

PREDICTING POLICE ENDORSEMENT OF MYTHS SURROUNDING INTIMATE
PARTNER VIOLENCE SURVIVORS

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DEDICATION

I finished this for you Papa. What is next?

ABSTRACT

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Intimate partner violence (IPV) is an epidemic in the United States. Despite its pervasive nature, IPV is underreported and faces substantial case attrition. One of the contributing factors that may be involved in explaining this phenomenon is the way police respond to IPV and specifically, endorsement of IPV myths that stigmatize, invalidate, blame, and re-victimize survivors. The present study used a purposive sample of 523 self-report surveys administered to police officers commissioned at a metropolitan department located in one of the fifth largest and most diverse US cities. The objective of this study was twofold: 1) assess endorsement of IPV myths among participants, and 2) identify predictors of this endorsement. Findings revealed IPV myth endorsement fell below the midpoint. Additionally officer sex, increased trauma misperceptions, and decreased perceptions of preparedness in responding to IPV calls for service were correlated with increased IPV myth endorsement. Future research and policy implications are discussed.

KEY WORDS: Intimate Partner Violence, IPV, Domestic Violence Myth Acceptance Scale, IPV Myth, Police Endorsement

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

Intimate partner violence (IPV) has been a pervasive problem in the United States (US). For decades, partner abuse has been a serious public health, social, and legal concern; and has been of interest to academics, policymakers, criminal justice personnel, and victims' rights groups (Twis, Nguyen, Nordberg, 2018; Bachman & Coker, 1995). Estimates suggest that 37.3% of all US women have experienced IPV during their lifetime (Smith, Chen, Basile, Gilbert, Merrick, Patel, Walling, & Jain, 2017). While men are not immune from violent intimate relationships, women are more likely to be victimized. Moreover, women have tended to suffer more severe consequences, including adverse physical and psychological effects (Twis et al., 2018). While men can be both perpetrators and victims of IPV (Drijber, Reijnders, & Ceelen, 2013; Swan, Gambone, Caldwell, Sullivan, & Snow, 2008; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000), this thesis focuses exclusively on male-perpetrated violence against women.

When it became evident that violence against women was not restricted to married couples, terms such as "wife battering" and "spouse abuse" were replaced with the more inclusive descriptor "domestic violence" (Nicolaidis & Paranjape, 2009). Domestic violence is still widely used today by the general public and among advocacy communities (Nicolaidis & Paranjape, 2009), however, scholars have adopted a more theoretically accurate descriptor to include violence between current or prior intimates. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have suggested using "intimate partner violence" (IPV; Nicolaidis & Paranjape, 2009) to describe behavior including "physical violence, sexual violence, stalking, and psychological aggression (including

coercive tactics) by a current or former intimate partner (i.e., spouse, boyfriend/girlfriend, dating partner, or ongoing sexual partner.)” (Breiding, Basile, Smith, Black, & Mahendra, 2015, p. 9). A host of terms have been used to describe IPV within the scholarly literature. Domestic violence, family violence, woman battering, partner abuse, dating violence and IPV remain common in the research on partner violence, though some of these descriptors incorporate violence that occurs in relationships beyond intimates. For instance, family violence refers to a range of physically and emotionally abusive behaviors that can happen in the context of families, including between intimates, among children, and targeting elders (Niolon, Kearns, Dills, Rambo, Irving, Armstead, & Gilbert, 2017). Similarly, domestic violence may include violence between domestic partners who are not intimate but share a residence. For the purpose of the present study, the term IPV is used to refer to those incidents or relationships in which violence has occurred between individuals who are or have been involved in a romantic relationship that has been characterized by violence and abuse, coercion, control, and manipulation. Exceptions to this include when existing measures employed in this analysis have been titled using the term “domestic violence.” Further, the police partner agency from which the data used in this thesis was drawn uses the term “family violence” in their offense codes.

IPV also has collateral consequences for the family, community, and for broader society (Twis et al., 2018). Individual consequences for survivors include elevated fear/startle responses; gastrointestinal disorders; migraine; safety concerns; post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD); physical injury; need for housing; victim advocacy; and legal services; absenteeism from work or school; sexually transmitted disease/infection;

and unwanted pregnancy (Smith, et al., 2017, pg. 125). Despite the prevalence of IPV, it remains significantly underreported (Gover, Pudrzynska, & Dodge, 2011; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000; Toon, Hart, Welch, Coronado, & Hunting, 2005). Indeed, Toon and colleagues (2005) found in Arizona, the vast majority of police officers considered IPV to be a serious and underreported problem, despite approximately 110,000 IPV calls for service (CFS) to police each year. Furthermore, Morgan and Oudekerk (2019), using 2018 Bureau of Justice Statistics data (BJS) reported 45% of IPV was reported to the police. Lack of formal reporting to law enforcement has been attributed to victim perceptions that police are unable or unwilling to intervene on their behalf (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). This has stemmed from an historical narrative that partner abuse was a private family matter and police were unwilling to get involved (Freedman, 2002; Dicker, 2008). Women have thus been denied equal protection under the law in terms of domestically violent relationships.

Public perceptions of IPV have typically been identified by the cultural norms of a specific group (Waltermaurer, 2012). For example, what is considered permissible violence within relationships can be traced to structural inequality and societal values within a given cultural context (see e.g., Hayes and Franklin, 2017 for an overview of attitudes toward violence against women in Asia). In turn, justification may exist for certain types of violence as committed by the perpetrator or reported by the victim/outcry witness as it exists with the US (Waltermaurer, 2012). Theoretically, this has been explained using feminist frameworks to understand the ways men and women interact in both intimate and platonic relationships and the permissibility of violence for men within mate pairs (Martin, 1981, Walker, 1979). The feminist perspective was founded on the

basis that historically misogynistic institutions, laws, and structures are supported by US society and therefore, have enabled IPV to persist (Buzawa & Buzawa, 1992; Coker, 2016; Miller, 2005, Meharg, 2017). For example, men have been expected to exhibit strength, independence, lack of emotional display, and aggressiveness; whereas women have been expected to display femininity—traditionally conceptualized as weakness, dependence, passivity and expressive emotionality, but not anger (Kilmartin, 2000; Johnson, 1997). These stereotyped gender roles have positioned men with superiority over women and given them the power to protect and discipline others, including women in their immediate families (Lutze & Symons, 2003).

Prior to the 1970s, IPV was considered by both criminal justice practitioners and the general population as a private, family matter (Lutze & Symons, 2003; Freedman, 2002, Dicker, 2008). This allowed male heads-of-household to use physical punishment to control women without fear of legal repercussions or criminal justice consequences (Harrison & Esqueda, 1999). As IPV slowly achieved recognition as a serious social problem (Martin, 1981), the nature of police involvement in these incidents transformed (Bachman & Coker, 1995). Though change was slow, this shift brought much debate on how to most appropriately handle IPV CFS. Sherman and Berk's (1984) Minneapolis Domestic Violence Experiment, for example, influenced law enforcement responses throughout the country toward pro-arrest and mandatory arrest policies. The findings of their 1984 analysis encouraged jurisdictions to adopt mandatory arrest policies, though backlash regarding the negative effect of arrest in IPV incidents became apparent in a series of follow-up analyses (Saunders, 1995). In other words, survivors were deterred

from involving police for fear of retaliatory physical punishment from abusive partners, which frustrated police efforts to address violence within relationships.

While US jurisdictions were attempting to legislate the most aggressive response to IPV, attention was paid to officers' frustrations upon handling IPV CFS (Johnson, 2004; Toon et al., 2005). Research on police perceptions of IPV and whether it should elicit formal response has varied. Law enforcement personnel have disagreed that arrest is the best option when responding to IPV incidents (Blount, Yegidis, & Maheux, 1992; Belknap, 1995; Sinden & Stephens, 1999; Toon, et al., 2005). Instead, police have noted the importance of maintaining significant discretion in responding to the varying degrees of severity that IPV CFS exhibit (Berk & Loseke, 1981; Bachman & Coker, 1995; Belknap, 1995; Toon, et al., 2005). Belknap (1995), for example, examined 324 law enforcement officers and reported personnel exhibited far more support for mediation compared to arrest. Additionally, Belknap (1995) found that officers had a tendency to view women who claimed to be victims of IPV as lacking credibility and as unworthy of police time.

To understand law enforcement frustration with IPV CFS and the case processing of partner violence, questions remain regarding the factors that influence police response to IPV. Trujillo and Ross (2008) identified three factors that have influenced police response to IPV: (a) an officer's individual beliefs and assumptions about domestic incidents, intimate relationships, and personal and contextual characteristics related to offenders and victims; (b) prior IPV incidents at the same residence; and (c) situational factors, such as evidence of injuries and victim preference for criminal justice involvement (Trujillo & Ross, 2008, p. 455). These factors have influenced an officer's

response to IPV. Specifically, Trujillo and Ross's (2008) first factor may be informed by various historical myths formulated to explain who perpetrates IPV and who is to blame. Peters' (2008) domestic violence myth acceptance scale (DVMAS) identified four conceptual surrounding stereotypes related to domestic violence; 1) myths of character blame, 2) behavior blame, 3) minimization of the incident, and 4) exoneration of the perpetrator. Adherence to these myths have placed blame on the victim and have excused the perpetrator. Importantly, IPV myth endorsement has affected general public response to IPV but may have also influenced the professionals who regularly interface with survivors because criminal justice practitioners are not immune from these cultural messages (see e.g., O'Neal et al., 2015). Keilitz, Hannaford, and Efken (1996) reported that police officers who held more stereotypical attitudes toward IPV incidents and their survivors were more likely to arrest the victim in a domestic dispute. The endorsement IPV myths by criminal justice personnel are problematic as they play a role in re-victimizing the survivor, which exacerbates feelings of powerlessness and helplessness, decreased victim cooperation, inhibited suspect apprehension and arrest, increased frustration among police, and hindered successful prosecution of perpetrators (Logan, Shannon, & Walker, 2006; Johnson, 2004; Sinden & Stephens, 1999; Gover, et al., 2011; Toon, et al., 2005; Twis, et al., 2018).

