

Rape Myths

FEMINIST DEVELOPMENTS IN VIOLENCE AND ABUSE

Series Editors: Dr Hannah Bows, Durham University (UK) and Professor Nicole Westmarland, Durham University (UK)

Feminist Developments in Violence and Abuse provides a feminist forum for academic work that pushes forward existing knowledge around violence and abuse, informing policy and practice, with the overarching objective of contributing towards ending violence and abuse within our society. The series enables academics, practitioners, policymakers and professionals to continually build and explore their understanding of the dynamics, from the micro to the macro level, that are driving violence and abuse. The study of abuse and violence has a large scope for co-producing research, and this series is a home for research involving a broad range of stakeholders; particularly those working in grassroots domestic and sexual violence organisations, police, prosecutors, lawyers, campaign groups, housing and victim services. As violence and abuse research reaches across disciplinary boundaries, the series has an interdisciplinary scope with research impact at the heart.

Available Volumes:

Victims' Experiences of the Criminal Justice Response to Domestic Abuse:
Beyond GlassWalls

Emma Forbes

Understanding and Responding to Economic Abuse

Nicola Sharp-Jeffs

Forthcoming Volumes:

'Rough Sex' and the Criminal Law: Global Perspectives

Hannah Bows and Jonathan Herring

Not Your Usual Suspect: Older Offenders of Violence and Abuse

Hannah Bows

Gendered Justice? How Women's Attempts to Cope With, Survive, or Escape
Domestic Abuse Can Drive Them into Crime

Jo Roberts

Rape Myths: Understanding, Assessing, and Preventing

BY

SOFIA PERSSON

Leeds Beckett University, UK

and

KATIE DHINGRA

Leeds Beckett University, UK



United Kingdom – North America – Japan – India – Malaysia – China

Emerald Publishing Limited
Howard House, Wagon Lane, Bingley BD16 1WA, UK

First edition 2022

Copyright © 2022 Sofia Persson and Katie Dhingra. Published under exclusive licence
by Emerald Publishing Limited.

Reprints and permissions service

Contact: permissions@emeraldinsight.com

No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, transmitted in any form or by any means electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without either the prior written permission of the publisher or a licence permitting restricted copying issued in the UK by The Copyright Licensing Agency and in the USA by The Copyright Clearance Center. Any opinions expressed in the chapters are those of the authors. Whilst Emerald makes every effort to ensure the quality and accuracy of its content, Emerald makes no representation implied or otherwise, as to the chapters' suitability and application and disclaims any warranties, express or implied, to their use.

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN: 978-1-80071-153-2 (Print)

ISBN: 978-1-80071-152-5 (Online)

ISBN: 978-1-80071-154-9 (Epub)



ISOQAR certified
Management System,
awarded to Emerald
for adherence to
Environmental
standard
ISO 14001:2004.

Certificate Number 1985
ISO 14001



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

This book is dedicated to all the women and girls who have been subjected to rape. We hear you; we see you; we believe you. Together we will build a society that does not justify, tolerate, or minimise men's sexual violence against women.

This page intentionally left blank

Contents

About the Authors	<i>xi</i>
Acknowledgements	<i>xiii</i>
Chapter One Introduction	1
Scope of the Problem	1
Prevalence	2
Overall Endorsement	2
Is the Prevalence Decreasing Over Time?	3
Focus and Definitions	4
Structure of this Book	5
Chapter Two Theoretical Background to Rape Myth Acceptance	9
Chapter Overview	9
The Importance of Feminism	9
Rape and Feminist Theory	10
Rape and the Criminal Justice System	11
Rape Myths	13
What is the Substance of Rape Myths?	14
Different Types of Rape Myths	18
Rape Myths and Black and South Asian Feminist Thought	23
Ways Forward in Working With Rape Myths	27
Conclusion	28
Chapter Three Assessing Rape Myths	29
Chapter Overview	29
An Overview of Research into Rape Attributions	29
Research into RMA	30
Why Measure Rape Myths?	31
How to Measure Rape Myths	32
Other Relevant Variables	35

