To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Roger Allan Drake entitled "The Effects of Blame and Empathy on an Observer's Perceptions of a Victim." I recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in Psychology.

Eric D. Sundstrom, Major Professor

We have read this dissertation
and recommend its acceptance:

Accepted for the Council:

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Graduate Studies and Research

THE EFFECTS OF BLAME AND EMPATHY ON AN OBSERVER'S PERCEPTIONS OF A VICTIM

A Dissertation

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Doctor of Philosophy

Degree

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ABSTRACT

Two experiments were conducted concerning derogation of victims. Earlier research had tried to test the hypothesis that an observer who blames victims does not necessarily derogate them. The research had failed to reach a conclusion because the victim had made a choice which would obviously lead to unpleasant outcomes. Experiment One of the present study assigned blame to a victim by describing the unpleasant outcome as being a result of choices made by the victim when he could not be expected to foresee the effect of those choices. The hypothesis was that when the victim was blamed, he would not be derogated. Participants were 120 college students who read of a nonvictim or of a low or high blame victim. The victim was rated on a set of 15 bipolar adjectives from which were subtracted similar ratings of the average college students. Result showed a derogation effect, with a nonsignificant trend supporting the hypothesis. Of three other measures, only the judgement of "worthy of my friendship" as compared to the average college student was consistent with predictions with a significant positive correlation with percieved responsibility and choice of the victim. This result supported the hypothesis because the victim with more perceived blame was judged to be more worthy of friendship.

Experiment Two tested the effects of empathy as a means of reducing derogation of a victim. The experiment attempted to manipulate empathy by describing equally unpleasant events with different probabilities of occurrence. The hypothesis was that participants would derogate a victim suffering from something that was unlikely to befall them, but

would not derogate a victim of which that they themselves may suffer in the near future. Results failed to support the hypothesis. There was no derogation for either victim. Possible reasons for this finding were discussed with respect to applications for people who are seen by others as victims, such as the handicapped, ill, or bereaved.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Derogation is the devaluation of a person or the taking away of lowering of that person's value. This word has been used especially by psychological researchers to describe the difference between the evaluations of victims and nonvictims by observers in experiments. This study investigates how derogation is affected by blaming the victim or by anticipating the same fate.

About 15 years ago Melvin H. Lerner published the first of several experiments that demonstrated that some people who viewed a film of another person receiving painful electric shocks reacted by describing that person with negative terms (Lerner & Simmons, 1966). Lerner suggested that this was caused by the need to believe in a just world (Lerner & Miller, 1978), i.e., a world where people get that they deserve. He described such a belief as a necessary assumption for a person to continue to work and to strive. However, there are experiences in everyday life inconsistent with this belief. Lerner stated that rather than sacrifice this comfortable belief, the individual is likely to distort his or her perceptions.

According to Lerner and Miller (1978), this is the source of the derogation of victims. Lerner says that we can see a victim as deserving of his fate as a result of a bad character. To see chance as the cause of suffering is to see ourselves also as vulnerable,

and so is anxiety provoking. Derogation serves to control this anxiety.

Support for this theory would be provided if one could measure an individual's belief in a just world and show that different degrees of derogation or blaming could be predicted by different scores. Such a scale was designed by Rubin and Peplau (1973) and has received some validation in that same article with high scorers rating winners in the military draft lottery more positively than they did losers, while those with a low just world score did not differentiate between their ratings of winners and losers. Lerner and Miller (1978) also reported an experiment by Zuckerman, Gerbasi, Kravitz, and Wheeler which showed more derogation of victims by observers high in belief in a just world than by those low in this belief.

A parallel theory suggests that people feel distressed when relationships are not equitable (Walster, Berscheid, & Walster, 1973). Equity is defined as the situation where all individuals receive outcomes proportional to their inputs. It is believed that individuals would prefer to maximize their own outcomes, but that since a group can maximize collective rewards through cooperation, groups and societies will train their members to prefer equitable situations.

Equity theory suggests that when a person sees someone suffering, he or she either changes his or her perception of the suffering person's outcomes by underestimating their suffering or else change their perception of that person's inputs by blaming or derogating

the person. Experiments demonstrating the former were carried out by Brock and Buss (1962), Hoiberg and Stires (1973), and Sykes and Matza (1957). Situations where victims were blamed for something they did or didn't do which contributed to their own suffering were found by Di Matteo (1972), Jones and Aronson (1973), Lerner (1965), and Schiavo (1973). Support for the idea that an observer may also perceive that the victim is an unworthy person, deserving bad outcomes due to bad personal characteristics, was provided by Davis and Jones (1960), Di Matteo (1972), Hoiberg and Stires (1973), Lerner (1971), Lincoln and Levinger (1972), and Stein (1973).

The first experiment in this paper deals with the effects of blame and derogation. The social significance of these effects is that they may serve to increase the suffering of the victims due to isolation and to reduced efforts toward helping.

Equity Theory (Walster, et al., 1973) proposes that only one mode is necessary for the observer to restore psychological equity. When one of the reactions, blame or derogation, is used, equity is achieved and so another is unnecessary. Two or more mechanisms are never used in tandem.

Lerner hypothesized that if an observer can blame the victim's fate on something the victim committed or omitted, then there should not be so much derogation (Lerner & Simmons, 1966). He called this an "untested, but extremely interesting hypothesis" (p. 210).

Both approaches predict that a victim who is blamed by the observer will not be derogated. A sociological theory, Labeling

Theory (Prus, 1975), suggests the logical statement that when an individual is seen as less reponsible for outcomes, he or she will be less likely to be judged on the basis of those outcomes, or the more an observer blames a victim for the victim's own suffering, the more the victim will be judged on the basis of that suffering. Thus the relationship as predicted by this theory between blame and derogation is that when blame for the victim occurs there will be more derogation.

Experiment one was developed to test the relationship between blame and derogation. Previous experiments were studied to determine the methodology used and to avoid the errors made by others.

CHAPTER II

DESIGN OF DEROGATION EXPERIMENTS

Stimulus Materials

In order to effect the observation of a victim, many experiments have asked the subject to view a videotape of a confederate purportedly receiving painful electrical shock as punishment for errors in a learning experiment (Cialdini, Kenrick, & Hoerig, 1976; Godfrey & Lowe, 1975; Harvey, Harris, & Barnes, 1975; Lerner, 1971; Lerner & Lichtman, 1968; Lerner & Matthews, 1967; Lerner & Simmons, 1966; Sorrentino & Boutilier, 1974; Stein, 1973). Other "live" victims have lost a money reward (Chaikin & Darley, 1973), spilled a cup of coffee (Mettee & Wilkins, 1972), and received a low number in the national military draft lottery (Rubin & Peplau, 1973).

Another approach has been to ask the subject to read something about a person, then give his or her response. This has the advantage of moving the purported victimization of the target person out of the psychology lab. Thus there is no need for deception as to why the victim is suffering, nor much likelihood for the subject to suspect deception. Another advantage of reading about the victim is convenience and cost: subjects can be run in groups, with the administration of several conditions of the experiment occurring at the same time. Runkel and McGrath (1972) emphasize that cost and time factors are considerations of any experimental design.

Using a laboratory learning experiment has sometimes led subjects to see it as unfair and unnecessary (Sorrentino & Boutilier, 1974) and so perhaps not a reflection of the subjects' everyday world. Also it is unlikely that such shocks for errors would normally happen to them or someone else they know.

Perhaps subjects in these experiments feel that the victims are being shocked so they can be observed. Bramel (1969) demonstrated that an observer derogates more a person he has harmed than one someone else has harmed.

Because of suspicion in laboratory settings, many experimenters have used the technique of presenting the victim by having the subject read of someone suffering from such things as rape (Hoiberg & Stires, 1973; Jones & Aronson, 1973; Gold, Landerman & Bullock, 1977; Selby, Calhoun, & Brock, 1977; Seligman, Brickman, & Koulack, 1977; Stokols & Schopler, 1973); drug addiction (Lerner & Agar, 1972); automobile accidents (Friedman & Austin, 1978; Miller, Smith, Feree, & Taylor, 1976; Shaver, 1970a; Shaver 1970b; Shaw & McMartin, 1973; Walster, 1966); losing a job (Seligman, Paschall, & Takata, 1974); an earthquake (Whitehead & Smith, 1976); receiving a bad grade (Medway & Lowe, 1975) and physical injury (Forsyth, Albritton, & Schlencker, 1977; Grant, 1973; Hill, 1975).

For the present study, the methodology of reading about natural suffering was used, rather than the viewing of actual or staged suffering. This is especially appropriate in an experiment manipulating blame, because in the laboratory the subject knows it

is possible for the victim to escape or refuse, and so it may be nearly impossible to produce a blameless victim there.

Varieties of Blame

For research relating blame and derogation, it is necessary to create a situation where a person can be blamed for his or her own unpleasant outcome, then be evaluated on the basis of the outcome, but not be evaluated for having been stupid to have caused the outcome.

The attribution literature is useful in considering blame. Fishbein and Ajzen (1973) report that some blame is assigned when a target person is merely associated in some way with an outcome. Additional blame is assigned when the target person was instrumental in producting or causing the outcome. An observer would place even more blame on the actor if it appeared that the actor was able to foresee the outcome which would follow from a certain outcome (Vidmar & Crinklaw, 1974; Whitehead & Smith, 1976). But an observed may consider anyone stupid who chose an action for which he or she could foresee an unpleasant outcome.

Removing the foreseeability factor, can an experimenter produce enough blame in an experiment using the manipulation of association with the outcome and instrumentality in producing the outcome to create perceived high blame and the low blame situations? Apparently the answer is yes, as Lerner and Matthews (1967) were able to demonstrate by having percieved blame (as measured by a

manipulation check) significantly affected by whether the victim or the observer drew a slip of paper from a bowl. The person who was blamed for the outcomes was the one associated with the choice, the one who performed an act instrumental to the choice, but was unable to foresee the results of choosing one of the pieces of paper.

It is perhaps surprising that a person is blamed for such a small connection with the outcome, yet Storms (1973) demonstrated that especially when judging others we are often ignorant of the external forces acting on them, so are likely to err in the direction of assigning causality to internal sources.

Derogation Measures

The most popular dependent variable has been a scale developed by Lerner (Lerner & Simmons, 1966) which consists of fifteen bipolar adjective scales. The subject chooses a number on a seven-point scale between the two opposite adjectives to describe the target person.

The subject rates the average college student, then the target person, the difference between the summed scores is used. An advantage of this system is that it sums reaction over fifteen measures. Another important quality is that by subtracting the rating of the average college student the experimenter reduces the variance in scores which might result from strong negative or positive response sets in a few subjects.

This has proved to be a sensitive measure, so Lerner continued to use it in his research program (Lerner, 1971; Lerner & Agar, 1972; Lerner & Matthews, 1967; Novak & Lerner, 1968). More recent

experimenters have used this same dependent measure (Cialdini et al., 1976; Friedman & Austin, 1978; Godfrey & Lowe, 1975; Lincoln & Leving er, 1972) because it had proved useful to Lerner or because they were replicating or extending the Lerner findings. This measure, called the deviation score, will be used in the present research (see Appendix A).

