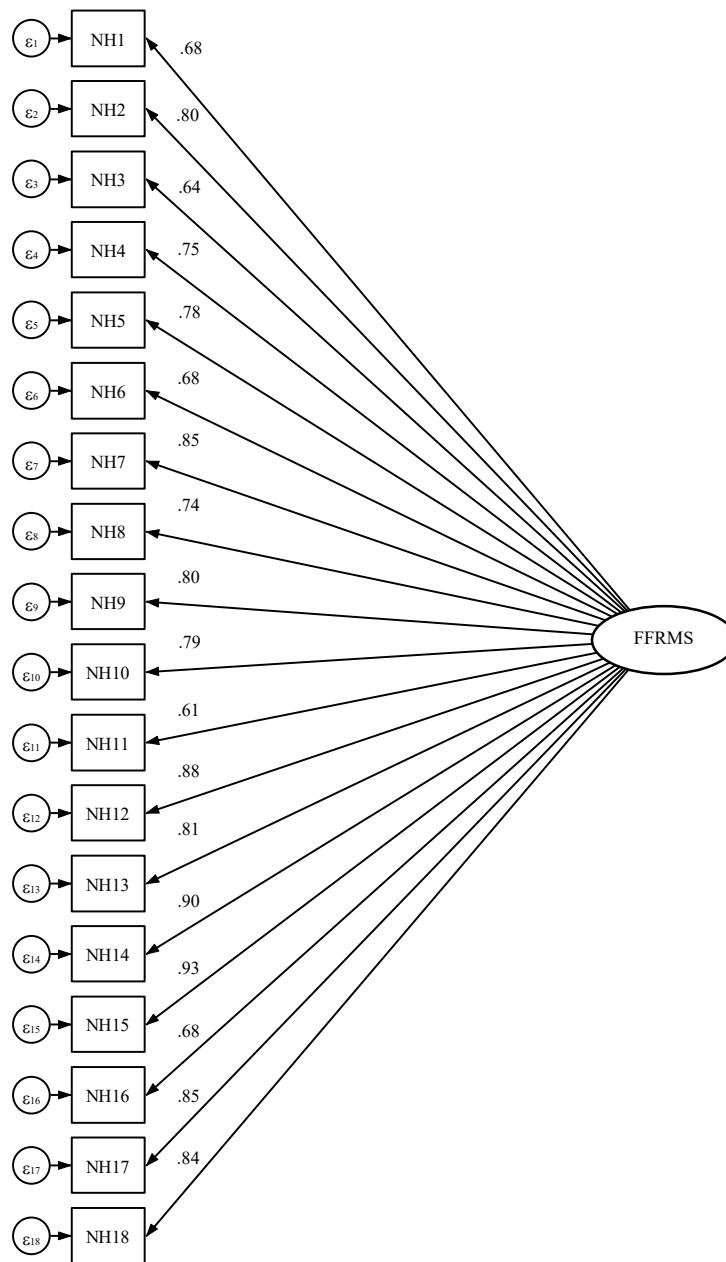


Figure 4.1. Unidimensional Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the Initial FFRMS

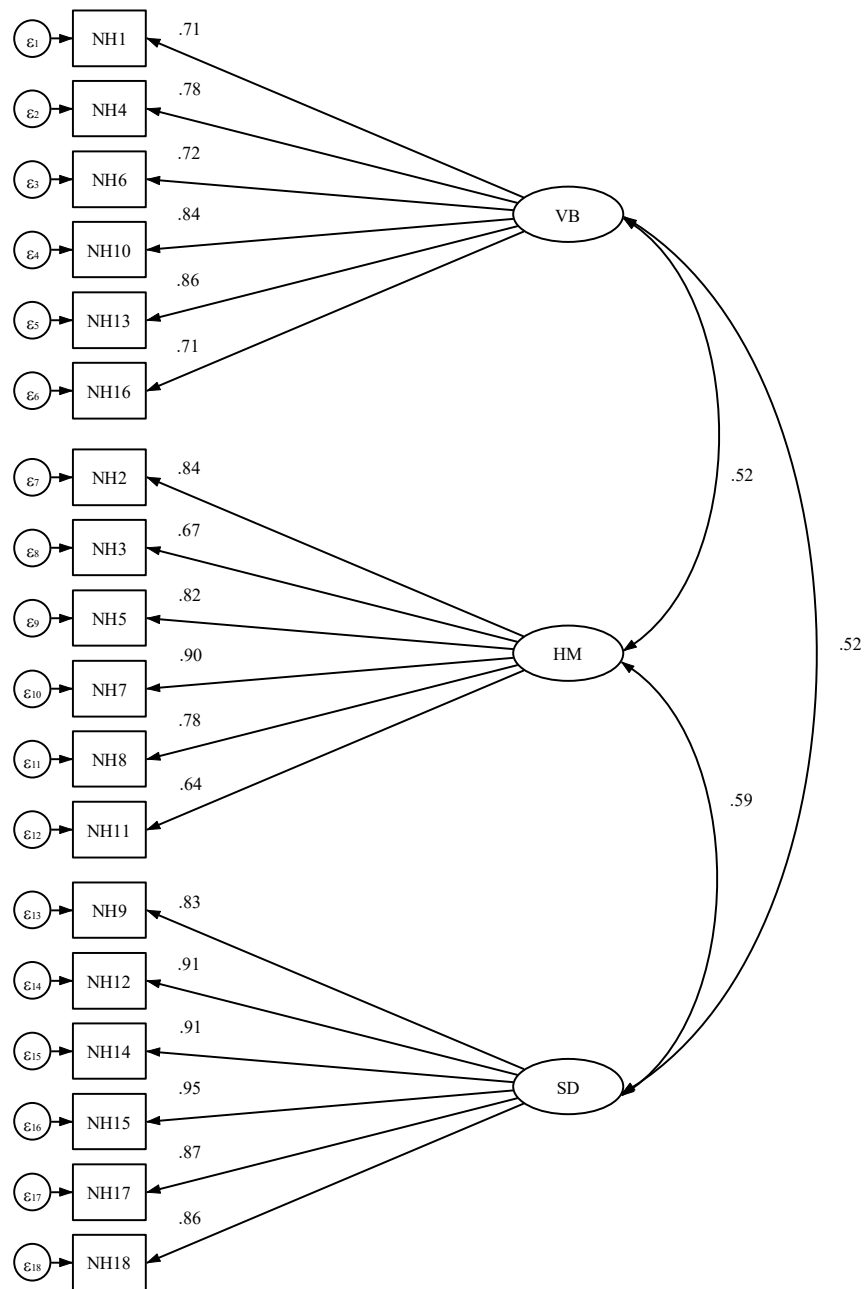


Figure 4.2. Multidimensional Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the Initial

model using the Satorra-Bentler Scaled Chi-Squared Difference Test indicated support for the use of the three-factor model over the single-factor model,  $\Delta S-B\chi^2 (3) = 74.05, p < .001$ . In other words, the three-factor solution more closely approximated the data than the single-factor solution. Even though the three-factor model demonstrated significantly better fit, however, the high intercorrelation among factors suggests that the FFRMS may either be combined to represent a composite measure of female-on-female rape myth acceptance or treated as subscales representing different facets of female-on-female rape myth acceptance.

### ***Summary of Study 1***

The results of Study 1 provide preliminary evidence for the factor structure of the FFRMS. Though EFA results suggested the retained 18 items measure the general concept of female-on-female rape myth acceptance, the CFA results suggested a more nuanced interpretation by which the retained 18 items measure three related concepts of victim-blaming, harm mitigation, and situational redefinition. Further, CFA results suggested the FFRMS may also be used as a composite measure of female-on-female rape myth acceptance. The overall measure demonstrated a satisfactory level of internal consistency. The observed model differed from the conceptual model only in that the FFRMS demonstrated the ability to be utilized as either a multidimensional or unidimensional construct. This finding suggests that the FFRMS is not insensitive to the initial conceptualizations, but rather that elements of victim-blaming, harm mitigation, and situational redefinition also potentially coalesce to reflect broader perceptions of female-on-female rape. Such findings are congruent with the results of recent efforts reassessing the psychometric properties of the Updated Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (*IRMA-U*; McMahon & Farmer, 2011) which demonstrated the instrument may serve as either a unidimensional measure of male-on-female rape

myth acceptance or as a multidimensional measure of four distinct elements comprising male-on-female rape myth acceptance (Chahal, Follingstad, Li, & Renzetti, 2017).

## **Study 2. Replication and Validation of the FFRMS**

### ***Aim/Goal***

Study 2 sought to replicate the three-factor structure of the FFRMS demonstrated in the previous study utilizing an independent sample to further assess the reliability of the factor structure. In addition, the present study assessed construct validity of the FFRMS by examining correlations between the FFRMS and extant empirical measures of theoretically related concepts (e.g., male-on-female rape myth acceptance, aggregated male rape myth acceptance, hookup culture endorsement, ambivalent sexism).

### ***Method***

**Respondents.** Utilizing an independent sample to verify construct validity, respondents in Study 2 consisted of 559 heterosexual undergraduate students who maintained active enrollment in four-year universities and colleges across the United States. The sample was composed of 248 (44.36%) women and 311 (55.64%) men, with a mean age of 31.6 years ( $SD = 12.66$ ). Only 37 (6.62%) respondents reported Greek affiliation. Closely mirroring the sample from Study 1, the majority (60.64%) of respondents identified as White, with the remainder identifying as Black (18.96%), Latino/a (10.55%), Asian (5.01%), and other racial groups not listed (4.83%). Furthermore, approximately half (48.48%) of respondents were single at the time of the study. Of those who were not single, 139 (24.87%) were in a committed relationship, 119 (21.29%) were married, and 30 (5.37%) were widowed, separated, or divorced. Regarding academic classification, 87 (15.56%) were freshman, 167 (29.87%) were sophomores, 154 (27.55%) were

juniors, and 151 (27.01%) were seniors. Overall, 123 (22.00%) of respondents had previously attended a rape education program.

**Procedure and Measures.** Following standard protocols for psychometric validation, each measure utilized in Study 1 of this chapter was included in the present study. Respondents were recruited during the Summer 2019 semester to allow time for acclimation to university culture. All respondents had the option to decline participation in the study. For the purpose of mitigating psychological harm, respondents were provided a list of national mental health services to contact should the need have arisen. The online survey was developed and administered to respondents through Qualtrics (Qualtrics, Provo, UT), an online survey platform utilized by many universities. The survey consisted of seven sections which included: 1) the initial FFRMS; 2) the IRMA-U (McMahon & Farmer, 2011); 3) the MRMS (Melanson, 1999); 4) the ASI (Glick & Fiske, 1996); 5) the EHCI (Aubrey & Smith, 2011); 6) the SASRV (Zullig et al., 2006); and, 7) demographic information.

*Female-on-Female Rape Myth Scale (FFRMS).* The FFRMS assessed respondents' adherence to female-on-female rape myths the 18 original items of three FFRMS subscales: 1) Victim-Blaming (e.g., "Emily probably didn't want to admit to people that she was a lesbian"); 2) Harm Mitigation (e.g., "Nicole was probably just excited to have someone interested in her and unintentionally took it a little too far"); 3) Situational Redefinition (e.g., "It wasn't really sexual assault because Emily and Nicole didn't have sex"). All responses were on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 5 (*Strongly Agree*). Responses were additive so that higher scores were indicative of greater levels of female-on-female rape myth acceptance. As with the previous study, the current study also demonstrated strong internal reliability for the overall measure ( $\alpha = .94$ ), as well as each subscale (VB,  $\alpha = .84$ ; HM,  $\alpha = .88$ ; SD,  $\alpha = .91$ ).

*Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (IRMA-U; McMahon & Farmer, 2011).* The IRMA-U assesses respondent's adherence to male-on-female rape myths, across the original 22 items of four IRMA-U subscales: 1) She Asked for It (e.g., "If a girl goes to a room alone with a guy at a party, it is her own fault if she is raped"); 2) He Didn't Mean To (e.g., "Rape happens when a guy's sex drive gets out of control"); 3) It Wasn't Really Rape (e.g., "A rape probably didn't happen if the girl has no bruises or marks"); and, 4) She Lied (e.g., "Rape accusations are often used as a way of getting back at guys"). All responses are on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 5 (*Strongly Agree*). Each subscale is additive so that higher scores indicate stronger beliefs for each particular subscale. Alphas from the original study demonstrated strong internal reliability for the overall measure ( $\alpha = .89$ ), as well as acceptable reliability for each subscale ( $\alpha$  ranges from .64 to .80). The current study also demonstrated strong internal reliability for the overall measure ( $\alpha = .94$ ), as well as each subscale ( $\alpha$  range from .79 to .90).

*Male Rape Myth Scale (MRMS; Melanson, 1999).* The MRMS assesses respondents' adherence to male rape myths as a unidimensional factor across 22 original items (e.g., "A man who allows himself to be raped by another man is probably a homosexual"). All responses are on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 5 (*Strongly Agree*) and were additive so higher scores indicated greater levels of male rape myth acceptance. The original study indicated strong internal reliability ( $\alpha = .90$ ). Analogously, the current study also demonstrated strong internal reliability ( $\alpha = .94$ ).

*Ambivalent Sexism Inventory (ASI; Glick & Fiske, 1996).* The ASI assesses respondents' levels of adherence across two dimensions of sexism: Hostile Sexism and Benevolent Sexism. The Hostile Sexism scale is a unidimensional assessment of sexist antipathy consisting of 11 items (e.g., "Women are too easily offended"). The Benevolent Sexism scale is an 11 item



multidimensional assessment of subjectively positive sexist orientations adopted towards women across three separate subscales: Protective Paternalism (e.g., “Women should be cherished and protected by men”), Complementary Gender Differentiation (e.g., “Many women have a quality of purity that few men possess”), and Heterosexual Intimacy (e.g., “Every man ought to have a woman whom he adores”). All responses are on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 5 (*Strongly Agree*), and each scale/subscale is additive so that higher scores indicate stronger beliefs for each particular scale/subscale. Alphas from the original study demonstrated strong internal reliability for the overall measure ( $\alpha = .92$ ), as well as for each scale: Hostile Sexism ( $\alpha = .92$ ) and Benevolent Sexism ( $\alpha = .85$ ). The current study demonstrated adequate reliability for the overall measure ( $\alpha = .86$ ), as well as for each subscale: Hostile Sexism ( $\alpha = .86$ ) and Benevolent Sexism ( $\alpha = .77$ ).

*Endorsement of Hookup Culture Index (EHCI; Aubrey & Smith, 2011).* The EHCI assesses respondents’ endorsement of collegiate hookups across five separate subscales: Harmless (e.g., “Hooking up is not a big deal”), Fun (e.g., “I hook up to have a good time”), Status (e.g., “Hooking up is a way for me to make a name for myself”), Control (e.g., “I feel powerful during a hookup”), and Sexual Freedom (e.g., “Hooking up allows me to be sexually adventurous”). Each subscale was composed of four such questions, and respondents rated each of the 20 items on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 5 (*Strongly Agree*). Responses to items on each subscale were additive so that higher scores were indicative of stronger beliefs on that particular subscale. Alphas from the original study demonstrated strong internal reliability for the overall measure ( $\alpha = .91$ ), as well as moderate-to-strong internal reliability for each subscale: Harmless ( $\alpha = .84$ ), Fun ( $\alpha = .88$ ), Status ( $\alpha = .90$ ), Control ( $\alpha = .79$ ), and Sexual Freedom ( $\alpha = .86$ ). Similarly, the current study demonstrated strong internal reliability for the overall measure ( $\alpha = .95$ ), as well

as for each subscale: Harmless ( $\alpha = .88$ ), Fun ( $\alpha = .87$ ), Status ( $\alpha = .91$ ), Control ( $\alpha = .86$ ), and Sexual Freedom ( $\alpha = .90$ ).

*Self-Ascribed Spirituality and Religiosity Variables (SASRV; Zullig et al., 2006).* The SASRV is a 6-item measure assessing respondents' perceptions regarding their personal experiences with religion through two subscales: Spirituality (i.e. "I am very spiritual"; 3 items) and Religiosity (i.e. "How often did you typically attend religious services in the past year?"; 3 items). Consistent with prior research, spirituality was conceptualized as "one's search for the sacred that occurs internally and is pursued through seeking a relationship with whatever one holds sacred", while religiosity was conceptualized as "the rituals and organization traditions that one practices in a group setting and that guides one's behavior" (Hyman & Handal, 2006). Responses across items were summed so higher score were indicative of stronger beliefs on each particular subscale. Alphas from the original study demonstrated strong internal consistency for each subscale: Spirituality ( $\alpha = .88$ ) and Religiosity ( $\alpha = .91$ ). The current study demonstrated similar levels of internal consistency.

*Control variables.* Selection of control variables was informed by previous research and included gender (Ching & Burke, 1999; Gilmartin-Zena, 1988; Reling et al., 2018a, 2018b) and Greek organization affiliation (Bleecker & Murnen, 2005; Foubert et al., 2006; Kalof, 1993; McMahon, 2010). Relationship status was controlled to assess the influence of intimate interpersonal commitment on rape myth acceptance and hookup culture endorsement. Previous exposure to rape education and training will be controlled for to assess the effects of such education/training on rape myth acceptance and hookup culture endorsement as previous research has demonstrated previous exposure decreased levels of rape myth acceptance (Anderson & Whiston, 2005; Hertzog & Yeilding, 2009; McMahon, 2010).

**Data Analysis.** To determine the replicability of the three-factor model from Study 1 utilizing an independent sample, asymptotic distribution free (ADF) confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) using diagonally weighted least squares (DWLS) estimation were conducted to assess goodness-of-fit<sup>14</sup>. Upon verifying factor structure, bivariate correlations were assessed to establish construct validity of the FFRMS in comparison to: 1) the *IRMA-U* and its subscales; 2) the *MRMS*; 3) the *ASI* and its subscales; and, 4) the *EHCI* and its subscales.

## **Results**

**Descriptive Statistics.** Table 4.3 presents descriptive statistics of the FFRMS and its subscales in addition to the variables used to demonstrate construct validity of the FFRMS. On average, respondents indicated similar levels of disagreement with female-on-female rape myths ( $M = 2.19, S.D. = .91$ ), male-on-female rape myths ( $M = 2.24, S.D. = .84$ ), and aggregated male rape myths ( $M = 2.25, S.D. = .81$ ). Specifically, respondents reported general disagreement with female-on-female rape myths invoking elements of victim-blaming ( $M = 2.43, S.D. = 1.04$ ), harm mitigation ( $M = 2.36, S.D. = 1.05$ ), and situational redefinition ( $M = 1.78, S.D. = .98$ ). Average levels of disagreement for specific female-on-female rape myths were identical to the corresponding male-on-female rape myths from the *IRMA-U*, indicating preliminary support for construct validity of the FFRMS. Furthermore, respondents reported a level of agreement just below the mid-point for a composite ambivalent sexism ( $M = 2.96, S.D. = .63$ ), benevolent sexism ( $M = 2.99, S.D. = .69$ ), and hostile sexism ( $M = 2.93, S.D. = .83$ ). Similarly, respondents reported a level of agreement around the mid-point for composite endorsement of hookup culture ( $M = 2.93, S.D. = .89$ ), as well as for specific endorsements of harmlessness ( $M = 3.15, S.D. = 1.05$ ),

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<sup>14</sup> Again, as noted by Kline (2005), asymptotic distribution free estimation methods (e.g., diagonally weighted least squares) are necessary to estimate models containing categorical indicators, due to the nature of such indicators to violate assumptions of univariate and multivariate normality

fun ( $M = 3.09$ ,  $S.D. = 1.07$ ), sexual control ( $M = 2.95$ ,  $S.D. = 1.02$ ), and sexual freedom ( $M = 3.18$ ,  $S.D. = 1.10$ ). The subscale demonstrating the lowest level of agreement was status ( $M = 2.03$ ,  $S.D. = 1.13$ ).