Challenges in Sexual Assault Research	38
Samples	38
Vignettes	40
Court Observations and Mock Juries	41
Open Science and Reproducibility	42
Current Challenges in Measuring RMA	43
Choice of RMA Measure	43
Subtlety, Wording, and Colloquialism	44
Social Desirability	46
Ways Forward	47
Case Study	49
Conclusion	51
Chapter Four Consequences of Rape Myth Acceptance on the Criminal Justice System and Women Subjected to Rape	53
Chapter Overview	53
Rape Myths and Policing	53
Prevalence	53
Impact on Decision-Making	54
Implications for Training	56
Rape Myths and Juror Decision-Making	58
Specific Myths and Juror Decision-Making	60
Implications: Addressing the Impact of RMA on Court Cases	63
Summary	70
Impact of RMA on Women Subjected to Rape	70
Policing: Disclosure, Engagement, and Secondary Victimization	71
Court	75
Formal and Informal Sources of Support	76
Mental Health and Well-Being	77
Self-Blame	78
Unacknowledged Rapes	79
How Disability and Perceived Social Class Affect CJS Experiences	80
Conclusion	81
Chapter Five The Perpetuation and Functions of Rape Myths	83
Chapter Overview	83
The Perpetuation of Rape Myths	84
Prevention Campaigns	84
Rape in the Media	87
Improving Prevention Campaigns and Media Portrayals of Sexual Assault	93

The Functions of Rape Myths: Why Do People Endorse Them?	95
Individual Functions	95
Societal Functions	100
Conclusion	103
Chapter Six Rape Myth Acceptance and Other ‘-Isms’	105
Chapter Overview	105
Sexism	105
Ambivalent Sexism	106
Scientific Sexism and Gender Essentialism	110
Sexism and the Maintenance of RMA	112
Racism, Classism, and Ableism	114
Social Dominance	116
Conclusion	116
Chapter Seven Ways Forward in Addressing Sexual Violence	119
Chapter Overview	119
Interventions to Address Sexual Violence	119
Theoretical Foundations	120
Outcomes Assessed	122
Specific Strategies to Address Sexual Violence	123
Addressing Sexual Violence in Specific Groups	130
Limitations of Existing Intervention Approaches	132
Ways Forward	135
Conclusion	136
References	139
Index	165

This page intentionally left blank

About the Authors

Sofia Persson, PhD, is a Senior Lecturer in Psychology at Leeds Beckett University, UK. She is a Chartered Psychologist with the British Psychological Society and a fellow of the Higher Education Academy. Her main research interests are blame attributions in rape cases and various forms of gender inequality. She is an Open Science advocate.

Katie Dhingra, PhD, is Reader/Associate Professor in Psychology at Leeds Beckett University, UK. She is a Chartered Psychologist with the British Psychological Society and a fellow of the Higher Education Academy. Her research largely focuses on the psychosocial mechanisms underlying suicide and non-suicidal self-injury. Additionally, she researches violence against women and children and psychological responses to trauma.

This page intentionally left blank

Acknowledgements

Sofia

I would like to thank my dad, who continues to be the most important person in my life – thank you for always being there for me whenever I need you. I would also like to thank Tom. Tom – thank you for everything, including for giving comments on an earlier draft of this book. Finally, I would like to acknowledge my cat Sukie, who is very small but incredibly loved.

Katie

I would like to thank my husband, Bill. He has been my rock – looking after our beautiful puppy, Poppy, so we could avoid asking for yet another extension (she thinks sleep is for wimps); for talking me through the rough times, of which there were many; and for allowing me to treat our home like a hotel (thank you and sorry). I could not have done this without you. I am also indebted to my parents and friends. Finally, I would like to express my sincerest gratitude to Tracy Levy Mulleague. No amount of ‘acknowledgement’ will repay the help and support that she has given, but I would like to say, ‘thank you’, nonetheless.

Sofia and Katie

We would like to thank Emerald Publishing Limited for the support they have provided in writing this book. Further, we would like to thank the editors of this book series, Dr Hannah Bows and Professor Nicole Westmarland for giving us the opportunity to contribute this book to *Feminist Developments in Violence and Abuse*. Here, we would also like to acknowledge the anonymous reviewers who provided incredibly valuable feedback and suggestions on our initial book proposal.

