Factors Influencing Decisions in a Capital Trial
Involving Domestic Violence

BY

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SUMMARY

In this study, I examined how mock jurors used a defendant’s childhood history of witnessing domestic violence as they rendered sentences during a capital murder trial in which the defendant was himself accused of domestic violence – murdering his partner. Specifically, I was interested in how jurors used this information on their own, and whether attorneys could influence how they used this information by priming (or not priming) attributions about the stability of the defendants’ behavior. Furthermore, I was interested in the effects of juror gender on decisions, especially whether men or women were more or less influenced by a defendant’s history of witnessing domestic violence. Participants read a case summary involving a domestic violence murder, gave sentencing judgments, and completed measures of attributions, emotions, and sentencing goals. As predicted, participants had more empathy for the defendant and believed the prosecuting attorney less and the defense attorney more when the defendant had a history of witnessing domestic violence than when he did not, but there were no other effects of this variable. When stable attributions were primed, participants were slightly more punitive, believed the defendant had more control over his actions, and felt his behavior was stable than when no attributions were primed. Contrary to hypotheses, there were no main effects of gender on the main dependent variables.
Factors Influencing Decisions in a Capital Trial Involving Domestic Violence

Domestic violence is an underreported form of violence, with perhaps only between 2.5% and 15% of an estimated 1.3 million women victims of domestic violence reporting their abuse (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Centers for Injury Prevention and Control, 2003; Garcia, 2004). In turn, there are many child witnesses to domestic violence. According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics (2006), between 1993 and 2004, children under the age of 12 years witnessed domestic abuse in 43% of incidents involving women victims. Witnessing domestic violence during childhood is associated with similar outcomes as emotional abuse (Sternberg, Lamb, Greenbaum, Cicchetti, Dawud, Cortes, Krispin, & Lorey, 1993; Maker, Kemmelmeier, & Peterson, 1998), post-traumatic stress (Briere, Johnson, Bissada, Damon, Crouch, Gil, et al., 2001), other trauma symptoms (Graham-Bermann & Levendosky, 1998; Kilpatrick & Williams, 1997), higher levels of aggression (Lundy & Grossman, 2005), and an increase in the likelihood of perpetrating intimate personal violence themselves in adulthood (Whitfield, Anda, Dube, & Felitti, 2003). In fact, Wekerle and Wolfe (1999) found that the best predictor of aggressive behavior toward intimate partners was exposure to violence in the home.

Does the public recognize this link? How do potential jurors perceive witnesses to domestic violence? Do they view adults who witnessed domestic violence as children permanently “damaged” and unable to recover from this trauma, or do people feel that children can recover from witnessing violence? Consider child witnesses of domestic violence who grow up to perpetrate domestic violence themselves as adults. When these cases go to trial, some jurors might attribute the cause of defendants’ actions to their childhood experiences of witnessing domestic violence, thus reducing the defendants’ responsibility for their behavior, leading to a sympathetic, lenient response to the defendants. People who believe that witnessing
domestic violence as a child leads to the victim being “damaged goods” (someone who will inevitably abuse again), however, might see the violent behavior as a stable part of their character, thus increasing their utilitarian concern about the potential for reoffending, and ultimately leading to a more harsh response to the defendants.

Given that jurors might have differing opinions about someone who grew up witnessing domestic violence and perpetrated it as an adult, they may make different attributions of responsibility for such a person’s crime of domestic violence and favor different forms of punishment. Different assumptions about the stability of the violent behavior might also lead to different punishment decisions. Attribution assumptions might be primed by attorneys, who might frame their arguments about the defendant’s history of witnessing domestic violence, priming certain attributions about the defendant’s behavior. It is important to understand how these factors might lead to case decisions, especially in capital trials where a defendant’s history may be brought up in the sentencing phase (but not the guilt phase). Thus, I studied jurors’ perceptions of a defendant who was found guilty of murdering his domestic partner. The defendant either witnessed or did not witness domestic violence in his childhood, and the prosecuting attorney and expert witness in the case either framed their arguments to underscore attributions of stability or not.

Use of Witnessing Domestic Violence as a Mitigating or Aggravating Factor in a Capital Trial

In a capital trial in which the defendant is found guilty, there is a second hearing that determines whether or not the defendant will receive the death penalty. During this sentencing phase, aggravating and mitigating factors—extralegal information not admissible during the guilt phase—are admissible to persuade the jurors toward a life or death sentence. Aggravating
factors emphasize or exacerbate the crime severity, defendant responsibility, or risk of future recidivism, thus encouraging a death sentence. Examples include a defendant’s prior criminal record and the crime being particularly severe or cruel. Mitigating factors reduce crime severity, defendant responsibility, and risk of recidivism, encouraging a life sentence. Williams v. Taylor (2000) specified that the following five factors could be used as mitigating factors in the sentencing phase of a capital trial: evidence of mental retardation, testimony about the defendant’s good behavior while incarcerated, childhood physical abuse, testimony from police that the defendant would not pose a risk while in jail, and the defendant’s background. In Lockett v. Ohio (1978), the U.S. Supreme Court established the admissibility of mitigating factors that do not need to be proven, and allowed “any aspect of the defendant’s character or record” to be used as a mitigating factor in the sentencing phase. Four years later, Eddings v. Oklahoma (1982) required that jurors take into account mitigating factors before ruling to ensure the defendant receives a fair trial.

Jurors are presumed to use certain factors as aggravating and mitigating to encourage or discourage a death sentence, respectively. Consider a defendant’s history of having grown up witnessing domestic violence. Will jurors be more likely to impose a life (versus death) sentence on a defendant who has witnessed domestic violence during childhood than on a defendant who has not, especially when the crime is the murder of a domestic partner? The impact of witnessing domestic violence on jurors’ decision making has not been studied specifically in this context, but past research has addressed the influence of a somewhat similar factor—a defendant’s history of having been abused as a child. Most of this work suggests that jurors consider it to be a mitigating factor (Nunez, Tang, & Jenson, 2007; Barnett, Brodsky, & Davis, 2004; Heath, Stone, Darley, & Grannemann, 2003; Lynch & Haney, 2000; Stalans & Henry,
1994). For example, in a study by Heath and colleagues (2003), participants read 15 separate defenses after reading an assault and battery case and rated the persuasiveness of each possible defense. Participants rated a defendant’s history of physical abuse during childhood as a highly persuasive defense, and they attributed less control and less responsibility for the crime to a defendant who had been physically abused as a child than to a defendant who had not been. Heath and colleagues suggested that participants might use this history as a mitigating factor, believing that due to social learning, children learn how to behave by observing those around them. In turn, participants might think that someone who grew up witnessing violence would learn that this behavior is normative, and therefore behave that way themselves, “naturally,” and therefore be less responsible for future related behaviors. Thus, jurors would be more likely to use the defendant’s history of witnessing domestic violence as a mitigating factor than an aggravating factor and more likely to render a more lenient sentence (life vs. death).