**Factor Structure.** The present study posited that the FFRMS factor structure demonstrated in Study 1 would be replicated using an independent sample. Figure 4.3 displays the results of the three-factor model for the present study. As predicted, all diagnostics fell within appropriate parameters as defined by Kline (2005) to demonstrate close fit for the three-factor model:  $\chi^2 (132, 559) = 410.39$ ,  $p < .001$  ([CFI] = .995, [TLI] = .995, [RMSEA] = .06, [SRMR] = .05). Consistent with results of Study 1, the three-factor model exhibited high intercorrelations among factors, suggesting that the FFRMS may either be combined to represent a composite measure of female-on-female rape myth acceptance or treated as separate subscales reflecting different facets of female-on-female rape myth acceptance. Furthermore, the standardized path loadings did not substantively differ from the model presented in Study 1 (see Figure 4.2). As such, the results indicate support of the successful replication of the three-factor model from Study 1.

Table 4.3. Descriptive Statistics of the FFRMS and Variables Included for Validation

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Min.	Max.
FFRMS	2.19	.91	1.00	5.00
FFRMS: VB	2.43	1.04	1.00	5.00
FFRMS: HM	2.36	1.05	1.00	5.00
FFRMS: SD	1.78	.98	1.00	5.00
IRMA-U	2.24	.84	1.00	5.00
IRMA-U: She Asked for It	2.21	1.03	1.00	5.00
IRMA-U: He Didn't Mean To	2.34	.89	1.00	5.00
IRMA-U: It Wasn't Really Rape	1.77	.90	1.00	5.00
IRMA-U: She Lied	2.64	1.08	1.00	5.00
MRMS	2.25	.81	1.00	4.55
ASI	2.96	.63	1.23	4.45
ASI: Benevolent Sexism	2.99	.69	1.00	4.91
ASI: Hostile Sexism	2.93	.83	1.00	4.91
EHCI	2.93	.89	1.00	5.00
EHCI: Harmless	3.15	1.05	1.00	5.00
EHCI: Fun	3.09	1.07	1.00	5.00
EHCI: Status	2.03	1.13	1.00	5.00
EHCI: Control	2.95	1.02	1.00	5.00
EHCI: Sexual Freedom	3.18	1.10	1.00	5.00

*Note:* FFRMS = Female-on-female rape myth Scale; ASI = Ambivalent Sexism Inventory;  
IRMA-U = Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance – Updated Scale; MRMS = Male Rape Myth Scale;  
EHCI = Endorsement of Hookup Culture Index

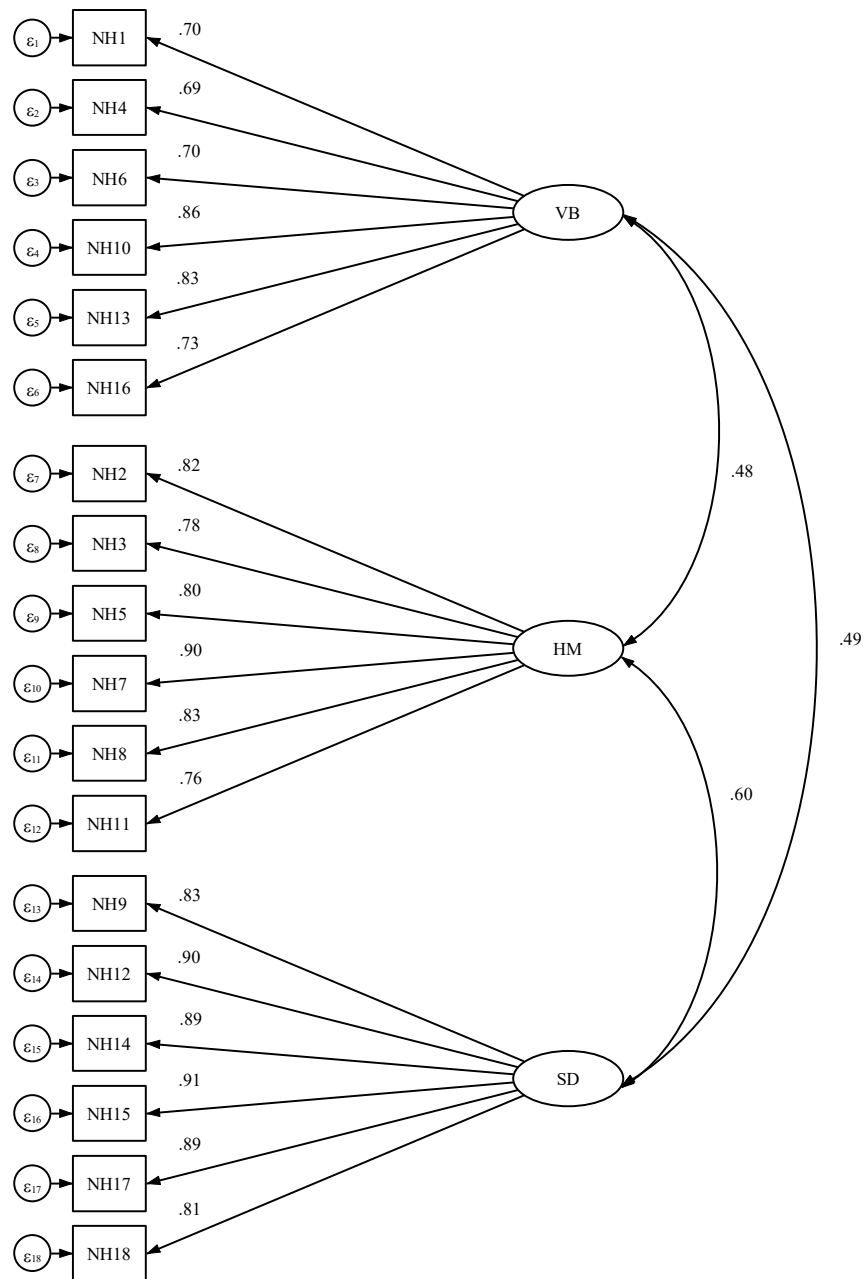


Figure 4.3. Multidimensional Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the FFRMS

**Construct Validity.** Table 4.4 presents bivariate correlations of the FFRMS and its subscales with extant measures of rape myth acceptance, ambivalent sexism, and hookup culture endorsement. Results indicated strong support for the construct validity of the FFRMS. Of the existing measures, the FFRMS and its subscales were most strongly associated with the IRMA-U (Pearson's  $r$  ranging from .62 to .76) and the MRMS (Pearson's  $r$  ranging from .54 to .74), indicating female-on-female rape myth acceptance as linked to male-on-female rape myth acceptance and aggregate male rape myth acceptance. Furthermore, the FFRMS and its subscales exhibited moderate-to-strong positive associations with the IRMA-U subscales. In addition, the FFRMS and its subscales demonstrated weak-to-moderate, positive correlations with composite scores of ambivalent sexism (Pearson's  $r$  ranging from .39 to .59), benevolent sexism (Pearson's  $r$  ranging from .26 to .45), and hostile sexism (Pearson's  $r$  ranging from .39 to .52). Though most of the measures of hookup culture endorsement demonstrated weak correlations with the FFRMS and its subscales, a notable exception was exhibited by the endorsement of beliefs that hookups serve to elevate an individual's social status (Pearson's  $r$  ranging from .42 to .50). For example,

Table 4.4. Correlations among FFRMS and Other Scales

Variables	FFRMS	VB	HM	SD
IRMA-U	.78***	.76***	.62***	.72***
IRMA-U: She Asked for It	.70***	.76***	.51***	.61***
IRMA-U: He Didn't Mean To	.69***	.61***	.59***	.63***
IRMA-U: It Wasn't Really Rape	.71***	.60***	.55***	.75***
IRMA-U: She Lied	.60***	.60***	.48***	.50***
MRMS	.73***	.74***	.54***	.68***
ASI	.53***	.59***	.39***	.43***
ASI: Benevolent Sexism	.37***	.45***	.26***	.28***
ASI: Hostile Sexism	.50***	.52***	.39***	.42***
EHCI	.36***	.26***	.34***	.37***
EHCI: Harmless	.17***	.09*	.17***	.21***
EHCI: Fun	.26***	.17***	.27***	.26***
EHCI: Status	.50***	.43***	.42***	.49***
EHCI: Control	.30***	.20***	.29***	.31***
EHCI: Sexual Freedom	.24***	.15***	.24***	.24***

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

sex positive beliefs such as hookups are harmless ( $r = .17$ ), fun ( $r = .26$ ), or engender a sense of sexual freedom ( $r = .24$ ) were weakly correlated with the FFRMS and its subscales. Conversely, the FFRMS and its subscales exhibited stronger correlations with sex negative beliefs regarding the function of hookup culture to provide control ( $r = .30$ ) or an elevation to social status ( $r = .50$ ).

In summation, the results demonstrate strong support for the construct validity of the FFRMS, as female-on-female rape myth acceptance was significantly associated with existing measures of male-on-female rape myth acceptance and aggregated male rape myth acceptance. In addition, the results further support the construct validity of the FFRMS through the association of female-on-female rape myth acceptance with indicators of heteronormativity (e.g., ambivalent sexism) and the endorsement of related cultural beliefs (e.g., hookup culture).

### ***Summary of Study 2***

The results of Study 2 lend further support to the three-factor structure of the FFRMS. The results provided through two series of CFAs conducted with independent samples suggest three factors (i.e., victim-blaming, harm mitigation, situational redefinition) which are reflective of female-on-female rape myth acceptance. As with Study 1, however, the intercorrelations among the three factors suggested that the FFRMS may also be utilized as a composite measure to broadly assess female-on-female rape myth acceptance. Though assessments of construct validity produced satisfactory results, the appropriate correlations with related measures were indicative of three noteworthy implications.

First, the FFRMS demonstrated strong, positive associations with measures of male-on-female and aggregated male rape myth acceptance, indicating that the FFRMS does indeed measure facets of female-on-female rape myth acceptance. These results were consistent with prior research demonstrating high levels of intercorrelation among measures of male-on-female and



aggregated male rape myth acceptance (Chapleau et al., 2008; Davies et al., 2012; Rosenstein, 2015), providing strong evidence of construct validity for the FFRMS.

Second, by closely examining the correlations between the FFRMS subscales and the IRMA-U subscales, an interesting pattern emerges. Though moderate-to-strong positive associations were exhibited for each of the IRMA-U subscales, the correlations for the IRMA-U She Lied subscale was notably weaker. In considering the conceptualized FFRMS model, as well as examining the reflective indicators in each subscale, it becomes clear that the reflective indicators were not constructed in such a manner to directly elicit perceptions of survivor dishonesty. This suggests further scale development may be necessary to ensure the FFRMS provides an exhaustive measure of female-on-female rape myth acceptance which is also attentive to perceptions of survivor dishonesty. Although each of the subscales may capture elements of perceived survivor dishonesty, further conceptual revision may necessitate the examination of a four-factor model distinguishing such sentiments from victim-blaming, harm mitigation, and situational redefinition.

Furthermore, the conceptualization of each FFRMS subscale were reflective of the conceptualizations for the remaining IRMA-U subscales. For example, a closer conceptual relationship existed between the FFRMS Victim-Blaming subscale and the IRMA-U She Asked for It subscale since both were respectively constructed to reflect discourses that cast blame upon survivors of female-on-female and male-on-female rape. Such findings are reflective of the broader literature indicating strong, positive associations among rape myth acceptance, victim-blaming, and offender exoneration (Chapleau et al., 2008; Davies & McCartney, 2003; Davies et al., 2012).

Finally, the FFRMS exhibited moderate, positive correlations with ambivalent sexism and hookup culture endorsement, providing preliminary support for the theoretical orientation adopted by the broader dissertation which views rape myth acceptance and hookup culture endorsement as situated actions guided by and reinforcing heteronormative social structure. Such associations reflect prior research demonstrating the agitating influence of ambivalent sexism (Chapleau et al., 2008; Davies et al., 2001, 2008; Lerner, 1980) and hookup culture endorsement (Reling et al., 2018a, 2018b) on rape myth acceptance.

## **Discussion**

This chapter developed an instrument capable of measuring collegiate acceptance of female-on-female rape myths. The findings contribute to a broader understanding of rape culture by providing a mechanism for assessing manifestations of rape myths that have been historically neglected. Data collected from two independent samples suggested that female-on-female rape myth acceptance reflects three distinct, yet related, concepts: 1) Victim-Blaming; 2) Harm Mitigation; and 3) Situational Redefinition. Though the results indicated the most appropriate utilization of the FFRMS scale would reflect the three-factor solution, the intercorrelations among factors suggested the FFRMS scale could also be utilized to reflect the generalized concept of female-on-female rape myth acceptance. Such a finding reflects more recent re-validation efforts for the IRMA-U, which indicated the instrument could be treated either as a measure of general male-on-female rape myth acceptance or as a measure of the three elements comprising the general construct (Chahal et al., 2017).

The development of a reliable and valid measure of female-on-female rape myth acceptance holds several notable benefits for future research. First, it provides a mechanism to comparatively assess influential associations with each of the various manifestations of rape

myths. Many scholars have contended the near-exclusive examination of male-on-female rape myths over the past four decades has resulted in the limited examination of aggregated male rape myth acceptance (Chapleau et al., 2008; Davies & McCartney, 2003; Davies et al., 2006; Davies et al., 2012; Doherty & Anderson, 2004; Reling et al., 2018a, 2018b; Stermac et al., 2004). Furthermore, no empirical assessments of female-on-female rape myth acceptance have been conducted to date due in part to the lack of empirical measures to assess such rape myths (Reling et al., 2018b). Second, by allowing for comparative assessment across forms of rape myth acceptance, such an instrument bolsters the ability of future research to advance theoretical understandings of rape culture and hookup culture. Though recent evidence has suggested an association among rape culture, hookup culture, and heteronormativity (Kimmel, 2008; Reling et al., 2018 a, 2018b; Wade, 2017), such efforts have failed to account for the theoretical relevance of female-on-female rape myth acceptance in such a context. Each of these implications are addressed in the subsequent chapter.

## **CHAPTER 5: RAPE MYTHS, HOOKUP CULTURE, AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE**

This chapter addresses the secondary research objective of this dissertation by providing a comparative assessment of female-on-female, male-on-female, and aggregated male rape myth acceptance. In contrast to the robust examination of male-on-female rape myths, scholarship on male rape myths remains relatively sparse (Chapleau et al., 2008; Davies & McCartney, 2003; Davies et al., 2006; Davies et al., 2012; Doherty & Anderson, 2004; Reling et al., 2018b). Furthermore, no empirical assessments of female-on-female rape myth acceptance have been published to date due in part to the lack of empirical measures of female-on-female rape myths (Reeling et al., 2018b). Though evidence suggests similar contextual, demographic, and ideological influences for male-on-female and aggregated male rape myth acceptance, the importance of such influences on female-on-female rape myth acceptance remains unexamined. In addition, recent evidence has suggested an intrinsic association among collegiate hookup culture and rape culture (Kimmel, 2008; Reling et al., 2018a, 2018b; Wade, 2017), but such efforts failed to account for the theoretical relevance of female-on-female rape myth acceptance. To this end, the current chapter serves to substantiate and expand upon prior research by comparatively addressing Research Question II, “To what extent is hookup culture associated with various forms of rape myth acceptance?”

In addition, the current chapter expands prior theoretical considerations of rape culture by assessing the degree to which rape myth acceptance and hookup culture endorsement may be viewed as situated actions guided by and reinforcing heteronormative social structures. As such, the current chapter seeks to better understand the influence of hookup culture on rape culture by addressing Research Question III, “To what extent do structural indicators of heteronormativity (e.g., sexist attitudes) mediate the associations of hookup culture endorsement with rape myth

acceptance?” This chapter contributes to the broader rape literature by assessing the degree to which sexism, as an indicator of heteronormative social structures, mediates the associations of hookup culture endorsement with rape myth acceptance.

### **Research Questions**

The present study explored Research Question II (i.e., “To what extent is hookup culture associated with various forms of rape myth acceptance?”) by testing the following three hypotheses:

*Hypothesis 1a:* Hookup culture endorsement, specifically the belief that hookups elevate an individual’s social status, will be positively associated with female-on-female rape myth acceptance.

*Hypothesis 1b:* Hookup culture endorsement, specifically the belief that hookups elevate an individual’s social status, will be positively associated with male-on-female rape myth acceptance.

*Hypothesis 1c:* Hookup culture endorsement, specifically the belief that hookups elevate an individual’s social status, will be positively associated with aggregate male rape myth acceptance.

Furthermore, the present study explored Research Question III (i.e., “To what extent do structural indicators of heteronormativity, such as sexist attitudes, mediate the association of hookup culture endorsement with rape myth acceptance?”) by addressing the following six hypotheses:

*Hypothesis 2a:* Ambivalent sexism will be positively associated with female-on-female rape myth acceptance.

*Hypothesis 2b:* Ambivalent sexism will be positively associated with male-on-female rape myth acceptance.

*Hypothesis 2c:* Ambivalent sexism will be positively associated with aggregated male rape myth acceptance.

*Hypothesis 3a:* Ambivalent sexism will mediate the association among hookup culture endorsement and female-on-female rape myth acceptance.

*Hypothesis 3b:* Ambivalent sexism will mediate the association among hookup culture endorsement and male-on-female rape myth acceptance.

*Hypothesis 3c:* Ambivalent sexism will mediate the association among hookup culture endorsement and aggregated male rape myth acceptance.

## **Method**

### ***Respondents and Procedures***

The present study used pooled respondents from the two waves of survey data discussed in Chapter 4. Data collection for this study was approved by the Louisiana State University Institutional Review Board (IRB #E11650). Respondents were recruited during the Spring 2019 and Summer 2019 semesters to allow time for acclimation to university culture. All respondents had the option to decline participation in the study. For the purpose of mitigating psychological harm, respondents were administered a list of national mental health services to contact should the need arise. The online survey was developed and administered to respondents through Qualtrics (Qualtrics, Provo, UT), an online survey platform utilized by many universities. The survey consisted of four sections which included scales measuring: 1) rape myth acceptance; 2) ambivalent sexism; 3) hookup culture endorsement; and, 4) demographic information.

Respondents were 857 heterosexual undergraduate students enrolled in four-year universities and colleges across the United States, including 495 (54.26%) women and 392 (45.24%) men. Approximately half (49.24%) were traditional college age (i.e., 18-24 years old), and approximately a quarter (25.20%) had previous rape education programming. Overall, 526 (61.38%) identified as White, 174 (20.30%) identified as Black, 78 (9.10%) identified as Latino/a, 41 (4.78%) identified as Asian, and 38 (4.43%) identified as other racial groups not listed.

Of the 495 women who participated in the study, over half (57.63%) were between the ages of 18 and 24. While the majority of women identified as White (62.58%), 93 (20.00%) were Black, 32 (6.88%) were Latino/a, 19 (4.09%) were Asian, and 30 (6.45%) identified as other racial groups not listed. Overall, approximately 45% ( $n = 208$ ) were single at the time of the study, approximately 12% ( $n = 54$ ) were Greek affiliated, and approximately 30% ( $n = 138$ ) had previous exposure to rape education programming. Of the 392 men who participated in the study, approximately two-fifths (39.29%) were between the ages of 18 and 24. The majority of men (59.95%) identified as White. Of those who identified as racial minorities, 81 (20.66%) were Black, 46 (11.73%) were Latino/a, 22 (5.61%) were Asian, and the remainder (2.04%) identified as other racial minorities not listed. Over half of the men (52.55%) were single at the time of the study, approximately a fifth of the men (19.90%) had prior exposure to rape education programming, and approximately 7% ( $n = 28$ ) were Greek affiliated. With the exception of religiosity and widowed/divorced/separated, statistically significant gender differences were found for all control variables.

### ***Measures***

**Female-on-Female Rape Myth Scale (FFRMS).** The FFRMS assessed respondents' adherence to female-on-female rape myths the 18 original items of three FFRMS subscales: 1)

Victim-Blaming (e.g., “Emily probably didn’t want to admit to people that she was a lesbian”); 2) Harm Mitigation (e.g., “Nicole was probably just excited to have someone interested in her and unintentionally took it a little too far”); 3) Situational Redefinition (e.g., “It wasn’t really sexual assault because Emily and Nicole didn’t have sex”). All responses were on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 5 (*Strongly Agree*). Responses were additive so that higher scores were indicative of greater levels of female-on-female rape myth acceptance. As with the previous study, the current study also demonstrated strong internal reliability for the overall measure ( $\alpha = .94$ ), as well as each subscale (VB,  $\alpha = .85$ ; HM,  $\alpha = .88$ ; SD,  $\alpha = .91$ ).

**Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (IRMA-U; McMahon & Farmer, 2011).** The IRMA-U assesses respondent’s adherence to male-on-female rape myths, across the original 22 items of four IRMA-U subscales: 1) She Asked for It (e.g., “If a girl goes to a room alone with a guy at a party, it is her own fault if she is raped”); 2) He Didn’t Mean To (e.g., “Rape happens when a guy’s sex drive gets out of control”); 3) It Wasn’t Really Rape (e.g., “A rape probably didn’t happen if the girl has no bruises or marks”); and, 4) She Lied (e.g., “Rape accusations are often used as a way of getting back at guys”). All responses are on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 5 (*Strongly Agree*). Each subscale is additive so that higher scores indicate stronger beliefs for each particular subscale. Alphas from the original study demonstrated strong internal reliability for the overall measure ( $\alpha = .89$ ), as well as acceptable reliability for each subscale ( $\alpha$  ranges from .64 to .80). The current study also demonstrated strong internal reliability for the overall measure ( $\alpha = .94$ ), as well as each subscale ( $\alpha$  range from .79 to .90).

**Male Rape Myth Scale (MRMS; Melanson, 1999).** The MRMS assesses respondents’ adherence to male rape myths as a unidimensional factor across 22 original items (e.g., “A man who allows himself to be raped by another man is probably a homosexual”). All responses are on



a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 5 (*Strongly Agree*) and were additive so higher scores indicated greater levels of male rape myth acceptance. The original study indicated strong internal reliability ( $\alpha = .90$ ). Analogously, the current study also demonstrated strong internal reliability ( $\alpha = .94$ ).

**Ambivalent Sexism Inventory (ASI; Glick & Fiske, 1996).** The ASI assesses respondents' levels of adherence across two dimensions of sexism: Hostile Sexism and Benevolent Sexism. The Hostile Sexism scale is a unidimensional assessment of sexist antipathy consisting of 11 items (e.g., "Women are too easily offended"). The Benevolent Sexism scale is an 11 item multidimensional assessment of subjectively positive sexist orientations adopted towards women across three separate subscales: Protective Paternalism (e.g., "Women should be cherished and protected by men"), Complementary Gender Differentiation (e.g., "Many women have a quality of purity that few men possess"), and Heterosexual Intimacy (e.g., "Every man ought to have a woman whom he adores"). All responses are on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 5 (*Strongly Agree*), and each scale/subscale is additive so that higher scores indicate stronger beliefs for each particular scale/subscale. Alphas from the original study demonstrated strong internal reliability for the overall measure ( $\alpha = .92$ ), as well as for each scale: Hostile Sexism ( $\alpha = .92$ ) and Benevolent Sexism ( $\alpha = .85$ ). The current study demonstrated adequate reliability for the overall measure ( $\alpha = .86$ ), as well as for each subscale: Hostile Sexism ( $\alpha = .86$ ) and Benevolent Sexism ( $\alpha = .77$ ).

**Endorsement of Hookup Culture Index (EHCI; Aubrey & Smith, 2011).** The EHCI assesses respondents' endorsement of collegiate hookups across five separate subscales: Harmless (e.g., "Hooking up is not a big deal"), Fun (e.g., "I hook up to have a good time"), Status (e.g., "Hooking up is a way for me to make a name for myself"), Control (e.g., "I feel powerful during

a hookup”), and Sexual Freedom (e.g., “Hooking up allows me to be sexually adventurous”). Each subscale was composed of four such questions, and respondents rated each of the 20 items on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 5 (*Strongly Agree*). Responses to items on each subscale were additive so that higher scores were indicative of stronger beliefs on that particular subscale. Alphas from the original study demonstrated strong internal reliability for the overall measure ( $\alpha = .91$ ), as well as moderate-to-strong internal reliability for each subscale: Harmless ( $\alpha = .84$ ), Fun ( $\alpha = .88$ ), Status ( $\alpha = .90$ ), Control ( $\alpha = .79$ ), and Sexual Freedom ( $\alpha = .86$ ). Similarly, the current study demonstrated strong internal reliability for the overall measure ( $\alpha = .95$ ), as well as for each subscale: Harmless ( $\alpha = .88$ ), Fun ( $\alpha = .87$ ), Status ( $\alpha = .91$ ), Control ( $\alpha = .86$ ), and Sexual Freedom ( $\alpha = .90$ ).

**Self-Ascribed Spirituality and Religiosity Variables (SASRV; Zullig et al., 2006).** The SASRV is a 6-item measure which assesses respondents’ perceptions about their personal relationships with religion through two subscales: Spirituality (i.e. “I am very spiritual”; 3 items) and Religiosity (i.e. “How often did you typically attend religious services in the past year?”; 3 items). In congruence with previous research, spirituality was conceptualized as “one’s search for the sacred that occurs internally and is pursued through seeking a relationship with whatever one holds as sacred” (Hyman & Handal, 2006, p.279). Religiosity was conceptualized as “the rituals and organization traditions that one practices in a group setting and that guides one’s behavior” (p. 278). Responses across items were summed so that higher scores indicated stronger beliefs on that subscale. Alphas from the original study demonstrated strong internal consistency for each subscale: Spirituality ( $\alpha = .88$ ) and Religiosity ( $\alpha = .91$ ). The current study demonstrated similar levels of internal consistency.

**Control variables.** Informed by previous research, control variables will include respondents' gender (Ching & Burke, 1999; Gilmartin-Zena, 1988) and Greek organization affiliation (Bleecker & Murnen, 2005; Foubert et al., 2006; Kalof, 1993; McMahon, 2010). Relationship status was controlled to assess the influence of intimate interpersonal commitment on rape myth acceptance because individuals in committed relationships may be less endorsing of hookup culture. Previous exposure to rape education and training will be controlled for to assess the effects of such education/training and its duration as previous research has demonstrated previous exposure or increased duration decrease levels of rape myth acceptance (Anderson & Whiston, 2005; Hertzog & Yeilding, 2009; McMahon, 2010).

### ***Data Analysis***

The current study analyzed two waves of survey data. In building upon the framework established by Reling and colleagues (2018a, 2018b), data analysis began with the fitting of three sets of ordinal least squares (OLS) regression models that examined: (a) the association of female-on-female rape myth acceptance with hookup culture and ambivalent sexism; (b) the association of male-on-female rape myth acceptance with hookup culture and ambivalent sexism; and, (c) the association of male rape myth acceptance with hookup culture and ambivalent sexism.

Each set of regressions assessed five models. Model 1 examined the associations of female-on-female rape myth acceptance with control variables (e.g., gender, traditional student status, relationship status, Greek affiliation, spirituality, religiosity, prior rape education programming). Model 2 expanded upon this assessment by controlling for specific forms of hookup culture endorsement in order to assess Hypothesis 1, which stated hookup culture endorsement will be positively associated with female-on-female rape myth acceptance. Model 3 further expanded upon this examination by controlling for forms of ambivalent sexism in order to

assess Hypothesis 2, which stated ambivalent sexism will be positively associated with female-on-female rape myth acceptance. To determine the extent to which associations differ among women and men, Model 4 and Model 5 assessed gender-specific associations for female-on-female rape myth acceptance and control variables while controlling for various forms of hookup culture endorsement and ambivalent sexism. Models 6 through 10 replicated this analysis strategy while substituting the previous dependent variable with male-on-female rape myth acceptance, while Models 11 through 15 substituted the previous dependent variable with aggregated male rape myth acceptance.

The second stage of the analyses assessed a series of simultaneous equation models were conducted to assess the mediating effects of ambivalent sexism on the associations of: (a) hookup culture endorsement and female-on-female rape myth acceptance; (b) hookup culture endorsement and male-on-female rape myth acceptance; and, (c) hookup culture endorsement and aggregated male rape myth acceptance. In contrast to the composite scores utilized by OLS regression, simultaneous equation modeling allows for multidimensional constructs to be modeled as latent variables that control for measurement error (Rijnhart, Twisk, Chinapaw, de Boer, & Heymans, 2017). In doing so, simultaneous equation modeling provides a level of granularity which allows one to assess the significance of each subscale with relation to the composite measure, highlighting which dimensions of hookup culture endorsement, ambivalent sexism, and rape myth acceptance exert more influence with regard to the overall model. As prior research has established the dimensionality of each measure through confirmatory factor analysis (see Aubrey & Smith, 2011; McMahon & Farmer, 2011), item parcels were constructed to act as continuous reflective indicators of the latent variables. As such, maximum likelihood robust estimation was performed for each simultaneous equation model to account for data non-normality.

## Results

### *Preliminary Analyses*

Table 5.1 presents descriptive statistics for the variables included in the analyses. To maintain consistency with the multivariate regressions, separate descriptive statistics are presented for the full sample and gender-specific sub-samples. Due to the gendered nature of rape myth acceptance, it was necessary to examine the gender-specific sub-sample for differences among key variables. A series of covariance analyses explored gender difference in (a) self-ascribed religiosity and spirituality (SARVS), (b) the five factors of hookup culture endorsement (EHCI), (c) female-on-female rape myth acceptance (FFRMS), (d) male-on-female rape myth acceptance (IRMA), (e) aggregate male rape myth acceptance (MRMS), and (f) benevolent and hostile sexism (ASI). Each covariance analysis assessed the main effects of gender while controlling partial effects of traditional student status, relationship status, and Greek affiliation.

The first multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA) demonstrated a significant main effect for gender,  $F(2, 855) = 6.82, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .02$ , accounting for differences among men and women in terms of self-ascribed spirituality. The effect was partially accounted for by marginal univariate effects of traditional student status,  $F(1, 856) = 5.49, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .01$ , being in a relationship,  $F(1, 856) = 4.87, p < .05, \eta_p^2 = .01$ , being married,  $F(1, 856) = 8.97, p < .01, \eta_p^2 = .01$ , and Greek affiliation,  $F(1, 856) = 6.98, p < .01, \eta_p^2 = .01$ . Despite differences among men and women in terms of self-ascribed spirituality, no such effects were demonstrated with regard to self-ascribed religiosity.

The second MANCOVA elucidated significant main effects for gender,  $F(5, 851) = 36.00, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .18$ , reporting differences among men and women in terms of perceptions that hookups are harmless,  $F(1, 856) = 26.12, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .03$ , fun,  $F(1, 856) = 74.72, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .03$ .

Table 5.1. Descriptive Statistics among Study Variables for Women and Men

Variable	Total <i>M (SD)</i> or %	<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>	Women <i>M (SD)</i> or %	Men <i>M (SD)</i> or %
1. Gender: Female	54.26%	0.00	1.00	--	--
2. Traditional Student	49.24%	0.00	1.00	57.63% <sub>a</sub>	39.29% <sub>b</sub>
3. Single	48.31%	0.00	1.00	44.73% <sub>a</sub>	52.55% <sub>b</sub>
4. In a Relationship	29.40%	0.00	1.00	35.05% <sub>a</sub>	22.70% <sub>b</sub>
5. Married	16.92%	0.00	1.00	13.55% <sub>a</sub>	20.92% <sub>b</sub>
6. Wid./Sep./Div.	5.37%	0.00	1.00	6.67% <sub>a</sub>	3.83% <sub>a</sub>
7. Greek	9.57%	0.00	1.00	11.61% <sub>a</sub>	7.14% <sub>b</sub>
8. SASRV: Spirituality	3.63 (1.17)	1.00	5.00	3.73 (1.13) <sub>a</sub>	3.52 (1.22) <sub>b</sub>
9. SASRV: Religiosity	2.90 (1.26)	1.00	5.00	2.92 (1.25) <sub>a</sub>	2.88 (1.28) <sub>a</sub>
10. Prev. Rape Ed.	25.20%	0.00	1.00	29.68% <sub>a</sub>	19.90% <sub>b</sub>
11. EHCI: Harmless	3.09 (1.02)	1.00	5.00	2.93 (1.00) <sub>a</sub>	3.27 (1.03) <sub>b</sub>
12. EHCI: Fun	3.02 (1.04)	1.00	5.00	2.76 (1.04) <sub>a</sub>	3.34 (0.96) <sub>b</sub>
13. EHCI: Status	2.18 (1.09)	1.00	5.00	1.81 (0.89) <sub>a</sub>	2.62 (1.13) <sub>b</sub>
14. EHCI: Control	2.93 (1.00)	1.00	5.00	2.81 (1.04) <sub>a</sub>	3.06 (0.93) <sub>b</sub>
15. EHCI: Sexual Freedom	3.15 (1.07)	1.00	5.00	2.91 (1.05) <sub>a</sub>	3.44 (1.02) <sub>b</sub>
16. ASI: Benevolent Sexism	2.97 (0.68)	1.00	4.91	2.91 (0.65) <sub>a</sub>	3.04 (0.70) <sub>b</sub>
17. ASI: Hostile Sexism	2.88 (0.80)	1.00	4.91	2.73 (0.76) <sub>a</sub>	3.05 (0.82) <sub>b</sub>
18a. FFRMS: Total	2.07 (0.89)	1.00	5.00	1.83 (0.77) <sub>a</sub>	2.36 (0.93) <sub>b</sub>
18b. IRMA: Total	2.17 (0.81)	1.00	5.00	1.96 (0.72) <sub>a</sub>	2.43 (0.84) <sub>b</sub>
18c. MRMS: Total	2.18 (0.78)	1.00	4.91	2.00 (0.69) <sub>a</sub>	2.41 (0.82) <sub>b</sub>

*Note.* SASRV = Self-Ascribed Spirituality and Religiosity Variable Scale; EHCI = Endorsement of Hookup Culture Index; ASI = Ambivalent Sexism Inventory; FFRMS = Female-on-Female Rape Myth Scale; MRMS = Male Rape Myths Scale; IRMA = Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale. Different subscripts for women and men across a row indicate a significant difference ( $p < .05$ ) in means/proportions.

= .08, elevate social status,  $F(1, 856) = 125.32, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .13$ , promote feelings of situational control,  $F(1, 856) = 16.48, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .02$ , and engender a sense of sexual freedom,  $F(1, 856) = 65.48, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .07$ , above and beyond the influences of traditional student status, relationship status, and Greek affiliation.

The third ANCOVA demonstrated a significant gender main effect,  $F(1, 856) = 61.80, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .07$ , for differences in female-on-female rape myth acceptance among men and women which was partially accounted for by marginal effects of traditional student status,  $F(1, 856) = 34.95, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .04$ , and Greek affiliation,  $F(1, 856) = 9.59, p < .01, \eta_p^2 = .01$ . The fourth and fifth ANCOVAs demonstrated similar gendered main effects for male-on-female rape myth acceptance,  $F(1, 856) = 62.02, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .07$ , and aggregate male rape myth acceptance,  $F(1, 856) = 43.72, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .05$ , respectively. The final MANCOVA demonstrated a significant gender main effect,  $F(2, 855) = 12.38, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .03$ , illustrating differences among men and women in terms of hostile sexism,  $F(1, 856) = 24.77, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .03$ , above and beyond the influence of traditional student status, relationship status, and Greek affiliation. Furthermore, a marginally significant gender main effect,  $F(1, 856) = 3.12, p < .10, \eta_p^2 = .00$ , was demonstrated regarding benevolent sexism. Collectively, results of the preliminary analyses substantiate the use of gender-specific examinations for rape myth acceptance, as statistical differences were demonstrated across men and women with regard to hookup culture endorsement, ambivalent sexism, and rape myth acceptance.

### ***Predicting Female-on-Female Rape Myths***

Table 5.2 presents the results for OLS regression analyses on female-on-female rape myth acceptance. Bivariate correlations and variance inflation factors were assessed for predictors of female-on-female rape myths to preclude issues of multicollinearity. The average variance

Table 5.2. Predictors of Female-on-Female Rape Myth Acceptance

Variables	Full Sample ( <i>n</i> =857)						Female Only ( <i>n</i> =465)		Male Only ( <i>n</i> =392)	
	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5	
	$\beta$	SD	$\beta$	SD	$\beta$	SD	$\beta$	SD	$\beta$	SD
Gender	-0.26***	0.06	-0.12***	0.06	-0.10***	0.05	--	--	--	--
Traditional Student	-0.19***	0.06	-0.17***	0.06	-0.12***	0.05	-0.12**	0.07	-0.12**	0.09
Rel. Status (Ref. <i>Single</i> )										
In a Relationship	-0.01	0.07	-0.01	0.06	-0.02	0.06	0.00	0.07	-0.05	0.09
Married	0.01	0.08	-0.01	0.08	-0.02	0.07	-0.07	0.10	0.01	0.10
W/D/S	-0.02	0.13	-0.02	0.12	-0.02	0.11	-0.05	0.13	0.00	0.20
Greek	0.10**	0.10	0.06	0.09	0.05	0.08	0.04	0.10	0.07	0.15
Spirituality	-0.03	0.03	0.01	0.03	-0.01	0.03	-0.03	0.04	-0.01	0.04
Religiosity	0.17***	0.03	0.09*	0.03	0.04	0.03	0.02	0.03	0.08	0.04
Previous Rape Education	-0.09**	0.07	-0.09**	0.06	-0.06*	0.06	-0.04	0.07	-0.09*	0.10
EHCI: Harmless			0.00	0.04	0.03	0.03	-0.02	0.04	0.09	0.05
EHCI: Fun			-0.05	0.04	-0.07	0.04	0.02	0.05	-0.14	0.07
EHCI: Status			0.39***	0.03	0.27***	0.03	0.34***	0.04	0.20***	0.05
EHCI: Control			0.07	0.04	0.10*	0.04	-0.05	0.04	0.22***	0.06
EHCI: Sexual Freedom			0.02	0.04	-0.01	0.04	0.02	0.04	-0.03	0.06
ASI: Benevolent Sexism					0.12***	0.04	0.21***	0.05	0.05	0.06
ASI: Hostile Sexism					0.30***	0.03	0.24***	0.04	0.33***	0.05
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.16		0.30		0.40		0.33		0.38	

\*  $p < 0.05$  \*\*  $p < 0.01$  \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$



inflation factor across all models for female-on-female rape myth acceptance was 1.65, falling within acceptable parameters as no variable exceeding a variance inflation factor of 3.29. Model 1 examined the associations of control variables with female-on-female rape myth acceptance to establish a baseline. The Adjusted  $R^2$  indicated that 16.28% of the variation in the model was explained by control variables alone. Within the baseline model, gender ( $\beta = -.26, t = -7.94, p < .001$ ) demonstrated the strongest association with female-on-female rape myth acceptance, indicating female students were less likely to accept such rape myths compared to their male counterparts. Furthermore, results of the baseline model indicated that traditional students ( $\beta = -.18, t = -4.97, p < .001$ ) and those who have had previous rape education programming ( $\beta = -.10, t = -2.93, p < .01$ ) were less susceptible to female-on-female rape myths. Conversely, Greek affiliation ( $\beta = .08, t = 2.50, p < .05$ ) and higher levels of religiosity ( $\beta = .18, t = 4.08, p < .001$ ) were positively associated with female-on-female rape myth acceptance.

Results of Model 2 indicate support for Hypothesis 1a because the belief that hookups serve to elevate an individual's social status ( $\beta = .39, t = 10.53, p < .001$ ) demonstrated a significant positive association with female-on-female rape myth acceptance. Expanding upon the baseline model, the Adjusted  $R^2$  indicated that 30.07% of the variation with the model was explained by control variables and hookup culture endorsement measures. Furthermore, the change in the Adjusted  $R^2$  indicated that measures of hookup culture endorsement predict 13.79% of the variation within the model, above and beyond the influence of control variables. Consistent with the results of the baseline model, gender ( $\beta = -.12, t = -3.64, p < .001$ ), traditional student status ( $\beta = -.16, t = -4.76, p < .001$ ), and exposure to prior rape education programming ( $\beta = -.10, t = -3.25, p < .01$ ) were negatively associated with female-on-female rape myth acceptance. Additionally,

respondents who were more religious were more likely to endorse such rape myths ( $\beta = .10, t = 2.44, p < .05$ ).

