

ABSTRACT

DISSERTATION: Heterosexual and Lesbian Women's Attributions of Domestic Violence and Myth Endorsement Behaviors

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COLLEGE: Teachers College

DATE: September 25, 2009

PAGES: 178

Much research has been conducted about domestic violence using heterosexual women samples. This study investigated how heterosexual and lesbian women make attributions about domestic violence, as well as their myth endorsement behaviors. It also looked at the effect of participants' egalitarianism on their victim blaming behaviors and the effect of their own victimization on their perpetrator blaming behaviors.

Analyses were also conducted to examine the relationship between attribution behaviors and myth endorsement behaviors. ANOVA results indicated that heterosexual and lesbian women tend to exhibit similar patterns in the attributions of blame behaviors, though heterosexual women engaged in greater victim blame and situational blame than did lesbian women. ANCOVA results suggested a relationship between egalitarianism and victim blaming behaviors, but not between victimization history and perpetrator blaming behaviors. Pearson correlation analyses showed that relationships did exist between some attributions and myths, though not between all of them. Finally, ANOVA results indicated that heterosexual and lesbian women engage in similar myth endorsement behaviors, with heterosexual women endorsing myths more than lesbian

women. Strengths, limitations, directions for future research, and implications for practice are also discussed.