Law Enforcement and Intimate Partner Violence Myths

The assessment of IPV myth endorsement among law enforcement is a worthwhile endeavor. Initial and investigative interactions with survivors of IPV can be damaging when the interaction is negative (Logan et al., 2006; Twis, et al., 2018). Judgmental or stigmatizing attitudes, disbelief, and disparaging assumptions regarding

the culpability of IPV survivors among law enforcement personnel have been harmful and demoralizing to victims (Erez and Belknap, 1998). Additionally, negative interactions with police have inhibited help-seeking behavior, such as calling the police in a follow-up incident, seeking a protective order, or pursuing a violation of a protective order (Logan, et al., 2006).

There has been limited scholarship on the endorsement of IPV myths among law enforcement personnel, who are often the first point of contact in the formal criminal justice process and who have significant influence on later criminal justice outcomes by way of decisions made by the responding officer and investigator (Twis, et. al., 2018; Gover, et al., 2011; Logan, et al., 2006; Younglove, et al., 2002; Ask, 2010; Jankowski, Hohnson, Holtz, & Smischney, 2011; Harrison & Esqueda, 1999; Sinden & Stephens, 1999; Belknap, 1995). After conducting an extensive review of the literature one article was identified that focused exclusively on the influence of IPV myths on police decision making and intervention in IPV CFS (Twis et al. 2018). Twis et al.'s (2018) study used IPV myths identified by Eigenberg and colleagues (2012) to examine 58 police reports. Their findings reported officers drew upon IPV myths to some degree, by:

- (a) “regularly typifying females as hysterical, whether they were the offenders or victims, (b) emphasizing injury, and the balance of injury between parties to determine who ought to be labeled as the offender, and (c) minimizing the coercive control exercised between involved parties to, instead, quickly and one-dimensionally determine ‘who started it.’” (Twis et al., 2018, p. 362).

Furthermore, their results have “suggest[ed] that the etiology and perpetuation of domestic violence myths is associated with undetected coercive control” (Twis et al., 2018, p. 365). Assessment of IPV myth endorsement by law enforcement using Peters’ (2008) DVMAS adds to the literature by clarifying the ways police personnel endorse these myths.

Summary

The assessment of IPV myth endorsement, particularly among law enforcement, remains a critical area of study as law enforcement attitudes and the police response to IPV directly affects a victim’s experiences and cooperation with the criminal justice system, formal investigation outcomes, and broader community attitudes towards IPV. The purpose of this thesis is to assess individual-level occupational and attitudinal predictors of police officer endorsement of IPV myths using Peter’s (2008) DVMAS, while controlling for officer demographics. The present study uses a sample of 523 police officers commissioned at a large, urban police department in one of the fifth largest and most diverse US cities to assess predictors of IPV myth adherence and officer perceptions of preparedness in responding to IPV CFS.

CHAPTER II

Literature Review

Intimate Partner Violence Prevalence

IPV remains a problem of epidemic proportions among intimate partners in the US. Law enforcement personnel have historically been reluctant to become involved in IPV incidents, because abuse has traditionally been viewed as a private or family matter addressed by male heads-of-household rather than a public issue necessitating formal case processing attention (Ford, 1983; Garcia, Garcia, & Lila, 2014; Buzawa & Austin, 1993). Normative and tolerant attitudes toward wife abuse have permeated society (Dobash & Dobash, 1979; Erez & Belknap, 1998). Early criminal courts provided immunity from prosecution to men who physically assaulted their wives and courts maintained that, in order to preserve the sanctity of marriage, issues of domestic relations were handled between husband and wife (Okun, 1986; Walker, 1979; Schneider, 2008). This resulted in considerable criticism brought against the police because law enforcement often still avoided arresting male perpetrators in heterosexual relationships who physically assaulted their female partners (Dobash & Dobash, 1979; Erez & Belknap, 1998; Walker, 1979). Although some strides were made in the US following the second wave of the feminist movement regarding the criminal justice response to IPV, (e.g., partner abuse is no longer legally sanctioned and protected), endorsement of negative myths concerning IPV has remained pervasive (Buzawa & Buzawa, 1993; Jenkins & Davidson, 1990; Walker, 1979).

Contextualizing Intimate Partner Violence.

While stereotypes surrounding partner abuse typically positioned women from lower-income and un- or under-educated social groups as over-represented among victims, IPV has occurred across all socioeconomic, cultural, and religious groups, worldwide (WHO, 2012). Men are not immune as victims of partner abuse, though data have consistently indicated that IPV is gender-based violence; women experience markedly more violence than men, and men perpetrate far more IPV than women—causing more injury, inducing greater levels of fear, and producing more negative psychological sequelae for women (LaViolette and Barnett, 2014). This has commonly been referred to by Johnson (2008) as intimate or patriarchal terrorism rather than common couple aggression, the latter of which can occur in *most* relationships and may be perpetrated by *either* partner in a heterosexual partnership (Brownmiller, 1975; Geffner, 2016; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000; WHO, 2012; Johnson, 1995; Johnson, 2008, Dobash & Dobash, 1979). Of note, scholars have rightly criticized Johnson’s typology as problematic where it may not accurately consider violent partnerships that involve sexual assault as a mechanism of control (O’Neal, Tellis, & Spohn, 2014; Tellis, 2008; Tellis, 2010). Indeed, rape within an intimate partnership would not fall under common couple aggression.

IPV remains a substantial problem within the US. Morgan and Oudekerk (2018) reported that the rate of IPV in the US was 3.1 incidents per 1000 persons age 12 or older where 847,230 individuals experienced IPV. Additionally, Smith et al. (2018), using the 2015 National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey, noted that 1 in 4 women (25.1%) experienced contact sexual violence, physical violence and/or stalking by an

intimate partner and reported some form of IPV-related impact during their lifetime compared to 1 in 10 men (10.9%). One explanation for the underreporting of IPV focuses on the way male perspectives have been historically favored within patriarchal systems, such as the hypermasculine nature of US justice systems (Lutz & Symons, 2003). As a result, gender-based violence against women has been minimized, excused, and neutralized, which has produced significant trauma for many women survivors of IPV (Lutz & Symons, 2003; Geffner, 2016).

As previously mentioned in chapter 1, IPV has collateral consequences (Twis et al., 2018). Mental and physical health sequelae have had a significant negative effect on survivor quality-of-life. IPV has affected an individual's physical and mental health directly through physical injuries; it has also produced indirect effects including chronic physical and psychological health conditions (Smith, Zhang, Basile, Merrick, Wang, Kresnow, & Chen, 2018; WHO, 2012). Smith et al., (2018) found that the effects of this abuse can begin early in the life course. For example, 71.1% of women and 55.8% of men who experienced some form of IPV experienced this abuse before age 25. Research has also suggested that the influence of abuse can persist long after the desistance of violence and that "...the impact over time of different types and multiple episodes of abuse appears to be cumulative" (WHO, 2012, p. 5). Despite its prevalence, accurate estimates of IPV have been difficult to gather though this violence continues to stigmatize victims and may produce retaliatory violence by abusive partners if survivors engage in help-seeking behavior (Gover, et al., 2011; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000; Toon et al., 2005; O'Neal & Beckman, 2017).

Criminal Justice Response to IPV: History and Reform.

IPV has received considerable attention over the last 40 years through social movements, the media, legislative changes, and agency-level response. Consequently, laws surrounding IPV, and violence against women more broadly, have undergone substantial change. Across the US, there has been revision to the definition of IPV to include non-married intimate partners, expansion of police powers, encouragement of pro-arrest and no-drop prosecution policies, and enhanced penalties for IPV offenders (Hilton, 1993; Lutze & Symons, 2003). While some scholars and advocates welcomed these changes, other stakeholders, such as police administrators, patrol officers, and prosecutors were not always as amenable (Hilton, 1993). This resistance has been attributed to individuals within the criminal justice system who have perceived limits to their discretion. Additionally, residual bias exists regarding the handling of IPV (Hirschel, Hutchinson, Dean, & Mills, 1992).

The failure of the criminal justice system to appropriately respond to IPV has been a reflection of male-dominated and male-identified nature of systems that have denied women equal protection (Johnson, 1997; Tong, 1984; Lutz & Symons, 2003). Criminal statutes have upheld patriarchal systems surrounding violence against women and date back to the Laws of Chastisement in 753 Rome. Under these laws, husbands were allowed to use physical force to discipline their wives (Okun, 1986; Hirschel, et al., 1992). This legacy continued in the US in Anglo-American common law. Specifically, husbands in the American colonies retained the power to chastise their wives. The criterion for this punishment was colloquially known as the “rule of thumb” (Hirschel et al., 1992 p. 250; Okun, 1986; Hilton, 1993, Lentz, 1999), which allowed a husband to

correct his “wayward” wife as long as the tool used for punishment was no thicker than the base of his thumb (Hirschel, et al., 1992 p. 250, Lentz, 1999). The perpetuation of this patriarchal construct within the United States was illustrated in 1824 Mississippi. *Bradley v. State* held that husbands had the right to use moderate chastisement against their wives (Okun, 1986; Lentz, 1999). The court emphasized in the *Bradley v. State* ruling that “...‘family broils and dissensions’ were not proper matters to bring before a court of law and were best left inside the walls of the home.” (Hirschel, et al., 1992). Decisions that followed *Bradley v. State* reinforced the position that violence against female intimates was handled differently by the criminal justice system when compared to stranger assault (Hirschel et al., 1992; Schneider, 2008). It was not until *Fulgham v. State* in 1871 that US courts first recognized that husbands did not have the right to physically abuse their wives (Farris & Holman, 2015). Marital rape laws were, however, much slower to catch up. It was not until 1993 that all fifty states legislated marital rape as a crime (Mahoney & Williams, 1998; Bennice & Resick, 2003). Subsequent attention given to gender-based violence, and partner abuse, in particular, have slowly influenced reform in the law, among law enforcement attitudes, and within police agencies.