Nunez and colleagues (2007) investigated the effect of past child abuse on jurors’ verdicts in a murder case involving a juvenile offender. Participants favored referring juvenile defendants with a history of child abuse to juvenile court (versus adult court) significantly more often than juvenile defendants with no history of child abuse. Yet there was an important confound in this study: The juvenile’s father was both the murder victim and the juvenile’s abuser. Thus, jurors might have attributed the murder to self-defense in those cases. Instead, however, Nunez and colleagues suggested that the juvenile offender’s history of child abuse decreased the important of punishment, incapacitation, and deterrence concerns, leading to less harsh sentences (juvenile vs. adult court). Thus, sentencing goals were important for the participants in this study, and they felt that punishment and incapacitation were less important for an abused than non-abused juvenile. Furthermore, participants might have felt that the
abused juvenile was less in control of his actions than the non-abused juvenile, thus decreasing
the threat posed by the juvenile and subsequent deterrence. If these goals are similarly activated
for adult defendants, jurors in a case with a defendant who witnessed domestic violence in
childhood could also be less concerned about punishing him than a defendant who was not a
witness to domestic violence, leading to more lenient judgments. These goals can all be
connected back to attribution theory—the less responsibility attributed to the individual him or
herself or the more one blames the abuse, the less threatening the abused juvenile seems.

Stalans and Henry (1994) studied jurors’ reactions to a juvenile found guilty of
murdering either a neighbor or the juvenile’s father, as a function of whether the defendant had a
history of childhood physical abuse perpetrated by the father or not. They found that jurors were
more likely to recommend transferring non-abused juveniles, compared to abused juveniles, to
adult court as opposed to juvenile court, a harsher disposition. Again, however, there was
confounding of abuse with self-defense. The defendant’s father was always the abuser (not the
neighbor), however, thus the participants might have been more lenient toward the abused
juvenile because they thought he was defending himself against his abuser. Stalans and Henry
also found that jurors were more likely to report that the non-abused juvenile understood the
wrongfulness of his actions and had greater intentions to kill the victim than abused juveniles,
citing attribution theory for these results. Thus, the participants attributed less wrongfulness and
intentionality, and less control to the abused juvenile than the non-abused juvenile, lending more
support for attribution theory when explaining jurors’ reactions to a defendant’s history of abuse.
If these attitudes about an abused juvenile can be transferred to an adult defendant who
witnessed domestic violence growing up, jurors would be more likely to attribute less control
and responsibility to the defendant, resulting in jurors’ using the defendant’s history of
witnessing domestic violence as a mitigating factor more often than an aggravating factor, and ultimately giving more lenient judgments.

Najdowski, Bottoms, and Vargas (2009) also examined perceptions of juvenile offenders, varying abuse history, but also intellectual ability and crime type. The juvenile was presented as either having a history of “neglect by her parents and maltreatment, including physical and sexual abuse at the hands of her father” or “no known abuse or neglect experiences” (p. 405). The abused juvenile was seen as less responsible and more influenced by her background than a non-abused juvenile. Thus, participants made less internal attributions for the abused juvenile than the non-abused juvenile. This effect, however, depended on the type of crime, significant when the juvenile was accused of murdering her father who perpetrated the abuse, but not when the juvenile was accused of a drug offense, aggravated murder, or shoplifting (crimes not involving self-defense). These results suggest that jurors made more external attributions for the cause of the crime (i.e., the child’s background) when the crime was more relevant to the past abuse experience than when it was not, lending more support for attribution theory as an explanation for these differences.

Another relevant issue is whether people believe someone who grows up with abuse, in this case witnessing domestic violence, is more likely to grow up to perpetrate that abuse themselves (i.e., perpetrate violence against their domestic partner). Researchers assessed public perceptions of sexual offenders and support for the sex offender registry, and found that the more people believed that sexual offending later in life was caused by childhood sexual abuse, the less they supported the registry (Stevenson, Nadjowski, Salerno, Wiley, & Bottoms, in preparation). Moreover, this effect was mediated by attributions: The more they believed that childhood sexual abuse caused sexual offending later in life, the more uncontrollable attributions they made
for the sexual offenders behavior, and the less likely they were to support the registry. Thus, if participants in the present study believe that the domestic violence perpetrated by the defendant was caused by his history of witnessing domestic violence, the more uncontrollable attributions they should make, leading to a more lenient sentence.

Other research, however, suggests that people will sometimes discount a defendant’s history of child abuse or even use it as an aggravating factor against the defendant, a phenomenon called the “backfire effect” (Barnett, Brodsky, & Price, 2007). Specifically, Lynch and Haney (2000) found that, in a capital sentencing trial for a robbery-murder case, although a defendant’s history of child abuse was used most often as a mitigating factor, a substantial minority of jurors either discounted it (25%) or used it as an aggravating factor (13%) supporting a death sentence. Lynch and Haney posited that these differences could be due to the incomprehensibility of jury sentencing instructions leading to misuse of evidence and confusion about the relevancy of evidence. They found that comprehension of instructions was positively related to the use of the defendant’s history of child abuse as a mitigating factor—the less they understood the instructions, the less likely they were to use it as a mitigating factor. Thus, participants did not understand the instructions, leading them to misuse the mitigating factor against the defendant.

Garvey (1998) found an even more substantial portion of jurors (62%) who reported they would not be influenced by a defendant’s history of child abuse in a capital murder case, with only one-third of the participants indicating that they would use a defendant’s history of child abuse as a mitigating factor. The author suggested that the participants considered the abuse mitigating because the abuse helped cause the defendant’s violent character. Factors that help shape character, such as a history of child abuse, however, were not considered as persuasive of
a defense as immediate factors that reduced the defendant’s control (e.g., under the influence of alcohol at the time of the crime) over his actions at the time of the crime that directly led to the murder.