Effects of Instructions

There were theoretical statements and empirical evidence to guide the development of the instructions in the present experiment. For instance, Koriat, Melkman, Averill, and Lazarus (1972) and Stotland (1969) found that different instructions could alter the amount of physiological responding to a victim. Regan and Totten (1975) found that empathy instructions produced more situational attributions of blame. Aderman, Brehm, and Katz (1974) found derogation of victims using instructions to observe and judge, with the derogation effect disappearing with empathy instructions.

When subjects were told that they were participating in an experiment studying the derogation of victims, there was no derogation (Simons & Piliavin, 1972). For the present experiment, subjects were told they were in an experiment studying impression formation and person perception. They were simply asked to give their impression of the target person. All stimulus materials were consistent with the idea that the experimenter was interested in their first impression of the person described in the experimental booklet.

According to Walster et al. (1973), derogation is a distoration of perceptions, and so it would be more difficult to derogate a person one knows or expects to meet in the future. Davis and Jones (1960) demonstrated this second point, but interpreted the result as being due to the fact that when there would be a future meeting, the observer could apologize for the derogation, which was public. Stokols and Schopler (1973) were also able to show more positive evaluations of a victim of an unwanted pregnancy when the subjects expected to meet her soon. They interpreted this as perhaps an increase in empathy or perhaps the tendency to upwardly value someone you anticipate meeting. Whatever is the correct interpretation, it was decided to design the present experiment such that subjects would not expect to meet the target person. This appeared to be necessary in order to allow any derogation effects, if present, to occur.

Perhaps if the target person were described in extremely favorable terms, it would become more difficult to derogate them by using negative descriptive traits. This was in fact demonstrated by Friedman and Austin (1978). The present experiment was designed with the target person described in relatively neutral, ambiguous terms. However, enough details were given to justify the idea that it was an experiment on first impressions (see Appendix A).

Lerner and Simmons (1966) demonstrated that in order to produce derogation of the victim it was necessary to describe the pain as continuing rather than finished. A special point was made in the present experiment to describe the target person as continuing

to suffer and worry, and remaining in doubt about possible future additional negative consequences.

In some laboratory situations, subjects have been able to convince themselves that they were acting in a basically unfair or unjust situation. Lerner and Simmons (1966) reported a significantly higher evaluation of the victim by those who rated the situation as a useless cruel experiment. Sorrentino and Boutilier (1974) produced a similar effect, but only for those in a similar fate condition. Because the present experiment was planned so that the suffering of the target person was at least in the realm of possibility for the observers, it was seen useful to describe the event as one in normal American society, so the subjects would not be able to simply reject the situation as being an exceptional case.

Personality Variables

Locust of control is a personality variable which is determined by where the individual places the blame for outcomes. Individuals vary in their tendency to attribute the causes of what happens to us to internal sources (such as personal characteristics, effort, or behavior) or to external sources (such as powerful others or chance). In an experiment involving blame, one would expect different reactions from people who differ in this quality.

Using the Rotter (1966) method of measuring this characteristic, Phares, Wilson, and Klyver (1971) found that internals assigned more blame to themselves than do externals. Phares and Wilson (1972) and Sosis (1974) found likewise that internals assign more blame to others

for their outcomes than do externals. In general, all observers tend to blame another person for their outcomes more than they blame themselves for the same outcome (Jones & Nesbit, 1971; Storms, 1973). This tendency may be because a person is more aware of the external forces on himself or herslef than those upon another person.

This scale measures a person's blaming of the source of outcomes. Reid and Ware (1974) found that respondents to the scale do not differentiate between control of themselves and control of others. This supports the above results which found that internals attribute more blame to both themselves and others. In other words, those who believe they are responsible for their own outcomes believe that others are also responsible for their outcomes.

MacDonald and Hall (1969; 1971) found that internal control people saw emotional problems as being more debilitating, and externals rated sensory and cosmetic problems as more negative than did internals. Perhaps the internals most feared losing the control that they feel they already have.

There is some support for this idea in the research of Moyer (1978) who found that internals were resistive to a loss of freedom. Externals appeared to view this loss as a normal situation. To this can be added from reactance theory the idea that the presence of a victim may reduce our freedom because of expectations that we should help in some way (Brehm, 1966). Feldman-Summers (1977) found that people did not like those who threatened their freedom. If the internals feel more reactance, then they should dislike more those who caused it. This was found to be true by Zuckerman and Gerbasi

(1977) who found in fact the logical conclusions derived from the above experiments: internals derogate more. They also found that they help more, which could be explained by Equity Theory (Walster et al., 1973) which suggested this as another means of removing the unpleasant stimulus of the victim.

A 1976 pilot study by Drake failed to find a significant relationship between a score on Rotter's (1966) Locus of Control Scale and ratings of a victim ($r = +.08$, $p > 30$). MacDonald and Hall (1971) also found no difference in reactions to another person as a victim as a function of Rotter Scale scores. The pilot study did, however, find that people scoring high on the Internal Scale of Levenson's (1974) revision of Rotter's scale were more likely to derogate a victim ($r = +.46$, $p < .05$). Perhaps this greater sensitivity of the Levenson scale reflects the fact that responses are on a six-point scale of strongly agree to strongly disagree rather than the two-choice format of Rotter's scale.

Levenson (1973) found a coefficient alpha of .67 in one experiment and .64 in another (Levenson, 1974). Ryckman and Malikiosi (1975) used the Levenson Internal Scale to conceptually replicate an earlier finding that using the Rotter Locus of Control Scale younger people scored more external. The same results were found with the Levenson as with the Rotter scale. For a copy of Levenson's scale, see Appendix A.

Rubin and Peplau (1973) developed a scale consisting of sixteen questions to assess belief in a just world. They found that men high on belief in a just world reacted toward losers in

the nationwide draft lottery of 1971, with less liking, comfort and favorability, but more resentment than did subjects low on the scale. Zuckerman (1975) found that responses to his version of a just world scale predicted differences in rate of volunteering to help, but only late in the school term, not at the beginning. Those who indicated high belief in a just world were more likely to offer help near the end of the school term than either high believers early in the term or low believers at any time during the term. Zuckerman interpreted this to be because as the high believers approached a time of need for good grades, their belief would lead them to do good deeds for which they would surely be justly repaid.

CHAPTER III

EXPERIMENT ONE: BLAME AND DEROGATION

Previous Research

Innocent victims have been derogated for receiving shocks (Cialdini et al., 1976; Simons & Poliavin, 1972), suffering rape (Hoiberg & Stires, 1973), accidental money reward loss (Chaikin & Darley, 1973), a fall with head injuries (Forsyth et al., 1977), and child's loss of previleges (Suls & Gutkin, 1976). Experiments have also shown increased blame or attribution of responsibility for victims of physical illness (Di Matteo, 1972), of a bad grade (Medway & Lowe, 1975), and of a checmical explosion (Shaw & Skolnick, 1971), and of an auto accident (Walster, 1966).

It is possible that both blame and derogation are attempts to decrease perceived similarity with the victim (Holberg & Stires, 1973). Taylor and Mettee (1971) viewed derogation as a means to deny similarity, by describing the victim as more different than a nonvictim is described. McKillip and Posavac (1975) said that blaming the victim is a means of making the victim more different (e.g., less careful). It is as if the observer is saying, "unlike the victim, I am not so stupid as to commit an act which will result in my own suffering."

Other attempts to decrease perceived similarity with the victim included describing the victim as different (Bleda, 1974; Coser, 1969; Novak & Lerner, 1968; Stokols & Schopler, 1973;

Tannebaum & Gaer, 1965) or changing one's own attitudes in order to appear more different (Cooper & Jones, 1969).

Some observers have avoided the victim (Kleck, Ono & Hastorf, 1966; Lerner & Agar, 1972) while others have claimed not to be aware of the victim (Coser, 1969). There was also evidence that observers reacted to handicapped persons with greater personal distance (Comer & Piliavin, 1972; Kleck, 1969; Kleck, Buck, Goller, London, Pheiffer, & Vukcevic, 1968; Taylor & Salaifia, 1970; Wolfgang & Wolfgang, 1968; Worthington, 1974) and with the trend toward shorter interaction time (Worthington, 1974).

Attempts by the observer to reduce in his or her own mind the observed suffering included the underestimation of the suffering (Brock & Buss, 1962; Hoiberg & Stires, 1973; Sykes & Matza, 1957) and attempts to actually reduce the suffering through direct offers and help (Staub, 1974). That successful helping seems to reduce the need to use another reaction to the victim was demonstrated by Lerner and Simmons (1966) who showed less derogation by observers who had halped the victims.

In trying to develop an experiment showing the effect of blame on derogation of the victim, earlier experimenters met several problems. The greatest problem was that when the victim was to blame for the suffering which occurred, it was, in these experiments, the result of some stupid or careless action on the part of the victim. Thus, the observer had additional information on the

victim, which was added to the feelings the observer had about the person being a victim.

An example of this was an experiment by Grant (1973). He described a man who suffered an injury at work. When it was described as being the result of his failure to take reasonable precautions, he was rated lower on a summed score based on four semantic-differential type adjective scales than if a co-worker was the cause. One conclusion might be that a victim to blame is derogated more. A more logical conclusion might be that the rating of a victim was altered by the knowledge that he had committed a stupid act.

In addition, in an attempt perhaps to produce a more subtle blame effect, some victims were described as having frequent and some infrequent accidents at work. The worker with the poor accident record was described less positively than the other, as might be expected, even though there was no cause given for the earlier accidents. Whether or not the victim was rated lower than a nonvictim workman in any of the conditions is not known, because there was no control group.

When a woman was described as being the cause of an automobile accident in which she suffered, she was described less positively on a set of eleven bipolar adjective scales than an innocent victim of an accident (Miller, Smith, Ferree & Taylor, 1976). This result was to be expected, but due to confounding the result cannot be ascribed to either the observer's evaluation of a guilty

perpetrator or a suffering victim. Due to a lack of non-suffering conditions, it is unknown whether the victims were derogated or described positively with respect to an average woman.

A third experiment without a control group told observers of the unwanted pregnancy of an unmarried college student (Stokols & Schopler, 1973). Some subjects were led to believe it was the result of rape and others that it was the result of sex by choice. Results were a nonsignificant trend that she was rated lower if she had had a choice. Perhaps these results reflect a sympathy for rape victims or else a condemnation of those who break religious codes or those who willingly accept the risks of premarital sex. Perhaps the results reflect a feeling of more similarity with a victim who is morally innocent than with one who chose premarital sex. None of these hypotheses are supportable by the data because of the confounding of the perpetrator and the victim being one and the same.

Lerner and Agar (1972) described to one group of subjects a drug addict who had caused his own addiction, and to another group described an addict who was addicted due to the negligence of a doctor who had prescribed the drug. If he had then described both as cured, one would be considered as either weak or evil, and hence labeled with negative characteristics. Yet, the experiment described them as ongoing victims, still suffering from the addiction, and there was no significant difference between observers' views of them. There was, however, a control group, and for target persons with attitudes similar to the observers, both victims were derogated as compared to a non-addict. The derogation effect for the

self-addicted man can be assumed to be because he is both a perpetrator and a victim. The effect for the one who was addicted by the doctor is slightly larger and can only be explained by the fact that he is a victim. This implies that there may be a greater derogation effect for a victim who is not to blame. However, the confounding of perpetrator and victim still leaves the question in doubt, and so leaves the need for the development of the present experiment to test the question.