We are very grateful to the Centre for Psychological Research at Leeds Beckett University for a grant that enabled us to carry out original research for this book. We would also like to express our gratitude to the people who participated in our empirical research, which provided the foundation for this book. We are particularly grateful to the women who had been subjected to rape and provided data on their experience of reporting (or not reporting) to the police. We are incredibly thankful for the insights shared by these women, and we hope that their voices will contribute to improved provisions and justice for victim-survivors of rape. We would also like to acknowledge the organisations dedicated to supporting victim-survivors of rape, such as Rape Crisis England and Wales, and extend our sincere appreciation and thanks for all the important work that they do.

This page intentionally left blank

Chapter One

Introduction

Scope of the Problem

Sexual violence against women is a serious concern globally – this is one of the main reasons that we decided to write this book. A wealth of sources confirms that each year, a large number of women are subjected to rape and/or sexual assault. For instance, Rape Crisis England and Wales (2021) estimates that 20% of women in England and Wales have experienced sexual assault since the age of 16, and figures from Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network (RAINN, 2021) suggest that one in six American women have been subjected to rape or attempted rape. Globally, the United Nations (UN Women, 2021) suggests that 30% of women have been subjected to physical or sexual violence. We note, however, that these figures are likely underestimations, as many women do not acknowledge experiences analogous to rape as being sexual violence or assault (see Chapter Four of this book). Perpetrators of rape are overwhelmingly male (ONS, 2019; UN Women, 2021) and typically known to the victim-survivor (e.g., ONS, 2019; Rape Crisis England and Wales, 2021), highlighting how sexual violence is both a result of and contributor to gender inequality. It is thought that only a minority of women who are subjected to rape report this to the police (Hohl & Stanko, 2015; RAINN, 2021; Rape Crisis England and Wales, 2021).

Despite the scope of the problem, legal provisions for women who report rape to the police are poor. In England and Wales, while reporting levels of rape are increasing, both prosecutions and convictions of rape cases are decreasing. Specifically, for the most recent figures in 2020, only 1.6% of recorded rapes resulted in a charge or a summons, and in 2019–2020, rape convictions fell to a record low (Crown Prosecution Service, 2020; George & Ferguson, 2021). The number of victim-survivors withdrawing support for the rape case once it has been reported has also increased to 41% (from 25% in 2015/2016; Molina & Poppleton, 2020). It is, therefore, established that ‘attrition’ in rape cases is significant (Kelly, Temkin, & Griffiths, 2006). Attrition refers to the process whereby cases drop out of the criminal justice system (CJS) at one of several points of exit from that system. Because of this, it is unsurprising that the most recent Victims’ Commissioner’s report into rape suggests that only a minority of the women surveyed believed

2 *Rape Myths*

that they would receive justice by reporting a rape to the police, and that generally, victim-survivors of rape have low levels of confidence in the CJS. Here, we echo the serious concerns voiced by the Victims' Commissioner for England and Wales, Dame Vera Baird, in that we are 'witnessing (...) the decriminalisation of rape' (Siddique, 2020), and that myths and misconceptions about rape may be important in explaining this dire situation.

Stereotypes and misconceptions surrounding rape have long been thought to be implicated in the societal treatment of victim-survivors of rape, as well as in the lack of justice in rape cases (e.g., Schwendinger & Schwendinger, 1974). That these myths remain relevant in a contemporary context highlights a continuum in societal prejudices towards rape victim-survivors and suggests that these beliefs share common features. Initially formalised by Burt (1980), 'rape myths' sought to provide an integrated theory of the common properties of these prejudices and misconceptions surrounding rape. Burt (1980), as well as subsequent researchers (e.g., Bohner et al., 2009; Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994; Payne, Lonsway, & Fitzgerald, 1999), noted the societal functions of these beliefs as especially important, where these attitudes serve to justify and normalise sexual violence against women. The conceptualisation of 'rape myths' continues to be relevant today, where the endorsement of these beliefs and other victim-survivor stereotypes are thought to significantly contribute to continued high levels of victim blame, both in society more generally and within the legal system specifically. Because of the detrimental effects that these beliefs have on the lives of victim-survivors of rape, rape myths remain an important consideration for feminist theory on men's sexual violence against women.

Prevalence

Rape Myth Acceptance (RMA) prevalence estimates refer to the proportion of people who endorse rape supportive beliefs in a fixed period of time. Prevalence research methodology has been a topic of considerable international attention and debate, with no internationally agreed good practice and competing approaches present. How a survey is framed, the measured used (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994), and other methodological factors (e.g., the number and wording of questions) affect individuals' responses, consequently rendering comparisons between studies both challenging and somewhat problematic. We discuss some of these issues throughout this book.