Efforts undertaken by activists, advocates, and survivors, as well as growing public pressure beginning in the 1960s, paved the way for legislative and policy changes by police agencies (Buzawa & Buzawa, 1992; Hilton, 1993). Local law enforcement maintained some reluctance in terms of their role in protecting victims of IPV. Additionally, resources available to these victims were limited. As a result, several high-profile court cases [e.g., *Thurman v. City of Torrington* (1984) and *Bruno v. Codd* (1976)] drew attention where women sued local law enforcement for failing to protect

them from abuse (Farris & Holman, 2015). *Thurman v. City of Torrington* (1984) ignited several subsequent suits against police departments. Victims testified that, despite their repeated calls for police service and requests for assistance, they were not provided with adequate protection from perpetrators of partner abuse (Menard, Anderson, & Godbolt, 2009; Pittaro, 2014).

The Battered Women's Movement of the 1980s rallied for police to respond more effectively to IPV and was an essential push toward a change in how IPV was addressed (Buzawa & Buzawa, 1992; Hilton, 1993). At this point in history, the limited laws that addressed IPV were rarely enforced; furthermore, these laws simultaneously existed with laws that protected perpetrators from arrest (Hilton, 1993; Sherman, Schmidt, & Rogan, 1992). For example, some statutes made it increasingly difficult for police to make warrantless arrests in cases where they did not directly witness an assault (Ferraro, 1989; Hilton, 1993; Sherman, Schmidt, & Rogan, 1992; Buzawa & Buzawa, 2003). In response to shortcomings, advocates demanded that police response to IPV should be treated the same as police responses to violence between strangers (Buzawa & Buzawa, 1992).

Scholarship began to demonstrate the need to publicly address IPV as a national, public health issue, and thus, previous legal attempts to protect the sanctity and privacy of the family came under scrutiny (Buzawa & Buzawa, 1992). Bowker's (1983) Milwaukee study of case processing experiences of victims who had been free from spousal abuse for over a year found that several victims reported negative experiences, including lawyers who sided with abusers instead of victims, and district attorneys (DAs) who refused service to victims or "...refused to help battered women for 'technical' reasons..." and "...went out of their way to discourage battered women from filing charges." (Bowker,

1983, p. 410). Evidence by Okun (1986) demonstrated that the criminal justice system response to IPV reflected societally-held misconceptions that IPV was not a criminal offense; furthermore, efforts to keep the problem from public view has perpetuated ignorance on the severity of this epidemic.

The NIJ responded to initial concerns by sponsoring IPV-centered research; including Sherman and Berks' (1984) Minneapolis Domestic Violence Experiment. Sherman and Berk's (1984) findings suggested the most effective deterrent for IPV recidivism was arrest, compared to mediation or separating the involved parties. These findings, coupled with lawsuits against police departments that followed *Thurman v. City of Torrington* (1984), provided a catalyst for change in arrest policies. Nationwide shifts of IPV statutes and police policies toward more proactive interventions to IPV followed concerns over police liability including mandatory and pro-arrest policies (Sherman, 1992; Buzawa, 2012). Thus, arrests increased dramatically (Hirschel, Buzawa, Pattavina, Faggiani, & Reuland, 2007). Mandatory or pro-arrest policies have produced negative consequences, however. These included an increase in dual arrests where both victim and offender were arrested, an increase in the arrest of women victims, victim dissatisfaction with the criminal justice response, and the failure to re-report abuse when victim preference was not followed (Buzawa, 2012).

In 1994, Congress passed the Violence against Women Act (VAWA; Violent Control Crime and Law Enforcement Act of 1994), which focused on law enforcement's insufficient effort to address gender-based violence. Through VAWA, federal funding was provided to police and prosecutors to investigate violence against women (Farris & Holman, 2015). Further, VAWA imposed mandatory restitution for victims while also

encouraging state and local governments to provide local service programs for violence prevention and victim assistance (Farris & Holman, 2015). Consequently, local jurisdictions encouraged law enforcement to take a larger role in combating IPV crimes (Farris & Holman, 2015).

While arrest rates increased dramatically in response to policy changes, prosecution and sentencing remained somewhat unchanged (Sherman, 1992; Buzawa, 2012). Research following Sherman and Berk's (1984) seminal study suggested that arrest was not the most powerful deterrent for IPV (Schmidt & Sherman, 1993; Sherman, 1992; Sloan, Platt, Chepke, and Blevins, 2013; Lee, Zhang, and Hoover, 2013). Five replication studies funded by NIJ through the Spouse Assault Replication Program were conducted following the Minneapolis experiment (Berk, Campbell, Klap, & Western, 1992; Dunford, Huizinga, & Elliott, 1990; Hirschel, Hutchison, Dean, Kelley, & Pesackis, 1991; Pate & Hamilton, 1992; Sherman, Schmidt, Rogan, & Smith, 1992). Despite the many methodological differences between Sherman and Berk's (1984) analysis and the replication studies, the overall consensus was that the NIJ-funded studies did not definitively establish arrest as a deterrent for future incidents of IPV in misdemeanor domestic assault cases (Buzawa & Buzawa, 2003; Weisz, 2001). Despite these findings, legislation mandating or advocating for arrest within IPV cases with probable cause was enacted nationwide (Dugan, 2003; Hirschel et al., 2007). Mandatory or pro-arrest policies restricted officer discretion by requiring or encouraging arrest even when the victim did not want to participate (Hirschel et al., 2007; Miller, 2005; Schneider, 2008). In response to these policy changes, research shifted to look at police attitudes, and specifically, police attitudes regarding arrest in IPV and attitudes toward IPV in

general (Belknap, 1995; Johnson, 2004; Sinden & Stephens, 1999; Blount, Yegidis, & Maheux, 1992; Toon, et al., 2005; Friday, Metzgar, & Walters, 1991). Unfortunately, limited research exists on police endorsement of IPV myths. Even less attention has focused on rape myths in the context of intimate relationships—or intimate partner sexual assault.¹ Understanding myth endorsement by law enforcement personnel may aid in better clarifying the case processing decisions made by police and prosecutors who are presented with cases involving IPV survivors.

Within the criminal justice system, police officers are often the first point of contact. They are the “gatekeepers” of formal case processing and have been blamed for ineffective response to IPV (Eigenberg et al., 2012, Kerstetter, 1990). Although IPV is no longer legally or publically conceptualized as a private or personal matter, victims have continued to express reluctance to activate law enforcement for a number of reasons, including the belief that police will not act on behalf of victims (Farris & Holman, 2015). It is important to better understand the endorsement of IPV myths by police personnel, who are responsible for the implementation of IPV policy, particularly as victims may experience law enforcement as insensitive or unresponsive to the issues of violence against women (Farris & Holman, 2015).

Theoretical Framework

As more attention focused on IPV during the 1960s and 1970s, feminist theory was further developed. Scholars argued that violence against women was a product of social systems including patriarchy, sexism, and misogyny (Dobash & Dobash, 1979;

¹ Research has too often dichotomized sexual assault and IPV which is problematic because these two constructs overlap. For example, intimate partner sexual assault is a form of violence perpetrated within intimate relationships and thus qualifies as a type of IPV.

Brownmiller, 1975; Buzawa & Buzawa, 1992; Schneider, 2008). Feminist theory was founded on the basis that within the US, misogynistic institutions, laws, and structures are supported by society and have enabled IPV (Dobash & Dobash, 1979; Buzawa & Buzawa, 1992; Coker, 2016; Miller, 2005). Furthermore, violence against women, particularly within marriage, was an expression of male domination over women (Dobash & Dobash, 1979). Public perceptions of IPV have typically been distinguished by the cultural norms of a specific group (Waltermaurer, 2012). In turn, justification may exist for certain types of violence as committed by the perpetrator or reported by the victim/outcry witness (Waltermaurer, 2012). Dobash and Dobash (1979) assert through the feminist theory that

...men who assault their wives are actually living up to cultural prescriptions that are cherished in Western society-aggressiveness, male dominance, and female subordination- and they are using physical force as a means to enforce that dominance. (Dobash & Dobash, 1979, p. 24).

More generally, feminist theory has been used for understanding how men and women interact and the permissibility of violence for men in intimate relationships (Martin, 1981; Walker, 1979). Furthermore, feminist theory has proposed that patriarchy fosters power and control disparities among men and women, creating hierarchal differences in social status, privilege, and worth (Dicker, 2008; Johnson, 2005; Freedman, 2002). This disparity has been further clarified by Stark (2009, p.1513),

Dramatic sex-based disadvantages remain that allow men to translate their relative privilege in the wider society into disproportionate levels of power and control in relationships...Coercive control extends women's already diminished

personhood and decisional autonomy in families and relationships into a comprehensive form of regulating whether and how they express themselves in every arena of existence.

Gender stereotypes have also influenced beliefs about how victims of IPV should behave and react. IPV and the attitudes and myths that surround and support it, cannot be adequately understood without examining the role that gender and male power plays in facilitating violence (Lawson, 2012). Within the US, gender inequalities have been enabled by patriarchal ideologies within the typical heterosexual family structure and have subsequently reinforced male domination generally and over women within intimate partnerships (Sherman, Schmidt, & Rogan, 1992; Johnson, 2005). These gender inequalities have existed in pervasive actions, behaviors, and attitudes that express an individual's masculinity or femininity (Johnson, 2005). For example, men have been expected to exhibit strength, independence, lack of emotional display, and aggressiveness; whereas women have been expected to display femininity—traditionally conceptualized as weakness, dependence, emotionality but not anger, and passivity (Kilmartin, 2000). These gender roles have positioned men with superiority over women and given them the power to protect and discipline others, including women in their immediate families (Lutze & Symons, 2003).

Patriarchal values are omnipresent in US society and have created and maintained uncompromising expectations of how society should function and how individuals should interact within intimate and non-intimate settings (Johnson, 2008; Franklin, 2013). Thus, the gendered phenomenon of violence against women within the framework of systematic subordination of women is recognized by feminist researchers and IPV

advocates alike. Significant gender differences in the rates of IPV have been reported in nationally represented victimization surveys (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000; Bachman, 2000). A picture has emerged from these studies that victimization falls along gendered lines. Levels of victimization have differed for men and women, and the context in which violence is perpetrated has similarly differed (Hunnicutt, 2009; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000; Bachman, 2000). Women are most at risk, and partner abuse happens more frequently in households where there are strong traditional gender roles. Scholars have suggested that patriarchal ideology is correlated with IPV (Walker, 1979; Dobash & Dobash, 1995; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000).