In a last experiment, where observers rated someone who was both a victim and a perpetrator, Whitehead and Smith (1976) described a man who built a house where a geologist predicted either 0%, 50%, or 75% chance of a serious earthquake. When he suffered a loss to the house, observers did not differ in their evaluation of his personality qualities, such as likableness or people wanting to know him better, as a function of his ability to foresee the earthquake. They did lower their evaluation of his abilities, such as being a good president of a construction firm and being likely to gain admiration from others, when he had been forewarned.

Again, one would expect devaluation of an individual so foolish as to take a large financial and safety risk against the overwhelming odds offered by an expert, irrespective of whether or not this person suffers a loss. It is again a question of why there was no difference between the evaluations of the personality characteristics of those to blame and those not able to foresee the accident. There exists the possibility that subjects were responding

differently to victims who are and who are not to blame.

Another interpretation of the results of this experiment is suggested by Shaver (1970a). He was discussing why Walster (1966) was able to show derogation in an experiment on blame for an automobile accident, but was unable to replicate this finding (Walster, 1967) when it involved financial loss related to home ownership. Shaver suggested that the student sample did not differ in their responses in the second experiment because it involved a situation where the experience of home ownership and large financial losses were unfamiliar to them.

In one of the earliest and most frequently cited studies of derogation, Lerner and Simmons (1966) included what they called the "martyr" condition. The confederate who was to receive shocks protested that she was afraid, but the experimenter convinced her that she should receive the shocks, explaining that it was necessary in order for the observer to receive her experimental credit. The confederate did comply, received the shocks, and was rated significantly lower on the attractiveness scales than the control person. As Cialdini et al., (1976) were able to demonstrate in a partial replication, this effect is apparently due to a feeling of complicity in the victim's suffering. When the observer gained by the victim's suffering, or seemed to be the cause of it, there was a greater derogation effect. This effect was confounded with the fact that only the "martyr" appeared to have any choice about being in the experiment. In their discussion, Lerner and Simmons said that an "untested, but extremely interesting hypothesis" is that if observers

can blame the suffering of the victim on some act the victim committed or failed to do, they will have less need to derogate. Apparently Lerner set out to test this in his next experiment (Lerner & Matthews, 1967) by manipulating the apparent cause of the victim's suffering.

The manipulation was merely who drew a piece of paper from a bowl which determined who was to be a victim and who was the observer. This met the criterion that the action of picking did not imply a stupid or evil person, as did some of the choices described in the last section, and it also produced significantly different attributions of blame as measured by a manipulation check. But though it managed to produce conditions where the victim was to blame and not to blame, when the victim was not to blame, she was in fact the victim of a choice made by the observer and at the same time the observer won escape from pain as a result of the victim's suffering.

When Godfry and Lowe (1975) decided to extend Lerner's previous studies, they made the same error of using the shock paradigm where the suffering of the victim prevented the suffering of the subject, who then became the observer. They demonstrated derogation of victims who were chosen as a result of chance or as a result of being convinced by the experimenter. Those victims who were either an outright volunteer to receive the shocks instead of the subject, or who, when chosen, accepted while justifying it in terms of scientific progress and helpfulness, were liked even more than the average college student.

One interpretation of this result could be that the one persuaded by the experimenter was seen by the subjects as really not being in control of the situation and so was treated as if she had been selected by chance. But this is a rather tenuous assumption to make, and there is no manipulation check to support it. A more likely interpretation is that the victims in the two conditions who quickly and willingly made a choice which was of direct benefit to the observers were seen as quite nice people, and so were described as such. Their positive rating was a combination of several forces, as a result of confounding the fact that the target person was a victim while at the same time she was a person who had chosen to help the subject.

In one experiment where subjects were asked their perceptions of the injustice of the attack by a policeman and dog as shown in a photo, and their evaluation of the victim, there was no significant relationship between these two measures ($r = .03$; Lincoln & Levinger, 1972). The authors explained that those who perceived the attack as just also must see the victim as being some kind of criminal. This was again a situation where the evaluation of the victim was confounded by the fact that the evaluator also believed that the victim was the perpetrator of some evil act which justified the suffering. The authors suggested that those observers who felt the attack to be unjustified were also negative toward the victim because of the classic derogation effect for victims. In fact, for all levels of perceived injustice combined, victims were rated significantly lower than nonvictims on a fifteen-item bipolar adjective scale.

Thus, in order to test the effects of differential blame on the derogation of a victim, Experiment One was designed to test the following hypothesis: There will be more derogation of a victim who is not to blame for his suffering than for a victim who is more to blame.

Method

Design

The experiment was a 2x2x2x5 factoral design. Each participant was assigned to one of two blocks according to gender. Within each of these blocks each participant was assigned to one of five levels of a randomized blocking variable based on a score on the Internal scale of Levenson's Locus of Control scale (1974). Within each of these ten blocks participants were randomly assigned to one of four experimental treatments combining conditions of blame or no blame with either a victim or nonvictim outcome.

Participants

Participants were 120 students at Western State College of Colorado, who volunteered to participate in the experiment in order to fill out the Locus of Control and Just World scales and to receive an interpretation of their scores on these personality inventories at a later date. They were enrolled in elementary psychology or developmental psychology classes for which there are no prerequisites.

Measures

The principal dependent measure was a deviation score which was

calculated as the difference between a subject's ratings of the target person and that subject's rating of the average college student. These ratings were made on a set of fifteen bipolar adjective scales developed by Lerner (1971). The pairs of adjectives were as follows: Intelligent-Unintelligent; Likable-Unlikable; Uncooperative-Cooperative; Bossy-Easygoing; Immature-Mature; Imaginative-Unimaginative: Irresponsible-Responsible; Nervous-Calm; Patient-Impatient; Reasonable-Unreasonable; Rigid-Flexible; Courteous-Rude; Selfish-Unselfish; Warm-Cold; Sincere-Insincere. This scale has been used in much recent research on derogation.

Other dependent measures of liking for the target person included three pairs of bipolar statements as follows: (1) Undeserving of a favor from me--Deserving of a favor from me; (2) Not in control of own outcomes--In control of own outcomes; (3) Worthy of my friendship--Unworthy of my friendship. These were also rated by the participants along a nine-point scale, both for the average college student and for the target person.

Manipulation Checks

The effects of the blame-no blame manipulation were tested by asking the subject, on a nine point bipolar scale, to rate the extent to which the target person was responsible for what happened, the extent to which what happened was the result of choices he made, and how much the target person was in control of his own fate.

The effects of the victim-nonvictim manipulation were measured by allowing each subject to rate the pleasantness-unpleasantness of

the target person's experiences on a nine point bipolar scale.

Procedure

Subjects came to the first session of their fall quarter psychology class, and after the usual course introduction, class was dismissed, but students were invited to remain to fill out a "personality inventory" with the explanation that it was a research project of the professor, and that scores would be calculated and interpreted in a later class period.

The self-report inventories for each participant were scored for the distributive justice scale and for the locus of control scale. Within each sex the subjects were divided into five equal groups based on their rank on the locus of control scale score. Within each of these groups participants were assigned randomly to one of the four experimental conditions.

One week after the first class session, class was again dismissed early with the request that students remain to receive their scores to note for later interpretation, which actually occurred about a month later. The necessity of providing each student with their own individual scores made it possible for the experimenter to assure that each subject received the experimental manipulation for which he or she had been randomly selected.

Subjects were told as a group that this was also an experiment for the professor, concerning first impressions or person perception. They were asked to complete the booklet given to them which had their name and personality inventory scores on it. They were asked to

proceed page by page from the beginning, answer every item, and not go back. They were told that there were no right answers, but that only their own impressions were desired.

The first page was a rating on Lerner's (1971) fifteen adjective bipolar checklist of the average college student. The first paragraph of the second page was a description of John, the target person, as a somewhat typical college student. The second paragraph varied with the experimental conditon, and described John as either being accidentally or mistakenly making a choice which involved him in a situation having neutral or else negative consequences.

Thus, the high blame, victim condition described John as being arrested after going out with some friends he had just met. In the low blame, victim condition John was arrested accidentally while merely walking alone. In the high blame, nonvictim condition John is described as going out with friends with a neutral outcome. The low blame, nonvictim condition described John as walking alone with a neutral outcome. Please see Appendix A for the actual materials used.

Because some of the participants were not present for both parts of the experiment or chose not to fill out the one or both booklets, there were 138 completed sets of data. Eighteen of these were randomly excluded from certain cells in order to leave an exactly evenly balanced sample of 120.

Results and Discussion

Analysis of Variance

The Analysis of Variance was performed by the Statistical

Analysis System (SAS) computer program. Using the randomized blocks design, the proper error term for each main effect and interaction was as follows:

Hypothesis	Error Term
Sex	Sex x Group
Group	Within Cells
Blame	Group x Blame
Victim	Group x Victim
Sex x Group	Within Cells
Sex x Blame	Sex x Group x Blame
Sex x Victim	Sex x Group x Victim
Group x Blame	Within Cells
Group x Victim	Within Cells
Blame x Victim	Group x Blame x Victim
Sex x Group x Blame	Within Cells
Sex x Group x Victim	Within Cells
Sex x Blame x Victim	Sex x Group x Blame x Victim
Group x Blame x Victim	Within Cells
Sex x Group x Blame x Victim	Within Cells

A Multiple Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was also performed for all four of the dependent variables, although the summed adjective ratings was the dependent variable of principal interest.

Manipulation Checks

The manipulation of describing the target person as being a victim or nonvictim was apparently successful, judging from the rated

unpleasantness of his outcomes. There was a significant difference between the way in which subjects rated what happened to the target person depending on whether they read the victim or the nonvictim manipulation. On a 9 point scale with 9 being the most unpleasant, the target person's experience was rated 8.33 by subjects reading the victim manipulation and 5.32 by subjects reading the nonvictim manipulation ($F = 120.10$, $p < .01$).

There was also a point-biserial correlation between the victim manipulation and rated unpleasantness of +.66, ($p < .01$).

The blame manipulation was successful as measured by subject's response to the question, "Was what happened to John the result of choices he made?" Those in the high blame manipulation said yes with a mean of 4.85; in the chance or low blame manipulation the mean was 3.13 ($F = 18.17$, $p < .02$). It should be noted, however, that the mid-point of the scale, half-way between yes and no, was 5.0.

Another measure of the effectiveness of the blame manipulation was the answer to the question, "How much is John responsible for what happened?" The high blame condition produced a response closer to the "Very Much" end of the scale (2.87) than did the low blame condition (1.80). Again it should be noted that the responses were below the midpoint of the scale. These differences were not significant ($F = 6.79$, $p < .06$).

There was a significant tendency for male subjects to place more responsibility on John than did females (respectively 2.77 and 1.90, ($F = 23.21$, $p < .01$). This did not interact with the blame manipulation.

Both of these measures produces a positive and significant point-biserial correlation with the blame manipulation, +.40 (p .01) with "choices" a-d +.31 (p .01) with "responsible."