Overall Endorsement

A 2005 poll of 1,095 randomly selected adults in England and Wales found that between 22% and 37% held rape victim-survivor blaming attitudes across a range of situations (e.g., if a woman was drunk or had been acting flirtatiously; Amnesty International, 2005). Out of the categories of myths examined, the category most highly endorsed (in terms of blaming the victim-survivor) was if the woman failed to say 'no' clearly to the man (37%). Thirty-four percent of respondents believed that the woman was 'partially' or 'totally' responsible for being raped if

she behaved in a flirtatious manner. A 2007 poll of 992 adults living in Scotland found similar endorsement rates (Scottish Executive/TNS System 3, 2007). Thirty one percent of respondents thought a woman can be at least partly responsible for being raped if she was flirting with the man (the item with the highest endorsement); and 18% believed that rape can be the woman's fault if she is known to have had several sexual partners (the item with the lowest endorsement). In a 2009 Ipsos Mori telephone poll of 915 adults, results indicated that there continued to be circumstances in which a large proportion of the population believed a woman should be held at least 'partly' responsible for being sexually assaulted or raped (Home Office, 2009). Out of the categories examined, endorsement was highest if the woman did not clearly say 'no' to the man (49% at least partially responsible) and lowest if a woman was out walking alone at night (14% at least partially responsible).

Although the findings outlined above are clearly related to rape myths, they did not use established and validated measures¹ of RMA, making findings difficult to compare with related studies. Temkin and Krahé (2008) provided information on acceptance of rape myths among the general population in the UK. In their online study of 2,176 adults, they found that 25.3% of participants scored above the midpoint (i.e., on the 'agreement' side of the scale) on the female precipitation belief scale, a subscale of Cowan and Quinton's Perceived Causes of Rape Scale (1997), and 44.4% scored above the midpoint of a 16-item version of the Acceptance of Modern Myths about Sexual Aggression (AMMSA) (Gerger, Kley, Bohner, & Siebler, 2007), which indicates more agreement than disagreement with the statements within that scale. Accordingly, rape myths – especially if measured with measures capturing subtle and less obvious stereotypical beliefs about rape – show substantial acceptance among members of the general population.

Although most RMA research has been conducted with college/university students, studies with other sample types generally find similar rates of rape myth endorsement (Edwards, Turchik, Dardis, Reynolds, & Gidycz, 2011). Gyls and McNamara (1996) found that 43% of US-based prosecuting attorneys sampled ($n = 182$) demonstrated a moderate to high level of RMA. Although minimal empirical research on rape myths within religious institutions exists, preliminary research suggests that some rape myths are endorsed by a substantial number of US clergy (Sheldon & Parent, 2002). However, 93% of the sample was female. Rape myths are also highly prevalent in a wide range of media content and directly affect consumers' attitudes towards rape (see Chapter Five).

Is the Prevalence Decreasing Over Time?

Given significant ongoing changes in society and increased awareness of men's sexual violence against women, we would also expect attitudes and beliefs about sexual violence to have changed over time, as reflected in reduced RMA. Somewhat surprisingly, there is little empirical research focusing on societal shifts in

¹Validated measures are surveys and screening questionnaires that have been tested to ensure the production of reliable, accurate results.

RMA over time, and the methodological differences across studies make it difficult to compare endorsement rates of these beliefs across time (see Chapter Three). Beshers and DiVita (2021) administered a scale intended to measure RMA (i.e., a revised version of the Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (IRMAS)) to two samples of undergraduates at a US university, one in winter 2010 and the other in spring 2017. They found that scores on the revised IRMAS were significantly lower in 2017 than in 2010. Bryne, Petri, and Oh (2021) administered the Attitudes towards Rape Victims Scale (ARVS) to two separate samples of college students from the same university in the US and found evidence of a substantial decline in undergraduate endorsement of rape myths from 1998 to 2018. Although these results may reflect a decline in RMA, it is important to consider alternative explanations, e.g., the results of both studies may in part reflect an increased awareness that it is not socially desirable to acknowledge beliefs that directly blame victim-survivors for their victimisation, excuse the perpetrators' behaviours, or trivialise the impact of sexual violence. We seek to expand on some of these considerations throughout this book and comment on the prevalence and impact of RMA among different groups.