Scholars have broadly described IPV based on women's experience as a pattern of behavior that includes male privilege, intimidation, isolation, threats of violence, threats to children, physical and sexual violence, and economic control (Koss et al., 1994; LaViolette & Barnett, 2014). Furthermore, researchers contend that women's lives, health, self-determination, freedoms, and autonomy are threatened by IPV (Schneider, 2008).

Myths and Intimate Partner Violence

The perpetuation of IPV has been in part, the result of endorsement of myths that excuse perpetrators and neutralize the seriousness of partner abuse. Myths surrounding IPV have abounded globally and have been strongly influenced by cultural and social factors (Peters, 2008; Stanley, 2012). According to Lonsway and Fitzgerald (1994), social myths surrounding violence against women are widely held, false beliefs that describe an experience and rationalize the systems that allow the experience to continue (see also Koss et al., 1994). IPV myths, for example, serve psychological and social

functions that place blame on the victim, exonerate the perpetrator, and minimize the violence (Peters, 2008). IPV myths have reduced social support for IPV victims and have denied the significance and scope of the issue of partner abuse (Peters, 2003, 2008). This has been accomplished where myths have transformed innocent victims of a potentially lethal crime to individuals who consciously or unconsciously *choose* to be battered (Peters, 2008). IPV myths have also served perpetrators because they pressure victims to think and act in ways that increase the power and control of the perpetrator while reducing the victim's independence, agency, autonomy, and self-esteem (Adams, 1988; Peters, 2008). Overall, IPV myths have reduced or eliminated social support for victims from both informal (family, friends) and formal (police, hospital staff) providers by falsely relabeling them from "pure" victims and positioning them as complicit in the violence (Peters, 2008). IPV myths have deceptively implied that any victim of partner abuse is not guilt-free because she may have triggered the abuse, provoked or initiated the abuse, unconsciously desired the abuse, or had the capacity to remove herself from the situation (LaViolette & Barnett, 2014; Peters, 2008; Stanley, 2012).

Rape Myths.

Rape myths have received considerably more attention than IPV myths in terms of scholarly research; it would be remiss not to briefly discuss findings related to IPV myths. Studies have demonstrated that rape myths have been a central element in reducing social support for victims of rape and have consequently supported rape prone attitudes and behaviors (Burt, 1980; Check & Malamuth, 1985). These myths have included beliefs such as, "women can resist rape," "women ask for it," and "women 'cry rape' only when they have something to cover up" (Burt, 1980, p. 217). Burt's (1980)

seminal research provided empirical support for the radical feminist perspective that violence against women has been maintained by patriarchal attitudes (Burt, 1980). Ensuing research has demonstrated that rape myths and other myths about crime victims and perpetrators have reinforced patriarchy and violence against women by reducing support for victims, exonerating perpetrators, and minimizing the seriousness of abuse (Peters, 2008; Check & Malamuth, 1985).

Within intimate relationships, sexual assault has been has also been masked by myths. As a result, IPV and sexual assault have often been dichotomized as separate and distinct issues when these crimes often overlap (see e.g., Berman, 2004; Tellis, 2010; O’Neal. Tellis, Spohn, 2015). For example, rape myths may intersect with the context of intimate partnerships, such as the idea that “husbands cannot rape their wives,” that “stranger rape is the only real rape,” and the belief that “rape is simply unwanted sex and not a violent crime” (Finkelhor & Yollo, 1985; O’Neal et al., 2015). Since the general public also subscribes to these myths, their influence may affect how criminal justice system actors proceed with allegations of rape and rape within intimate relationships or intimate partner sexual assault (Gerger, Kley, Bohner, & Siebler, 2013; Stewart, Dobbins, & Gatowski, 1996).

Defensive Attribution: Myths vs. Attitudes.

While rape myths serve a social function in supporting, facilitating, and protecting patriarchy, studies of rape myth endorsement have also illustrated individual defensive attributes. Generally, myths about crime victims can protect women from anticipated threat of harm (Walster, 1966; Shaver, 1970; Thornton, 1984; Thornton, Hogate, Moirs, Pinette, & Presby, 1986). In other words, myth endorsement positions victims as “others”

who have done something or behaved in a certain way to precipitate abuse (Shaver, 1970). These beliefs have tended to protect some women from ideas surrounding IPV victimization in that they would not be targeted or if involved in an abusive relationship, would be “smart enough to get out.” For men, myths about crime have enabled the avoidance of blame (Burger, 1981; Thornton, 1984; Thornton et al., 1986). To be sure, precipitation and fabrication myths would suggest that women in heterosexual partnerships are blamed for their behavior and thus, the men involved in abuse are not held culpable. According to Walster (1966), if an individual is aware of a catastrophic incident or accident, they have neutralized the event as one that was controllable and should be avoided in the future. Specifically, Walster (1966, p. 74) suggested that,

...as the magnitude of the misfortune increases.... it becomes more unpleasant to acknowledge that “this is the kind of thing that could happen to anyone.” Such an admission implies a catastrophe of similar magnitude could happen to you. If we can categorize a serious accident as in some way the victim’s fault, it is reassuring. We then simply need to assure ourselves that we are a different kind of person from the victim, or that we would behave differently under similar circumstances, and we feel protected from the catastrophe.

In short, the defensive attribution literature has demonstrated that myths about crime protect potential victims of crime from the awareness that there is a threat, while at the same time protecting potential perpetrators from blame (Burger, 1981). Thus, myths are different from attitudes about crime because myths fulfill important defensive psychological functions while attitudes are not defensively motivated (Burger, 1981).

Intimate Partner Violence Myths.

The same cultural beliefs that support rape also support sexual harassment, stalking, battering, and other forms of violence against women (Koss, Goodman, Browne, Fitzgerald, Keita, & Russo, 1995). Examination of these myths have helped to explain why scholarly research and direct intervention efforts have produced victim blame, and why the responses of individuals involved in or aware of abuse (e.g., family members, friends, co-workers, healthcare workers, criminal justice system practitioners) have tended to allow continued perpetuation of male violence against women (Koss et al., 1995).

Common myths about violence against women, including those related to IPV, have built upon three broad categories that include “victim masochism,” “victim precipitation,” and “victim fabrication” (Koss et al., 1995 pp. 8-9). These myths apply to IPV and other types of violence against women, including rape, stalking, and sexual harassment. Additionally, each of these broad categories covers different types of assumptions surrounding the victim, the perpetrator, and the situation in which the violence has occurred.

Arguments surrounding victim masochism have suggested that victims enjoy or desire the abuse they experience. This myth has asserted that some women are masochistic and seek out violent men for mate selection (Walker, 1979). Moreover, victim masochism has encompassed the idea that when women do not leave violent relationships, violence with the relationship must be tolerable (Ferraro, 1989). Victim precipitation arguments have suggested that the victim is a participant in encouraging or provoking the abuse. The victim may precipitate male violence against women by

nagging, not fulfilling household duties, or by refusing sex. Victim precipitation has suggested that women are deserving of abuse; that abuse only happens to certain “types of women,” from specific “types of families” (Walker, 1979). Specifically, working-class women, women who are “bad” or negligent housewives, or women who have witnessed or experienced violence as children or in their families-of-origin would fall into this group. The final broad category of social myths includes victim fabrication. These myths have minimized violence by claiming that women lie about or exaggerate the effects of violence; that men are justified in their behavior or are not responsible for the consequences of violence; that violence was not really harmful, or that violence was unusual or deviant (Koss et al., 1995). Each of these claims minimizes relationship violence and reduces or removes blame from the perpetrator. Overall the myths of victim masochism, victim precipitation, and victim fabrication have excused relationship violence among broad social norms and in criminal justice case processing.

Among studies that investigate IPV myths, the following five categories of myths appear with some consistency: 1) victim-blaming myths (Harrison & Esqueda, 1999; Policastro & Payne, 2013; Yamawaki et al., 2012; Walker, 1979), 2) myths regarding traditional gender roles (Harrison and Esqueda, 1999; Jenkins & Davidson, 1990), 3) myths that excuse the perpetrator (Hirschel & Buzawa, 2013), 4) myths that suggest women unconsciously desire to be battered (Harrison & Esqueda, 1999, Ferraro, 1989), and 5) minimization myths (Peters, 2008; Stanely, 2012; Yamawaki et al., 2012). Noteworthy myths that appear in IPV literature include beliefs surrounding the ease with which victims can leave abusive relationships if they really wanted to (Policastro & Payne, 2013, Ferraro, 1989; Buzawa & Buzawa, 1993) which falls under the fourth

category of myths, the limited resources women should receive if they continue to stay in abusive relationships (Yamawaki et al., 2012), and the degree to which women of color are complicit in their abuse by being labeled as aggressive and argumentative (Harrison & Esqueda, 1999; Weitz & Gordon, 1993) which falls under both the first and second category of myths. In their study on myths and the criminalization of victimhood, Policastro and Payne (2013) found that, at least indirectly, myths have contributed to violence. This finding is consistent with prior research that examines the connection between myths and perceptions surrounding sexual violence (Carmody & Washington, 2001).

In terms of gender, Peters' (2008) study on measuring myths IPV through his use of the DVMAS found that both men and women endorsed IPV myths. Importantly, men and women endorsed IPV myths for different psychological reasons (Peters, 2008). Internalized oppression played a role in why women endorsed IPV myths. According to Peters (2008, p. 16), women "...engage in character and behavior blame in order to reduce the threat that they too could be victims of domestic violence." Furthermore, Peters (2008) reported that the most prominent myths appeared to be victim-blaming related to character blame and behavior blame.

Intimate Partner Violence Scales.