Effects of the Treatment Variables

The principal measure was the deviation of the combined adjective ratings of the target person from the adjective ratings of "the average college student." The alpha coefficient found in this experiment was .70. On this deviation score there was a significant three-way interaction between the blocking variables of Sex and Group (locus of control) with the Victim manipulation ($F = 4.22$, $p < .01$, see Table 1). This three-way interaction involving the blocking variables was not involved in the test of the hypothesis. The graphical results were quite complex, but can be partially explained by the fact that only females in Group 1 (most external locus of control) and males in Group 2 (somewhat external locus of control rate nonvictims more negatively than they rate victims. This kind of effect was anticipated by Drake's 1979 pilot study and by Zuckerman and Gerbasi (1977) who found that people with external locus of control were less likely to derogate victims. It follows logically that a person who believes that the good or bad things which befall another person are not due to the behavior or characteristics of that person, but rather to external causes, will not berate or derogate a victim. Thus, the finding here was that subjects who were in the two most external groups were different from

the more internal subjects, and not even consistent with each other in response to manipulation of the Victim variable. In their concept of causation, the characteristics of a person and what happens to that person are not necessarily related to each other.

There were no significant simple interactions. The interaction of most interest to this experiment was the one between the Blame and Victim manipulations. It was hypothesized that the difference between the ratings for victims and nonvictims would be greater when the target person was not blamed. This interaction was in the predicted direction (see Figure 1), but as noted in Table 1 it was not significant ($F = 6.61$, $p < .07$).

Another way of looking at this finding is shown in Figure 2. In this case the two nonvictim conditions were collapsed together, and a Newman-Keuls test was performed to test the differences among the remaining three groups at the .05 level of significance. The nonvictim condition was significantly different from each of the two victim conditions, which were not significantly different from each other

There were two significant main effects for the deviation scores. They were less positive when the target was described as a victim than when he was described as a nonvictim. This is the classical derogation effect as expected. The mean rating of the victim was 2.4, for the nonvictim 8.0 ($F = 12.88$, $p < .03$).

The fact that both of these were positive numbers indicated that even for victims an individual was rated more positively than

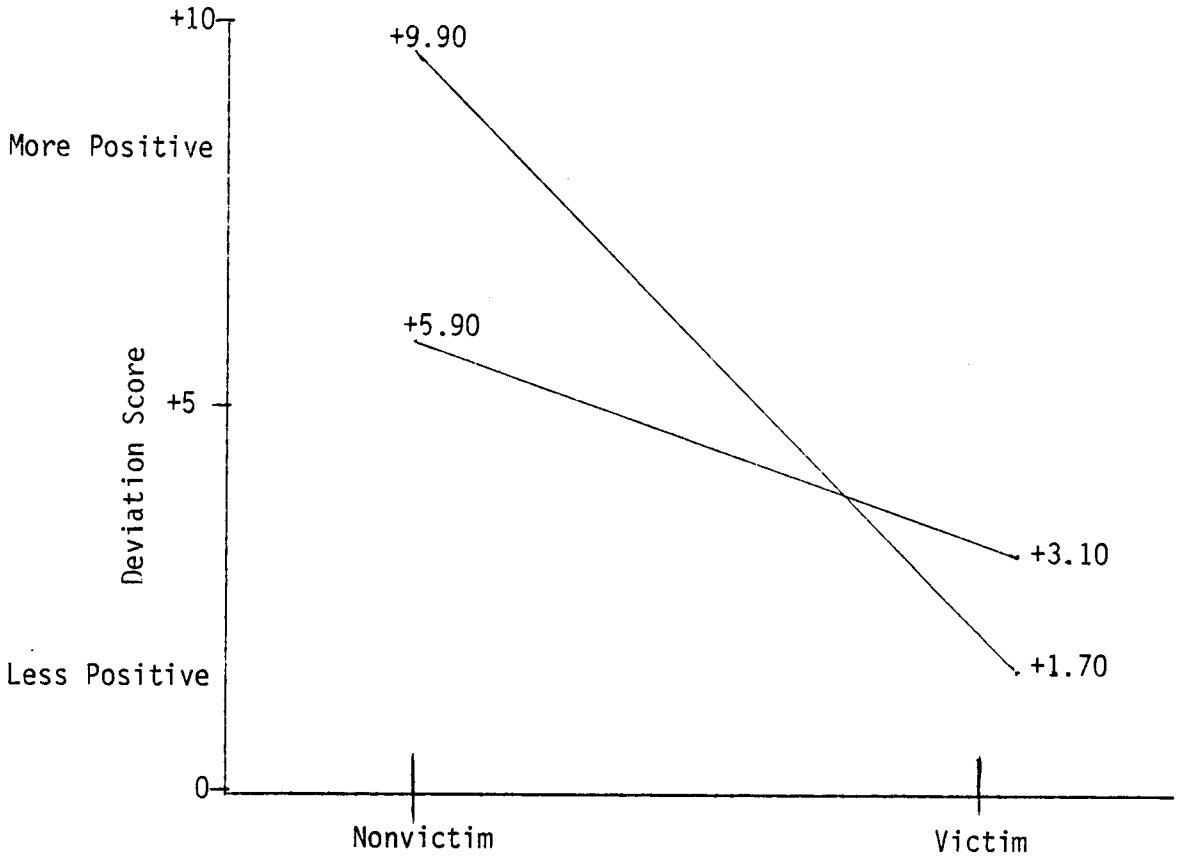


Figure 1. Deviation scores of a low blame or a high blame target person as a function of the victim manipulation.

NOTE: Derogation is the lowering of the deviation score of a nonvictim to the comparable victim.

Table 1. Analysis of variance for adjective ratings of the target person.

Source	df	MS	F
Sex	1	1178.13	5.51
Group	4	349.32	3.45*
Blame	1	43.20	0.67
Victim	1	940.80	12.43*
Sex x Group	4	213.65	2.11
Sex x Blame	1	320.13	3.06
Sex x Victim	1	64.53	0.15
Group x Blame	4	64.47	0.64
Group x Victim	4	75.70	0.75
Blame x Victim	1	202.80	6.61
Sex x Group x Blame	4	104.74	1.03
Sex x Group x Victim	4	427.43	4.22**
Sex x Blame x Victim	1	154.13	0.83
Group x Blame x Victim	4	30.70	0.30
Sex x Group x Blame x Victim	4	185.36	1.83
Within Cells	80	101.33	

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

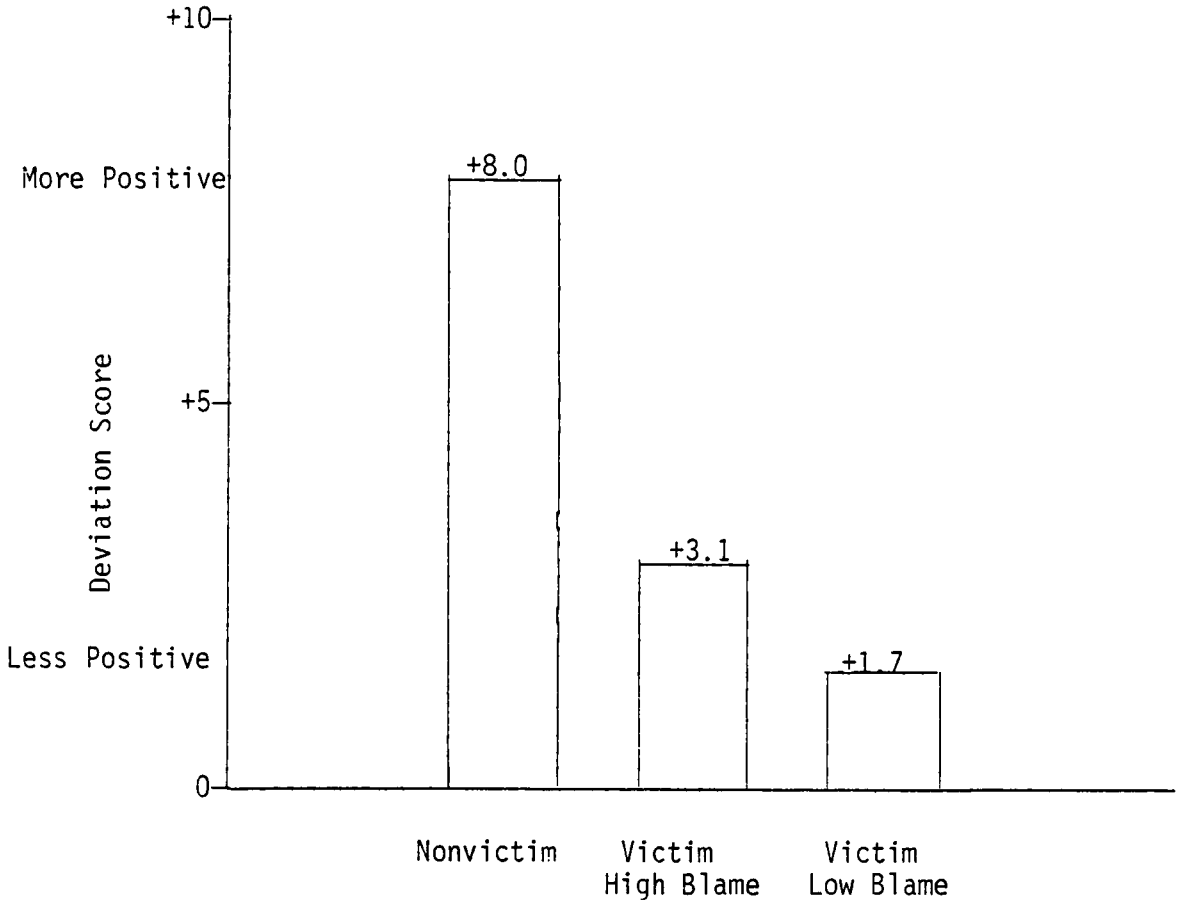


Figure 2. Deviation scores of a target person compared across three experimental conditions.

NOTE: The nonviction condition is significantly different from each of the two victim conditions ($P < .05$) which are not significantly different from each other.

"the average college student." This effect may have been due to a tendency to like a specific individual more than an average member of a group. It may have been due to the stimulus materials and their presentation of the target person in a positive manner or in a way where the students in the experiment saw him as similar to themselves.

Another partial explanation is reflected in the main effect for sex ($F = 5.51$, $p. < .08$) which was not significant, but showed a trend for females to rate the male target person more positively ($\bar{X} = 8.33$) than did males $\bar{X} = 2.07$). This could possibly be due to female college students liking the opposite sex more than they do "the average college student."

The other significant main effect was for Group, that is for the effects of grouping the experiment's participants according to locus of control ($F = 3.45$, $p. < .02$). As this was one of the blocking variables, these differences were not important to the hypothesis tested in this experiment. The overall variance accounted for by the model, omega squared, was .517.

Another dependent measure was the response to the statement of whether or not the target person was viewed, as compared to the average college student, to be "deserving of a favor from me." There were no significant effects on this measure.

Another dependent measure was the response to the statement "worthy of my friendship." The only significant effect was from the Blame by Victim interaction, which was the subject of principal investigation for this experiment (See Table 2). Analysis of variance found an F of 10.40 ($p < .05$). Investigation of Figure 3

Table 2. Analysis of variance for worthy of my friendship.