Results of Model 3 provide support for Hypothesis 2a as each measure of ambivalent sexism demonstrated significant positive associations with female-on-female rape myth acceptance. The Adjusted  $R^2$  indicated 40.72% of the variation within the model was explained by ambivalent sexism, hookup culture endorsement, and control variables. Furthermore, the change in Adjusted  $R^2$  indicated 10.65% of the variation within the model was accounted for by ambivalent sexism alone. Demonstrating greater endorsement of hostile sexism ( $\beta = .31, t = 10.19, p < .001$ ) and benevolent sexism ( $\beta = .13, t = 4.32, p < .001$ ) was associated with elevated levels of female-on-female rape myth acceptance. The beliefs that hookups elevate an individual's social status ( $\beta = .27, t = 7.48, p < .001$ ) and promote a sense of sexual control ( $\beta = .10, t = 2.42, p < .05$ ) were also associated with higher levels of female-on-female rape myth acceptance among respondents. As with previous models, female-on-female rape myth acceptance was lower among female students ( $\beta = -.10, t = -3.47, p < .01$ ), traditional students ( $\beta = -.11, t = -3.65, p < .001$ ), and those who have had prior rape education programming ( $\beta = -.06, t = -2.28, p < .05$ ).

Turning to the gender-specific analyses, the Adjusted  $R^2$  indicated ambivalent sexism, hookup culture endorsement, and control variables accounted for 32.31% of the variation among female students and 39.76% of the variation among male students. As with the full sample, hostile sexism was positively associated with female-on-female rape myth acceptance among female ( $\beta = .24, t = 5.31, p < .001$ ) and male students ( $\beta = .34, t = 7.64, p < .001$ ), indicating students who endorsed overtly hostile attitudes towards women were more accepting of such myths. Furthermore, female ( $\beta = .34, t = 7.38, p < .001$ ) and male students ( $\beta = .19, t = 3.37, p < .01$ ) who believed hookups serve to elevate an individual's social status were more accepting of female-on-

female rape myths. Additionally, results demonstrated negative associations among traditional student status and female-on-female rape myth acceptance for female ( $\beta = -.11, t = -2.41, p < .05$ ) and male students ( $\beta = -.11, t = -2.43, p < .05$ ). In spite of the consistency, the influences of hookup culture endorsement and ambivalent sexism demonstrated gender-specific variation. Benevolent sexism ( $\beta = .22, t = 4.95, p < .001$ ) increased female-on-female rape myth acceptance among *female students only*, while perceptions of hookups as harmless ( $\beta = .11, t = 2.00, p < .05$ ) and promoting sexual control ( $\beta = .23, t = 3.85, p < .001$ ) increased non-heterosexual rape myth acceptance among *male students only*. Furthermore, male students who participated in prior rape education programming ( $\beta = -.09, t = -2.14, p < .05$ ) were less accepting of female-on-female rape myths than male students who never had exposure to such programs.

Table 5.3 provides a comparison of the results for Model 2 and 3, indicating the incorporation of ambivalent sexism measures resulted in substantially increased variability and coefficient changes among key variables. To explore the statistical significance of such differences, a comparison of regression coefficients was performed utilizing the technique developed by Clogg et al. (1995). This test serves as a preliminary indicator of the mediating influences of ambivalent sexism upon the relationship of hookup culture endorsement and non-heterosexual rape myth acceptance by assessing the degree to which the inclusion of predictor variables,  $Z_i$ , exert influence upon the coefficients of control variables,  $X_i$ . Results from Table 5.3 indicate significant changes in coefficients between Model 2 and 3 for traditional student status, religiosity, previous rape education, and beliefs regarding social status. As such, the results provide preliminary support for Hypothesis 3a by suggesting ambivalent sexism mediates the relationship between these variables and female-on-female rape myth acceptance in meaningful ways.

Table 5.3. A Comparison of Two Regression Models Predicting Female-on-Female Rape Myth Acceptance

	Model 2 b (SD)	Model 3 b (SD)	Change in Coefficient	Test Statistic
Intercept	1.34 (0.15)	0.22 (0.17)	1.12	18.32***
$X_1$ : Gender	-0.21 (0.06)	-0.18 (0.05)	-0.03	-0.81
$X_2$ : Traditional Student	-0.30 (0.06)	-0.22 (0.05)	-0.08	-2.51*
$X_3$ : In a Relationship	-0.03 (0.06)	-0.03 (0.06)	0.01	0.17
$X_4$ : Married	-0.02 (0.08)	-0.05 (0.07)	0.03	0.82
$X_5$ : W/D/S	-0.09 (0.12)	-0.08 (0.11)	0.00	-0.05
$X_6$ : Greek	0.17 (0.09)	0.16 (0.08)	0.01	0.23
$X_7$ : SASRV: Spirituality	0.01 (0.03)	-0.01 (0.03)	0.02	1.34
$X_8$ : SASRV: Religiosity	0.07 (0.03)	0.03 (0.03)	0.04	2.41*
$X_9$ : Previous Rape Education	-0.19 (0.06)	-0.12 (0.06)	-0.07	-2.07*
$X_{10}$ : EHCI: Harmless	0.00 (0.04)	0.03 (0.03)	-0.03	-1.50
$X_{11}$ : EHCI: Fun	-0.04 (0.04)	-0.06 (0.04)	0.02	0.66
$X_{12}$ : EHCI: Status	0.32 (0.03)	0.22 (0.03)	0.10	6.92***
$X_{13}$ : EHCI: Control	0.06 (0.04)	0.09 (0.04)	-0.03	-1.29
$X_{14}$ : EHCI: Sexual Freedom	0.02 (0.04)	-0.01 (0.04)	0.03	1.26
$Z_1$ : ASI: Benevolent Sexism		0.12 (0.04)		
$Z_2$ : ASI: Hostile Sexism		0.30 (0.03)		
$\hat{\sigma}$	15.17	17.46		
Adjusted $R^2$	.30	.40		

*Note.* SASRV = Self-Ascribed Spirituality and Religiosity Variables scale; EHCI = Endorsement of Hookup Culture Index.  $X_i$  variables are control variables for which statistically significant shifts of coefficients are being determined.  $Z_i$  variables are additional control variables which demonstrate a possible mediating influence on  $X_i$  variables.  $\hat{\sigma}$  = Regression Error Variance for Model. Change in Coefficients calculated by  $d_k = b^* - b$ . Test statistic calculated by  $t = d_k / s(d_k)$ .

\*  $p < 0.05$  \*\*  $p < 0.01$  \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$

Figure 5.1 presents the recursive simultaneous equation model utilized for the mediation analysis of hookup culture endorsement and female-on-female rape myth acceptance. The model demonstrated adequate goodness-of-fit as defined by Kline (2005):  $\chi^2 (157, 73) = 627.97, p < .001$  ([CFI] = .952, [TLI] = .942, [RMSEA] = .06, [SRMR] = .09). As expected, each item parcel exhibited a significant factor loading with the appropriate latent construct. For ease of interpretation, Table 5.4 presents the standardized estimates for the total, direct, and specific indirect effects of note for the mediation analysis. Results indicate support for Hypothesis 3a in demonstrating partial mediation of the association between hookup culture endorsement and female-on-female rape myth acceptance. Significant total effects ( $\beta = .32, p < .001$ ) were noted for the association of hookup culture endorsement with female-on-female rape myth acceptance. Decomposition demonstrated a significant direct effect ( $\beta = .20, p < .001$ ) of hookup culture endorsement on female-on-female rape myth acceptance, as well as a significant specific indirect effect ( $\beta = .13, p < .001$ ) of hookup culture endorsement on female-on-female rape myth acceptance mediated by ambivalent sexism.

Table 5.4. Maximum Likelihood Robust Parameter Estimates of Direct and Indirect Effects

Parameter	Standardized	<i>SE</i>
Total Effects	.32***	.04
Direct Effects	.20***	.04
Specific Indirect Effects	.13***	.04

\*  $p < 0.05$  \*\*  $p < 0.01$  \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$

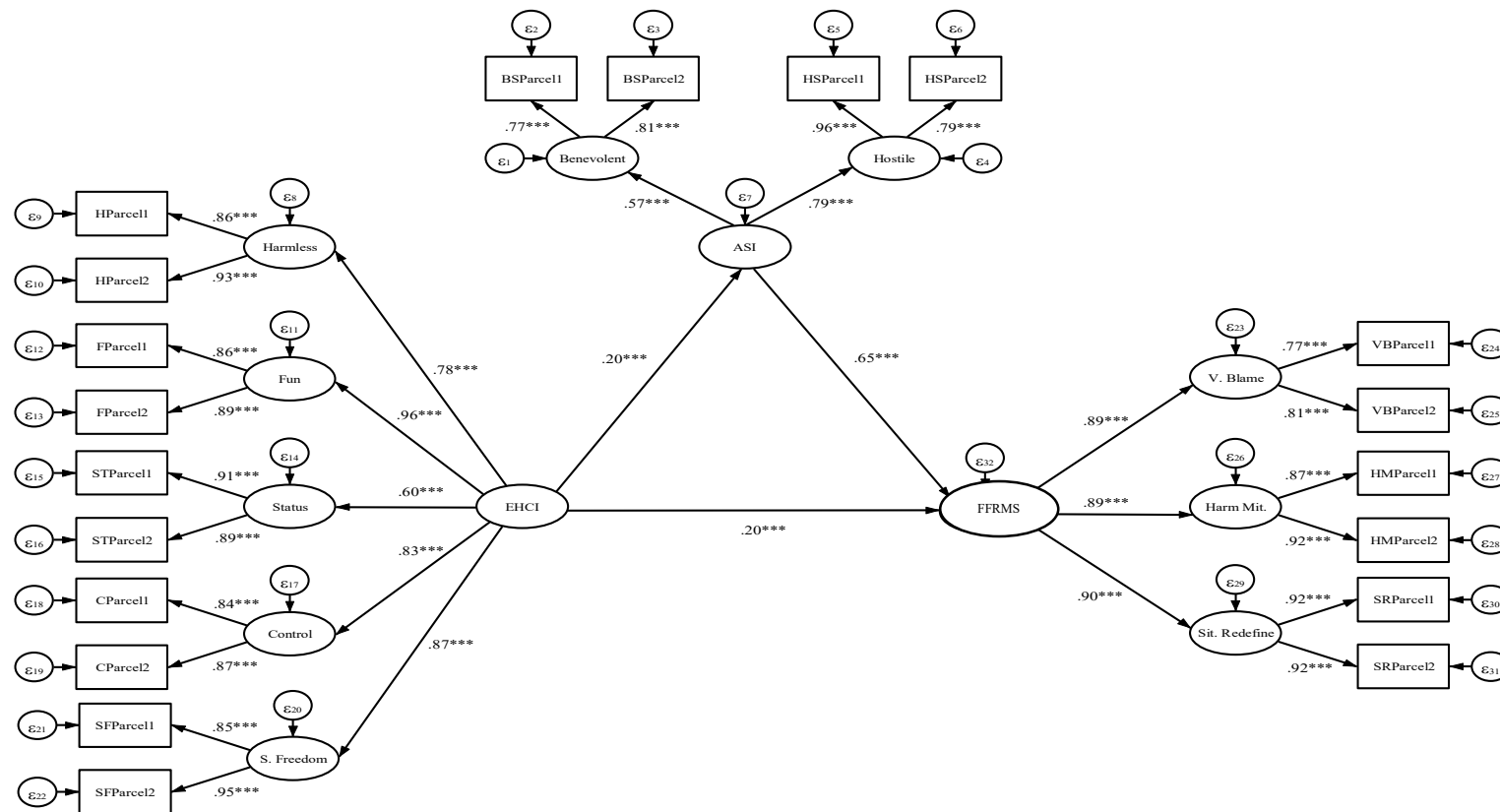


Figure 5.1. Mediation Analysis of the FFRMS

*Note:* Standardized Coefficients are displayed.

\*  $p < 0.05$  \*\*  $p < 0.01$  \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$

### ***Predicting Male-on-Female Rape Myths***

Table 5.5 presents the results for OLS regression analyses on male-on-female rape myth acceptance. Bivariate correlations and variance inflation factors were assessed to preclude potential multicollinearity of predictors. Across all models for male-on-female rape myth acceptance, the average variance inflation factor was 1.66, with no variable exceeding a variance inflation factor greater than 3.24. Model 6 established a baseline by assessing the association of male-on-female rape myth acceptance with control variables. As indicated by the Adjusted  $R^2$ , 14.79% of within-model variation was accounted for by control variables alone. As demonstrated by previous research, the respondent's gender ( $\beta = -.27, t = -8.07, p < .001$ ) was significantly associated with male-on-female rape myth acceptance, indicating female students were less accepting of male-on-female rape myths than male students. Gender was the strongest predictor of male-on-female rape myth acceptance even when controlling for other factors. The results also indicated more religious individuals ( $\beta = .18, t = 4.17, p < .001$ ) and Greek affiliated students ( $\beta = .10, t = 2.89, p < .01$ ) disproportionately accepted male-on-female rape myths. However, traditional students ( $\beta = -.09, t = -2.44, p < .05$ ) demonstrated greater resiliency against male-on-female rape myth acceptance than non-traditional students. Furthermore, prior rape education programming ( $\beta = -.10, t = -2.97, p < .01$ ) mitigated male-on-female rape myth acceptance.

Results of Model 7 indicate support for Hypothesis 1b that elements of hookup culture endorsement would exhibit significant positive associations with male-on-female rape myth acceptance. Expanding upon the baseline model, the Adjusted  $R^2$  indicated that 30.22% of the variation within the model was accounted for by control variables and hookup culture endorsement measures. The change in Adjusted  $R^2$  demonstrated that measures of hookup culture endorsement accounted for approximately 15% of the within-model variation above and beyond that which was

Table 5.5. Predictors of Male-on-Female Rape Myth Acceptance

Variables	Full Sample (n=857)						Female Only (n=465)		Male Only (n=392)	
	Model 6		Model 7		Model 8		Model 9		Model 10	
	$\beta$	SD	$\beta$	SD	$\beta$	SD	$\beta$	SD	$\beta$	SD
Gender	-0.27***	0.05	-0.12***	0.05	-0.09***	0.04	--	--	--	--
Traditional Student	-0.09*	0.06	-0.07*	0.05	-0.01	0.05	0.02	0.06	-0.03	0.07
Rel. Status (Ref. <i>Single</i> )										
In a Relationship	-0.04	0.06	-0.04	0.06	-0.05	0.05	-0.03	0.06	-0.07	0.07
Married	0.01	0.08	-0.01	0.07	-0.03	0.06	-0.06	0.09	-0.01	0.08
W/D/S	-0.04	0.12	-0.04	0.11	-0.04	0.09	-0.08*	0.12	-0.01	0.16
Greek	0.10**	0.09	0.05	0.08	0.04	0.07	0.07	0.09	0.01	0.12
Spirituality	0.00	0.03	0.05	0.03	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.03	0.01	0.03
Religiosity	0.18***	0.03	0.10*	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.01	0.03	0.07	0.03
Previous Rape Education	-0.10**	0.06	-0.10**	0.06	-0.05*	0.05	-0.07	0.06	-0.03	0.08
EHCI: Harmless			-0.03	0.03	0.02	0.03	-0.04	0.04	0.08	0.04
EHCI: Fun			-0.09	0.04	-0.11**	0.03	0.01	0.04	-0.22***	0.05
EHCI: Status			0.44***	0.03	0.27***	0.02	0.29***	0.03	0.24***	0.04
EHCI: Control			0.05	0.04	0.09*	0.03	-0.05	0.04	0.20***	0.05
EHCI: Sexual Freedom			0.06	0.04	0.02	0.03	0.03	0.04	0.02	0.05
ASI: Benevolent Sexism					0.09***	0.03	0.16***	0.05	0.05	0.05
ASI: Hostile Sexism					0.47***	0.03	0.41***	0.04	0.51***	0.04
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.15		0.30		0.51		0.40		0.54	

\* p&lt;0.05 \*\* p&lt;0.01 \*\*\* p&lt;0.001



explained by control variables. As with previous research, the belief that hookups elevate an individual's social status ( $\beta = .44, t = 11.73, p < .001$ ) was the largest predictor of male-on-female rape myth acceptance. Consistent with the baseline model, male-on-female rape myth acceptance was lower among female students ( $\beta = -.12, t = -3.59, p < .001$ ), traditional students ( $\beta = -.07, t = -2.08, p < .05$ ), and those who had previous rape education programming ( $\beta = -.10, t = -3.25, p < .01$ ). Results also indicated more religious individuals ( $\beta = .10, t = 2.39, p < .05$ ) held greater levels of male-on-female rape myth acceptance than their less religious counterparts.

Results of Model 8 provide support for Hypothesis 2b that elements of ambivalent sexism would be positively associated with male-on-female rape myth acceptance. As indicated by the Adjusted  $R^2$ , 50.96% of the variation within the model was accounted for by ambivalent sexism, hookup culture endorsement, and control variables. Hostile sexism ( $\beta = .47, t = 17.24, p < .001$ ) and benevolent sexism ( $\beta = .09, t = 3.32, p < .01$ ) each demonstrated positive associations with male-on-female rape myth acceptance. Furthermore, hostile sexism was the strongest predictor of male-on-female rape myth acceptance. As with previous models, female students ( $\beta = -.09, t = -3.42, p < .01$ ) and those with previous rape education programming ( $\beta = -.05, t = -2.00, p < .05$ ) were less accepting of male-on-female rape myths. Furthermore, male-on-female rape myth acceptance was higher among individuals who believed hookups serve to elevate social status ( $\beta = .27, t = 8.19, p < .001$ ) and promote a sense of sexual control ( $\beta = .09, t = 2.53, p < .05$ ). However, stronger beliefs that hookups are fun ( $\beta = -.11, t = -2.64, p < .01$ ) were associated with lower male-on-female rape myth acceptance.

Regarding the gender-specific analyses, Model 9 examined male-on-female rape myth acceptance among students who identified as female, whereas Model 10 assessed male-on-female rape myth acceptance among students who identified as male. The Adjusted  $R^2$  indicated

ambivalent sexism, hookup culture endorsement, and control variables accounted for 40.36% of the variation among female students and 53.87% of the variation within male students. Consistent with results of the full sample, hostile sexism was the most significant predictor of male-on-female rape myth acceptance for female students ( $\beta = .41, t = 9.84, p < .001$ ) and male students ( $\beta = .24, t = 5.02, p < .001$ ). Although hostile sexism demonstrated the largest influence among the gender-specific sub-samples, benevolent sexism ( $\beta = .15, t = 3.86, p < .001$ ) served to mitigate male-on-female rape myth acceptance among *female students only*. Furthermore, female students ( $\beta = .29, t = 6.68, p < .001$ ) and male students ( $\beta = .24, t = 5.02, p < .001$ ) who were more endorsing of beliefs that hookups elevate an individual's social status accepted male-on-female rape myths at higher rates than those who were less endorsing of such beliefs. In spite of the consistency, the influence of hookup culture endorsement demonstrated gender-specific variation. For male students, beliefs that hookups are fun ( $\beta = -.22, t = -3.60, p < .001$ ) decreased male-on-female rape myth acceptance, while beliefs that hookups provide a sense of control ( $\beta = .20, t = 3.84, p < .001$ ) increased male-on-female rape myth acceptance. Though no other factors of hookup culture endorsement were significant for female students, those who were widowed, divorced, or separated ( $\beta = -.08, t = -2.06, p < .05$ ) were less accepting of male-on-female rape myth acceptance compared to their single counterparts.