Despite widespread awareness of IPV myths, Peters' (2008) DVMAS was the first reliable and valid measure of domestic violence myth adherence. Peters' (2008) DVMAS is an 18-item scale with an internal reliability coefficient alpha of .81. Older scales, such as Briere's (1987) Attitudes toward Wife Abuse (AWA) and Saunders, Lynch, Grayson, and Linz's (1987) Inventory of Beliefs about Wife Beating (IBWB)

reported low internal reliability coefficients and have been limited. Briere's (1987) Attitudes toward Wife Abuse (AWA) was designed to measure the self-reported likelihood of battering and not the systematic assessment of "false beliefs" that Burt (1980) asserted are essential of myths. Additionally, the AWA had a low internal reliability coefficient alpha of .63 (Briere, 1987). The IBWB was also limited in that only attitudes focused on violence toward *married* women were captured. While this inventory has good construct validity, the reliability of three of the five subscales ranged from .61 to .67. There is no psychometric data available for other measures, such as Petretic-Jackson, Sandberg, and Jackson's (1982) the Domestic Violence Blame Scale (DVBS) or Finn's (1986) Attitudes towards Force in Marriage Scale. Both of these scales were specifically related to social or political causes of IPV and not conceptually related to individual-level myth adherence.

Altogether, other measures of IPV myths have been either psychometrically inadequate or untested (e.g. Petretic-Jackson, et al., 1982; Finn, 1986), limited in their ability to generalize (e.g., Saunders et al., 1987), or have been too broad or vague to measure the concept of myths (e.g., Briere, 1987). In contrast to the literature on rape and rape mythology, there has been a dearth of empirical evidence about IPV myths and the effect of these myths on IPV case processing and case attrition as an incident moves through the criminal justice system from initial contact to final disposition.

Law Enforcement Characteristics and Handling of Intimate Partner Violence

IPV Myths & Perceptions of IPV in Law Enforcement.

Scholarship has generally focused on rape myth endorsement in criminal justice case processing to the exclusion of IPV myth endorsement. (But see, O'Neal, Tellis, &

Spohn, 2015 and Tellis, 2010) Lack of research on the presence of IPV mythology in criminal justice case processing should be an area of concern for the field and an opportunity for future research. Endorsement of myths may affect police behavior, and when behavior is influenced by myth endorsement, victims and the broader public suffer.

Perpetuation of IPV myths can be harmful and demoralizing to victims (Logan et al., 2006; Twis et al., 2018; Erez & Belknap, 1998). Existing literature has revealed that law enforcement have also been vulnerable to employing IPV myths in case processing decision-making (Eigenberg, Kappeler, & McGuffee, 2012; Gover, et al., 2011; Twis, et al., 2018). Beyond the traditional myths surrounding IPV, law enforcement may adhere to additional myths and perceptions regarding IPV.

Factors that Influence Police Response to IPV Calls for Service

In addition to the organizational protocols that are tasked to an officer when responding to IPV CFS, other factors influence an officer's response. Trujullo and Ross (2008), for example, identified three factors: (a) an officer's beliefs and assumptions about IPV incidents, intimate relationships, and personal and contextual characteristics related to offenders and victims; (b) prior IPV incidents at the same residence; and (c) situational factors, including evidence of injuries and victim preference (Trujullo & Ross, 2008, p. 455).

Prior research has demonstrated that an officer's formal case processing decisions about whether to arrest, charge, or jail a perpetrator have been influenced by an officer's attribution of blame toward victims or perpetrators (Stewart & Madden, 1997) and gender role attributions (Feder, 1997). Stewart and Madden's (1997) findings indicated that police officers endorsed stereotypes regarding gender roles that influenced their judgment

of the IPV incident to which they were called. Furthermore, victim- and perpetrator-specific variables, such as age, income, ethnicity, and class (Avakame & Fyfe, 2001; Bachman & Coker, 1995; Ferraro, 1989; Robinson & Chandek, 2000); characteristics of the relationship, such as if the victim and perpetrator share the same residence or if they are former or current partners, have influenced police decision making (Buzawa & Austin, 1993; Jones & Belknap, 1999; Robinson, 2000).

Trujillo and Ross (2008) identified prior IPV incidents at the same residence as influencing police response. Police can look through records related to previous CFS, the existence of protection orders, or victims' statements to determine if there has been a pattern of abuse. Bachman and Coker (1995) found that when victims' do not report prior victimization, this produces an increase in the likelihood of arrest (Bachman & Coker, 1995), while other studies have reported no significant relations between repeated incidents at a single location and arrest outcomes (Buzawa & Austin, 1993). Kane (2000) used police incident reports (n=468) from 1994 in Massachusetts and found that violation of a restraining order and increased previous IPV incidents decreased the likelihood of perpetrator arrest. These findings reiterate IPV mythology that if women do not leave violent relationships, the violence in the relationship must be tolerable (Ferraro, 1989; Policastro & Payne, 2013; Buzawa & Buzawa, 1993; Peters, 2008).

There are two types of situational factors that shape police case processing decisions: 1) the type of aggression involved in the incident, including evidence of injuries, if children were present, and drugs and alcohol (Belknap, 1995; Bachaman & Coker, 1995; Buzawa & Austin, 1993; Mignon & Holmes, 1995; Robinson & Chandek, 2000). Research has reported increased arrest among incidents involving intoxicated

offenders compared to counterparts (Berk and Loseke, 1981; Worden and Pollitz, 1984).

2) The second category of situational factors have included victim preference, a couple's marital status, as well as victim and perpetrator demeanor (Hoyle, 1998; Worden, 1989; Trujillo & Ross, 2008; Worden & Pollitz, 1984). Hoyle (1998), for example, indicated that perpetrators were more likely to be arrested when the victim presented with increased agitation and the perpetrator was confrontational and aggressive. Additionally, victims' arrest preferences in relation to their influence over arrest has been examined, and while some studies have found victim preferences influence police decisions (Buzawa & Austin, 1993; Eigenberg et al., 2001; Feder, 1998; Hoyle, 1998), other studies reported that victim preferences were frequently ignored (Buzawa et al., 1995).

Extralegal factors have also influenced law enforcements attitudes, myth endorsement, and actions towards IPV CFS. These factors included background and characteristics of law enforcement personnel; such as an officer's age, years on the job, and training. Younger officers and those with a college education have supported IPV arrest policies and have been less likely to dismiss or downplay the nature of IPV (Gover, Paul, and Dodge, 2011). Officers with longer job tenure reported the importance of increased discretion in the arrest decision and have been less likely to arrest perpetrators without victim cooperation (Gover, et al., 2011). Officers who have been poorly trained or lack training on the specific dynamics of IPV have subscribed to stereotypical beliefs that focus blame on the victim (Gover, et al., 2011). Garner (2005), for example, found that police attitudes were capable of change and that training was one approach to facilitate this change. Others have reiterated these conclusions (Johnson, 2004; Logan et al.; 2006; Saunders, 1995).

Attitudinal Studies: Law Enforcement Perceptions of IPV.

Attitudes and beliefs about IPV are likely to influence how law enforcement respond to IPV CFS. Police have been commonly characterized as “biased, inconsistent, and inadequate” (Trujillo & Ross, 2008, p. 455); descriptors that are concerning for both victims and perpetrators (Twis et al., 2018). Attitudes toward IPV have also influenced case attrition, or the difference between the number of offenses reported and the number of offenses that end in conviction (Belknap, 1995). Findings on officers’ perceptions of IPV as a real crime that demands a response criminal justice have varied. Police may believe that arrest is not always the most appropriate response to IPV CFS (Blount, Yegidis, & Maheux, 1992; Sinden & Stephens, 1999; Toon et al., 2005). In contrast, research has also reported support for mandatory arrest laws (Friday, Metzgar, and Walters, 1991). Friday and colleagues (1991), for example, found support for mandatory arrest laws. Their research also revealed that officers viewed the policy as ineffective. Fewer than half (43%) of officers in their study believed that mandatory arrest reduced the overall number of IPV incidents. Robinson and Chandek’s (2000) study using 471 case files reported several situational variables predicted arrest decisions. Twice as many arrests were made when both the victim and the perpetrator were using alcohol or controlled substances compared to when alcohol was not involved (49% vs. 25%; Robinson & Chandek, 2000). Robinson and Chandek (2000) also found that arrest was more likely when witnesses were present and when the victim and suspect shared a residence.

A study conducted by Johnson (2004) reported that many officers experience frustration and disillusionment with the behaviors of IPV victims. Johnson’s (2004) study

included non-random sample of 74 police officers who were attending a state-mandated four-hour course. Attitudinal studies have suggested officers experienced cynicism and struggled to understand a victim's behavior (Johnson, 2004; Toon et al., 2005). When officers have failed to understand the complex challenges inherent in a violent intimate relationship, police have held derogatory views that attribute blame to victims. These attributions may result in frustration, which subsequently produced inappropriate responses to IPV incidents (Johnson, 2004; Toon et al., 2005). Frustration seems to emerge from subtle victim-blaming myths, where officers have believed that victims should leave the abusive relationship as soon as law enforcement is involved (Johnson, 2004). Rigakos' (1995) study of Canadian police officers, however, found less subtle victim blaming among their sample. In particular, participants reported that victims of IPV were calculating and deceitful and that perpetrators were "victims of adverse circumstances". Saunder's (1995) study assessing police response, to IPV using a sample of 64 officers from three cities and seven small-town police departments in Wisconsin, reported adherence to some portion of IPV myths (Saunders, 1995). Participant attributions included feeling uncomfortable interacting with victims of IPV, that IPV is sometimes justified, and that victims who remained in abusive situations did so because they enjoyed the abuse (Saunders, 1995). While instructive, these studies are not without limitation. For example, Rigakos (1995) used a small Canadian sample with a low response rate (45 questionnaires completed out of 122 distributed) which may not be generalizable to the US.