Source	df	MS	F
Sex	1	0.30	0.05
Group	4	0.80	0.16
Blame	1	0.30	0.08
Victim	1	2.70	0.63
Sex x Group	4	6.15	1.23
Sex x Blame	1	4.03	1.01
Sex x Victim	1	0.30	0.21
Group x Blame	4	3.61	0.72
Group x Victim	4	4.30	0.86
Blame x Victim	1	17.63	10.40*
Sex Group x Blame	4	4.01	0.81
Sex x Group x Victim	4	1.40	0.28
Sex x Blame x Victim	1	0.83	0.19
Group x Blame x Victim	4	1.70	0.34
Sex x Group x Blame x Victim	4	4.31	0.87
Within Cells	80	4.98	

* $p < .05$

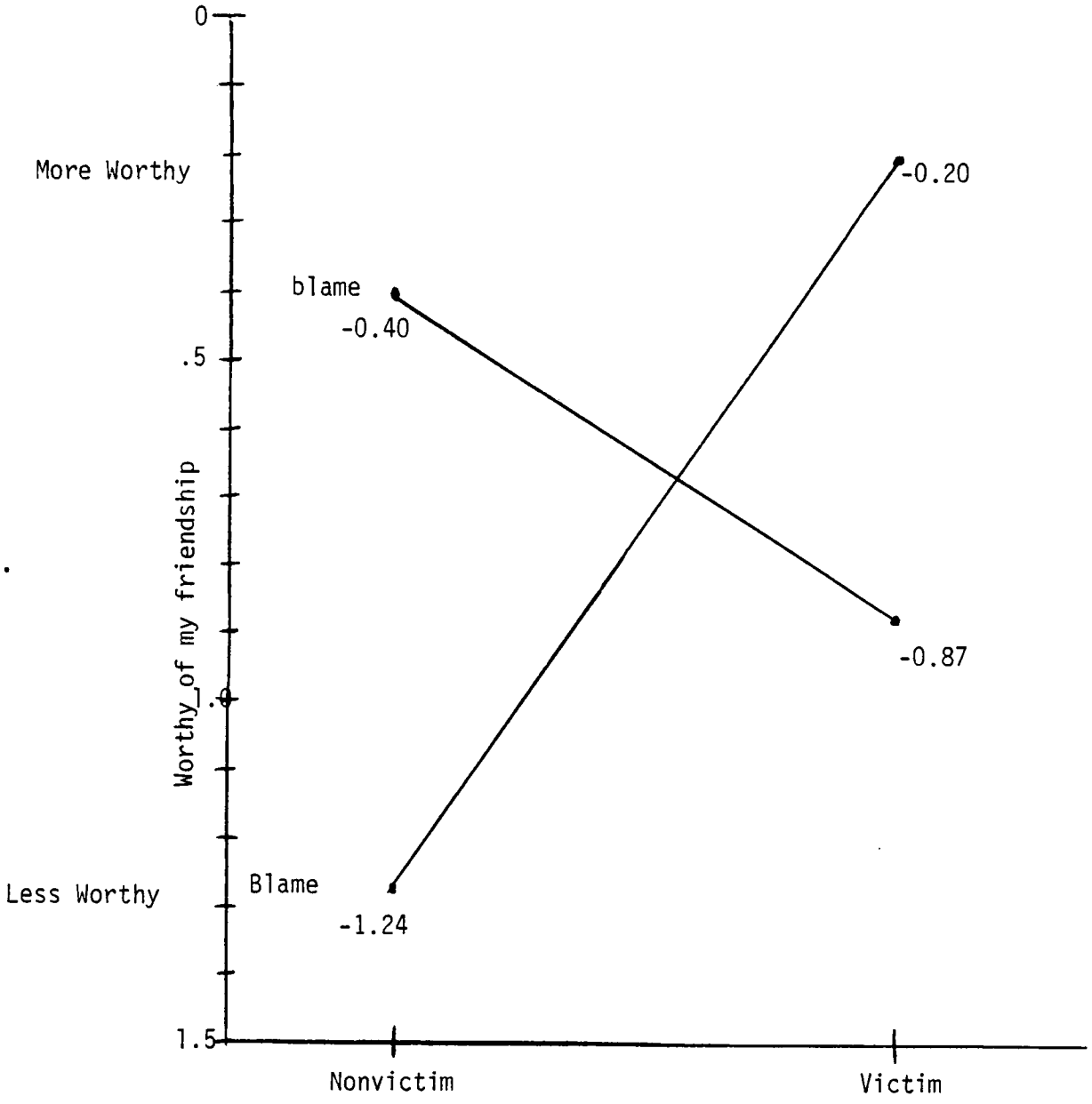


Figure 3. Judgments of whether a low blame or a high blame target person is worthy of friendship as a function of the victim manipulation.

NOTE: Derogation is the lowering of the worthy of friendship score of a nonvictim to a comparable victim.

indicated that this effect is in the predicted direction, with an apparent derogation effect for the low blame condition but no such effect for the high blame condition.

However, when Newman-Keuls test of significance was performed on the participants in the low blame condition only, this effect was found to be nonsignificant. Apparently much of the interaction effect was due to the unexpected preference by the high blame group for victims rather than nonvictims. The hypothesis predicted a less negative response to victims who were to blame, not a more positive one. Without a significant derogation effect in the no-blame conditions, this measure can only tentatively support the hypothesis.

Another way of looking at this finding is shown in Figure 4. The two nonvictim conditions were collapsed together to produce a mean on this measure of -.83. A Newman-Keuls test was performed at the .05 level of significance. It showed that the nonvictim condition was significantly different from the high blame victim and that the low blame victim was not significantly different from either of the other conditions.

Significant Pearson correlations were found in the victim condition between worthy of my friendship and the blame manipulation ($r = .29$, $p < .05$), worthy of my friendship and perceived responsibility for what happened ($r = .34$, $p < .05$), and worthy of my friendship and what happened being the result of choices he made ($r = .32$, $p < .05$). All of these represent a more positive valuation of the victim being related to more blame for the victim. Thus, the hypothesis that the low blame victim will be derogated more is supported by this evidence.

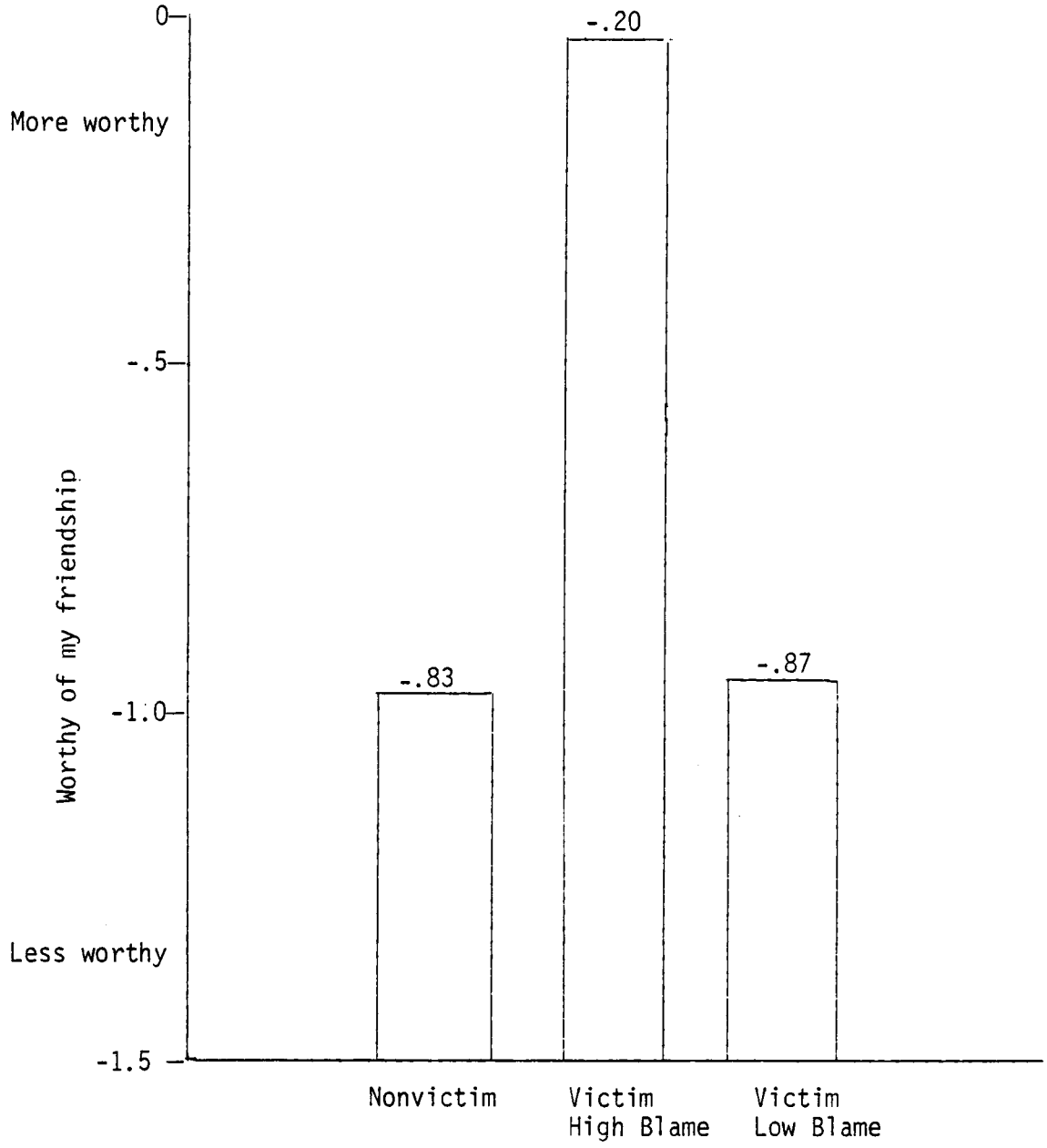


Figure 4. Judgements of whether a target person is worthy of friendship compared across three experimental conditions.

NOTE: The nonvictim condition is significantly different from the victim high blame condition ($p < .05$). The victim low blame condition is not significantly different from either of the other two conditions.

The last dependent measure was not really a measure of liking, but asked whether the target person was in control of his own outcomes. The only significant effect was due to the victim manipulation. The target person was judged to be less in control when he was a victim. The means were -.43 for nonvictims and -1.72 for victims ($F = 18.32$, p .02)/

A mulciple Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was performed combining all four dependent variables, but by the Hotelling-Lawley Trace, Pillai's Trace, or Wilks' Criterion, there were no significant effects.

Personality Variables

Neither the Belief in a Just World nor the Internal Locus of Control scores had a significant linear effect on the reactions to victims. Though there were interaction effects, these were too complex to understand. They did, however, correlate significantly with each other ($r = -.34$, $p < .02$). Students who agreed that a person has control over their own outcomes were those who also believed that one gets what one deserves. The difference between these scales is that belief in a just world also tries to measure the idea of getting what you deserve not only as a result of your actions but also as a result of your character.