Table 5.6 provides a comparison of regression coefficients for Model 7 and 8 utilizing the Clogg et al. (1995) technique. As with female-on-female rape myth acceptance, results indicate preliminary support for the mediating influences of ambivalent sexism on the association between hookup culture endorsement and male-on-female rape myth acceptance. In addition to substantially increasing the amount of explained variability, the inclusion of ambivalent sexism

Table 5.6. A Comparison of Two Regression Models Predicting Male-on-Female Rape Myth Acceptance

	Model 7 b (SD)	Model 8 b (SD)	Change in Coefficient	Test Statistic
Intercept	1.42 (0.13)	0.04 (0.14)	1.37	16.98***
$X_1$ : Gender	-0.19 (0.05)	-0.15 (0.04)	-0.04	-0.84
$X_2$ : Traditional Student	-0.11 (0.05)	-0.02 (0.05)	-0.10	-2.08*
$X_3$ : In a Relationship	-0.08 (0.06)	-0.09 (0.05)	0.01	0.20
$X_4$ : Married	-0.03 (0.07)	-0.07 (0.06)	0.04	0.69
$X_5$ : W/D/S	-0.16 (0.11)	-0.16 (0.09)	0.00	0.01
$X_6$ : Greek	0.14 (0.08)	0.11 (0.07)	0.03	0.35
$X_7$ : SASRV: Spirituality	0.03 (0.03)	0.01 (0.02)	0.02	0.87
$X_8$ : SASRV: Religiosity	0.06 (0.03)	0.02 (0.02)	0.04	1.83*
$X_9$ : Previous Rape Education	-0.19 (0.06)	-0.10 (0.05)	-0.09	-1.83*
$X_{10}$ : EHCI: Harmless	-0.03 (0.03)	0.01 (0.03)	-0.04	-1.34
$X_{11}$ : EHCI: Fun	-0.07 (0.04)	-0.09 (0.03)	0.02	0.50
$X_{12}$ : EHCI: Status	0.33 (0.03)	0.20 (0.02)	0.13	5.53***
$X_{13}$ : EHCI: Control	0.04 (0.04)	0.07 (0.03)	-0.03	-1.07
$X_{14}$ : EHCI: Sexual Freedom	0.04 (0.04)	0.01 (0.03)	0.03	1.03
$Z_1$ : ASI: Benevolent Sexism		0.09 (0.03)		
$Z_2$ : ASI: Hostile Sexism		0.47 (0.03)		
$\hat{\sigma}$	12.68	18.36		
Adjusted $R^2$	.30	.51		

*Note.* SASRV = Self-Ascribed Spirituality and Religiosity Variables scale; EHCI = Endorsement of Hookup Culture Index.  $X_i$  variables are control variables for which statistically significant shifts of coefficients are being determined.  $Z_i$  variables are additional control variables which demonstrate a possible mediating influence on  $X_i$  variables.  $\hat{\sigma}$  = Regression Error Variance for Model. Change in Coefficients calculated by  $d_k = b^* - b$ . Test statistic calculated by  $t = d_k / s(d_k)$ .

\*  $p < 0.05$  \*\*  $p < 0.01$  \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$

measures resulted in significant changes in coefficients for traditional student status, religiosity, previous rape education, and beliefs regarding social status.

Figure 5.2 presents the recursive simultaneous equation model utilized for the mediation analysis of hookup culture endorsement and male-on-female rape myth acceptance. The model demonstrated adequate goodness-of-fit as defined by Kline (2005):  $\chi^2 (195, 80) = 947.99, p < .001$  ([CFI] = .929, [TLI] = .916, [RMSEA] = .07, [SRMR] = .09). As with the previous simultaneous equation model, each item parcel demonstrated a significant factor loading with the appropriate latent construct. Table 5.7 presents the standardized estimates for the total, direct, and specific indirect effects of note for the mediation analysis. Results indicate support for Hypothesis 3b in demonstrating partial mediation of the association between hookup culture endorsement and male-on-female rape myth acceptance. Significant total effects ( $\beta = .28, p < .001$ ) were noted for the association of hookup culture endorsement and male-on-female rape myth acceptance. Additionally, decomposition of the total effects indicated a significant direct effect ( $\beta = .13, p < .001$ ) of hookup culture endorsement on male-on-female rape myth acceptance, as well as a significant specific indirect effect ( $\beta = .15, p < .001$ ) of hookup culture endorsement on male-on-female rape myth acceptance mediated by ambivalent sexism.

Table 5.7. Maximum Likelihood Robust Parameter Estimates of Direct and Indirect Effects

Parameter	Standardized	SE
Total Effects	.28***	.04
Direct Effects	.13***	.04
Specific Indirect Effects	.15***	.04

\*  $p < 0.05$  \*\*  $p < 0.01$  \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$

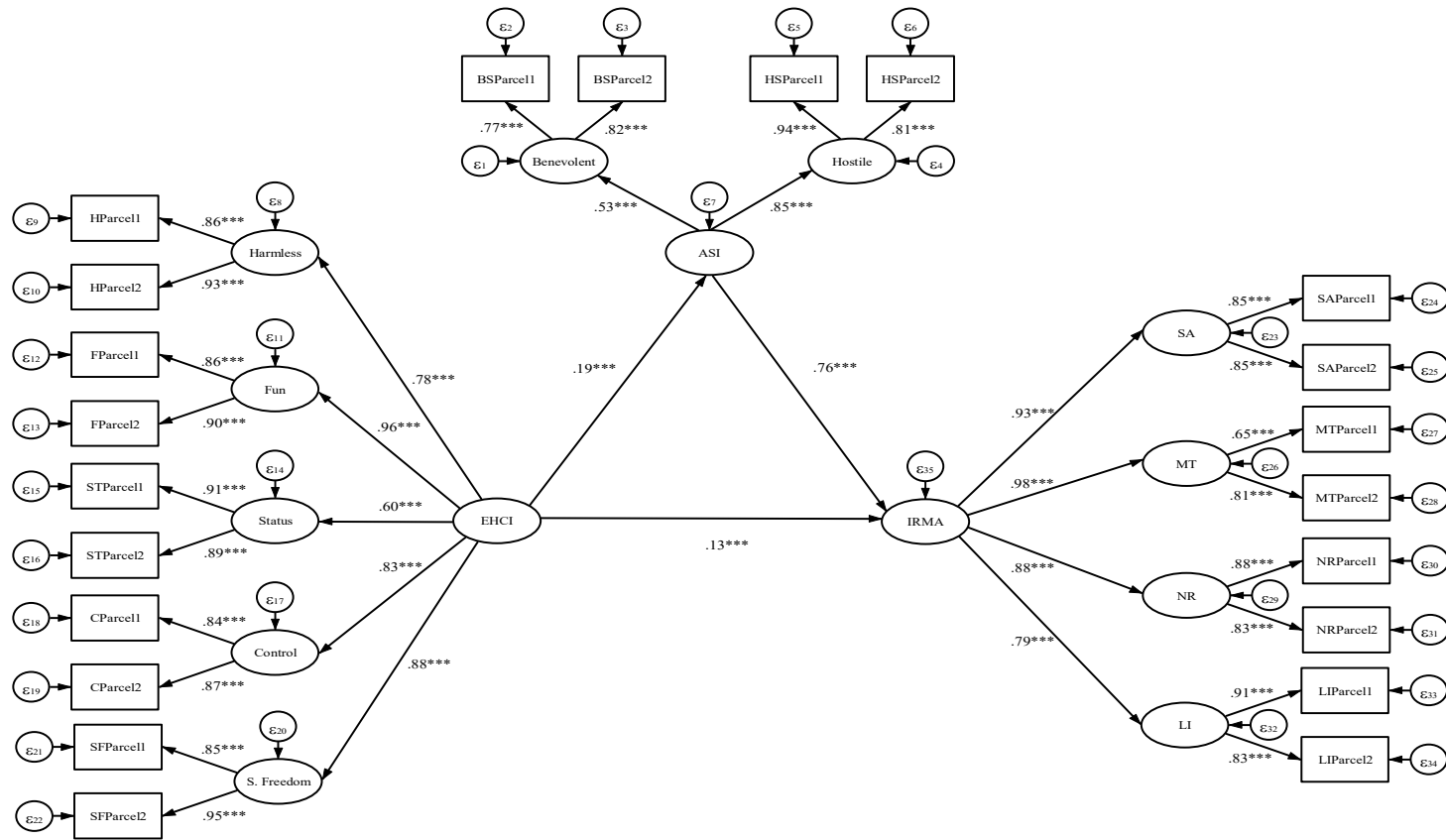


Figure 5.2. Mediation Analysis of the IRMA

Note: Standardized coefficients are displayed.

\*  $p < 0.05$  \*\*  $p < 0.01$  \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$

### ***Predicting Aggregated Male Rape Myths***

Table 5.4 presents the results for OLS regression analyses on male rape myth acceptance. Bivariate correlations and variance inflation factors were assessed to preclude potential multicollinearity of predictors. Across all models for male rape myth acceptance, the average variance inflation factor was 1.66, with no variable exceeding a variance inflation factor greater than 3.29. Model 11 established a baseline by assessing the association of aggregated male rape myth acceptance with control variables. As indicated by the Adjusted  $R^2$ , 16.96% of the variation in the model was accounted for by control variables. In line with extant research, female students ( $\beta = -.22, t = -6.82, p < .001$ ) were less accepting of male rape myths than their male counterparts. Traditional student status ( $\beta = -.15, t = -4.07, p < .001$ ) and being in a relationship were negatively associated with male rape myth acceptance ( $\beta = -.08, t = -2.38, p < .05$ ). Furthermore, the results indicated religiosity ( $\beta = .19, t = 4.43, p < .001$ ) and Greek affiliation ( $\beta = .10, t = 3.03, p < .01$ ) increased students' propensity of accepting male rape myths. However, prior rape education programming ( $\beta = -.13, t = -3.95, p < .001$ ) mitigated male rape myth acceptance.

Results of Model 12 provide support for Hypothesis 1c in that the belief that hookups serve to elevate an individual's social status ( $\beta = .43, t = 11.49, p < .001$ ) exhibited a significant positive association with aggregated male rape myth acceptance. Expanding upon the baseline model, the Adjusted  $R^2$  indicated 30.82% of the variation within the model was explained by control variables and hookup culture endorsement. Furthermore, the change in Adjusted  $R^2$  indicated the measures of hookup culture endorsement predict 13.86% of the model variation above and beyond the influence of the control variables. Consistent with the baseline model, gender ( $\beta = -.08, t = -2.37, p < .05$ ), traditional student status ( $\beta = -.12, t = -3.74, p < .001$ ), relationship status ( $\beta = -.08, t =$

Table 5.8. Predictors of Male Rape Myth Acceptance

Variables	Full Sample (n=857)						Female Only (n=465)		Male Only (n=392)	
	Model 11		Model 12		Model 13		Model 14		Model 15	
	$\beta$	SD	$\beta$	SD	$\beta$	SD	$\beta$	SD	$\beta$	SD
Gender	-0.22***	0.05	-0.08*	0.05	-0.06*	0.04	--	--	--	--
Traditional Student	-0.15***	0.06	-0.12***	0.05	-0.06*	0.04	-0.05	0.06	-0.06	0.07
Rel. Status (Ref. <i>Single</i> )										
In a Relationship	-0.08*	0.06	-0.08**	0.05	-0.08**	0.04	-0.11**	0.06	-0.07	0.07
Married	-0.01	0.07	-0.03	0.07	-0.05	0.06	-0.09*	0.08	-0.01	0.08
W/D/S	-0.02	0.12	-0.02	0.11	-0.02	0.09	-0.06	0.11	0.01	0.16
Greek	0.10**	0.09	0.06*	0.08	0.06*	0.07	0.04	0.08	0.07	0.12
Spirituality	0.01	0.03	0.05	0.03	0.01	0.02	0.02	0.03	0.00	0.03
Religiosity	0.19***	0.03	0.11**	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.04	0.03	0.03	0.03
Previous Rape Education	-0.13***	0.06	-0.13***	0.05	-0.09**	0.05	-0.06	0.06	-0.12**	0.08
EHCI: Harmless			0.01	0.03	0.05	0.03	-0.02	0.03	0.14**	0.04
EHCI: Fun			-0.06	0.04	-0.09*	0.03	0.03	0.04	-0.20**	0.05
EHCI: Status			0.43***	0.03	0.26***	0.02	0.28***	0.03	0.24***	0.04
EHCI: Control			0.01	0.03	0.05	0.03	-0.05	0.04	0.11*	0.05
EHCI: Sexual Freedom			0.03	0.03	-0.02	0.03	0.00	0.04	-0.04	0.05
ASI: Benevolent Sexism					0.22***	0.03	0.29***	0.04	0.18***	0.05
ASI: Hostile Sexism					0.38***	0.03	0.30***	0.04	0.42***	0.04
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.17		0.31		0.50		0.42		0.51	

\* p&lt;0.05 \*\* p&lt;0.01 \*\*\* p&lt;0.001

-2.59,  $p < .05$ ), and exposure to prior rape education ( $\beta = -.13$ ,  $t = -4.30$ ,  $p < .001$ ) were negatively associated with aggregated male rape myth acceptance. Greek Life affiliated students ( $\beta = .06$ ,  $t = 1.99$ ,  $p < .05$ ) were more accepting of aggregated male rape myths than the general student population. Additionally, students who were more religious ( $\beta = .11$ ,  $t = 2.72$ ,  $p < .01$ ) were more accepting of such myths than less religious students.

Results of Model 13 provide support for Hypothesis 2c that ambivalent sexism would be positively associated with aggregated male rape myth acceptance. The Adjusted  $R^2$  indicated 49.79% of the variation within the model was explained by ambivalent sexism, hookup culture endorsement, and control variables. Of this, the change in Adjusted  $R^2$  indicated 18.97% of the variation within the model was accounted for by measures of ambivalent sexism alone. Students that were more endorsing of hostile sexist beliefs ( $\beta = .38$ ,  $t = 13.57$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and benevolent sexist beliefs ( $\beta = .22$ ,  $t = 7.97$ ,  $p < .001$ ) expressed higher levels of aggregated male rape myth acceptance than those who were less endorsing of such sentiments. Upon controlling for ambivalent sexism, a complex association emerged for hookup culture endorsement and aggregated male rape myth acceptance. As with the previous model, beliefs that hookups served to elevate an individual's social status ( $\beta = .26$ ,  $t = 7.91$ ,  $p < .001$ ) increased aggregated male rape myth acceptance; however, beliefs that hookups are fun ( $\beta = -.09$ ,  $t = -2.00$ ,  $p < .05$ ) served to decrease the acceptance of such rape myths. Apart from the lack of a significant association for religiosity, the control variables demonstrated significant associations consistent with the previous models.

Regarding the gender-specific analyses, the Adjusted  $R^2$  indicated ambivalent sexism, hookup culture endorsement, and control variables accounted for 42.05% and 51.24% of the variation among female students and male students respectively. Though hostile and benevolent



sexism influenced aggregated male rape myth acceptance similarly for female and male students, the influences of hookup culture endorsement and control variables were nuanced by gender. Though no control variables were significantly associated with aggregated male rape myth acceptance for male students, female students that were in a relationship ( $\beta = -.11, t = -2.75, p < .01$ ) or married ( $\beta = -.09, t = -2.21, p < .05$ ) at the time of the study were less accepting of aggregated male rape myths than single female students. Furthermore, prior rape education ( $\beta = -.12, t = -3.10, p < .01$ ) served to mitigate aggregated male rape myth acceptance for *male students only*. Though status was positively associated with increased aggregated male rape myth acceptance among female ( $\beta = .28, t = 6.72, p < .001$ ) and male students ( $\beta = .24, t = 4.85, p < .001$ ), additional facets of hookup culture endorsement significantly influenced aggregated male rape myth acceptance among *male students only*. Beliefs that hookups were harmless ( $\beta = .14, t = 2.66, p < .01$ ) and provided a sense of control in sexual situations ( $\beta = .11, t = 2.06, p < .05$ ) increased aggregated male rape myth acceptance, whereas, beliefs that hookups are fun ( $\beta = -.20, t = -3.06, p < .01$ ) decreased aggregated rape myth acceptance.

Table 5.9 provides a comparison of the results for Model 12 and 13 utilizing the Clogg et al. (1995) technique. Results indicate substantially increased variability and significant coefficient changes occurred upon introducing measures of ambivalent sexism into the model. Specifically, significant coefficient changes between Model 12 and 13 were demonstrated regarding the influence of traditional student status, religiosity, and beliefs regarding social status. As such, the results provide preliminary support for Hypothesis 3 by suggesting ambivalent sexism mediates the relationship between hookup culture endorsement and aggregated male rape myth acceptance.

Table 5.9. A Comparison of Two Regression Models Predicting Aggregated Male Rape Myth Acceptance

	Model 12 b (SD)	Model 13 b (SD)	Change in Coefficient	Test Statistic
Intercept	1.49 (0.13)	0.08 (0.14)	1.41	21.27***
$X_1$ : Gender	-0.12 (0.05)	-0.09 (0.04)	-0.03	-0.64
$X_2$ : Traditional Student	-0.19 (0.05)	-0.09 (0.04)	-0.10	-2.35*
$X_3$ : In a Relationship	-0.14 (0.05)	-0.14 (0.04)	0.01	0.12
$X_4$ : Married	-0.06 (0.07)	-0.10 (0.06)	0.04	0.78
$X_5$ : W/D/S	-0.08 (0.11)	-0.07 (0.09)	-0.01	-0.09
$X_6$ : Greek	0.16 (0.08)	0.15 (0.07)	0.01	0.10
$X_7$ : SASRV: Spirituality	0.04 (0.03)	0.00 (0.02)	0.03	1.46
$X_8$ : SASRV: Religiosity	0.07 (0.03)	0.02 (0.02)	0.05	2.38*
$X_9$ : Previous Rape Education	-0.24 (0.05)	-0.15 (0.05)	-0.08	-1.87
$X_{10}$ : EHCI: Harmless	0.00 (0.03)	0.04 (0.03)	-0.03	-1.35
$X_{11}$ : EHCI: Fun	-0.04 (0.04)	-0.07 (0.03)	0.02	0.66
$X_{12}$ : EHCI: Status	0.31 (0.03)	0.19 (0.02)	0.12	5.76***
$X_{13}$ : EHCI: Control	0.01 (0.03)	0.04 (0.03)	-0.03	-1.23
$X_{14}$ : EHCI: Sexual Freedom	0.02 (0.03)	-0.01 (0.03)	0.03	1.21
$Z_1$ : ASI: Benevolent Sexism		0.22 (0.03)		
$Z_2$ : ASI: Hostile Sexism		0.38 (0.03)		
$\hat{\sigma}$	11.93	16.57		
Adjusted $R^2$	.31	.50		

*Note.* SASRV = Self-Ascribed Spirituality and Religiosity Variables scale; EHCI = Endorsement of Hookup Culture Index.  $X_i$  variables are control variables for which statistically significant shifts of coefficients are being determined.  $Z_i$  variables are additional control variables which demonstrate a possible mediating influence on  $X_i$  variables.  $\hat{\sigma}$  = Regression Error Variance for Model. Change in Coefficients calculated by  $d_k = b^* - b$ . Test statistic calculated by  $t = d_k / s(d_k)$ .

\*  $p < 0.05$  \*\*  $p < 0.01$  \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$

Figure 5.3 presents the recursive simultaneous equation model utilized for the mediation analysis of hookup culture endorsement and aggregated male rape myth acceptance. The model demonstrated adequate goodness-of-fit as defined by Kline (2005):  $\chi^2 (94, 58) = 285.59, p < .001$  ([CFI] = .960, [TLI] = .949, [RMSEA] = .06, [SRMR] = .08). As expected, each item parcel exhibited a significant factor loading with the appropriate latent construct. Table 5.10 presents the standardized estimates for the total, direct, and specific indirect effects of interest for the mediation analysis. Significant total effects ( $\beta = .32, p < .001$ ) were noted for the association of hookup culture endorsement with aggregated male rape myth acceptance. Though a significant specific indirect effect ( $\beta = .18, p < .001$ ) was noted for the association hookup culture endorsement on rape myth acceptance mediated by ambivalent sexism, the direct effect ( $\beta = .06, p = .150$ ) of hookup culture endorsement on aggregated male rape myth acceptance was non-significant. Such results indicate support for Hypothesis 3c in demonstrating the full mediation of the association between hookup culture endorsement and aggregated male rape myth acceptance by ambivalent sexism.