Finally, Stevenson and colleagues (2010) examined mock jurors’ discussions during sentencing phase deliberations in a robbery/murder capital trial (where no self-defense was involved). They found that jurors were more likely to argue against using the defendant’s history of childhood physical abuse as a mitigating factor than to use it as a mitigating factor as intended by the defense. They found that the more jurors blamed the abuse for the defendant’s crime (uncontrollable attributions), the more likely they were to give a life sentence. The more people thought the abuse caused permanent psychological damages (stable attributions), however, the more likely they were to give a death sentence. When comparing only mitigating and aggravating comments, however, they found that the defendant’s history of childhood sexual abuse was used more often as a mitigating than aggravating factor. Thus, Stevenson and colleagues proposed a model based on Graham, Weiner, and Zuker’s (1997) model that focuses on the two main dimensions composing attribution theory: controllability and stability (Weiner, 1993; Graham et al., 1997). The model combines these attributions with emotions and sentencing goals to explain differences between jurors’ use of mitigating and aggravating factors and subsequent sentencing judgments. According to this model, jurors who view the defendant’s actions as uncontrollable (i.e., the defendant’s past history of childhood abuse predisposed him to react violently) will attribute less responsibility for the crime to the defendant, feel decreased anger and increased sympathy, be less likely to have retributive goals (i.e., goals to punish for the sake of punishing—“giving the defendant what he deserves”), and finally, be inclined to render more lenient sentences. Alternatively, jurors who view the defendant’s actions as stable (i.e., the
defendant’s history of childhood abuse has permanently ruined him) will have a higher expectancy for future violence, have more utilitarian sentencing goals (i.e., goals to protect the rest of society), and render more severe sentences. The model also predicts that, in contrast, jurors who view the defendant’s actions as controllable (i.e., the abuse did not make him a violent person) will attribute more responsibility, feel more anger and less sympathy, and have more retributive sentencing goals, and render more severe sentences. Jurors who view the defendant’s actions as unstable (i.e., the abuse did not permanently ruin him) will have a lower expectancy for future violence, have less utilitarian goals, and render less severe sentences. In the present study, mock jurors made decisions in the sentencing phase of a capital trial in which the defendant has been found guilty of murdering his wife. I varied whether the defendant had a history of witnessing domestic violence during his childhood. Given past research on similar factors and the research on attribution theory, I predicted the following:

**H1:** Compared to jurors who read about a defendant with no history of witnessing domestic violence, jurors who read about a defendant with a history of witnessing domestic violence would be more likely to make more lenient sentencing decisions (life vs. death).

**H2:** Jurors would be less likely to attribute as much control and responsibility to the defendant when he grew up with a history of witnessing domestic violence than when he did not have this history.

**H3:** Participants would feel more sympathy for the defendant when he grew up witnessing domestic violence than when he did not have this history.
H4: Jurors would have less retributive sentencing goals when the defendant grew up witnessing domestic violence than when he did not have this history.

But is it possible to manipulate the attributions that jurors make? Can they be led down the opposite path suggested by the Stevenson et al. (2010) model, the other path being to make stable attributions, which lead to harsher punishments (i.e., an aggravating path)? I manipulated case facts to highlight either stability arguments or not. That is, in the control condition, the defense and prosecution argued for life or death, respectively, without mentioning stability arguments specifically. In the experimental condition, the prosecution and an expert witness made the same arguments as in the control condition except that they also stressed the stability of the defendant’s violent behavior. I predicted the following:

H5: Jurors who read stability attribution arguments, compared to those who read no attribution arguments, will be more likely to give a death sentence than life sentence.

H6: Jurors who read stability attribution arguments, compared to those who read no attribution arguments, will attribute more control and stability to the defendant for his behavior.

H7: Jurors who read stability attribution arguments, compared to those who read no attribution arguments, will have more utilitarian sentencing goals.

Furthermore, I predicted that the main effects of the defendant’s history of witnessing domestic violence and attribution arguments would be qualified by a two-way interaction:
H8: The hypothesized effects of witnessing domestic violence would hold most strongly in the no-attributions condition (i.e., the control condition) but be reversed in the stable-attributions condition.

Juror Individual Differences

**Juror gender.** Research assessing effects of juror gender on sentencing judgments in child abuse and domestic violence cases has shown that women tend to be more pro-victim than are men. Compared to men, women jurors tend to be more lenient toward women defendants who kill their batterers and are more likely to acquit the defendant (Schuller, 1992; Schuller & Hastings, 1996; Schuller, Smith, & Olson, 1994; Schuller & Rzepa, 2002). Researchers suggest that a greater understanding of the battered woman’s situation (Greene, Raitz, & Lindblad, 1989) and more belief in the claims of self-defense (Schuller, 1992) explain the gender differences. Furthermore, Schuller and Hastings (1996) found that women mock jurors, compared to men, were more likely to believe that the woman defendant greatly feared her batterer and feared for her life, more likely to believe the plausibility of the self-defense claim, and less likely to attribute intentional behavior to the woman defendant. Schuller and Rzepa (2002) also found that women mock jurors were more sympathetic toward battered women defendants than men mock jurors. Although not directly tested, the differences between women and men in perceptions of fearfulness, believability of self-defense claims, and intentionality all reflect aspects of attribution theory. Women mock jurors are most likely attributing less controllability (acting in self-defense) and less intentionality to the woman defendant than are men mock jurors, resulting in more lenient verdicts. Furthermore, the finding of differences between men and
women in levels of sympathy toward the defendant provides some evidence that emotions are also involved in explaining gender differences.

In studies in which jurors considered a case with a husband on trial for abusing his wife, researchers found that women participants blamed the husband more for the abuse, sympathized with the victim more, and in turn rendered harsher verdicts than did men participants (Locke & Richman, 2004; Harris & Cook, 1994; Pierce & Harris, 1993). Locke and Richman suggest that women feel a need to defend their own gender, and, because they feel they are more likely than men to become victims of domestic violence, they sympathize more with the victim. They also posit that men may feel a need to defend their gender from criticism about domestic violence and thus blame men perpetrators less for the abuse than women. Locke and Richman suggest that people are more likely to sympathize with similar others, attributing less blame to them and more blame to dissimilar others. Thus, attribution theory has also been used to explain gender differences in domestic violence cases with both men and women defendants.