Focus and Definitions

The focus of this book is rape, broadly understood as penetration of the vagina and/or anus with a penis without consent. In England and Wales, the Sexual Offences Act (2003) expanded this definition:

- (1) A person [A] commits [rape] if:
 - (a) he intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person [B] with his penis;
 - (b) B does not consent to the penetration, and
 - (c) A does not reasonably believe that B consents.
- (2) Whether a belief is reasonable is to be determined having regard to all the circumstances, including any steps A has taken to ascertain whether B consents.
- (3) Sections 75 and 76 apply to an offence under this section.
- (4) A person guilty of an offence under this section is liable, on conviction on indictment, to imprisonment for life.

Given the gendered nature of sexual violence, the focus in this book is on the rape of women, as perpetrated by men. We acknowledge that sexual violence is a pressing concern within groups outside of a heterosexual context, especially given that groups with other gender identities and expressions can be among the most vulnerable in society. The scope of this book is, however, limited largely to rape perpetrated by men in a heterosexual context (which also reflects the research base in this area). The fact that this book is about men's sexual violence against women is not to suggest that men are not subjected to rape, that women do not perpetrate sexual violence, or that sexual violence not perpetrated by men against women is any less traumatic. Despite our focus, we hope that some of the implications of the findings reviewed may be of use outside a heterosexual context.

In describing rape, we have chosen to use the phrase ‘subjected to rape’. This phrase acknowledges the forced and non-consensual nature of rape and is in line with terminology used by public health bodies such as the World Health Organization (WHO, 2021). Throughout this book, we have chosen to refer to women who have been subjected to rape as ‘victim-survivors’ of rape. The only exceptions are where we refer to research that has involved a pre-conceptualised idea or concept (e.g., the RMA domain of ‘blaming the victim’) or measurement of attitudes towards the victim-survivor (e.g., victim blame, victim culpability, victim responsibility, etc.), as we strive for an accurate representation of what previous research did and measured. Here, we acknowledge that phrases used to refer to women who have been subjected to rape not only describe these women as having been raped but also these labels come with connotations and may as such influence women’s identities and outcomes following rape (Hockett & Saucier, 2015), including the support they receive.

In choosing the term ‘victim-survivor’, we drew on considerations by Thompson (2000) who introduced the ‘victim-survivor paradox’ where women may need to dynamically highlight or minimise the effects of rape to assume different identities, meaning that neither ‘victim’ nor ‘survivor’ is, in isolation, sufficient to capture the identities of women who have been subjected to rape. The women interviewed in the study by Thompson (2000) further stated that the way in which they described themselves varied, sometimes choosing the term ‘victim’ and sometimes choosing the term ‘survivor’ depending on the context. We acknowledge that while we needed to settle on an operational definition for this book, no single definition is perfect. Women who have been subjected to rape will inevitably have individual preferences about how they would like to describe themselves, and what they have survived (or even if they consider that they have survived and recovered from sexual violence). It is worth noting that CJS professionals refer to victim-survivors as ‘complainants’, but we feel this does not reflect the vulnerable position in which victim-survivors are situated.

Structure of this Book

Despite its long history and relative popularity as a research topic (as evidenced by recent meta-analytic research, e.g., Persson & Dhingra, 2020; Suarez & Gadalla, 2010), many questions regarding the nature, correlates, and assessment of rape myths remain unanswered. In this book, we review the available evidence on the topic of RMA and seek to provide a comprehensive answer to some of these questions. Here, we outline the theoretical background to rape myths and position this theory within feminist scholarship and activism. We also consider the many methodological issues involved in researching sexual violence attributions and provide a practical guide to those wishing to research and assess rape myths. Importantly, we seek to situate rape myths within a broader societal context of prejudices such as sexism and racism, to address *why* interventions to address sexual violence seem to fail to eradicate myths and misconceptions about rape. We further highlight gaps in past research and point towards future developments in the area. In this book, we include previously unpublished data (collected in

October 2021) highly relevant to the study of rape myths. Throughout all chapters, we consider practical implications of the findings reviewed for researchers and practitioners. Below is an outline of each of the six main chapters of this book.