Table 5.10. Maximum Likelihood Robust Parameter Estimates of Direct and Indirect Effects

Parameter	Standardized	SE
Total Effects	.24***	.04
Direct Effects	.06	.05
Specific Indirect Effects	.18***	.04

\*  $p < 0.05$  \*\*  $p < 0.01$  \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$

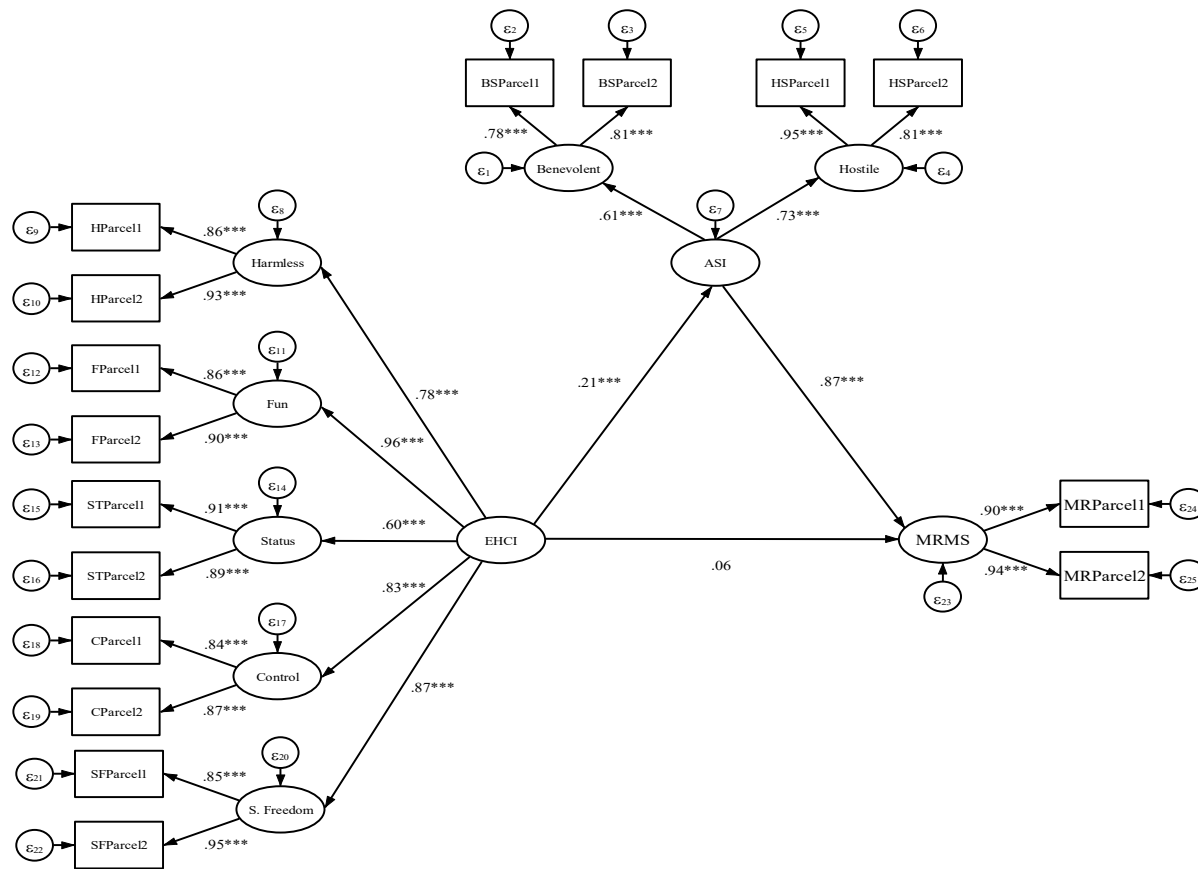


Figure 5.3 Mediation Analysis of the MRMS

*Note:* Standardized coefficients are displayed.

\*  $p < 0.05$  \*\*  $p < 0.01$  \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$

## Discussion

This chapter made two contributions to the research on rape myth acceptance. First, it provided a comparative assessment regarding the association of hookup culture endorsement with female-on-female, male-on-female, and aggregated male rape myth acceptance. Second, it examined the degree to which ambivalent sexism, as an indicator of heteronormativity, mediated the associations of hookup culture endorsement with female-on-female, male-on-female, and aggregated male rape myth acceptance. Broadly, results suggested female students in the United States were less accepting of rape myths than their male counterparts. Such findings substantiate prior research demonstrating women are less accepting of male-on-female rape mythology (Ching & Burke, 1999; Davies et al., 2012; Reling et al., 2018a, 2018b) and aggregated male rape mythology (Chapleau et al., 2008; Davies et al., 2012; Kassing et al., 2005) relative to their male counterparts. Furthermore, results indicated U.S. college students with previous exposure to rape education were less accepting of each form of rape myth acceptance relative to those with no such exposure, corroborating previous research on male-on-female rape myths (Anderson & Whiston, 2005; Hertzog & Yeilding, 2009; McMahon, 2010). Consistent with prior research, students affiliated with Greek life organizations, as well as those self-ascribing as more religious, were more accepting of each form of rape myth acceptance (Bleeker & Murnen, 2005; Davies et al., 2012; Foubert et al., 2006; McMahon, 2010; Reling et al., 2018a, 2018b). However, the predictive capacity of each dissipated after the inclusion of cultural and structural covariates. Furthermore, results indicated traditional college-aged students were less accepting of each form of rape myth relative to their non-traditional aged peers.

The overall results supported Hypothesis 1, which predicted that believing hookups serve as a mechanism to elevate an individual's social status was positively associated with each form

of rape myth acceptance across the full sample and gender-specific samples. Such findings are consistent with prior research illustrating beliefs concerning social status elevation significantly predicted male-on-female (Reling et al., 2018a, 2018b) and aggregated male rape myth acceptance (Reling et al., 2018b). The overall association of hookup culture endorsement with each form of rape myth acceptance posed a few additional caveats when controlling for social structural influences. First, believing that hookups allow one to invoke control over sexual situations was positively associated with each form of rape myth acceptance among the full sample. Second, believing that hookups are fun was negatively associated with male-on-female and aggregated male rape myth acceptance among the full sample. Finally, believing that hookups are harmless was positively associated with aggregated male rape myth acceptance among the full sample. Examinations of the gender-specific models indicated each of these associations were significant *for male students alone*. Such findings illustrate consistency with prior research indicating the complex relationship among hookup culture endorsement and rape myth acceptance (Reling et al., 2018a; 2018b). However, where prior research demonstrated gender-specific differences *for male-on-female rape myth acceptance alone* (Reling et al., 2018b), these results indicate gender-specific differences *for each form of rape myth acceptance*.

Collectively, these results suggest investment in conventional gender norms and heterosexual relationship dynamics relate to each form of rape myth acceptance among college students. Men, who benefit more from heteronormative relationships and traditional gender relations (Currier, 2013; Kalish, 2013; Kimmel, 2008; Wade, 2017), are more likely to endorse each form of rape myth acceptance than women. Though hooking up with the right men and strategically utilizing vague “hookup” language to downplay the level of physical intimacy which they share with casual partners can serve to elevate women’s social status on college campuses,

men disproportionately benefit from hookup culture (Currier, 2013; Kalish, 2013; Kimmel, 2008; Sweeney, 2014a; 2014b; Wade, 2017). For men, cultural norms of masculinity create a vested interest in emphasizing the casual nature of sexual encounters (Currier, 2013; Wade, 2017). Not only can men strategically employ vague “hookup language to overstate their level of intimacy in casual sexual encounters, but men benefit also benefit from how frequently they engage in hookups (Kalish, 2013; Kimmel, 2008; Sweeney, 2014a, 2014b; Wade, 2017). As such, masculinity dictates an easily achieved additional means of elevating one’s status among peers: the more hookups which men engage in, the better (Kalish, 2013; Kimmel, 2008; Reling et al., 2018b; Wade, 2017).

Furthermore, results supported each variation of Hypothesis 2, as measures of ambivalent sexism were positively associated with female-on-female, male-on-female, and aggregated male rape myth acceptance. These trends are consistent with previous work denoting the influence of ambivalent sexism on female and male rape myth acceptance (Abrams et al., 2003; Chapleau et al. 2007, 2008; Glick & Fiske, 1997; Viki & Abrams, 2002; Viki et al., 2004). Across analyses for the full and gender-specific samples, hostile sexism served as the strongest predictor of each form of rape myth acceptance. Though benevolent sexism also increased aggregated male rape myth acceptance *for male and female students*, endorsing benevolent sexism increased female-on-female and male-on-female rape myth acceptance *for female students only*. Such results further illustrate the manner in which traditional gender roles and compulsory heterosexuality influence rape myth acceptance and hookup culture endorsement. Serving to stigmatize deviations from traditional gender roles and embodiment respectively, hostile sexism and benevolent sexism each constitute a reaffirmation of hegemonic masculinity and femininity, as well as compulsory heterosexuality (Chapleau et al., 2008; Glick & Fiske, 1996; Viki & Abrams, 2002; Viki et al., 2004). Men and women who internalized ambivalent sexist attitudes have demonstrated beliefs

that male survivors must have deviated from hegemonic masculine norms which dictate “real” men are capable of fending off any potential attackers (Chapleau et al., 2008; Davies & McCartney, 2003; Davies et al., 2006; Davies et al., 2012; Sleath & Bull, 2010; Struckman-Johnson & Struckman-Johnson, 1992) and imply men’s innate enthusiasm to seize any intimate heterosexual opportunities (Clements-Schreiber & Rempel, 1995; Stermac et al., 2004). Further, the internalization of benevolent sexist attitudes among women stigmatizes female survivors for any perceived deviations from hegemonic feminine norms which dictate appropriate sexual gatekeeping through feminine embodiment and bodily practice (Burt, 1980; Reling et al., 2018b; Ward, 1995).

Finally, results supported each variation of Hypothesis 3, as ambivalent sexism demonstrated partial-to-full mediation for each form of rape myth acceptance. Though ambivalent sexism partially mediated the association between hookup culture endorsement and *each form of female rape myth acceptance*, ambivalent sexism fully mediated the association between hookup culture endorsement and aggregated male rape myth acceptance. Such results provide preliminary support that hookup culture endorsement and rape myth acceptance may be viewed as sexual and gendered actions which are structured by and reproduce heteronormative social structures through the endorsement of unequal gender relations and compulsory heterosexuality. Though not as ubiquitous as popularly believed, hegemonic masculine norms avoiding commitment and emotional intimacy influence young people’s identities and behaviors. Hookups serve to reinforce traditional sexual scripts which dictate women act as the sexual gatekeepers and men as the sexual initiators (Armstrong et al., 2012; Bartoli & Clark, 2006; Bernston & Hoffman, 2014; Bogle, 2008; Kalish, 2013). Furthermore, women’s sexual pleasure is viewed as secondary, devaluing their experiences relative to those of men (Armstrong et al., 2012; Kimmel, 2008; Wade, 2017).



In addition, male-on-female rape myths embody the perceived normality of men's sexual aggression, identifying culpable victims as those who stray from the norms prescribed by emphasized femininity while simultaneously exonerating offenders by identifying their strict adherence to the norms of hegemonic masculinity (McMahon & Farmer, 2011; Reling et al., 2018b). Adherence to these beliefs indicates the endorsement of heteronormative sexual interactions and gender power inequalities, as these such myths regularly portray women as poor sexual gatekeepers and attribute blame based upon their mannerisms and attire, while constructing offenders as "good guys" who were carried away by their natural sexual proclivities (McMahon, 2010; McMahon & Farmer, 2011; Reling et al., 2018a). Furthermore, female-on-male and male-on-male rape myth acceptance embody situated actions which simultaneously accomplish gender and sexuality through the rejection of non-heteronormative female-initiated sexual interaction (for female-on-male rape myths) and homosexuality (for male-on-male rape myths).

## CHAPTER 6. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Though scholars have thoroughly investigated male-on-female rape myths over the past four decades, substantially fewer efforts have sought to understand gender transgressive forms of sexual violence (Reling et al., 2018b; Schulze et al., 2019). Aside from a growing body of research regarding men's sexual victimization in prisons, relatively few efforts have examined rape myths concerning male survivors (Chapleau et al., 2008; Davies et al., 2006; Davies et al., 2012; Sabo, Kupers, & London, 2001; Struckman-Johnson & Struckman-Johnson, 2006; Reling et al., 2018b). Furthermore, examinations of female-on-female rape have been largely absent from the literature (Reling et al., 2018b; Schulze et al., 2019). Such disparities have limited conceptualizations regarding the underlying mechanisms which perpetuate rape mythology, as well as hindered the comparative assessment of various forms of rape myth acceptance. Results of the analyses in this study contribute to this discussion by demonstrating heteronormativity exerts a consistent mediating influence on the association of hookup culture endorsement across non-heterosexual female, heterosexual female, and aggregated male rape myth acceptance.

To reach this conclusion, three sets of analyses were conducted. First, the analyses in Chapter 3 determined the degree to which heteronormative discourse structures heterosexual collegiate perspectives of female-on-female rape to reflect thematic elements present in male-on-female rape myths. Second, the analyses in Chapter 4 determined how female-on-female rape myth acceptance would be operationalized in subsequent analyses by developing, piloting, and validating a psychometric instrument assessing female-on-female rape myths. Finally, the analyses in Chapter 5 provided a comparative assessment of the significance of a commonly used set of predictors across three forms of rape myth acceptance, exploring the mediating influence of heteronormativity on the association of rape culture and hookup culture. This chapter briefly

summarizes the results of these analyses while highlighting the contributions made to the rape culture literature.

## **Research Objectives**

The aim of the current study was dualistic in nature. The primary research objective addressed by this project was the development, piloting, and validation of a psychometric instrument to assess female-on-female rape myth acceptance. Though scholars have emphasized the examination of female rape myth acceptance over the past four decades, such efforts limited conceptualization definitions of female rape myth acceptance to perceptions of rape involving a male offender and a female survivor (Chapleau et al., 2008; Davies et al., 2012; Reling et al., 2018a, 2018b; Schulze et al., 2019). As such, there has been limited emphasis directed towards understanding female-on-female rape (Reling et al., 2018b; Schulze et al., 2019). The scarcity of such efforts remains problematic, as evidence suggests non-heterosexual women experience greater rates of victimization relative to their heterosexual counterparts (Rothman et al., 2011; Schulze et al., 2019; Walter et al., 2013) and heteronormativity establishes additional barriers to social support services post-victimization (Ristock, 2005; Schulze et al., 2019; Todahl et al., 2009). The second research objective addressed by this project was to provide a comparative assessment of the demographic, ideological, cultural, and social structural influences on non-heterosexual female, heterosexual female, and aggregated male rape myth acceptance.

To this end, the current study drew upon literatures regarding rape culture, hookup culture, and gender/sexualities in order to address four sub-questions. First, how do individuals perceive non-heterosexual incidents of female rape? Second, to what extent do these perceptions discursively construct female-on-female rape as a reflection of male-on-female rape myths. Third, to what extent is hookup culture endorsement associated with various forms of rape myth

acceptance? Finally, to what extent do structural indicators of heteronormativity, such as sexist attitudes, mediate the associations between rape myth acceptance and hookup culture endorsement? To address these questions, the current study utilized a mixed methodological approach consisting of focus groups and large-scale surveys utilizing non-probability sampling of U.S. college students.

### **Findings Regarding Collegiate Discourse on Female-on-female rape**

Analyses conducted in Chapter 3 addressed questions regarding the operationalization of female-on-female rape myth acceptance. The findings contribute to the broader understanding of rape culture by highlighting the social structural influences which guide and reinforce collegiate perceptions of a historically neglected form of sexual violence (Reling et al., 2018b; Schulze et al., 2019). Though evidence suggests queer, lesbian, and bisexual women experience greater rates of sexual victimization relative to their heterosexual counterparts, few efforts have examined societal reactions to non-heterosexual female victimization (Martin et al., 2011; Rothman et al., 2011; Schulze et al., 2019; Walters et al., 2013). Data collected from four focus groups suggest heteronormative discourse structures collegiate perceptions of female-on-female rape by establishing three broad categories of rape myths: 1) Victim-Blaming; 2) Harm Mitigation; and 3) Situational Redefinition. Collectively, these findings suggest female-on-female rape broadly reflects similar thematic elements present within male-on-female rape myths. Such findings substantiate recent qualitative efforts suggesting prevailing notions of hegemonic masculinities and femininities reflect the oppositional sexism inherent across heterosexual and female-on-female rape myths (Schulze et al., 2019).

Determining collegiate perceptions regarding female-on-female rape held several notable benefits for future research. First, the examination of female-on-female rape myth acceptance

bolsters the ability of future research to advance theoretical understandings of rape culture in relation to social structure. Though prior evidence has suggested an association between rape culture and heteronormativity, such efforts often failed to account for how heteronormative social structure influences perceptions of female-on-female rape (Kimmel, 2008; Reling et al., 2018a, 2018b, Schulze et al., 2019; Wade, 2017). Efforts to address this issue remain important as heteronormative social structures have been noted to construct additional barriers for non-heterosexual survivors to access social support services (Ristock, 2005; Schulze et al., 2019; Todahl et al., 2009).

The findings of Chapter 3 engage with this issue by illustrating similar heteronormative discourse prevalent in male-on-female rape myths is used to evaluate the legitimacy of female-on-female rape. Drawing upon heteronormative textual relations of power (i.e., masculine dominance/feminine submission), survivors and offenders were evaluated for any perceived deviations from the sex-gender-heterosexuality structure (Burt, 1980; Chapleau et al., 2008; Messerschmidt, 2014; Schippers, 2007; Schulze et al., 2019). As with male-on-female rape myths, survivors were viewed as poor sexual gatekeepers who failed to properly embody the norms of hegemonic femininity, precipitating their own victimization due to their body language, sexual history, or consent prior to the assault (Becker & Tinkler, 2015; Burt, 1980; McMahon & Farmer, 2011; Reling et al., 2018a, 2018b; Schulze, 2019). Likewise, offenders were sympathetically interpreted as unintentionally causing harm as a result of being carried away with excitement or misunderstanding the extent to which the survivor wanted to experiment (McMahon & Farmer, 2011; Schulze et al., 2019). Furthermore, in relying upon the traditional model of sex, instances of female-on-female rape were redefined as non-sexual as a result of lacking penile-vaginal penetration (Bogle, 2007; Jackson, 2006; Laumann, Ellingson, Mahay, Paik, & Youm, 2004).

Together, these findings contribute to the broader literature on rape myth acceptance by noting the common heteronormative underpinnings of heterosexual female and female-on-female rape myth acceptance, providing the basis for future comparative examinations regarding the influence of social structure across each form of female rape myth acceptance. In addition, these findings provided the foundation for the development, piloting, and validation of the first multidimensional psychometric assessment of female-on-female rape myth acceptance.

### **Findings Regarding Instrument Development and Validation**

Analyses conducted in Chapter 4 further addressed questions regarding the operationalization of female-on-female rape myth acceptance by assessing the validity and reliability of the proposed Female-on-female rape myth Scale. Though recent efforts have sought to develop an identity inclusive validated psychometric instrument, such efforts treated non-heterosexual male and female-on-female rape myths as an aggregate without interrogating the fit of each as an individual multidimensional construct (Schulze et al., 2019). Such efforts miss the potential nuance of each form of rape myth acceptance by reducing items relevant to a single individual non-heterosexual dyad. The findings of Chapter 4 overcome such issues by drawing upon the findings of Chapter 3 to develop, pilot, and validate a multidimensional instrument to exclusively assess female-on-female rape myth acceptance. Data collected from two independent samples suggested that female-on-female rape myth acceptance reflects three distinct, yet related, concepts: 1) Victim-Blaming; 2) Harm Mitigation; and 3) Situational Redefinition. Though the results indicated the most appropriate utilization of the FFRMS scale would reflect the three-factor solution, the intercorrelations among factors suggested the FFRMS scale could also be utilized to reflect the generalized concept of female-on-female rape myth acceptance. Such a finding reflects more recent re-validation efforts for the IRMA-U, which indicated the instrument could be treated

either as a measure of general male-on-female rape myth acceptance or as a measure of the three elements comprising the general construct (Chahal et al., 2017).