Additional studies analyzing attributions directed toward victims of IPV have reported myth adherence. Farris and Holman (2015), for example used survey data from

sheriffs to assess IPV myths and attitudes toward IPV. Forty-six percent of respondents reported adherence to the myth that victims could easily leave their abusive relationship but chose not to. Gover and colleagues (2011) reported similar findings from 309 surveys drawn from law enforcement officers at a large urban agency in a Western state. Seventy-one percent of participants subscribed to victim-blaming myths involving leaving the perpetrator. Additionally, both Gover and colleagues (2011) and Farris and Holman (2015) indicated that police participants subscribed to the misconception that alcohol and drug abuse causes IPV. Overall, Farris and Holman (2015) found that sheriffs who expressed increased skepticism about the need to help women succeed in society also subscribed to myths about violence against women.² Logan and colleagues (2006) assessed police attitudes toward a variety of attributions related to IPV using a sample of 315 officers from one midsized city police department. Officers agreed most that “domestic violence is a crime that should be handled by treatment.” (Logan et al., 2006, p. 1368). Logan et al.’s (2006) findings reiterated Belknap’s (1995) conclusions in that officers reported a preference for handling IPV CFS with mediation instead of arrest. Conversely, Logan and colleagues’ (2006) sample viewed sanctions as a more appropriate response to IPV offenders who abused substances compared to counterparts. Additionally, Farris and Holman (2015) and Gover et al. (2011) found that officers subscribed to the misconception that alcohol and drug abuse *causes* IPV and therefore believed that harsher punishments were fitting for CFS when alcohol was part of the presenting incident.

² It should be noted that sheriff populations are considered unique in that they are elected into office. Additionally, Farris and Holsman’s (2015) study used a sample size of 553 surveys completed for a response rate of 19.5%.

Purpose of Current Study

When responding to IPV CFS, officer attitudes can directly affect a victim's experiences, formal investigation outcomes by police and prosecutors, and broader community attitudes. Since stereotypes surrounding towards IPV can influence police response to CFS and perceptions of preparedness, the assessment of IPV myth endorsement is necessary for understanding the criminal justice case processing of IPV cases. First, the present study used 523 self-report, pencil-and-paper surveys administered to a purposive sample of police personnel commissioned at one of the five largest and most diverse US cities to examine demographic and occupational predictors of police officer endorsement of IPV myths. Second, this study examined perceptions of preparedness in responding to IPV CFS, while accounting for participant sex, and IPV myth endorsement.

Research Questions

RQ1: To what degree do police officers endorse IPV myths?

RQ2: Do officer occupational characteristics (years of service, previous calls for service, perceptions of preparedness in responding to calls for service, prior specialized training), or attitudinal factors (trauma misperceptions) predict endorsement of IPV myths, controlling for officer demographics (race, sex, education)?

CHAPTER III

Methods

Data used for this study were collected from police participants in August 2016 as part of a larger federally-funded grant project awarded by the Office of Violence against Women (OVW) evaluating a mandatory, agency-wide training on sexual and family violence response. Prior to beginning the 2016-2017 training cycle, baseline data were collected. These baseline, pre-training data were used for the present analysis. Survey administration took place in a large, urban police department located in one of the fifth largest and most diverse US cities. A purposive sample of roll call times were selected for data collection based upon the anticipated number of officers' present at each location, taking into consideration scheduled leave, to maximize participation. Roll call times were held at 6:00am-7:00am, 2:00pm-3:00pm, and 10:00-11:00pm. Data were collected during 55 roll call meetings at all 14 metropolitan police substations. To facilitate participation, reminder announcements were made via email by police Lieutenants from the Special Victims' Division to roll call supervisors prior to the scheduled survey administration date. Pencil-and-paper surveys were administered by the research team to commissioned officers who were present for roll call after reading an institutional review board (IRB) approved description of the study highlighting the voluntary and anonymous nature of survey participation.³ Survey completion took approximately 25 minutes and was described to participants as "Police Attitudes about Crime and Victimization."

³ Police participants were not provided individual incentive or reward for their participation per instructions by the police partner's legal counsel.

Altogether, 694 surveys were administered and 633 surveys were returned, for a response rate of 91.2%. Of the returned surveys 523 were retained for analysis.⁴

Sample Demographics

Sample demographics are presented in Table 1 and illustrate the mean age of police participants was 38.12 years old. Participants averaged 11.82 years of service as an officer. Men represented the majority of the sample ($n = 466$, 89.1%), compared to women ($n = 57$, 10.9%). Participants were racially diverse, such that 38% ($n = 199$) were White, 27.5% ($n = 144$) were Latinx, 23.5% ($n = 123$) were Black, 8.0% ($n = 42$) were Asian/Pacific Islander, 0.4% ($n = 2$) were Native American/Alaska Native, and 2.5% ($n = 13$) identified as other. Approximately 40.1% ($n = 209$) of participants reported having a four-year degree, nearly 28.1% ($n = 147$) reported some college, and 12.0% ($n = 63$) reported graduate school.

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Variables	n	%	M (SD)	Range
Officer Age			38.12 (10.29)	21-72
Years of Service			11.82 (9.91)	.33-40.5
Officer Sex				
Male	466	89.1%		
Female	57	10.9%		
Participant Race/ Ethnicity				

⁴ 9 cases either marked the same answer all the way through the survey or sections of the survey where variation was expected, or responded to almost none of the survey and were therefore excluded from the sample. 101 of surveys had missing data on pertinent data and were excluded from the analysis.

Variables	n	%	M (SD)	Range
White	199	38%		
Black	123	23.5%		
Latino/a	144	27.5%		
Asian/Pacific Islander	42	8.0%		
Native American/Alaska Native	2	0.4%		
Other	13	2.5%		
Educational Attainment			2.20 (1.20)	0-4
High School	41	7.8%		
Some College	147	28.1%		
Two-year degree	63	12.0%		
Four-year degree	209	40.0 %		
Graduate School	63	12.0%		
Number of Family Violence Calls in Previous 12 Months			3.05 (1.28)	0-4
None	36	6.9%		
1-5	46	8.8%		
6-10	62	11.9%		
11-20	90	17.2%		
21 or more	289	55.3%		
Perceptions of Preparedness in Responding to Calls for Service			4.33 (.84)	0-5
Very Unprepared	5	1.0%		
Moderately Unprepared	1	0.2%		
Slightly Unprepared	8	1.5%		
Slightly Prepared	45	8.6%		
Moderately Prepared	207	39.6%		
Very Prepared	257	49.1%		
Prior Specialized Training			16.97 (6.41)	0-35

Variables	n	%	M (SD)	Range
Trauma Misperceptions			16.97 (6.41)	0-35

Dependent Variables

Intimate Partner Myth Endorsement.

Participant adherence to IPV myths was captured using a modified version of Peters' (2008) DVMAS. 18-Items were captured on a 6-point Likert-type scale from 0 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The 18-items were subjected to confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Loadings ranged from .675 to .304. Items loading over .4 were retained. In total, 16-items with loadings ranging from .675 to .351 were summed to create a scale capturing IPV myths.⁵ The scale ranged from 0 to 80 where increased values represented higher levels of IPV myth endorsement ($M = 19.03$, $SD = 11.24$). Internal consistency reliability as measured by chronbach's alpha was excellent ($\alpha = .850$). Appendix B presents the 16-item scale with factor loadings and index reliability.

Independent Variables.

Occupational Characteristics.

Family Violence Response.⁶ The number of family violence CFS responded to in the previous 12 months was measured through one item, "*How many family violence calls have you responded to in your current position in the last 12 months?*" Responses

⁵ To ensure accuracy, the 18 items were first subjected to exploratory factor analysis (EFA) using maximum likelihood estimation and verimax rotation to determine if items represented separate underlying constructs (e.g., character blame, minimization, behavior blame, exoneration). Like Peters' (2008, p. 15) reported, the present analysis found that "the factor structure of the instrument was highly unstable." As a result, the researchers made the decision to employ the DVMAS as a single 16-item scale.

⁶ This particular agency uses "Family Violence" to describe Domestic Violence calls for service, which includes IPV, child abuse, elder abuse, and parental abuse.

were captured on an ordinal scale [None = 0 ($n=36$, 6.9%), 1 to 5 = 1 ($n=46$, 8.8%), 6 to 10 = 2 ($n=62$, 11.9%), 11 to 20 = 3 ($n=90$, 17.2%), 21 or more = 4 ($n=289$, 55.3%)].

Perceptions of Preparedness in Responding to Calls for Service. The degree to which participants reported perceptions of preparedness in responding to CFS was measured using one item, “*How prepared do you feel to respond effectively to calls for service for domestic violence involving intimate partners?*” Responses were captured on a 6-point Likert-type scale ranging from 0 (very unprepared) to 5 (very prepared) where higher numbers represented increased perceptions of preparedness [$M=4.33$, $SD=.837$].

Prior Specialized Training. Prior specialized training was captured using three binary items that reflected various types of specialized training (no =0, yes =1). Items included having received, “*any specialized training on victim sensitivity?*”, “*any special training on the trauma of victimization?*”, and “*specialized training on crime victims’ reactions and behaviors in dealing with their victimization?*” The three items were subjected to EFA, which produced one factor with an Eigenvalue greater than 1 that accounted for 68.86% of the variance, with factor loadings ranging from .885 to .769. Items were summed to create an index from 0 to 3 where increased values represented increased participation in specialized training ($M=1.73$, $SD=1.30$). Internal consistency reliability was excellent ($\alpha=.867$). Appendix C presents the prior specialized training items, factor loadings, and index reliability.

Attitudinal Characteristics.

Trauma Misperceptions. Attitudes toward crime victims, and the nature of trauma response in particular, was measured using nine items from Ask (2010) that asked officers to rate their responses to a series of items measuring stereotypical trauma

expectations such as hysteria, behavioral expressiveness, and emotionality as a sign of truth-telling. Responses were captured using a 6-point Likert-type scale ranging from 0 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The 9-items were subjected to an EFA. Seven items loaded over .4 and were retained. Item loadings ranged from .671 to .547. The 7-items were summed to create a trauma misconceptions scale from 0 to 35, where increased numbers represented increased trauma misconceptions (see also Franklin et al., 2019; $M = 16.97$, $SD = 6.41$). Internal consistency reliability was excellent ($\alpha = .822$). Appendix D presents the factor loadings for the 7 items that were retained and index reliability.