Studies of jurors’ perceptions of child abuse cases may also be relevant in understanding jurors’ reactions to domestic violence, because there may be a general “gendered” type of reaction to personal victimization, whether it is abuse, domestic violence, or witnessing domestic violence. A large number of studies have shown gender effects in child abuse cases. Specifically, women are generally more pro-victim, believe the victim more often, have more negative views of child sexual abuse, attribute less responsibility to the victim, and find the defendant guilty more often (for a review, see Bottoms, Golding, Stevenson, Wiley, & Yozwiak, 2007). What explains these differences? Compared to women, men are less likely to view child sexual abuse victims as credible (Bottoms & Goodman, 1994), are less empathic toward child sexual abuse victims, perceive child sexual abuse and other forms of abuse less negatively, and
have less positive views towards women (Bottoms, 1993; Bottoms, Wiley & Stevenson, 2005). Bottoms (1993) and Bottoms and colleagues (2005) found that these gender differences in empathy and in attitudes relevant to child sexual abuse cases explained in part the gender differences in case judgments. Research has also shown that women tend to make more stable and internal attributions about the defendant in child sexual abuse cases than do men, which could also explain gender differences found between women’s and men’s verdicts (Beling, Hudson, & Ward, 2001). Thus, most research investigating gender differences has explained them using attributions, emotions, and attitudes.

Although some research has explored juror gender differences in domestic violence cases, for the first time, I studied the potential for juror gender to influence reactions to a case involving domestic violence where the perpetrator of this crime has himself grown up having witnessed domestic violence. There are reasons to consider several competing hypotheses for the potential effects of juror gender. First, there may be no gender differences in reactions to the manipulation of defendant history of witnessing domestic violence. Stevenson and colleagues (2010) did not find any differences between men and women jurors’ use of a defendant’s history of child abuse as a mitigating or aggravating factor, a surprising finding given the pervasiveness of juror gender differences in reactions to the crime of child sexual abuse. Thus, similarly, perhaps the gender differences usually seen in research examining jurors’ reactions to cases of domestic violence are not relevant to understanding jurors’ use of a defendant’s history of witnessing domestic violence as a mitigating or aggravating factor in a capital case.

Second, compared to men jurors, women might have more pro-defendant reactions in the condition in which he witnessed domestic violence as a child. Compared to men, women are more pro-victim in cases of child abuse and attribute less responsibility to the victim for the
abuse situation. Furthermore, women tend to be more sensitive toward domestic violence victims in general than are men (Schuller & Rzepa, 2002). Thus, compared to men, if women jurors perceive the defendant to be a victim because he grew up witnessing domestic violence, they could have more sympathy for the defendant, make less stable and controllable attributions for his behavior, and render more votes for life rather than death.

Yet, third, this increased understanding and sympathy about the issue of domestic violence might also make women less sympathetic and more punitive toward the man defendant in either childhood-witnessing condition, because women may identify with the defendant’s victim more than with him – a defendant who, regardless of childhood, committed domestic violence himself. Women generally react more harshly to the perpetrators of domestic violence than do men. This reaction would be further supported by the similarity-leniency bias (Kerr, Hymes, Anderson, & Weathers, 1995), which would predict that women jurors will feel more similar to the woman victim in the case than to the man defendant, resulting in more anger and less sympathy and empathy toward the defendant, and more death than life verdicts, regardless of whether the defendant grew up witnessing domestic violence. Furthermore, the similarity-leniency bias would suggest that, compared to women, men would feel more similar to and therefore more sympathetic toward the man defendant, attributing less blame to him, and therefore being more likely to vote for life than death. Thus, women might discount the defendant’s history of witnessing domestic violence or even use it as an aggravating factor against the defendant when it is presented because their strong identification with the woman who has been murdered in this case will overwhelm whatever sympathies they might have toward the defendant and his history of witnessing domestic violence.
The strength of these converging arguments makes this third possible hypothesis the strongest. Thus, I predicted the following:

**H9:** Compared to men, women would be more likely sentence the defendant to death.

**H10:** Compared to men, women would be more likely to attribute more stability and control to the defendant for his behavior.

**H11:** Compared to men women would be have more utilitarian sentencing goals.

**Overview and Design**

The current study had a 2 (defendant’s history of witnessing domestic violence: non-witness vs. witnessed) x 2 (attributions: stable vs. none) x 2 (juror gender: men vs. women) between-subjects design. Men and women mock jurors made sentencing judgments after reading about a capital murder case. Before reading the case, I assessed participants’ U.S. citizenship, their death qualification, and their death penalty attitudes. The citizenship and death qualification questions were used as screening questions to make sure that participants were eligible for participation on a capital jury.

After reading the case summary, participants read the Illinois Pattern Jury Instructions, gave their sentencing decision, their confidence in the sentence they gave, a brief reason for their decision, the number of years they would sentence the defendant to if they had the option, mitigating and aggravating factors they found relevant to their sentence, and completed measures of their attributions, their feelings of similarity, sympathy, and empathy toward the defendant, their sentencing goals, their perceptions of the psychiatrist testimony and defense and
prosecuting attorneys’ arguments, manipulation checks, any current or past experience with being a victim of domestic violence or witnessing domestic violence, and demographics (i.e., gender, age, race, income, political orientation). Although in Stevenson and colleagues’ (2010) model, anger and sympathy are the main emotions, I also measured levels of empathy. Past research has shown that empathy and sympathy are different emotions, and that empathy for defendants can lead to more lenient judgments because participants attribute less responsibility to the defendant when they feel empathy for him than when they do not (Sulzer & Burlgass, 1968; Haegerich & Bottoms, 2000).

Method

Participants

An online sample of participants was recruited using Study Response, a company run by Syracuse University that recruits a nationally representative sample of participants for research purposes. Study Response recruited 94 participants for this study (52% men) who ranged in age from 19 years to 72 years ($M = 46$ years). The average annual income was $40,000 to $59,999; 86% of participants identified as Caucasian/White, 6% as African American/Black, 2% as Asian American/Asian, 2% as Hispanic American/Latino, and 3% as other. All were capital jury-eligible participants—those who were 18 years of age and older, who were United States citizens, and who passed the death qualification measure used in capital cases in Illinois (Morgan v. Illinois, 1992 and Wainwright v. Witt, 1985). An additional 40 were not allowed to complete the study because they failed the death qualification pre-screening measure and indicated that they would either (a) always vote for the death penalty ($N = 15$) or (b) never vote for the death penalty ($N = 25$). An additional 33 participants were dropped because they failed manipulation checks, including 8 who thought the defendant had witnessed domestic violence when he had
not, 3 who thought he had not witnessed domestic violence when he had, 11 who thought they read no attributions when they were in the stable condition, and 17 who thought they had read stability attributions when they were in the no-attributions condition. (One person did not answer either question and 6 of those people failed both manipulation checks, which is why the Ns in these categories add to more than 33.)