CHAPTER IV

EXPERIMENT TWO: EMPATHY AND DEROGATION

Previous Research

One way of defining "empathy" is: "the sharing of another's emotions" (Stotland, 1969). Aderman, Archer & Harris (1975) say that the occurrence of empathy makes the observer forget considerations of the just world or equity. One might expect that this sharing of emotions might make people feel more positively toward each other. But this is not always the case. It does sometimes produce negative feelings in the observer. Tannenbaum and Gaer (1965) showed that observers of a victim who identified with the victim were more likely to describe themselves as depressed on a mood adjective check list. This increased reaction to another can also be produced by instructions, as by Stotland (1969) who found greater vasoconstriction and palmar sweating reactions to a victim by using empathy instructions.

One could hypothesize a greater ability to share emotions with one who is similar in some way to the observer. Evidence from Novak and Lerner (1968) showed that participants preferred to avoid emotionally disturbed people who were similar more than those who were dissimilar.

Using gender as the means of establishing a possible identity with a victim, Hoiberg and Stires (1973) found less liking for a female rape victim by women than men, with the difference increased for greater suffering by the victim. Kerr and Kurtz (1977) showed that a significant interaction reported for sex by severity of

suffering was due to the female victim being described as less likable in the severe condition by women than by men. This evidence seems to predict that similar attributes will produce a negative rather than a positive reaction toward the victim. Lerner and Matthews (1967) believed that "identification with a victim requires the perception of the same possible common fate and not the perception of similar attributes" (p. 324).

Two experiments have given ample evidence that when a subject is expecting to undergo the same conditions in the near future as the victim being observed, that subject will not derogate as much as will an observer expecting a different fate. Chaikin and Darley (1973) allowed students to view a film, expecting to be next in the role of the victim or of the perpetrator. Those expecting to become the perpetrator derogated the victim, the others did not.

Sorrentino and Boutilier (1974) led some subjects to expect that they would be the recipient of shocks and others to believe they would not. After watching a film of a confederate supposedly receiving shocks, those with a dissimilar fate derogated the victim significantly more than did those with a similar fate.

Another way to perhaps share another person's emotions is to role play the experiences of that person. In the 1960's a method used to try to reduce the derogation of racial minorities and other disadvantaged people was to have others role play some of their experiences. In one case, students who traveled across campus in a wheelchair showed increased liking for a wheelchair victim

and toward issues favoring the disabled (Clore & Jeffery, 1972). The attitudes toward the issues remained positive in response to a telephone poll four months later.

Aderman et al., (1974) and Brehm and Aderman (1977) found that empathy instructions reduced the amount of derogation of a victim. Another way of producing more positive reactions toward victims was shared emotional arousal (Byrne, Allgeir, Winslow, & Buckman, 1975).

Thus, the evidence seems to show that we reject victims more who share common attributes but are positive toward those who may share similar fates or experiences. Perhaps the rejection of someone like ourselves who is suffering is an attempt to reject the possibility that the same thing may happen to us. But when that same suffering appears likely for us (sharing a similar fate), then the derogation of the sufferer leads to the eventual derogation of self.

Another way to look at this is to see derogation of a similar sufferer as a way to make them appear less similar. To describe them in negative terms is to make them seem more distant from the observer, and thus, of course, to make the same fate seem less likely to the observer. However, when the same fate is already assured, or at least more likely, then this is something in common between the victim and observer. People sharing similar experiences may be attracted and feel positively about each other.

The present experiment was designed to test these ideas over a long-term situation. Does the observer of a victim also empathize with the victim if such a fate is likely for the observer but not in

the near future? Another goal is to test the findings in a real life setting. Sorrentino and Boutilier's (1974) findings were that the differences between observers were greatest between similar fate and dissimilar fate observers who thought the experimental situation was unfair. It is granted that some aspects of life are perceived as unfair, but stimulus materials for this experiment were chosen such that neither the victim nor some other individual or institution could reasonably be seen as the cause of the victim's suffering.

The hypothesis was that there would be less derogation of a victim whose fate was perceived to have a high probability of happening to the observer than of a victim with a perceived lower probability fate.

Method

Design

The experiment used a 2 x 5 x 3 randomized block design. The participants were divided into two groups by gender. Each of these groups was divided into 5 groups based on the individual's score on the Internal Scale of Levenson's Locus of Control Scale (1974). Within each of these 10 blocks, participants were randomly assigned to one of three experimental treatments consisting of reading about a victim of either high probability suffering, low probability suffering, or no suffering.

The events chosen to represent the different levels of probability were chosen from a list of events which had been rated for both unpleasantness and probability by students at The University

of Tennessee during a 1976 pilot study. The results of this study are reproduced in Appendix B. Two events were sought which had similar perceived unpleasantness but vastly different ratings of probability of occurrence during the next three years. The high probability event chosen was death of a close relative and the low probability event chosen was contracting arthritis. These events were also chosen because they were among those where the victim was also unlikely to be perceived as the perpetrator.

Participants

Participants were 120 students at Western State College of Colorado, who volunteered to participate in the experiment in order to fill out the Locus of Control and Just World scales and to receive an interpretation of their scores on these personality inventories at a later date. They were enrolled in elementary psychology classes for which there were no prerequisites.

Measures

The principal dependent measure was a deviation score which was calculated as the difference between a subject's ratings of the target person and that subject's rating of the average college student. These ratings were made on a set of fifteen bipolar adjective scales developed by Lerner (1971). These are reproduced in Appendix A.

Other dependent measures included three pairs of bipolar statements as follows:

1. Undeserving of a favor from me--Deserving of a favor from me.
2. Worthy of my friendship--Unworthy of my friendship.
3. Not in control of own outcomes--In control of own outcomes.

These were also rated by the participants on a nine-point scale and the rating of the average college student was subtracted from the rating of the target person.

Manipulation Checks

To see whether the present sample perceived the incidents causing suffering to the victim as being, respectively, likely and unlikely, participants were asked to rate the chances of something like that happening to them within the next three years. They were also asked to rate the unpleasantness such an event would have for themselves, on a scale from zero to 100.

Procedure

Subjects came to the first session of their fall quarter psychology class, and after the usual course introductions, class was dismissed, but students were invited to remain to fill out a "personality inventory" with the explanation that it was a research project of the professor, and that scores would be calculated and interpreted in a later class period.

The self-report inventories for each participant were scored for the Just World scale and for the Locus of Control scale. Within each sex, the subjects were divided into five equal groups based on their rank of the locus of control scale score. Within each of these

groups, participants were assigned randomly to one of the three experimental conditions.

One week after the first class session, class was again dismissed early with the request that students remain to receive their scores to note for later interpretation, which actually occurred about a month later. Students were given the experimental booklets with their scores and asked to write them down. They were then told that they could participate in an experiment in person perception or impression formation. They filled out their ratings of the average college student, participated in Experiment One, and then read a description of Sue, a hypothetical college student (see Appendix A). Included in the description was a recent event which was either meeting an old friend (no suffering), hearing of the death of a close aunt (high probability suffering), or learning that she has arthritis (low probability suffering). Each event was balanced so that it had equal likelihood of following each of the four conditions in Experiment One.

Results and Discussion

Analysis of Variance

The Analysis of Variance was performed using the randomized block design, under which the proper error term for each main effect and interaction was as follows:

Hypothesis	Error Term
Sex	Sex x Group
Group	Within Cells

Hypothesis (cont'd.)	Error Term (cont'd.)
Victim	Group x Victim
Sex x Group	Within Cells
Sex x Victim	Sex x Group x Victim
Group x Victim	Within Cells
Sex x Group x Victim	Within Cells

A Multiple Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was also performed combining all four of the dependent variables, although only the deviation score was the dependent variable of principal interest.

Manipulation Checks

When participants rated the unpleasantness of Sue's experiences on a 100-point scale, the means were 17.64 for meeting a friend, 75.65 for the death of her aunt, and 69.52 for contracting arthritis. These differences were significant ($F = 77.45$, $p < .0001$). A Tukey HSD Multiple Comparison Test was performed, and it showed that the meeting of a friend (nonvictim) manipulation was rated significantly less unpleasant than the other two, which were not rated significantly different from each other. Thus, the victim manipulation was effective in the direction anticipated.

The median unpleasantness ratings were compared to those made by the University of Tennessee sample used in the pilot study. Males rated the unpleasantness of the death of Sue's aunt at 88 and 75 respectively in the pilot study and in the present experiment. Females rated the unpleasantness of that event at 100 and 90 respectively. Males rating the unpleasantness of contracting arthritis

produced median scores of 80 and 70 respectively for the pilot study and the present experiment. Females produced median scores of 100 and 78 respectively.

The median estimated probability for meeting an old friend was one in 22, for the death of an aunt one in 10, and for contracting arthritis one in 50. Comparisons to The University of Tennessee sample yielded males rating the chances of a close relative dying at one in 10 for that sample and one in 10 in the present experiment. Females estimated the probabilities at one in 10 and one in 10 respectively. For contracting arthritis, the males estimated the probability at one in 100 in the pilot sample and one in 50 in the present experiment. Females estimated the probabilities at one in 78 and one in 50 respectively.

These indicated that the probability manipulation was effective. Participants did judge the death of a close relative to be more probable than contracting arthritis. Since Experiment Two was performed immediately after the participants completed Experiment One, an analysis of variance was performed to see if the manipulations of Experiment One had effects on responses to Experiment Two. There were no significant effects.

Effects of the Treatment Variables

Table 3 shows the analysis of variance for deviation scores for Sue, the target person. There is a significant interaction between the effects of Sex and the Victim ($F = 5.59$, $p < .05$). The form of this interation appears in Figure 5. A

Table 3. Analysis of variance for deviation scores in Experiment Two.

Source	df	MS	F
Sex	1	662.70	14.16
Victim	2	60.02	1.44
Group	4	101.30	0.86
Sex x Victim	2	336.78	5.59*
Sex x Group	4	46.80	0.41
Victim x Group	8	41.72	0.35
Sex x Victim x Group	8	60.22	0.51
Within Cells	90	117.78	