Individual Characteristics.

Officer Sex. Participant sex was a dichotomous variable, [Men = 0 ($n = 466$; 89.1%); Women = 1 ($n = 57$; 10.9%)].

Officer Race/ethnicity. Participant race/ethnicity was captured through a single nominal variable, “*What is your race/ethnicity?*” Responses were categorical, [White ($n=199$, 38%), Latinx ($n=144$, 27.5%), Black ($n=123$, 23.5%), Asian/Pacific Islander ($n=42$, 8.0%), Native American/Alaska Native ($n=2$, 0.4%), and Other ($n=13$, 2.5%)]. Race/ethnicity was recoded into four binary variables [(no, yes); White, Black, Latinx, Asian].

Officer Education. Participant education was captured through a single nominal variable, “*What is your highest level of education completed?*” Responses were captured on an ordinal scale, [High school diploma ($n=41$, 7.8%), some college ($n=147$, 28.1%), two year degree ($n=63$, 12.0%), four year degree ($n=209$, 40.0%), graduate school ($n=63$, 12.0%)].

Officer Years of Experience. Participant years of experience was captured through a single continuous variable, “*How many years have you been a police officer?*” Responses were captured on a continuous scale, with responses ranging from .33 years to 40.5 years served. ($M = 11.82$, $SD = 9.91$)

Analytic Strategy

The analysis proceeded in three stages. First univariate statistics, means, and standard deviations were calculated for each of the study variables. Next, a bivariate correlation matrix presented statistically significant relations between the independent and dependent variables. Finally, a multivariate Ordinary Least Squares regression model was estimated to test the research hypotheses (Tabachnick, Fidell, & Ullman, 2007).

CHAPTER IV

Results

Data Screening

Prior to estimating statistical models, SPSS, Version 25.0 was used to screen the data for skewness and kurtosis. Estimates of skewness and kurtosis fell within the acceptable range and did not exceed the recommended cutoff values of 3.0 and 8.0, respectively (Kline, 2005). Multicollinearity diagnostics were evaluated. Acceptable tolerance values are generally greater than 0.2 and less than 4.0, respectively (Belsey, Kuh, & Welsch, 1980; Fox, 1991). Acceptable VIF values fall below 2.5 (Tabachnick et al., 2007). Tolerance values for the variables in the present analysis ranged from .771 to .964 and variance inflation factors (VIFS) ranged from 1.04 to 1.30, indicating that multicollinearity, was not a problem (Belsey, Kuh, & Welsch, 1980).

Missing Data

A series of steps were conducted in order to address issues surrounding missing data. First, nine surveys that had anomalies were excluded from the sample.⁷ A missing data analysis was run which produced 101 surveys that had missing data on variables of interest. From there, analysis employed listwise deletion to exclude the 110 surveys not suitable for analysis.

Univariate Statistics

Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics for each of the variables included in the regression model. Participants tended to score above the scale midpoint on perceptions of

⁷ Nine cases either marked the same answer all the way through the survey or sections of the survey where variation was expected, or responded to almost none of the survey and were therefore excluded from the sample.

preparedness when responding to CFS involving intimates ($M = 4.33, SD = .84$). In addition, participants reported low levels of IPV myth endorsement as measured by the DVMAS, scoring well below the scale midpoint ($M = 19.03, SD = 11.24$).

Table 2

Summary of Correlations, Means, and Standard Deviations for Study variables

Measure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. 16 item Intimate Partner Violence Myth Endorsement	---							
2. Prior Specialized Training	-.037	---						
3. Trauma Misperceptions	.300**	.030	---					
4. Perceptions of Preparedness in Responding to CFS involving intimates	-.121**	.088*	-.040	----				
5. Officer Years of Service	-.086	-.056	-.108*	.070	---			
6. Officer Education	-.029	.157**	-.034	.090*	-.085	---		
7. Officer Sex	-.110*	.039	-.009	.030	-.114**	.135**	---	
8. Family Violence Response (in previous 12 months)	.100*	.074	.032	.032	-.353**	-.126**	-.014	---
<i>M</i>	19.03	1.73	16.97	4.33	11.82	---	---	3.05

Measure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<i>SD</i>	11.24	1.30	6.41	.84	9.91	---	---	1.28

Note.

*** Correlation is significant at the $p < .01$ level (2 tailed)*

** Correlation is significant at the $p < .05$ level (2-tailed).*

Bivariate Correlation Matrix

Table 2 presents the Pearson bivariate correlations and demonstrates the significant relations that emerged between independent and dependent variables. First there was positive, significant relation between trauma misconceptions and IPV myth endorsement, $r(521) = .300, p = .001$. Similarly a positive, significant relation emerged between family violence CFS in previous twelve months and IPV myth endorsement, $r(521) = .100, p = .005$. Results also demonstrated a negative, significant relation between IPV myth endorsement and perceptions of preparedness in responding to CFS involving intimates, $r(521) = -.121, p = .001$, and between IPV myth endorsement and officer sex, $r(521) = -.110, p = .005$. The remaining variables related to IPV myth endorsement were not statistically significant.

In evaluating relations between independent variables, several notable preliminary finding emerged. Prior general training was statistically significant and positively related to perceptions of preparedness in responding to CFS involving intimates, $r(521) = .088, p = .005$, and to educational attainment, $r(521) = .157, p = .001$. Trauma misconceptions was statistically significant and negatively related to officer years of service, $r(521) = -.108, p = .005$. Perceptions of preparedness in responding to CFS involving intimates was statistically significant and positively related to officer education, $r(521) = .090, p = .005$. Significant negative relations emerged between officer years of service and officer sex, $r(521) = -.114, p = .001$ and between officer years of service and family violence response (in previous 12 months), $r(521) = -.353, p = .001$. Officer education was positive and significantly related to officer sex, $r(521) = .135, p = .001$. Finally, officer education

emerged as significant and negatively related to family violence response (in previous 12 months), $r(521) = -.126, p = .001$.

Multivariate OLS Regression Model

Table 3 presents the results of the multivariate OLS regression model predicting IPV myth endorsement, where independent and control variables were entered simultaneously. The 16-item IPV myth endorsement index was regressed on officer occupational, attitudinal, and individual characteristics. The regression equation was significant, $R^2 = .134, F(10, 512) = 7.95, p = .000$ and explained 13.4% of the variance in IPV myth endorsement. In terms of occupational characteristics, family violence response (in previous 12 months) was a significant, positive predictor of IPV myth endorsement, $b = .802, t = 2.032, p = .043$, suggesting that increased family violence CFS was correlated with increased endorsement in IPV myths. Perceptions of preparedness in responding to family violence was also a significant, negative predictor of IPV myth endorsement, $b = -1.320, t = -2.347, p = .019$, suggesting decreased perceptions of preparedness correlated with increased endorsement of IPV myths. Regarding attitudinal characteristics, trauma misconceptions was a significant, positive predictor of IPV myth endorsement $b = .496, t = 6.759, p = .000$, where increased trauma misperceptions correlated with increased endorsement of IPV myths. Finally, officer sex (Men = 0, Women = 1) was a significant, negative predictor of IPV myth endorsement, $b = -3.476, t = -2.283, p = .023$, such that women reported decreased endorsement of IPV myths when compared to men.

Table 3

*Multivariate Ordinary Least Squares Regression Model Predicting Intimate Partner**Violence Myth Endorsement*

Variables	<i>b</i>	β	<i>t</i> ratio	Sig
Officer sex	-3.476	-.096	-2.283*	.023*
Officer Education	.087	.009	.212	.832
Officer Years of Experience	-.033	-.029	-.641	.522
Family Violence Response (in previous 12 months)	.802	.091	2.032	.043
Perceptions of Preparedness in Responding to CFS	-1.320	-.098	-2.347*	.019*
Black	-1.423	-.054	-1.180	.238
Latinx	-1.186	-.047	-1.008	.314
Asian	2.838	.069	1.566	.118
Prior General Training	-3.83	-.044	-1.056	.291
Attitudes towards crime victims	.496	.283	6.759*	.000*
Constant	15.55		4.74	.000
Model <i>R</i>		.367		
<i>R</i> ²		.134		
<i>F</i>		7.954		

Note. CFS = Calls for service. * $p < .05$.

CHAPTER V

Discussion

IPV remains a problem in the US. National estimates have suggested that 37.3% of all women have experienced IPV during their lifetime (Smith et al., 2017). Although the occurrence of IPV is prevalent, the crime continues to be underreported (Gover, et al., 2011; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000; Toon et al., 2005; Morgan & Oudekerk, 2019). This has been attributed to victim perceptions that police are unable or unwilling to intervene on their behalf (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). Prior literature has examined police attitudes towards IPV and responses to IPV, though there is limited scholarship on the endorsement of IPV myths among law enforcement personnel, who are often the first point of contact in the formal criminal justice process and who have significant influence on later criminal justice outcomes by way of decisions made by the responding officer and investigator (Twis, et. al., 2018; Gover, et al., 2011; Logan et al., 2006; Younglove, Kerr, & Vitello, 2002; Ask, 2010; Jankowski et al., 2011; Harrison & Esqueda, 1999; Sinden & Stephens, 1999; Belknap, 1995). The current literature, however, has not explored predictors of IPV myth endorsement within police samples. The present study addressed this gap and used 523 paper-and pencil surveys administered to a purposive sample of police officers commissioned at one of the fifth largest and most diverse US cities to examine occupational, attitudinal, and demographic predictors of IPV myth endorsement. Four findings from the analysis are worthy of additional discussion.

First, results from the study indicate low IPV myth endorsement among police participants, a finding that supports recent literature (Twis et al., 2018; Farris & Holman, 2015). Any endorsement of IPV myths, however, is problematic for victims who formally

report, given the unique position of police officers as gatekeepers of the formal criminal justice processes and their ability to facilitate an investigation, validate a victim's experience and mitigate survivor trauma (Eigenberg et al., 2012; Kerstetter, 1990; Farris & Holman, 2015; Twis et al., 2018). To be sure, IPV myths can be harmful and demoralizing to victims (Logan et al., 2006; Twis et al., 2018; Erez & Belknap, 1998).