Though assessments of construct validity produced satisfactory results, the appropriate correlations with related measures were indicative of three noteworthy implications. First, the FFRMS demonstrated strong, positive associations with measures of heterosexual female and aggregated male rape myth acceptance, indicating that the FFRMS does indeed measure facets of female-on-female rape myth acceptance. These results were consistent with prior research demonstrating high levels of intercorrelation among measures of heterosexual female and aggregated male rape myth acceptance (Chapleau et al., 2008; Davies et al., 2012; Rosenstein, 2015), providing strong evidence of construct validity for the FFRMS.

Second, by closely examining the correlations between the FFRMS subscales and the IRMA-U subscales, an interesting pattern emerges. Though moderate-to-strong positive associations were exhibited for each of the IRMA-U subscales, the correlations for the IRMA-U She Lied subscale was notably weaker. In considering the conceptualized FFRMS model, as well as examining the reflective indicators in each subscale, it becomes clear that the reflective indicators were not constructed in such a manner to directly elicit perceptions of survivor dishonesty. This suggests further scale development may be necessary to ensure the FFRMS provides an exhaustive measure of female-on-female rape myth acceptance which is also attentive to perceptions of survivor dishonesty. Although each of the subscales may capture elements of perceived survivor dishonesty, further conceptual revision may necessitate the examination of a four-factor model distinguishing such sentiments from victim-blaming, harm mitigation, and situational redefinition. Furthermore, the conceptualization of each FFRMS subscale were reflective of the conceptualizations for the remaining IRMA-U subscales. For example, a closer

conceptual relationship existed between the FFRMS Victim-Blaming subscale and the IRMA-U She Asked for It subscale since both were respectively constructed to reflect discourses that cast blame upon survivors of non-heterosexual and male-on-female rape. Such findings are reflective of the broader literature indicating strong, positive associations among rape myth acceptance, victim-blaming, and offender exoneration (Chapleau et al., 2008; Davies & McCartney, 2003; Davies et al., 2012).

Finally, the FFRMS exhibited moderate, positive correlations with ambivalent sexism and hookup culture endorsement, providing preliminary support for the theoretical orientation adopted by the broader dissertation which views rape myth acceptance and hookup culture endorsement as situated actions guided by and reinforcing heteronormative social structure. Such associations reflect prior research demonstrating the agitating influence of ambivalent sexism (Chapleau et al., 2008; Davies et al., 2001, 2008; Lerner, 1980) and hookup culture endorsement (Reling et al., 2018a, 2018b) on rape myth acceptance.

### **Findings Regarding Rape Culture, Hookup Culture, and Social Structure**

The analyses in Chapter 5 addressed questions regarding the association between rape culture, hookup culture, and social structure. This chapter made two contributions to the research on rape myth acceptance. First, it provided a comparative assessment regarding the association of hookup culture endorsement with non-heterosexual female, heterosexual female, and aggregated male rape myth acceptance. Second, it examined the degree to which ambivalent sexism, as an indicator of heteronormativity, mediated the associations of hookup culture endorsement with non-heterosexual female, heterosexual female, and aggregated male rape myth acceptance.

Broadly, results suggested female students in the United States were less accepting of rape myths than their male counterparts. Such findings substantiate prior research demonstrating



women are less accepting of male-on-female rape mythology (Ching & Burke, 1999; Davies et al., 2012; Reling et al., 2018a, 2018b) and aggregated male rape mythology (Chapleau et al., 2008; Davies et al., 2012; Kassing et al., 2005) relative to their male counterparts. Furthermore, results indicated U.S. college students with previous exposure to rape education were less accepting of each form of rape myth acceptance relative to those with no such exposure, corroborating previous research on male-on-female rape myths (Anderson & Whiston, 2005; Hertzog & Yeilding, 2009; McMahon, 2010). Consistent with prior research, students affiliated with Greek life organizations, as well as those self-ascribing as more religious, were more accepting of each form of rape myth acceptance (Bleeker & Murnen, 2005; Davies et al., 2012; Foubert et al., 2006; McMahon, 2010; Reling et al., 2018a, 2018b). However, the predictive capacity of each dissipated after the inclusion of cultural and structural covariates. Furthermore, results indicated traditional college-aged students were less accepting of each form of rape myth relative to their non-traditional aged peers.

The overall results supported Hypothesis 1, which predicted that believing hookups serve as a mechanism to elevate an individual's social status was positively associated with each form of rape myth acceptance across the full sample and gender-specific samples. Such findings are consistent with prior research illustrating beliefs concerning social status elevation significantly predicted heterosexual female (Reling et al., 2018a, 2018b) and aggregated male rape myth acceptance (Reling et al., 2018b). The overall association of hookup culture endorsement with each form of rape myth acceptance posed a few additional caveats when controlling for social structural influences. First, believing that hookups allow one to invoke control over sexual situations was positively associated with each form of rape myth acceptance among the full sample. Second, believing that hookups are fun was negatively associated with heterosexual female and aggregated male rape myth acceptance among the full sample. Finally, believing that

hookups are harmless was positively associated with aggregated male rape myth acceptance among the full sample. Examinations of the gender-specific models indicated each of these associations were significant *for male students alone*. Such findings illustrate consistency with prior research indicating the complex relationship among hookup culture endorsement and rape myth acceptance (Reling et al., 2018a; 2018b). However, whereas prior research demonstrated gender-specific differences *for male-on-female rape myth acceptance alone* (Reling et al., 2018b), these results indicate gender-specific differences *for each form of rape myth acceptance*.

Collectively, these results suggest investment in conventional gender norms and heterosexual relationship dynamics relate to each form of rape myth acceptance among college students. Men, who benefit more from heteronormative relationships and traditional gender relations (Currier, 2013; Kalish, 2013; Kimmel, 2008; Wade, 2017), are more likely to endorse each form of rape myth acceptance than women. Though hooking up with the right men and strategically utilizing vague “hookup” language to downplay the level of physical intimacy which they share with casual partners can serve to elevate women’s social status on college campuses, men disproportionately benefit from hookup culture (Currier, 2013; Kalish, 2013; Kimmel, 2008; Sweeney, 2014a; 2014b; Wade, 2017). For men, cultural norms of masculinity create a vested interest in emphasizing the casual nature of sexual encounters (Currier, 2013; Wade, 2017). Not only can men strategically employ vague “hookup language to overstate their level of intimacy in casual sexual encounters, but men benefit also benefit from how frequently they engage in hookups (Kalish, 2013; Kimmel, 2008; Sweeney, 2014a, 2014b; Wade, 2017). As such, masculinity dictates an easily achieved additional means of elevating one’s status among peers: the more hookups which men engage in, the better (Kalish, 2013; Kimmel, 2008; Reling et al., 2018b; Wade, 2017).

Furthermore, results supported each variation of Hypothesis 2, as measures of ambivalent sexism were positively associated with female-on-female, male-on-female, and aggregated male rape myth acceptance. These trends are consistent with previous work denoting the influence of ambivalent sexism on female and male rape myth acceptance (Abrams et al., 2003; Chapleau et al. 2007, 2008; Glick & Fiske, 1997; Viki & Abrams, 2002; Viki et al., 2004). Across analyses for the full and gender-specific samples, hostile sexism served as the strongest predictor of each form of rape myth acceptance. Though benevolent sexism also increased aggregated male rape myth acceptance *for male and female students*, endorsing benevolent sexism increased female-on-female and male-on-female rape myth acceptance *for female students only*, suggesting women were more critical of gender embodiment for male and female survivors. Such results further illustrate the manner in which traditional gender roles and compulsory heterosexuality influence rape myth acceptance and hookup culture endorsement. Serving to stigmatize deviations from traditional gender roles and embodiment respectively, hostile sexism and benevolent sexism constitute a reaffirmation of hegemonic masculinity and femininity, as well as compulsory heterosexuality (Chapleau et al., 2008; Glick & Fiske, 1996; Viki & Abrams, 2002; Viki et al., 2004). Men and women who internalized ambivalent sexist attitudes have demonstrated beliefs that male survivors must have deviated from hegemonic masculine norms which dictate “real” men are capable of fending off any potential attackers (Chapleau et al., 2008; Davies & McCartney, 2003; Davies et al., 2006; Davies et al., 2012; Sleath & Bull, 2010; Struckman-Johnson & Struckman-Johnson, 1992) and imply men’s innate enthusiasm to seize any intimate heterosexual opportunities (Clements-Schreiber & Rempel, 1995; Stermac et al., 2004). Further, the internalization of benevolent sexist attitudes among women stigmatizes female survivors for any perceived deviations from hegemonic feminine norms which dictate appropriate sexual

gatekeeping through feminine embodiment and bodily practice (Burt, 1980; Reling et al., 2018b; Ward, 1995).

Finally, results supported each variation of Hypothesis 3, as ambivalent sexism demonstrated partial-to-full mediation for each form of rape myth acceptance. Though ambivalent sexism partially mediated the association between hookup culture endorsement and *each form of female rape myth acceptance*, ambivalent sexism fully mediated the association between hookup culture endorsement and aggregated male rape myth acceptance. Such results provide preliminary support that hookup culture endorsement and rape myth acceptance may be viewed as sexual and gendered actions which are structured by and reproduce heteronormative social structures through the endorsement of unequal gender relations and compulsory heterosexuality. Though not as ubiquitous as popularly believed, hegemonic masculine norms avoiding commitment and emotional intimacy influence young people's identities and behaviors. Hookups serve to reinforce traditional sexual scripts which dictate women act as the sexual gatekeepers and men as the sexual initiators (Armstrong et al., 2012; Bartoli & Clark, 2006; Bernston & Hoffman, 2014; Bogle, 2008; Kalish, 2013). Furthermore, women's sexual pleasure is viewed as secondary, devaluing their experiences relative to those of men (Armstrong et al., 2012; Kimmel, 2008; Wade, 2017).

Furthermore, male-on-female rape myths embody the perceived normality of men's sexual aggression, identifying culpable victims as those who stray from the norms prescribed by emphasized femininity while simultaneously exonerating offenders by identifying their strict adherence to the norms of hegemonic masculinity (McMahon & Farmer, 2011; Reling et al., 2018b). Adherence to these beliefs indicates the endorsement of heteronormative sexual interactions and gender power inequalities, as these such myths regularly portray women as poor sexual gatekeepers and attribute blame based upon their mannerisms and attire, while constructing

offenders as “good guys” who were carried away by their natural sexual proclivities (McMahon, 2010; McMahon & Farmer, 2011; Reling et al., 2018a). Furthermore, female-on-male and male-on-male rape myth acceptance embody situated actions which simultaneously accomplish gender and sexuality through the rejection of non-heteronormative female-initiated sexual interaction (for female-on-male rape myths) and homosexuality (for male-on-male rape myths).

### **Limitations and Future Directions for Research**

Although this project advanced the study of rape culture, the study was not devoid of limitations. First, each chapter relied upon a non-probability sampling technique, limiting the generalizability of the results. In relying upon convenience sampling, this study utilized biased estimates of the broader U.S. collegiate population, limiting the ability to discuss these results in contexts beyond the sample analyzed throughout this study. Though non-probability sampling is common among qualitative research and initial scale development efforts, future research should attempt to overcome this limitation by utilizing probability sampling to ensure results are replicable and reflective of the broader U.S. collegiate population.

Second, each sample consisted solely of heterosexual individuals, limiting the ability to discuss perspectives LGBTQ+ individuals hold towards female-on-female rape. LGBTQ+ individuals may be more attuned to the social structural mechanisms which oppress survivors of non-heterosexual rape, allowing for the incorporation of more nuanced rape myths in future scale development. Beyond expanding the generalizability of female-on-female rape myth sentiments, the inclusion of LGBTQ+ individuals would allow future research to comparatively examine susceptibility to the internalization of female-on-female rape myths, as prior research has denoted that every individual remains vulnerable to rape myth acceptance (Clay-Warner & Burt, 2005; Du Mont et al., 2003; Wilson & Miller, 2016).

Third, as the study utilized self-report data on perceptions regarding sensitive subject matter, it is imperative to acknowledge the potential for social desirability bias in focus group and survey responses. However, attempts were made to control for social desirability as much as possible by assuring participants of the complete anonymity of their responses.

Finally, though this project sought to expand conceptualizations to distinguish female rape myths concerning *heterosexual dyads* and *non-heterosexual dyads*, it was beyond the scope of the current study to develop a disaggregated measure of male rape myths. As such, utilization of an aggregate male rape myth acceptance instrument inhibited the ability of the current study to independently assess the mediating influence of heteronormativity across each form of male rape myth acceptance. Though results demonstrated direct associations for hookup culture endorsement and each form of female rape myth acceptance, no such association was demonstrated for aggregated male rape myth acceptance. Reliance on an aggregate measure of male rape myth acceptance implies that heteronormativity similarly influences the association between hookup culture endorsement and each form of male rape myth acceptance. Future research should seek to develop a disaggregated measure for the purpose of assessing this underlying assumption and providing more nuanced discussions regarding the relationship of rape culture, hookup culture, and social structure.

Echoing the sentiments of previous researchers (Chapleau et al., 2008; Davies et al., 2012; McMahon & Farmer, 2011; Reling et al., 2018b), future efforts examining rape myth acceptance should continue engaging in the development, expansion, and refinement of validated instruments to account for ongoing linguistic and cultural transitions occurring on college campuses. Furthermore, future efforts should attempt to understand how such rape mythology is sustained and reproduced across different types of universities (e.g., PWI [predominately white institution])

vs. HBCU [historically Black colleges and universities]), as well as how such narratives are discussed outside of academic settings (Reling et al., 2018b; Sapp et al., 1999; Sorenson, Joshi, & Sivitz, 2014). In addition, future efforts should be made to disaggregate male rape myth acceptance to account for variation among myths pertaining to *heterosexual dyads* and *non-heterosexual dyads*. Furthermore, future efforts should utilize multiple-indicator multiple-cause models (MIMIC) to assess the gender variance of the structural associations demonstrated for rape culture, hookup culture, and social structure to assess the stability of heteronormative influences.

### **Policy Implications**

In providing a comprehensive assessment of rape myth acceptance, hookup culture endorsement, and heteronormativity among heterosexual U.S. college students, the current study provides several methodological and policy implications which can be utilized by higher education administration and social support services for the purpose of refining their rape prevention and response efforts. In doing so, such knowledge encourages a shift from primary educational practices of rape myth reduction to addressing broader issues of sexual health and underlying issues of sexual and gender inequality (Reling et al., 2018a, 2018b). By carefully examining the negative/positive influences which practices and beliefs have on sexual health and safety for people of all sexualities and genders, it could provide campus administrators, law enforcement personnel, medical staff, and social service employees with supplementary guidance to enhance primary prevention and response practices (Reling et al., 2018b; Wade, 2017). Contemporary rape education programs (e.g., sexual education, bystander intervention) have demonstrable long-term effects which can be supplemented through the inclusion of contextualized discussions of sexual norms (i.e., hookup culture) and implicit biases towards heteronormativity impact health on campus (Foubert, 2000; Foubert et al., 2006; Reling et al., 2018b). Specifically, it could allow for

the discussion of how rape myth acceptance is exacerbated by sustained sexual inequalities and hookup culture norms/practices. In turn, this could serve to broaden interventions to include the interrogation of how widely accepted ideas concerning healthy sexuality (i.e., hookups) and heteronormative bias create and reproduce inequality in sexual pleasure and the avoidance of negative and/or violent sexual encounters. By contextualizing such discussions, campus administrators can potentially identify not only the individuals with the greatest need for rape education, but also the particular barriers to reporting which men and women face within their academic institutions (Reling et al., 2018b). As such, institutionalized biases among law enforcement, medical staff, and social service employees may also be identified and addressed to reduce barriers to reporting and social support services post-victimization.

## **Conclusion**

This study contributed to the broader literature by examining a historically neglected area of rape myth acceptance in order to provide a broader comparative assessment regarding the mediating influence of heteronormativity upon the association between rape myth acceptance and hookup culture endorsement. To this end, the present study explored collegiate perceptions of female-on-female rape to denote the influence of heteronormative discourse in guiding myths regarding survivor culpability, offender culpability, and situational contexts. Building upon these findings, this study developed, piloted, and validated the first psychometric instrument to exclusively assess female-on-female rape myth acceptance. Furthermore, this study provided a comparative assessment which denoted the consistent mediating influence of heteronormativity on the association of hookup culture endorsement and various forms of rape myth acceptance. Though this study presents a first step towards a more nuanced understanding of rape myth acceptance, further scale development is necessary, as future research should attempt to replicate these results



utilizing probability sampling methods to ensure generalizability and attempt to distinguish between heterosexual male and non-heterosexual male rape myth acceptance.

## APPENDIX A. FOCUS GROUP IRB FORM

### ACTION ON EXEMPTION APPROVAL REQUEST



**TO:** Timothy Reling  
Sociology

**FROM:** Dennis Landin  
Chair, Institutional Review Board

**DATE:** December 12, 2017

**RE:** IRB# E10821

**TITLE:** Collegiate Perceptions of Sexual Assaults: An Examination of the Effects of Gender Dyads

Institutional Review Board  
Dr. Dennis Landin, Chair  
130 David Boyd Hall  
Baton Rouge, LA 70803  
P: 225.578.8692  
F: 225.578.5983  
[irb@lsu.edu](mailto:irb@lsu.edu)  
[lsu.edu/research](http://lsu.edu/research)

**New Protocol/Modification/Continuation:** New Protocol

**Review Date:** 12/12/2017

**Approved** ☒ **Disapproved** ☐

**Approval Date:** 12/12/2017 **Approval Expiration Date:** 12/11/2020

**Exemption Category/Paragraph:** 2b

**Signed Consent Waived?:** No

**Re-review frequency:** (three years unless otherwise stated)

**LSU Proposal Number** (if applicable):

**Protocol Matches Scope of Work in Grant proposal:** (if applicable)

**By:** Dennis Landin, Chairman 

#### PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING –

##### Continuing approval is **CONDITIONAL** on:

1. Adherence to the approved protocol, familiarity with, and adherence to the ethical standards of the Belmont Report, and LSU's Assurance of Compliance with DHHS regulations for the protection of human subjects\*
2. Prior approval of a change in protocol, including revision of the consent documents or an increase in the number of subjects over that approved.
3. Obtaining renewed approval (or submittal of a termination report), prior to the approval expiration date, upon request by the IRB office (irrespective of when the project actually begins); notification of project termination.
4. Retention of documentation of informed consent and study records for at least 3 years after the study ends.
5. Continuing attention to the physical and psychological well-being and informed consent of the individual participants, including notification of new information that might affect consent.
6. A prompt report to the IRB of any adverse event affecting a participant potentially arising from the study.
7. Notification of the IRB of a serious compliance failure.
8. **SPECIAL NOTE: When emailing more than one recipient, make sure you use bcc. Approvals will automatically be closed by the IRB on the expiration date unless the PI requests a continuation.**

\* All investigators and support staff have access to copies of the Belmont Report, LSU's Assurance with DHHS, DHHS (45 CFR 46) and FDA regulations governing use of human subjects, and other relevant documents in print in this office or on our World Wide Web site at <http://www.lsu.edu/irb>

**ACTION ON EXEMPTION APPROVAL REQUEST**



Institutional Review Board  
Dr. Dennis Landin, Chair  
130 David Boyd Hall  
Baton Rouge, LA 70803  
P: 225.578.8692  
F: 225.578.5983  
[irb@lsu.edu](mailto:irb@lsu.edu)  
[lsu.edu/research](http://lsu.edu/research)

**TO:** Timothy Reling  
Sociology

**FROM:** Dennis Landin  
Chair, Institutional Review Board

**DATE:** January 24, 2018

**RE:** IRB# E10821

**TITLE:** Collegiate Perceptions of Sexual Assaults: An Examination of the Effects of Gender Dyads

**New Protocol/Modification/Continuation:** Modification

**Brief Modification Description:** Change the subject inclusion criteria to individuals registered in sociology courses between the ages of 18 and 65

**Review date:** 1/24/2018

**Approved** X **Disapproved** \_\_\_\_\_

**Approval Date:** 1/24/2018

**Approval Expiration Date:** 12/11/2020

**Re-review frequency:** (three years unless otherwise stated)

**LSU Proposal Number** (if applicable):

**Protocol Matches Scope of Work in Grant proposal:** (if applicable)

**By:** Dennis Landin, Chairman 

**PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING –**  
**Continuing approval is CONDITIONAL on:**

1. Adherence to the approved protocol, familiarity with, and adherence to the ethical standards of the Belmont Report, and LSU's Assurance of Compliance with DHHS regulations for the protection of human subjects\*
2. Prior approval of a change in protocol, including revision of the consent documents or an increase in the number of subjects over that approved.
3. Obtaining renewed approval (or submittal of a termination report), prior to the approval expiration date, upon request by the IRB office (irrespective of when the project actually begins); notification of project termination.
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6. A prompt report to the IRB of any adverse event affecting a participant potentially arising from the study.
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*\*All investigators and support staff have access to copies of the Belmont Report, LSU's Assurance with DHHS, DHHS (45 CFR 46) and FDA regulations governing use of human subjects, and other relevant documents in print in this office or on our World Wide Web site at <http://www.lsu.edu/irb>*

## APPENDIX B. FOCUS GROUP GUIDE

Good (*afternoon, evening*) and welcome to the (*first, second, third*) session. Thank you for taking the time to join me and assist in this research project. My name is (*Tim Reling, Kami Rutherford*), and assisting me is (*Tim Reling, Kami Rutherford*). We are with the LSU Department of Sociology. Over the course of the next few hours, we will be discussing perceptions of various aspects of sexual assault against (*men, women*). We will be conducting similar discussions with other focus groups across the university.