Materials

I discuss measures in the order participants completed them.

Recruitment email (Appendix A). Participants were informed of the purpose of the study and recruited for the study via a brief email (see Appendix A).

Consent form (Appendix B). Participants received a consent form via email informing them of their rights as volunteers in this experiment. They were required to agree to the elements in the consent form to participate in the study.

Death Qualification measure (Appendix C). Participants were required to answer a pre-screening question (see Appendix C) assessing their attitudes toward the death penalty. This question was used to screen out potential participants that would not be jury-eligible based on Morgan v. Illinois, 1992 and Wainwright v. Witt, 1985.

Case summary (Appendices D, E, F and G). The case summary (Diamond, Casper, Heiert, & Marshall, 1996), adapted for use in this study in a number of ways, described a capital murder trial. In this adapted case, a man was found guilty of the capital murder of his wife. Because intimate partner violence accounts for a substantial portion of homicides each year—35% of homicides in 2000 with 30% women victims, and only 5% men victims (Bureau of Justice Statistics Crime Data Brief, 2003; Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2006), the case involved a woman victim. The defendant, John Henry Smith, was found guilty of murdering his wife,
Deborah Smith. According to testimony, Smith came home one night and, after being confronted by Deborah Smith about not helping out around the home, they began arguing. The argument escalated into a violent fight during which John Henry Smith beat Deborah Smith multiple times and ultimately strangled her to death.

To accommodate the witnessing domestic violence manipulation, as shown in Appendices F and G, Alice Spencer, the defendant’s Aunt, testified that he grew up witnessing his father brutally beat his mother. A psychiatrist also testified that he believed the defendant suffered severe emotional distress due to his childhood of witnessing domestic violence. To accommodate the stability manipulation, as shown in Appendices E and G, the prosecuting and defense attorneys made arguments on behalf of a death and life sentence, respectively, but the prosecuting attorney and a psychiatrist highlighted the stability of Smith’s violent behavior. In all conditions the psychiatrist testified that Smith was competent to stand trial.

**Illinois Pattern Jury Instructions (Appendix H).** The actual Illinois Pattern Jury Instructions appropriate for this crime describe the legal definition of the crime of murder, define aggravating and mitigating factors, and help inform participants’ sentencing judgments. The instructions detail the laws that are specific to the sentencing phase of a capital trial, define legal terms, and instruct jurors on the best procedures to make sentencing judgments. With minor changes for comprehension, these are the exact instructions that would be given if this case were tried in the state of Illinois.

**Sentencing Measures (Appendix I).** Sentencing was measured by asking jurors to vote for either the “the death penalty” or “life in prison.” In addition, confidence in sentencing judgment was measured by asking participants, “How confident you are you in the sentence you gave above?” with response alternatives ranging from 0% to 100%. These two measures were
combined to produce a Degree of Confidence in Sentencing measure, ranging from 1 (100% confident, life) to 22 (100% confident, death). Duration of an optional sentence was assessed using the following directions: “If you had the option to sentence John Henry Smith to a specific number of years in prison, how many would you sentence him to?”

**Attributions of controllability measures (Appendix J).** I included two items to measure controllability with response alternatives from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 6 (Strongly agree): (a) “John Henry Smith had complete control over his behavior,” (i.e., “control” measure) (b) “John Henry Smith just snapped—this was a one-time crime of passion,” (i.e., “snapped” measure). These measures were created specifically for this study. Coefficient alpha analysis revealed that these two items did not form a reliable scale ($\alpha = .52$, $r = .35$) and were thus analyzed separately.

**Attributions of stability measures (Appendix J).** I included three items to measure stability with response alternatives from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 6 (Strongly agree): (a) “It is John Henry Smith’s character to kill—it’s just the kind of person he is,” (b) “John Henry Smith will always be violent toward women,” and (c) “John Henry Smith will always be a violent person” (modified from Najdowski et al., 2009). Coefficient alpha analysis revealed that these three items formed a reliable scale ($\alpha = .80$, $rs \geq .44$) to measure the theoretical construct of stability.

**Attributions of responsibility measure.** I included one item to measure responsibility with response alternatives from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 6 (Strongly agree): “John Henry Smith is solely responsible for Deborah Smith’s death” (modified from Najdowski et al., 2009).

**Emotions and feelings of similarity measures (Appendix K).** One item with response alternatives from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 6 (Strongly agree) assessed participants’ anger toward
the defendant: “I feel anger toward John Henry Smith,” (i.e., “anger” measure). This measure was created specifically for this study to best measure the construct of anger. Five separate items, with response alternatives from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 6 (Strongly agree), assessed participants’ sympathy, empathy, and similarity toward the defendant (Haegerich & Bottoms, 2000). Of those, the similarity item was analyzed separately: “I think I have a lot of things in common with John Henry Smith.” The following two of the five items composed a 2-item Sympathy scale ($\alpha = .92$, $r = .85$): (a) “I feel sorry for John Henry Smith, the defendant” and (b) “I have sympathy for John Henry Smith, the defendant.” The remaining two items composed a 2-item Empathy scale ($\alpha = .80$, $r = .68$): (a) “I feel like I can easily take the perspective of John Henry Smith, the defendant” and (b) “I can really see myself in John Henry Smith’s, the defendant’s, shoes.” These items have been used in past research to best measure the theoretical constructs of sympathy and empathy (Haegerich & Bottoms, 2000).

**Sentencing goals measures (Appendix L).** Four separate items, with response alternatives from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 6 (Strongly agree) assessed participants’ utilitarian and retributive goals for sentencing (Graham et al., 1997). Two items were devised to measure retributive goals: (a) “Earlier I chose the sentence I chose because justice will be served,” (i.e., “justice” measure) and (b) “Earlier I chose the sentence I chose because the punishment will make John Henry Smith suffer,” (i.e., “suffer” measure). Coefficient alpha reliability analysis revealed that the two items did not form a reliable scale ($\alpha = .37$, $r = .25$), thus they were analyzed separately. The remaining two items were devised to measure utilitarian goals: (a) “Earlier I chose the sentence I chose because the punishment will send a message to others that crimes such as this will be punished severely” and (b) “Earlier I chose the sentence I chose to keep John Henry Smith from committing a crime in the future.” Coefficient reliability analysis
revealed that these two items formed a reliable scale (Utilitarian Goal scale) ($\alpha = .78$, $r = .64$). These items best measure the theoretical constructs of retributive and utilitarian sentencing goals and were adapted from Graham et al. (1997).