Chapter Two serves as an introduction to the theory of rape myths and outlines how early feminist theorising into myths and misconceptions surrounding rape developed into the measurable construct of RMA. Here, we will stress that the feminist underpinnings of rape myths are crucial for understanding what they are as well as their purpose, especially in terms of how research into this area has sought to address the fundamental and persistent inequalities facing women in the context of sexual violence and rape. This chapter will further present different ideas about what rape myths ‘are’ and outline how these beliefs can be categorised into different domains or categories. Finally, we note that feminist theorising into sexual violence has traditionally failed to include the voices of women of colour, meaning that RMA is likely theoretically incomplete without considering its links with racism. Here, we make recommendations about how the theoretical basis of rape myths can be strengthened through also considering racist myths about victim-survivors and perpetrators.

Chapter Three focuses on the methodological background to, and assessment of, RMA and is intended to serve as a practical guide for those interested in assessing and researching rape myths. Here, we consider why it is advantageous to be able to measure RMA, and we also provide an overview of the ways in which this is typically achieved. In doing so, we detail the most commonly used scales for RMA assessment, including their psychometric properties and background. We further consider several other relevant variables often measured in conjunction with RMA. Finally, this chapter outlines some of the methodological challenges faced by researchers in this area, and we make several recommendations for how research methodologies can be improved. Here, we focus specifically on increased international collaboration and research transparency as two promising avenues going forward.

Chapter Four reviews the consequences of RMA on the CJS and women subjected to rape, and we further signpost how the impact of these myths could be mitigated. We note that rape myths play a major role at every stage of the CJS process, and that victim-survivor characteristics – especially the victim-survivor’s relationship with the offender and whether the victim-survivor engaged in any ‘risky’ behaviour at the time of the rape – influence decision-making. Further, we examine the impact of RMA on juries and conclude that they may compromise their impartial position by infusing their assessment of a rape victim-survivor with their rape mythology. Here, we consider how the impact of prejudicial and stereotypical beliefs on verdicts could be reduced. We also argue that women’s experience of the CJS is not only shaped by rape myths but also by age, ethnicity, social class, and disability. Consequently, improving the CJS response to rape will require a deeper understanding of wide-ranging and intersecting structural inequalities.

Chapter Five examines the perpetuation of rape myths in society, with a particular focus on the complex ways in which institutions who would – on the

surface – disagree with the perpetuation of rape myths often maintain them. We also critically discuss some of the ways in which the media portray rape, since such portrayals have been shown to increase victim-survivor blaming and influence the way in which victim-survivors are perceived by the CJS and the general population more broadly. Within this section, we advance an outline of changes that could be made to improve prevention campaigns and media portrayals of sexual assault. Finally, we link the perpetuation of rape myths to the functions of rape myths, to explore *why* individuals and institutions appear reluctant to completely abandon these ideas, particularly regarding how truth is established and maintained.

Chapter Six draws on Burt's (1980) original considerations of the correlates of RMA and details the relationship between RMA and other types of prejudices ('-isms'). We pay particular attention to how *other* types of stereotypical beliefs may scaffold rape myths. Here, we argue that the many shapes of sexism present in society are key for maintaining and legitimising RMA, particularly through their cementing of gender differentiations and the backlash against feminism. We further note racism, classism, and ableism as relevant prejudices co-existing with the endorsement of rape myths and suggest that social dominance may be a general belief system underlying these beliefs. In doing this, this chapter finally notes that the failure to consider the societal context to RMA likely underlies the limited effectiveness of interventions developed to reduce these beliefs.

Chapter Seven examines whether rape myths can be prevented and, if already present, whether they can be changed. We outline some of the attempts to design rape myth prevention programmes and comment on their effectiveness. Placing rape myth prevention programmes within the context of theories of change, we consider some of the issues involved in using these strategies to impact deep-seated opinions. We argue that short-term interventions to lessen attitudes such as RMA are not a panacea, considering how pervasive and widely perpetuated these myths are. Here, we bring together considerations presented throughout this book and posit that so long as more benevolently sexist attitudes remain socially acceptable, interventions to reduce rape myths will have limited efficacy. We, therefore, conclude that wider discussions around sexist attitudes are necessary, and that sexual violence needs to be situated within wider gender inequality in society. A feminist context to these attitudes is, therefore, necessary, and we further propose ways in which research in this area can move forward to facilitate a reduction in RMA.

This page intentionally left blank