* $p < .05$

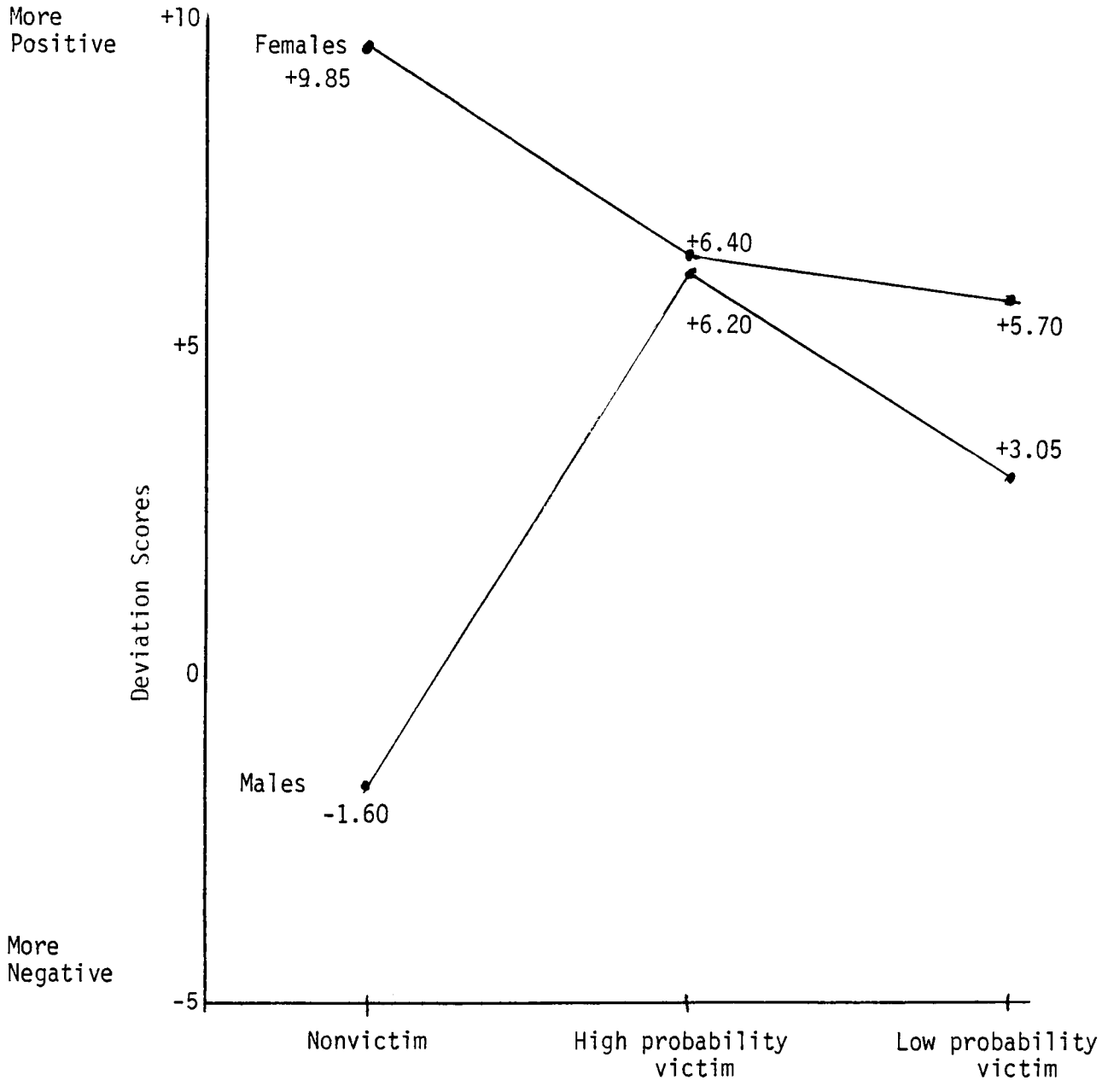


Figure 5. Deviation scores as a function of sex and the victim manipulation in Experiment Two.

Newman-Keuls test at the .05 level of significance was performed. It found that the mean male deviation score for nonvictims was significantly different from all of the other means in the experiment, though not in the direction predicted. Also the female deviation score for nonvictims was significantly higher than the male deviation score for low probability victims. There were no other significant differences among the means.

Thus, the males described the high probability victim in more positive terms than they did the nonvictim. The hypothesis in this experiment predicted that high-probability victims would be derogated less, but did not not expect that the strength of the effect would be so powerful as to produce a significantly more positive evaluation of this high probability victim than of the nonvictim control. Perhaps an important issue which was overlooked was that the observer may well have experienced such a high-probability fate in the past, and that is the basis of the empathy for the victim. Thus any future experimentation in this area would need to assess past experience with the event as well as expectations for its future occurrence.

It is not known why females did not react significantly to the manipulations, nor why neither sex showed a significant derogation effect for the low probability event, as would be expected. Perhaps the event described (arthritis) was considered to be so unlikely as to have no effect on the observer, as was suggested by Shaver (1970) that observers would not react to suffering which was not understandable to them.

It should be noted that in all three experimental conditions the mean deviation scores are positive. This probably reflects the findings by Scheier, Carver, Schulz, Galss and Katz (1978) that compared to members of a groups as a whole, individual members are rated more positively.

There was also a significant main effect for Sex ($F = 14.16$, $p < .05$) on the adjective ratings. As with Experiment One, overall the females rated the target person higher than did the males. Overall, the variance accounted for by the model, omega squared, was .221.

There were no significant effects on the variables "Worthy of my friendship," nor "In control of own outcomes." The variable "Deserving of a favor from me" was significant only for a Sex by Group interaction ($F = 2.92$, $p < .05$). Because these were the blocking variables, this finding is not relevant to the hypothesis being tested.

A multiple Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was performed combining all four dependent variables. By the Hotelling-Lawley Trace and Wilks' Criterion, there were no significant effects. However, Pillai's Trace indicated a significant effect for Sex by Victim ($F = 3.09$, $p < .05$) as was found using only the main dependent variable, the summed adjective ratings.

Personality Variables

There were no significant linear effects of the grouping of participants by locus of control upon the principal dependent measure. The Sex X Group interaction for the "Deserving of a favor from me"

variable was too complex to interpret. There were no significant correlations on any of the measures with either of the personality variables (see Appendix B). They did, however, correlate highly with each other ($r = -.42$, $p < .001$), which because of reverse scoring of the internal scale indicated that those high in internal locus of control also had a high belief in a just world.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The results of Experiment One showed a derogation effect. A person who was described as suffering was judged to have more negative personality characteristics that a person who did not suffer. The purpose of the experiment was to investigate whether increasing the amount of blame of the victim for what happened would reduce this tendency to describe him with negative terms.

This result had been predicted by both Equity Theory (Walster et al., 1973) and Just World Theory (Lerner & Miller, 1978). On the deviation scores the high and low blame manipulation was not effective. One the judgement of whether the victim was worthy of friendship there were significant positive correlations with more blame, with perceived choice, and with perceived responsibility. These were the only data which gave support to the predictions, and therefore contradicted Prus (1975), whose Social Labeling Theory clearly predicted the opposite.

This partial support for the idea that blame reduces derogation has some corroboration from some nonexperimental studies. For instance, when Bulman and Wortman (1977) interviewed victims of paralysis due to accidents, they found that those who were rated as the best copers by their therapists were those with a high degree of self blame. They also found a significant positive correlation between the victim's belief in a just world and their happiness with their present situation. Perhaps a test on a control group would

find all high scorers on the Just World Scale happy with their lives, yet this would not reduce the importance of this factor to their adjustment.

When observing the parents of leukemia victims, Chodoff, Friedman, and Hamburg (1964) felt that some parents achieved some relief of the stress involved by blaming themselves, and recommended that medical doctors not dissuade these parents from self-blame by insisting that science does not support their beliefs.

Janoff-Bulman (1979) separated the concept of blame into characterological self-blame and behavioral self-blame. She found that depressives used more characterological self-blame than did nondepressives. She pointed out that characterological self-blame is done in the present tense, implying that it is unmodifiable and will continue in the future. Behavioral self-blame describes as action in the past which can be changed. She suggested that both help givers and recipients be trained to use this latter attribution in order to perceive that helping will in fact improve the victim's situation.

But why were the deviance scores and other measures in Experiment One unable to produce support for the hypothesis in addition to the correlational support and the above-mentioned nonexperimental reports? The answer lies possibly in the weakness of the blame manipulation. One manipulation check showed a significant perception of difference, the other showed a nonsignificant trend. On both of these measures the judgement of the amount of

responsibility or choice for the high blame condition fell below the midpoint of the scale.

The problem was anticipated in planning the experiment, because it was understood that foreseability is an important factor in an observer's attribution of blame. Yet if an observer knows that a person could foresee that his or her choice of an action would lead to his or her own suffering, then that observer will derogate the victim for making stupid choices as well as for suffering. Thus, the blame manipulation is this experiment could use only association with the outcome and making a choice which led to the outcome as ways to vary blame. For the moment successful research in this area awaits a more powerful technique. Perhaps it lies in directly stating that a person is to blame, at fault, responsible for, or the cause of his or her outcomes rather than inferring the blame through a description of circumstances.

Experiment Two attempted to produce empathy with a victim, thus reducing derogation, by describing an event which participants could identify with or expect to encounter in the future. Chaikin and Darley (1973) and Sorrentino and Boutilier (1974) had demonstrated this effect in the laboratory and this experiment was an attempt to extend the findings over a longer period of time and to a more natural setting. However, the results showed no derogation of victims.

One possible explanation for this finding was that the experimenter failed to ask whether each observer had possibly experienced a similar problem in the past. As Clore and Jeffery (1972) have demonstrated,

a shared past experience can produce empathy. The positive deviance scores given to the victims in this experiment may well be due to these past shared experiences.

Another possible explanation is that the high probability event, judged to be one in ten, was still not seen to be very likely. As well, the low probability event may not have been reacted to because it was outside of the experience of most participants in the experiment.

A third problem, which the experimenter tried to avoid, was the possibility that the overall description of the target person was too positive. Friedman and Austin (1978) failed to find derogation of a victim who was described in positive terms.

Training those who are suffering (e.g., the handicapped, the poor, the bereaved) to avoid negative effects from derogation, or being described in negative terms, and thus perhaps unworthy of aid, could also include the use of empathy. It may be counterproductive to emphasize characteristics in common, but rather more useful to share experiences. Some charitable groups practice this by using role playing to allow some people to experience the disadvantages some others face. Some groups mention in their request for money the large numbers of sufferers from a certain disease, or the fact that one of ten children has a birth defect. An individual seeking empathy from others may try to have them share more of his or her activities.

Another means is to minimize the unpleasantness of the situation. As one is seen as less of a victim, as suffering less, there may be less derogation or rejection. This suggests that blind people

who make light of their problem will be more liked than those who remind us of their suffering. For example, in an experiment where the victim could perhaps be stigmatized because of a white eye patch, less help was offered in a high effort than in a low effort condition. Under the same circumstances without the eye patch, there was no reduction in helping with increased effort (Ungar, 1979),

Wortman and Brehm (1975) argued against the kind of training reported by de Charms (1972) which led to increased feelings by students that they were in control of their outcomes and would get what they deserved. The result of this training was increased adademic achievement, but the critics feared that excessive self blame for failure could later lead to learned helplessness and depression (Wortman & Brehm, 1975).

Yet, learned helplessness is related to the individual's perception that the qualities leading to failure are permanent, as for example, personality characteristics. Perhaps these students could also be taught that self blame means to blame themselves in terms of actions committed or omitted, which are temporary characteristics. This may have beneficial results by preventing self-derogation when they meet with failures.

The negative effect of self-derogation was shown in an experiment concerning those expecting to suffer through eating a worm (Comer & Laird, 1975). Several means of psychological preparation for this event were available, including a change in the rated

edibility of worms. But for those subjects who seemed to describe themselves as deserving to eat worms (on a self-esteem scale), they were also more willing to give themselves electric shocks. If self-derogation of victims occurs, and does lead to the individual choosing additional unpleasant alternatives for his or her own life, then it is in need of further understanding.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

EXPERIMENTAL MATERIALS

PERSONALITY INVENTORY

LERNER'S BELIEF IN A JUST WORLD SCALE

Please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with each of the following statements by circling the number that best represents your own personal feeling. It is important that you give one answer for each item.