**Perceptions of testimony measures (Appendix M).** Participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they valued the psychiatrist’s testimony (i.e., “valued the psychiatrist” measure) using response alternatives ranging from -3 (*Did not value at all*) to +3 (*Extremely valued*). They were then asked to indicate the extent to which they believed both the prosecuting (i.e., “believed prosecution” measure) and defense attorneys’ arguments (i.e., “believed defense” measure) using response alternatives ranging from -3 (*Did not believe at all*) to +3 (*Completely believed*).

**Manipulation Check questions (Appendix N).** Manipulation checks asked the participants to give a Yes or No response to the following questions: “Did the materials you read (i.e., the case summary) say that John Henry Smith grew up witnessing his mother being beaten by his father?” “Think about exactly what you read in the case summary. In that summary, did anyone argue that John Henry Smith would probably always be a violent person?” If participants answered incorrectly to these questions they were dropped from the study.

**Personal Experience with Domestic Violence measure (Appendix O).** I used the following statement to define domestic violence: “Domestic violence is a pattern of assaultive and/or coercive behaviors, including physical, sexual, and psychological attacks, as well as economic coercion, that adults or adolescents use against their intimate partners” (Schechter & Edelson, 1999). Participants responded to the following questions with a Yes or No response: “When you were growing up, did you ever witness domestic violence between your mother and her intimate partner, with your mother as the victim and her intimate partner as the perpetrator
(That is, that perpetrator may have been your father, stepfather, or your mother’s boyfriend, etc.)?” and, “Are you or have you ever been a victim of domestic violence as defined above, perpetrated by an intimate partner?”

**Demographics.** Participants responded to standard demographic questions assessing gender, age, race, and income.

**Procedure**

Only jury-eligible participants who passed the screening measures (citizenship and the Death Qualification measure) were eligible for this study. First, participants were recruited to the study and given a brief introduction as to the purpose of the study via email (see Appendix A). Second, they read the consent form (Appendix B) and agreed to it before being allowed to participate in the study. Next, they were told they were to play the role of jurors, read the case summary, read the Illinois Pattern Jury Instructions, and make decisions about the case such as verdict. After reading the case summary, participants read the Illinois Pattern Jury Instructions, then filled out the following pre-deliberation measures: Sentencing Measures, Attributions of behavior measures, Emotions and feelings of similarity measures, Sentencing goals measures, Perceptions of testimony measures, Manipulation Checks, the Personal Experience with Domestic Violence measure, and Demographics. Participants were not allowed to go back and change answers they had already completed, and they could only take the study once. Participants had one week to complete the measures before the survey was closed. After participants completed the survey, Study Response issued them a $5 Amazon gift card for their participation.

**Results**
Preliminary analyses revealed that there were no differences between the experimental conditions (stable attributions vs. no attributions, witnessed domestic violence vs. no witnessing of domestic violence) in terms of the likelihood of having been a childhood witness to domestic violence or the likelihood of having been a victim personally of domestic violence. I also performed a separate series of Pearson correlations between these two variables and all dependent measures. There were no significant effects with only two exceptions: People who had witnessed domestic violence in their childhood had more empathy for the defendant than did others, \( r = .31, p < .01 \), and people who had been a victim personally of domestic violence gave longer sentences than did others, \( r = .22, p < .05 \). Given these effects, I reran the analyses reported below on the dependent measures of empathy and sentence (separately) using personal history of witnessing domestic violence and personal experience with domestic violence as covariates, respectively. There was no change in the results for sentence reported below. The marginal main effect of the defendant witnessing domestic violence on empathy reported below, however, became significant when controlling for participants’ personal history of witnessing domestic violence, \( F(1, 84) = 4.71, p < .05, \eta^2 = .05 \). The interaction between witnessing domestic violence and attributions did not change.

Results are organized around hypotheses. All significant \( (p < .05) \) and marginally significant \( (p < .10) \) main effects of juror gender, witnessing domestic violence, attributions, and interactions on the following dependent measures are discussed: sentence, stability, control, snapped, sympathy, empathy, believed prosecution, believed defense, similarity, and valued the psychiatrist. There were no significant or marginally significant effects of responsibility, anger, utilitarian goal, justice, suffer, or intent measures. See Table 1 for all means.
**H1:** This hypothesis was analyzed using a binary logistic regression and was unsupported.

**H2:** This hypothesis was analyzed using an analysis of variance (ANOVA) and was unsupported.

**H3:** In partial support of H3, ANOVAs revealed that participants were marginally more empathic toward the defendant when the defendant had a history of witnessing domestic violence ($M = 2.38$) than when the defendant had no such history ($M = 1.90$), $F(1, 86) = 3.55, p = .06, \eta^2 = .04$. Participants also believed the prosecuting attorney’s arguments significantly less and believed the defense attorney’s arguments significantly more when they read about a defendant with a history of witnessing domestic violence, ($Ms = 4.10$ and $3.92$), compared to reading about a defendant without a history of witnessing domestic violence, ($Ms = 4.87$ and $3.11$), $F(1, 86) = 8.04, p < .01, \eta^2 = .09$, and $F(1, 85) = 8.87, p < .01, \eta^2 = .09$, respectively. There were no other main effects of witnessing domestic violence.

**H4:** This hypothesis was analyzed using an ANOVA and was unsupported.

**H5:** A binary logistic regression revealed that, in partial support of H5, when stable attributions were primed, compared to no attributions, participants were marginally more likely to vote for the death penalty (56%) vs. life in prison (44%), $OR = 4.67$, $Wald = 2.79$, $p = .10$, a trend that is in the direction of hypothesized effects.

**H6:** In support of H6, an ANOVA revealed that participants were significantly less likely to believe that the defendant “just snapped” (higher numbers mean they were more likely to attribute control to him for his behavior thus less likely to believe he just snapped) when stable attributions were primed ($M = 4.20$) than when no attributions were primed ($M = 3.59$), $F(1, 86) = 4.04, p = .05, \eta^2 = .05$. Analyses also revealed that participants reported valuing the
psychiatrist’s testimony marginally more when stable attributions were primed \((M = 4.44)\) than when no attributions were primed \((M = 4.02)\), \(F(1, 86) = 3.43, p = .07, \eta^2 = .04\) (not hypothesized).