The present study also found that officer sex was a significant, negative predictor of IPV myth endorsement. This indicates that male officers endorsed IPV myths to a greater degree when compared to female officers. These findings reiterate the need for targeted change of these beliefs for the benefit of victims. Furthermore, this finding is consistent with existing research on officer samples looking at rape myth endorsement (Feild, 1978; Page, 2007; 2008; Rich & Seffrin, 2012) as well as more generally among community and college samples (Hockett, Smith, Klausning, & Saucier, 2016; Franklin & Garza, 2018; Suarez & Gadalla, 2010). Since sex is a predictor of myth endorsement, it would be beneficial to target hiring women in law enforcement agencies to promote a change in organizational culture that ultimately decreases rape myth endorsement and subsequently, IPV myth endorsement (Meier & Nicholson-Crotty 2006). Further, law enforcement agencies would benefit from educational programming that centers on dismantling myths in a non-judgmental and educational manner. Fostering learning environments where participants can interact and critically assess myths may be beneficial, particularly for a law enforcement population. Katz's (2006) Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) program has produced positive results such as improved attitudes and knowledge surrounding violence against women in other masculine

organizations and has been implemented in groups of college athletic teams, fraternities, and branches of the military (Katz, 1995; 2006).

Third, results demonstrated that officers with higher trauma misconceptions also reported increased IPV myth adherence. This finding illustrates that officers who endorse trauma misperceptions also endorse IPV myths, a suite of underlying misconceptions that may be particularly dangerous to survivors who present to police for formal assistance. IPV stereotypes have been reported in prior literature as well and trauma misperceptions have had negative consequences (Franklin et al., 2019). Prior literature has noted that poor training or lack of training can facilitate endorsement to these stereotypes (Gover et al., 2011; Johnson, 2004; Logan et al.; 2006; Saunders, 1995).

Fourth, findings from this study demonstrated the correlation between decreased perceptions of preparedness among police participants in responding to IPV CFS and increased IPV myth endorsement. It appears that the way police personnel perceive their role and accomplish their duty to “protect and serve” may correlate with their acceptance of myths that neutralize the seriousness of IPV, excuse the perpetrator, and blame the victim. By equipping officers with training necessary to dismantle myths surrounding IPV and gender violence, perhaps law enforcement will be in a stronger position to provide improved response to those most vulnerable who are seeking criminal justice assistance (Toon et al., 2005). That said, research has demonstrated that educational programming does not always produce attitude change among program completers and in particular, long term change. In other words, educational programming is sensitive to decay. That said, Sleath and Bull (2012) have noted the utility of implementing training protocol among agencies for the benefit of cultural and organizational transformation

over time. Indeed, the organizational climate and informal norms of a law enforcement agency may take generations to evolve and transform in ways more accepting of attitudes reflecting the reality of intimate partner violence. For this reason, training is not without value.

Despite the importance of these findings, there are several limitations worth mentioning. First, 17.4% of data were missing, however, this is the first study of its kind and provides an instructive starting point for future research. Additionally, data comprised responses from a purposive sample of police officers commissioned in a large, metropolitan city and results should be interpreted accordingly. Future studies should replicate this study with police personnel commissioned at smaller and rural agencies with more homogenous populations to examine what occupational, attitudinal, and demographic characteristics predict IPV myth endorsement. It is important to note the potential role of social desirability bias given the underreporting of undesirable beliefs, particularly regarding sensitive questions (Tourangeau & Yan, 2007), such as those pertaining to myths surrounding IPV. That said, the measures capturing IPV myth endorsement among this sample is a conservative estimate. Importantly, for the purpose of this study, type of family violence CFS (intimate-partner, elder, child, etc.) was not specified as this was a mechanism of the police partner agency offense codes. Furthermore, the DMVAS used in this study is heteronormative. Future studies should consider how different victim-offender relationships, such as sexual minorities, transgender couples, and gender non-conforming couples may influence IPV myth endorsement among police officers when responding to IPV CFS. Additionally, it would be fruitful to consider police officer perceptions of IPV among sexual minority

perpetrators and victims in terms of culpability (Pattavina, Hirschel, Buzawa, Faggiani, Bentley, 2007).

Despite these limitations, findings from the current study have important implications for practice and potential for expansion for future research. Violence against women represents a challenge for officers, especially given the chronic and hidden nature of the crimes and the reluctance of victims to report assaults to law enforcement. While law enforcement responses to violence against women have evolved challenges still remain. Existing research has noted shortcomings in police response to IPV (Ferraro, 1989; Hilton, 1993; Sherman, Schmidt, & Rogan, 1992; Buzawa & Buzawa, 1992, 2003; Johnson, 2004). However, the present study was the first of its kind to examine occupational, attitudinal, and demographic predictors of police officer IPV myth endorsement using myths from Peters' (2008) DVMAS. The aforementioned results, however, demonstrate that when police officers endorse myths surrounding "appropriate" victim behaviors, officers are also endorsing trauma misperceptions and feel significantly less prepared to respond to CFS involving intimates. Findings from the current study highlight that IPV myth endorsement is a critical area for intervention and improvement. Training to dismantle myths surrounding IPV and to increase feelings of preparedness in officers when responding to CFS regarding intimates, as well as to address any other effects that IPV CFS may be having on officers would be beneficial. Actions and behaviors follow victims and perpetrators throughout the criminal justice process through paper trails, investigative activity and case notes (Eigenberg et al., 2012,). Limiting the role of IPV myths on this process can only benefit victims, social service engagement, public safety, and community well-being.

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APPENDIX A

Domestic Violence Myth Acceptance Scale (DVMAS).

- 1) Domestic violence does not affect many people.
- 2) When a man is violent it is because he has lost control of his temper.
- 3) If a woman continues living with a man who beats her then it's her own fault if she is beaten again.
- 4) Making a man jealous is asking for it.
- 5) Some women unconsciously want their partners to control them.
- 6) A lot of domestic violence occurs because women keep on arguing about things with their partners.
- 7) If a woman doesn't like it, she can leave.
- 8) Most domestic violence involves mutual violence between partners.
- 9) Abusive men lose control so much that they don't know what they're doing.
- 10) I hate to say it, but if a woman stays with the man who abused her, she basically gets what she deserves.
- 11) Domestic violence rarely happens in my neighborhood.
- 12) Women who flirt are asking for it.
- 13) Women can avoid physical abuse if they give in occasionally.
- 14) Many women have an unconscious wish to be dominated by their partners.
- 15) Domestic violence results from a momentary loss of temper.
- 16) I don't have much sympathy for a battered woman who keeps going back to the abuser.
- 17) Women instigate most family violence.

18) If a woman goes back to the abuser, how much is that due to something in her character?

APPENDIX B

Domestic Violence Myth Acceptance Scale, Factor Loadings, and Reliability Estimates

Reliability: $\alpha = .850$ Numbered Items	Loading
14. Many women have an unconscious wish to be dominated by their partners.	.675
18. If a woman goes back to the abuser, that is the result of her character.	.635
12. Women who flirt are asking for it.	.632
13. Women can avoid physical abuse if they give in occasionally.	.620
5. Some women unconsciously want their partners to control them.	.592
16. I don't have much sympathy for a battered woman who keeps going back to the abuser.	.591
6. A lot of domestic violence occurs because women keep on arguing about things with their partners.	.575
4. Making men jealous is asking for it.	.572
10. I hate to say it, but if a woman stays with the man who abused her, she basically gets what she deserves.	.558
17. Women instigate most family violence.	.544
3. If a woman continues living with a man who beats her then it's her own fault if she is beaten again.	.538
15. Domestic violence results from a momentary loss of temper.	.447
1. Domestic violence does not affect many people.	.414
8. Most domestic violence involves mutual violence between partners.	.413
7. If a woman doesn't like the abuse, she can leave.	.357
11. Domestic violence rarely happens in my neighborhood.	.351

Reliability: $\alpha = .850$	Loading
Numbered Items	
2. When a man is violent it is because he has lost control of his temper.	.322
9. Abusive men lose control so much that they don't know what they're doing.	.304
Note. <i>Forced onto 1 factor, solution could not be rotated. Bolded items were retained to create the final measure.</i>	

APPENDIX C

Prior Specialized Training, Factor Loadings, and Reliability Estimates

Reliability: $\alpha = .867$	Loading
1. Have you received any specialized training on the trauma of victimization?	.885
2. Have you received specialized training on crime victims' reactions and behaviors in dealing with their victimization?	.831
3. Have you received specialized training on victim sensitivity?	.769

APPENDIX D

Trauma misperceptions (Attitudes towards crime victims)

Reliability: $\alpha = .822$	Loading
A crime victim who displays negative emotions (e.g. crying, despair, clear signs of distress) during his/her testimony is likely to be telling the truth.	.671
A crime victim who displays positive emotions (e.g. laughter, smiling) during his/her testimony is not likely to be telling the truth.	.654
A crime victim's reluctance to spontaneously give a detailed account of the crime is an indicator of the accuracy of his/her statements.	.649
A crime victim's display of emotions when recalling the crime is an indicator of the accuracy of his/her statements.	.649
The fact that a crime victim's expressive style contradicts my expectations is generally reason to examine that statement's accuracy extra carefully.	.629
A crime victim's inability to report details about the event shortly after the crime (less than a day) is reason to question the accuracy of the statement.	.623
Details that appear in a crime victim's memory after a period of time are less reliable than those the victim can remember and report right from the start.	.547

VITA

EDUCATION

- 2019 (expected) Masters of Arts, *Criminal Justice and Criminology*
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- 2017 Bachelor of Science, *Victim Studies* with minor in *Accounting*
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PUBLICATIONS

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ACADEMIC EMPLOYMENT

- 2018- Present Graduate Research/Teaching Assistant, Sam Houston State
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TEACHING EXPERIENCE

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PRESENTATIONS

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CERTIFICATIONS/TRAININGS

2018 Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative
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