1. By and large, people deserve what they get.

2. Men who keep in shape have little chance of suffering a heart attack.

3. Although evil men may hold political power for a while, in the general course of history good wins out.

4. People who get 'lucky breaks' have usually earned their good fortune.

6. Basically, the world is a just place.

13. People who meet with misfortune often have brought it on themselves.

15. When parents punish their children, it is almost always for good reasons.

23. It is rare for an innocent man to be wrongly sent to jail.

24. Crime doesn't pay.

26. In almost any business or profession, people who do their job well rise to the top.

33. Students almost always deserve the grades they receive in school.

Responses were recorded on a six-point Likert-type scale. Agreement with the above statements yielded a high belief in a just world score. Disagreement with the following statements yielded a high score.

7. It is often impossible for a person to receive a fair trial in the USA.

11. It is a common occurrence for a guilty person to get off free in American courts.

12. The political candidate who sticks up for his principles rarely gets elected.

14. In professional sports, many fouls and infractions never get called by the referee.

16. Good deeds often go unnoticed and unrewarded.

19. American parents tend to overlook the things most to be admired in their children.

27. Careful drivers are just as likely to get hurt in traffic accidents as careless ones.

29. Many people suffer through absolutely no fault of their own.

31. I've found that a person rarely deserves the reputation he has.

PERSONALITY INVENTORY

LEVENSON'S INTERNAL CONTROL SCALE

Please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement with each of the following statements by circling the number that best represents your own personal feeling. It is important that you give one answer for each item.

5. Whether or not I get into a car accident depends mostly on how good a driver I am.

8. Whether or not I get to be a leader depends mostly on my ability.

18. How many friends I have depends on how nice a person I am.

20. When I make plans, I am almost certain to make them work.

21. I am usually able to protect my personal interests.

25. I can pretty much determine what will happen in my life.

28. My life is determined by my own actions.

32. When I get what I want, it's usually because I worked hard for it.

Responses were recorded on a six-point Likert-type scale. Agreement with these statements yielded a high internal score.

RESPONSE SHEET

RATING THE AVERAGE COLLEGE STUDENT

Please indicate on this scale your impression of the average college student. For each pair of adjectives circle the number which best indicates your impression. If you don't know, please give your best guess, but be sure to circle one number on each line.

Intelligent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Unintelligent
Likable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Unlikable
Uncooperative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Cooperative
Bossy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Easygoing
Immature	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Mature
Imaginative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Unimaginative
Irresponsible	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Responsible
Nervous	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Calm
Patient	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Impatient
Reasonable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Unreasonable
Rigid	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Flexible
Courteous	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Rude
Selfish	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Unselfish
Warm	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Cold
Sincere	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Insincere
Undeserving of a favor from me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Deserving of a favor from me
Worthy of my friendship	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Unworthy of my friendship
Not in control of own outcomes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	In control of own outcomes

STIMULUS MATERIALS

EXPERIMENT ONE

NO BLAME, NONVICTIM MANIPULATION

John lives in the dorm at the college. He finds that studying doesn't take as much of his time as he had been led to believe, so he is taking advantage of the time to meet and know lots of different people. He is taking general courses now, but will soon decide on a major he thinks he will want to work in for the rest of his life. He would eventually like to return to his hime town, but realizes that his work may take him anywhere for at least a few years.

Two weeks ago John went out alone for a walk in the community. While he was passing by an apartment house a police car stopped and the policemen asked him some questions. They asked him about some burglaries in the area, but they soon went on their way.

STIMULUS MATERIALS

EXPERIMENT ONE

NO BLAME, VICTIM MANIPULATION

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Two weeks ago John went out alone for a walk in the community. While he was passing by an apartment house a police car stopped and the policemen asked him some questions.

As it turned out, some people were burglarizing one of the apartments and by mistake John was also arrested. Although he was innocent, he spent the night in jail, where he was taunted and physically abused by the other inmates. His parents were called and raised enough money to pay a bail bondsman, but he is uncertain whether he will be found guilty or not. The bruises are gone now but he still has very unpleasant memories of the incident.

STIMULUS MATERIALS

EXPERIMENT ONE

BLAME, NONVICTIM MANIPULATION

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Two weeks ago John went out with some people he's met in the dorm that evening. They went out in the community and told him to wait outside while they went into an apartment house. A police car stopped and the policemen asked him some questions. They asked him about some burglaries in the area, but they soon went on their way.

STIMULUS MATERIALS

EXPERIMENT ONE

BLAME, VICTIM MANIPULATION

John lives in the dorm at the college. He finds that studying doesn't take as much of his time as he had been led to believe, so he is taking advantage of the time to meet and know lots of different people. He is taking general courses now, but will soon decide on a major he thinks he will want to work in for the rest of his life. He would eventually like to return to his home town, but realizes that his work may take him anywhere for at least a few years.

Two weeks ago John went out with some people he'd met in the dorm that evening. They went out in the community and told him to wait outside while they went into an apartment house. A police car stopped and the policemen asked him some questions.

As it turned out, the people with John were burglarizing one of the apartments and by mistake John was also arrested. Although he was innocent, he spent the night in jail, where he was taunted and physically abused by the other inmates. His parents were called and raised enough money to pay a bail bondsman, but he is uncertain whether he will be found guilty or not. The bruises are gone now but he still has very unpleasant memories of the incident.

RESPONSE SHEET

EXPERIMENT ONE

How would you describe John's experience with the police?

Pleasant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Unpleasant

How much is John responsible for what happened?

Very little	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Very much

Was what happened to John the result of choices he made?

No	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Yes

Please indicate on this scale your impression of John. For each pair of adjectives circle the number which best indicates your impression. If you don't know, please give your best guess, but be sure to circle one number on each line.

Intelligent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Unintelligent
Likable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Unlikable
Uncooperative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Cooperative
Bossy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Easygoing
Immature	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Mature
Imaginative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Unimaginative
Irresponsible	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Responsible
Nervous	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Calm
Patient	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Impatient
Reasonable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Unreasonable
Rigid	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Flexible
Courteous	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Rude
Selfish	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Unselfish
Warm	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Cold
Sincere	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Insincere
Undeserving of a favor from me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Deserving of a favor from me
Worthy of my friendship	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Unworthy of my friendship
Not in control of own outcomes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	In control of own outcomes

STIMULUS MATERIALS

EXPERIMENT TWO

HIGH PROBABILITY VICTIM MANIPULATION

Sue is majoring in elementary education. When she finishes college she hopes to work with children with reading problems. Though she feels that she is a little shy, she is a member of several clubs on campus. She feels that she has several undiscovered talents that she hopes to have a chance to develop in the future.

Last week Sue learned of the unexpected death of her favorite aunt. She had lived nearby all of her life and they had shared many parts of Sue's life. Sue went to the funeral, but finds herself still very sad about what happened.

STIMULUS MATERIALS

EXPERIMENT TWO

LOW PROBABILITY VICTIM MANIPULATION

Sue is majoring in elementary education. When she finishes college she hopes to work with children with reading problems. Though she feels that she is a little shy, she is a member of several clubs on campus. She feels that she has several undiscovered talents that she hopes to have a chance to develop in the future.

Last week she learned that the results of tests by her doctor show that she has contracted arthritis. Already she feels some pain and stiffness in her arms and it worries her a great deal that it may get worse.

STIMULUS MATERIALS

EXPERIMENT TWO

CONTROL GROUP

Sue is majoring in elementary education. When she finsihes college she hopes to work with children with reading problems. Though she feels that she is a little shy, she is a member of several clubs on campus. She feels that she has several undiscovered talents that she hopes to have a chance to develop in the future.

Last week Sue was surprised to meet a girl she had known five years ago but who had moved away. They had never been very good friends, but they were able to talk about some of the people they both knew.

RESPONSE SHEET

EXPERIMENT TWO

How likely is it for something like what happened to Sue to happen to you within the next three years?

About one chance in _____

Rate the degree of unpleasantness this would have for you, using a scale from zero for no unpleasant effects to 100 for extremely unpleasant.

Unpleasantness_____

Please indicate on this scale your impression of Sue. For each pair of adjectives circle the number which best indicates your impression. If you don't know, please give your best guess, but be sure to circle one number on each line.

Intelligent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Unintelligent
Likable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Unlikable
Uncooperative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Cooperative
Bossy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Easygoing
Immature	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Mature
Imaginative	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Unimaginative
Irresponsible	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Responsible
Nervous	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Calm
Patient	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Impatient
Reasonable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Unreasonable
Rigid	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Flexible
Courteous	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Rude
Selfish	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Unselfish
Warm	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Cold
Sincere	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Insincere
Undeserving of a favor from me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Deserving of a favor from me
Worthy of my friendship	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Unworthy of my friendship
Not in control of own outcomes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	In control of own outcomes

APPENDIX B

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS

Correlation coefficients from Experiment One for the victim conditions only.

	Adj. rat.	Deserv. Favor	Worthy Friend.	Unpleas.	Blame Manip.	Respons.	Choices	Inter. Cont.	Just World
Adjective ratings	--								
Deserving Favor	.16	---							
Worthy Friendship	.03	.31	---						
Unpleasant	.11	.05	-.06	---					
Blame Manipulation	.00	.12	.29*	-.05	---				
Responsible	-.21	.04	.34*	-.21	.44***	---			
Choices	-.19	.12	.32*	-.32*	.45***	.53***	---		
Internal Control	-.05	-.11	.10	.02	.05	.20	.07	---	
Just World	-.21	.08	-.03	-.05	-.35**	-.02	-.05	-.34**	---

* significant at .05
** significant at .01
***significant at .001

Median unpleasantness and probability ratings of eleven events from a 1976 pilot study:

Event	Unpleasantness		Chances of happening to me (One chance in ____)	
	Male (N=24)	Female (N=18)	Male (N=24)	Female (N=18)
Flunk out of college	100	100	88	95
Contract leukemia	100	100	300	100
Car wreck	90	100	45	50
*Close Relative dies	88	100	10	10
Unwanted pregnancy	85	100	25	100
*Contract arthritis	80	100	100	78
Rejected by lover	78	100	20	20
Money problems	78	95	8	5
In bed sick	50	20	8	10
Catch a cold	28	10	4	5
Parking ticket	25	23	10	10

Median unpleasantness and probability ratings of eleven events (from a 1976 pilot study).

Correlation coefficients from Experiment Two for the victim conditions only.

	Adjec. rating	Deser. favor	Worthy friend.	Probab.	Unpleas.	Sex	Internal Control	Just World
Adjective ratings	--							
Deserving favor	.08	--						
Worthy friendship	.05	-.19	--					
Probability	.09	.07	-.07	--				
Unpleasant	.19	.11	-.02	-.02	--			
Sex	.05	-.18	-.18	.12	.12	--		
Internal	-.08	.03	-.13	-.12	-.04	.01	--	
Just World	-.03	.04	.02	.10	-.03	-.02	-.42***	--

***significant at .001

VITA

Roger Allan Drake was born in Bremerton, Washington. He attended the schools of that city and graduated from West High School in June 1961.

He attended California Institute of Technology and Western Washington State College, where he received the Bachelor of Arts in Psychology in 1966. In 1969 he was awarded the Master of Arts in Psychology by the University of Iowa.

He has been teaching at Western State College of Colorado. He is married to the former Shou-Yu Loretta Chen.