Indicating that the experimental manipulation of attributions was effective, and in line with H6, an ANOVA revealed that participants were significantly more likely to attribute stability to the defendant’s actions when stable attributions were primed \((M = 3.93)\) vs. when no attributions were primed \((M = 3.28)\), \(F(1, 86) = 8.27, p < .05, \eta^2 = .09\). There were no other significant main effects of attributions.

**H7**: This hypothesis was analyzed using an ANOVA and was unsupported.

**H8**: An ANOVA revealed that the marginal main effect of witnessing domestic violence on participants’ levels of empathy (mentioned above) was qualified by an interaction of witnessing domestic violence with attributions, \(F(1, 86) = 5.41, p < .05, \eta^2 = .06\). Simple effects analyses revealed that, contrary to H8, participants were more empathic when the defendant witnessed domestic violence than when he did not witness domestic violence, but only when stable attributions were primed, \(F(1, 86) = 9.39, p < .05, \eta^2 = .10\), and not when no attributions were primed, \(F(1, 86) = .09, ns, \eta^2 = .00\) (see Figure 1).

The marginal main effect of attributions on perceptions of whether the defendant “just snapped” was qualified by a marginally significant interaction of attributions with witnessing domestic violence, \(F(1, 86) = 3.45, p = .07, \eta^2 = .04\). Simple effects analyses revealed that, contrary to H8, participants were marginally more likely to believe the defendant “just snapped” when he grew up witnessing domestic violence than when he did not, but only when stable attributions were primed, \(F(1, 86) = 3.36, p = .07, \eta^2 = .04\), and not when no attributions were primed, \(F(1, 86) = .68, ns, \eta^2 = .01\) (see Figure 2).
ANOVAs also revealed a significant interaction between the defendant’s history of witnessing domestic violence and attributions on sympathy, $F(1, 86) = 4.53, p < .05, \eta^2 = .05$. Simple effects revealed that, contrary to H8, participants were more sympathetic toward the defendant when he witnessed domestic violence as a child than when he did not, but only when stable attributions were also primed, $F(1, 86) = 6.53, p < .05, \eta^2 = .07$, and not when no attributions were primed, $F(1, 86) = .26, ns, \eta^2 = .00$ (see Figure 3).

ANOVAs also revealed a significant interaction between the defendant’s history of witnessing domestic violence and attributions on similarity, $F(1, 86) = 4.25, p < .05, \eta^2 = .05$. Simple effects revealed that, contrary to H8, participants reported feeling just as similar to the defendant when he had a history of witnessing domestic violence as when he did not have a history of witnessing domestic violence when no attributions were primed, $F(1, 86) = 1.41, ns, \eta^2 = .02$. When stable attributions were primed, however, participants reported feeling marginally more similar to the defendant when he had a history of witnessing domestic violence than when he did not have a history of witnessing domestic violence, $F(1, 86) = 3.05, p = .08, \eta^2 = .03$ (see Figure 4).

These interactive effects are all consistent with each other, indicating a more pro-defendant reaction when he witnessed domestic violence than when he did not, but only in the stable attribution condition. In contrast, I predicted that this effect would have obtained most strongly in the no-attribution condition.

There were no main effects of juror gender across any variables, all $Fs \leq 2.46$, all $ps \geq .12$ with one exception. An analysis of variance (ANOVA) revealed that women ($M = 4.47$) reported valuing the psychiatrist’s testimony marginally more than men ($M = 4.04$), $F(1, 86) = 3.62, p = .06, \eta^2 = .04$. 
The marginal main effect of attributions on verdict was qualified by a marginally significant interaction with participant gender, OR = .11, Wald = 3.27, p = .07. Binary logistic regression revealed that men were equally punitive in both the stable-attributions and no-attributions conditions, OR = .49, Wald = .73, ns. Women, however, were marginally more punitive when stable attributions were primed than when no attributions were primed, OR = 4.67, Wald = 2.79, p = .10 (see Figure 5). As one can see from the figure, however, these effects may not be large enough to be meaningful.

ANOVA also revealed a significant interaction between attributions and gender on perceptions of the defendant’s control over his own behavior, F(1, 85) = 4.36, p < .05, η² = .05. Specifically, men attributed equal amounts of control to the defendant for his behavior in both the stable- and no-attributions conditions, F(1, 85) = .64, ns, η² = .01. Women, however, attributed more control to the defendant for his behavior in the stable-attributions condition than in the no-attributions condition, F(1, 85) = 4.59, p < .05, η² = .05 (see Figure 6). This interactive effect is not consistent with my hypothesis that women would be less pro-defendant than men, regardless of condition.

**H9:** A binary logistic regression revealed no support for this hypothesis.

**H10:** An ANOVA revealed no support for this hypothesis.

**H11:** An ANOVA revealed no support for this hypothesis.

**Discussion**

In general, there were few significant effects in line with my predictions on the main independent variables. The marginal effects exhibit a lack of power. Either more subjects are required to detect the effect, or regardless of how many subjects I collect, the effect does not exist. A power analysis revealed that for the marginal effects with the largest effect sizes, a total
sample size of 199 is required to find effects with enough power (.80, conventional value for power). When there were effects on secondary dependent measures, however, they were generally in the predicted direction, but not always.

Specifically as predicted, participants were trending toward more empathy when the defendant had a history of witnessing domestic violence than when the defendant had no such history. This effect, however, was marginal (with an effect size of .04, between “small” and “medium” according to Cohen, 1988) and therefore conclusions about the effect of witnessing domestic violence on empathy are limited. Participants also believed the defense attorney more and the prosecuting attorney less when the defendant grew up witnessing domestic violence, perhaps indicating that the history of witnessing violence gave the defendant more credibility. These effects indicated that in line with past research and my hypotheses, participants seem to be using this history of witnessing domestic violence more as a mitigating factor than an aggravating factor. These effects, however, did not translate into effects on the main independent measure—sentencing decisions. Participants may have been aware of their emotions and corrected for potential biases when rendering verdicts. Levels of empathy, however, were generally low and this effect was marginal, so participants might not have experienced enough empathy to affect their ultimate sentencing decision.