Because of the sensitive nature of this topic, I want to take this time to remind you that your participation is voluntary, and you may choose to leave at any point during this study.

---

*Based upon the specific focus group and session:*

### *Session 1*

- A. Tonight we will be talking about perceptions of heterosexual rape committed against women. By this we mean sexual assaults which involve a male offender and a female survivor;  
*or*
- B. Tonight we will be talking about perceptions of heterosexual rape committed against men. By this we mean sexual assaults which involve a female offender and a male survivor.

### *Session 2*

- A. Tonight we will be talking about perceptions of non-heterosexual rape committed against women. By this we mean sexual assaults which involve a female offender and a female survivor;  
*or*
- B. Tonight we will be talking about perceptions of non-heterosexual rape committed against men. By this we mean sexual assaults which involve a male offender and a male survivor.

### *Session 3*

- A. Tonight we will be presenting you with some of the discussions that were obtained through other focus groups in order to get your reflections.
- 

There are no right or wrong answers, just different points of view. Please feel free to share your perceptions or those you have heard from your peers, even if they differ from what others have said. Keep in mind that we are just as interested in negative comments as positive ones, so please be as honest as possible during these discussions. Also, please be respectful of others perceptions. It is okay to disagree, but please do so in a respectful way.

As you have probably noticed, we have brought a microphone with us. We are going to be tape recording each session because we do not want to miss any of your comments. People often bring up important points during these discussions, and we cannot write them all down fast enough. We will not be using names during these interviews. Instead, you each have a number

assigned to you, in order to ensure your privacy. I will be using pseudonyms in my reports. These discussions will be used as part of my dissertation, as well as inform my future research.

Well, let us begin. Let us find out a little more about each other by going around the table and stating some information about yourselves, such as your age, classification, and field of study.

---

### Semi-Structured Questions

1. Generally speaking, how wide-spread of an issue do you feel (*heterosexual, non-heterosexual*) rape against (*men, women*) is?
  - Specifically, how often do you think this occurs on college campuses?
2. Where do you think (*heterosexual, non-heterosexual*) rape is occurring? In other words, if I said a (*man, woman*) was raped by someone of (*the same sex, the opposite sex*), where would you immediately think this happened?
3. When thinking about (*men, women*) survivors of (*heterosexual, non-heterosexual*) rape, what characteristics comes to mind?
  - How would you or your peers describe their behavior?
  - What is their relationship to the offender? How well do they know each other?
  - What sexual orientation are they? Why?
4. When thinking about (*men, women*) perpetrators of (*heterosexual, non-heterosexual*) rape, what characteristics come to mind?
  - How would you or your peers describe their behavior?
  - What is their relationship to the offender? How well do they know each other?
  - What sexual orientation are they? Why?
5. In a hypothetical situation of (*heterosexual, non-heterosexual*) rape with a (*male, female*) victim, what happened that initiated the assault? In other words, describe the typical interactions between the survivor and offender.
  - What were the survivor's intentions?
  - What were the offender's intentions?
6. When thinking about (*male perpetrated, female perpetrated*) (*heterosexual, non-heterosexual*) rape, instinctively who do you attribute fault to?
  - Why do you feel the (*survivor, offender*) was more responsible for the incident?
  - (***If the above response was the survivor***) What do you think they should have done differently?

---

Thank you all so much for your time and input. Please remember that we will be convening for the (*second, final*) session next week on (*specified day*) at (*specified time*) in this room,

(*specified room number*). I will be sending out a reminder email, and I look forward to seeing you then.

## APPENDIX C. FEMALE-ON-FEMALE RAPE MYTH SCALE

---

INSTRUCTIONS: *Please read the hypothetical scenario below before responding to the following set of statements.*

Emily, a young college student, attended a part on Saturday night. Nicole, a friend of the host, also attended this party. Though they were not close, they had met each other previously on multiple occasions, and spend most of the evening visiting with each other during the party. Nicole noticed Emily had quite a bit of alcohol, so she thought she would offer for her to spend the night at her apartment. Besides, she thought Emily was quite attractive, especially in her red stiletto heels, black mini-skirt, and black crop-top. Emily saw the invitation as harmless and accepted Nicole's offer. When they made it to Nicole's apartment, Nicole brought out two wine glasses and put on a movie. By the time they opened a third bottle of wine, Emily and Nicole were both feeling pretty tipsy. As the movie ended, Nicole asked Emily if she was a little "curious," about what it was like to kiss a girl before proceeding to kiss her. Emily decided she wanted to see what it was like, so they continued to make out. As time went on, Nicole was getting increasingly physical and Emily began to feel uncomfortable. She told Nicole that she enjoyed making out with her, but she wasn't sure she wanted things to go any further physically. Later, she felt Nicole's finger penetrate her vagina. Emily said she didn't like that, but Nicole persisted anyway.

---

*Please rate your agreement with the following statements:*

- NH1. Since Emily was drinking, she was at least somewhat responsible for letting things get out of hand.
- NH2. Nicole didn't do anything wrong. Emily just changed her mind in the middle of everything.
- NH3. Nicole didn't mean to make Emily uncomfortable, but she just got a little carried away.
- NH4. Emily should have been clearer in the way she said "no".
- NH5. Nicole probably just misunderstood how far Emily wanted to go.
- NH6. Emily was asking for trouble going to Nicole's apartment alone.
- NH7. Nicole didn't do anything wrong. She was only trying to help Emily explore her sexuality.
- NH8. Nicole was probably just excited to have someone interested in her and unintentionally took it a little too far.
- NH9. It can't be considered sexual assault if it was a misunderstanding.
- NH10. Emily should not have been surprised Nicole assumed she wanted to go further since she agreed to experiment.
- NH11. Nicole wasn't trying to be overly aggressive.
- NH12. It wasn't really sexual assault because Emily and Nicole didn't have sex.
- NH13. Since Emily was wearing revealing clothes to the party, she was asking for trouble.
- NH14. Since both Emily and Nicole were drunk, it can't be sexual assault.

NH15. It shouldn't be considered sexual assault because Emily and Nicole were experimenting.

NH16. Emily probably didn't want to admit to people that she was a lesbian.

NH17. It shouldn't be considered sexual assault since Nicole was drunk and probably didn't realize what she was doing.

NH18. In general, a woman can't rape another woman.

---



## APPENDIX D. ILLINOIS RAPE MYTH ACCEPTANCE SCALE – UPDATED

---

- SA1. If a girl is raped while she is drunk, she is at least somewhat responsible for letting things get out of hand.
- SA2. When girls go to parties wearing slutty clothes, they are asking for trouble.
- SA3. If a girl goes to a room alone with a guy at a party, it is her own fault if she is raped.
- SA4. If a girl acts like a slut, eventually she is going to get into trouble.
- SA5. When girls get raped, it's often because the way they said "no" was unclear.
- SA6. If a girl initiates kissing or hooking up, she should not be surprised if a guy assumes she wants to have sex.
- MT1. When guys rape, it is usually because of their strong desire for sex.
- MT2. Guys don't usually intend to force sex on a girl, but sometimes they get too sexually carried away.
- MT3. Rape happens when a guy's sex drive goes out of control.
- MT4. If a guy is drunk, he might rape someone unintentionally.
- MT5. It shouldn't be considered rape if a guy was drunk and didn't realize what he was doing.
- MT6. If both people are drunk, it can't be rape.
- NR1. If a girl doesn't physically resist sex – even if protesting verbally – it can't be considered rape.
- NR2. If a girl doesn't physically fight back, you can't really say it was rape.
- NR3. A rape probably doesn't happen if a girl doesn't have any bruises or marks.
- NR4. If the accused "rapist" doesn't have a weapon, you really can't call it rape.
- NR5. If a girl doesn't say "no" she can't claim rape.
- LI1. A lot of times, girls who say they were raped agreed to have sex and then regret it.
- LI2. Rape accusations are often used as a way of getting back at guys.
- LI3. A lot of times, girls who say they were raped often led the guy on and then had regrets.
- LI4. A lot of times, girls who claim they were raped have emotional problems.
- LI5. Girls who are caught cheating on their boyfriends sometimes claim it was rape.

---

*Note.* SA = She Asked For It; MT = He Didn't Mean To; NR = It Wasn't Really Rape;  
LI = She Lied

## APPENDIX E. MALE RAPE MYTH SCALE

---

- \*1. It is a terrible experience for a man to be raped by a woman.
- 2. The extent of a man's resistance should be a major factor in determining if he was raped.
- 3. Any healthy man can successfully resist a rapist if he really wants to.
- 4. If a man obtained an erection while being raped it probably means that he started to enjoy it.
- 5. A man can enjoy sex even if it is being forced upon him.
- \*6. Most men who are raped by a woman are very upset by the incident.
- 7. Many men claim rape if they have consented to homosexual relations but have changed their minds afterwards.
- 8. Most men who are raped by a woman are somewhat to blame for not escaping or fighting off the woman.
- 9. If a man engages in necking and petting and he lets things get out of hand, it is his own fault if his partner forces sex on him.
- 10. Male rape is usually committed by homosexuals.
- 11. Most men who are raped by a man are somewhat to blame for not escaping or fighting off the man.
- 12. A man who has been raped has lost his manhood.
- 13. Most men who are raped by a woman are somewhat to blame for not being more careful.
- 14. If a man told me that he had been raped by another man, I would suspect that he is homosexual.
- 15. Most men who have been raped have a history of promiscuity.
- 16. No self-respecting man would admit to being raped.
- 17. Women who rape men are sexually frustrated individuals.
- 18. A man who allows himself to be raped by another man is probably homosexual.
- \*19. Most men would not enjoy being raped by a woman.
- 20. Men who parade around nude in a locker room are asking for trouble.
- 21. Male rape is more serious when the victim is heterosexual than when the victim is homosexual.
- 22. I would have a hard time believing a man who told me that he was raped by a woman

---

*Note.* \* = Reverse-Scored Item

## APPENDIX F. AMBIVALENT SEXISM INVENTORY

- 
- B1. No matter how accomplished he is, a man is not truly complete as a person unless he has the love of a woman.
- H1. Many women are actually seeking special favors, such as hiring policies that favor them over men, under the guise of asking for “equality.”
- \*B2. In a disaster, women ought not necessarily to be rescued before men.
- H2. Most women interpret innocent remarks or acts as being sexist.
- H3. Women are too easily offended.
- \*B3. People are often truly happy in life without being romantically involved with a member of the other sex.
- \*H4. Feminists are not seeking for women to have more power than men.
- B4. Many women have a quality of purity that few men possess.
- B5. Women should be cherished and protected by men.
- H5. Most women fail to appreciate fully all that men do for them.
- H6. Women seek to gain power by getting control over men.
- B6. Every man ought to have a woman whom he adores.
- \*B7. Men are complete without women.
- H7. Women exaggerate problems they have at work.
- H8. Once a woman gets a man to commit to her, she usually tries to put him on a tight leash.
- H9. When women lose to men in a fair competition, they typically complain about being discriminated against.
- B8. A good woman should be set on a pedestal by her man.
- H10. There are actually very few women who get a kick out of teasing men by seeming sexually available and then refusing male advances.
- B9. Women, compared to men, tend to have a superior moral sensibility.
- B10. Men should be willing to sacrifice their own well being in order to provide financially for the women in their lives.
- \*H11. Feminists are making entirely reasonable demands of men.
- B11. Women, as compared to men, tend to have a more refined sense of culture and good taste.
- 

*Note.* H = Hostile Sexism, B = Benevolent Sexism, \* = Reverse-Scored Item

## APPENDIX G. ENDORSEMENT OF HOOKUP CULTURE INDEX

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- H1. Hooking up is not a big deal.
- H2. A hookup is just a hookup.
- H3. Hooking up is harmless.
- H4. Hooking up is just for fun.
- F1. I overlook some of the questionable parts of hooking up because it is fun.
- F2. I hook up to have a good time.
- F3. I like hooking up because it provides immediate gratification.
- F4. Hooking up is pleasurable.
- ST1. Hooking up would be a way for me to make a name for myself.
- ST2. It would improve my reputation to hook up with someone who others find appealing.
- ST3. Hooking up would make me more popular.
- ST4. Hooking up would improve my status among my friends.
- C1. I feel that I can control what I want to have happen during a hookup.
- C2. I assert my needs during a hookup.
- C3. I feel powerful during a hookup.
- C4. Hooking up is fun when I am in control.
- SF1. College is a good time to experiment with hooking up.
- SF2. College is a time to experience sex.
- SF3. Hooking up allows me to be sexually adventurous.
- SF4. Hooking up is a natural thing to do in college.

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*Note.* H = Harmless, F = Fun, ST = Status, C = Control, SF = Sexual Freedom

## APPENDIX H. SELF-ASCRIBED SPIRITUALITY AND RELIGIOSITY VARIABLES

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*Please rate your agreement with the below statements as honestly as possible. Draw a distinction in your perspective between religion and spirituality. For the purposes of this survey, the term “religious” is defined as “the rituals and organizational traditions that one practices in a group setting and that guides one’s behavior” and the term “spirituality” is defined as “one’s search for the sacred that occurs internally and is pursued through seeking a relationship with whatever one holds as sacred.”*

- S1. “Spirituality is very important to me”**
  - S2. “I am very spiritual”**
  - S3. “I rely on a higher power for guidance”**
  - R1. “Religion is very important to me”**
  - R2. “I am very religious”**
  - R3. How often did you typically attend religious services in the past year?**
- 

*Note.* S = Spirituality, R = Religiosity

## APPENDIX I. SURVEY IRB FORM

### ACTION ON EXEMPTION APPROVAL REQUEST



**TO:** Timothy Reling  
Sociology

**FROM:** Dennis Landin  
Chair, Institutional Review Board

**DATE:** April 3, 2019

**RE:** IRB# E11650

**TITLE:** Rape Myths, Hookup Culture, and Social Structure

Institutional Review Board  
Dr. Dennis Landin, Chair  
130 David Boyd Hall  
Baton Rouge, LA 70803  
P: 225.578.8692  
F: 225.578.5983  
[irb@lsu.edu](mailto:irb@lsu.edu)  
[lsu.edu/research](http://lsu.edu/research)

**New Protocol/Modification/Continuation:** New Protocol

**Review Date:** 4/3/2019

**Approved** X **Disapproved** \_\_\_\_\_

**Approval Date:** 4/3/2019 **Approval Expiration Date:** 4/2/2022

**Exemption Category/Paragraph:** 2c

**Signed Consent Waived?:** Yes

**Re-review frequency:** (three years unless otherwise stated)

**LSU Proposal Number** (if applicable):

**By:** Dennis Landin, Chairman

### PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING –

#### Continuing approval is **CONDITIONAL** on:

1. Adherence to the approved protocol, familiarity with, and adherence to the ethical standards of the Belmont Report, and LSU's Assurance of Compliance with DHHS regulations for the protection of human subjects\*
2. Prior approval of a change in protocol, including revision of the consent documents or an increase in the number of subjects over that approved.
3. Obtaining renewed approval (or submittal of a termination report), prior to the approval expiration date, upon request by the IRB office (irrespective of when the project actually begins); notification of project termination.
4. Retention of documentation of informed consent and study records for at least 3 years after the study ends.
5. Continuing attention to the physical and psychological well-being and informed consent of the individual participants, including notification of new information that might affect consent.
6. A prompt report to the IRB of any adverse event affecting a participant potentially arising from the study.
7. Notification of the IRB of a serious compliance failure.
8. **SPECIAL NOTE: When emailing more than one recipient, make sure you use bcc. Approvals will automatically be closed by the IRB on the expiration date unless the PI requests a continuation.**

\* All investigators and support staff have access to copies of the Belmont Report, LSU's Assurance with DHHS, DHHS (45 CFR 46) and FDA regulations governing use of human subjects, and other relevant documents in print in this office or on our World Wide Web site at <http://www.lsu.edu/irb>

**ACTION ON EXEMPTION APPROVAL REQUEST**



Institutional Review Board  
Dr. Dennis Landin, Chair  
130 David Boyd Hall  
Baton Rouge, LA 70803  
P: 225.578.8692  
F: 225.578.5983  
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[lsu.edu/research](http://lsu.edu/research)

**TO:** Timothy Reling  
Sociology

**FROM:** Dennis Landin  
Chair, Institutional Review Board

**DATE:** April 23, 2019

**RE:** IRB# E11650

**TITLE:** Rape Myths, Hookup Culture, and Social Structure

**New Protocol/Modification/Continuation:** Modification

**Brief Modification Description:** Adjust sampling frame from "undergraduate students enrolled in introductory-level sociology courses over the age of 18" to "undergraduate students currently enrolled in a four-year university over the age of 18"

**Review date:** 4/23/2019

**Approved** ☒ **Disapproved** ☐

**Approval Date:** 4/23/2019 **Approval Expiration Date:** 4/2/2022

**LSU Proposal Number** (if applicable):

**By:** Dennis Landin, Chairman

**PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING –**  
**Continuing approval is CONDITIONAL on:**

1. Adherence to the approved protocol, familiarity with, and adherence to the ethical standards of the Belmont Report, and LSU's Assurance of Compliance with DHHS regulations for the protection of human subjects\*
2. Prior approval of a change in protocol, including revision of the consent documents or an increase in the number of subjects over that approved.
3. Obtaining renewed approval (or submittal of a termination report), prior to the approval expiration date, upon request by the IRB office (irrespective of when the project actually begins); notification of project termination.
4. Retention of documentation of informed consent and study records for at least 3 years after the study ends.
5. Continuing attention to the physical and psychological well-being and informed consent of the individual participants including notification of new information that might affect consent.
6. A prompt report to the IRB of any adverse event affecting a participant potentially arising from the study.
7. Notification of the IRB of a serious compliance failure.
8. **SPECIAL NOTE: Make sure you use bcc when emailing more than one recipient. Approvals will automatically be closed by the IRB on the expiration date unless the PI requests a continuation.**

*\*All investigators and support staff have access to copies of the Belmont Report, LSU's Assurance with DHHS, DHHS (45 CFR 46) and FDA regulations governing use of human subjects, and other relevant documents in print in this office or on our World Wide Web site at <http://www.lsu.edu/irb>*

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## **VITA**

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