As predicted, participants were also slightly more punitive when stable attributions were primed. Participants who were told that the defendant’s behavior was stable were marginally more likely to render a sentence of death than life in prison. Again, this effect was marginal, so conclusions about effects of attribution primes on sentencing judgments are limited. Participants were also significantly more likely to attribute more control and more stability to the defendant
for his actions when stable attributions were primed, suggesting that the manipulation of priming stable attributions was effective in priming these types of attributions. These attributions, however, did not translate into effects on actual sentencing judgments.

Interactions revealed that participants were significantly more likely to feel empathy, sympathy, and more similar to the defendant when he witnessed domestic violence than when he did not, but only when stable attributions were primed. Thus, participants actually felt more empathy and sympathy toward, and more similar to the defendant when he grew up witnessing domestic violence and the prosecuting attorney and psychiatrist highlighted the stability of the defendant’s actions than when no attributions were primed. Participants were also marginally more likely (with a .04 effect size) to believe he just snapped and lost control when he witnessed domestic violence than when he did not, but only when stable attributions were primed. In contrast, I had predicted that these effects would have obtained most strongly in the no-attribution condition. When stability attributions were primed, I had expected jurors to see a history of domestic violence as a negative factor – believing that he would be damaged goods and always likely to be violent because of the childhood experiences.

These effects could reflect that the prosecuting attorney’s strategy backfired leading to increased levels of sympathy and empathy toward the defendant. Specifically, if participants feel empathy, sympathy, and think the defendant “just snapped” (although only trending for this variable) when he witnessed domestic violence, they might feel more anger toward the prosecuting attorney who tries to use this traumatic background against him. It is also possible, however, that participants initially made stable attributions about the defendant’s behavior, and then after hearing that he grew up witnessing domestic violence, felt sympathy and empathy for
him because of his background. Future research should assess perceptions of attorneys and the possible order of attributions and emotions to better explain these results.

Giving slight support to my hypothesis that women would be more punitive, women were only slightly more likely to give the death penalty when stable attributions were primed (vs. no attributions). Women also attributed significantly more control to the defendant when stable attributions were primed but not when no attributions were primed. Women also exhibited a trend to believe the psychiatrist’s testimony more than men (small effect size). Thus, it is possible that women were more persuaded by the stability argument that the psychiatrist gave than were men, leading to more attributions of control and ultimately a harsher sentence. It is also possible that women were more likely than men to automatically consider other reasons the defendant may have committed this crime, and only when stability was highlighted were they more likely to attribute responsibility to the defendant himself. Women, however, were only marginally more likely to give a death sentence than men, so their attributions of control did not consistently translate into sentence judgments.

I might not have found stronger effects because my theory about how jurors will make attributions about a defendant who witnessed domestic violence as a child is incorrect. Specifically, people may have generally unchanging attitudes toward a defendant with a history of witnessing domestic violence that cannot be manipulated by priming different attributions or case characteristics. Alternatively, my methods might not have been appropriate to capture the effect. Specifically, the manipulations of the attributions and past history of violence might not have been strong enough to influence verdicts. The absence of an interaction between the two main variables suggests that, although participants were marginally more punitive when stable attributions were primed, their verdicts were not influenced by the defendant’s history of
witnessing domestic violence. Future studies should use a stronger manipulation of the defendant’s past history and a stronger link between stability of the defendant’s behavior and his past history of witnessing domestic violence. For example, in future methodology, I would give a more detailed and intense description of the defendant’s domestic violence that he witnessed as a child. I would also have the prosecuting attorney explicitly mention the link between the defendant’s history of witnessing domestic violence and stability attributions of behavior (i.e., the prosecuting attorney should argue that the reason why his behavior is stable is because of his history of witnessing domestic violence as a child). These changes would highlight both manipulations of the history of witnessing domestic violence and stability attributions.

It is also possible that participants did not draw a link between domestic violence and the murder. Specifically, participants might have seen the murder as a homicide and not an incident of domestic violence because there was no pattern of domestic violence between the defendant and victim mentioned in the case summary. Thus, the link between witnessing it as a child and perpetrating it later in life through a murder might not have been clear to participants, explaining why significant effects on sentence were not present. Future research should include a more clear link between the domestic violence witnessed as a child and the murder case used. Specifically, future studies should add testimony about a pattern of domestic violence perpetrated by the defendant on the victim.

Similarly, the definition of domestic violence used to assess participants’ personal experience with it might have been too vague or misleading for some participants. Specifically, participants’ probably had many different types of domestic violence they were thinking of when asked if they had witnessed it before, potentially resulting in some participants not indicating they had witnessed it because the specific type they were thinking of was not included in the
definition. Future research should include multiple questions of witnessing domestic violence to include multiple forms that participants could have witnessed growing up.

Limitations

One limitation, which is more a concern for applied reasons than for scientific reasons, is that I cannot definitively say whether the effects of attributions were because the participants were influenced by the attorney’s testimony that the defendant would always be a violent person, or by the testimony of the court-appointed psychiatrist who emphasized the stability of his actions. Future research should investigate if attorney’s arguments are enough to sway the jury, or if expert testimony is needed to affect verdicts.

Another limitation could have been the using an online study instead of paper and pencil measures. Specifically, it is possible that online participants are less likely to pay attention to instructions and are more likely to quickly complete measures without really reading them completely. Thirty-three participants in this study were dropped for failing manipulation checks (25% of the full sample). In a pilot study using paper and pencil measures, 20% of the sample was dropped for failing manipulation checks. Thus, it seems that an issue is not the method of survey distribution but the manipulation. Specifically, the majority of participants that failed the manipulation checks failed the attribution manipulation check. Seventeen of the 33 participants who failed manipulation checks reported that they had read stability attributions when they had not read attributions. Thus, it is possible a stronger manipulation of stable attributions would reduce the number of participants failing this manipulation check. Specifically, I would increase the number of statements from the prosecuting attorney and psychiatrist stating that the defendant would continue to be violent. I would also use a less leading question for the manipulation check of attributions. Specifically, I would use a question that did not directly ask
participants if they had read about stable attributions, but instead would have a check list of options that each participant for which each participant would indicate what they read about in the summary.

Another potential limitation of this study was the ethnic breakdown of the participants. Specifically, the majority of the participants in this study were Caucasian. This might not best represent a national population, and thus these results might represent the views of the majority of the sample. Future studies should be conducted with a more diverse population to ensure that results could be generalized to a national population.

A strength of my study is that I used a representative national sample who were diverse in age and SES and who had been screened for death qualification and citizenship as are real jurors. Even so, a potential limitation of this study is that these were “mock” not “real” jurors. Mock jurors might not be representative of actual jurors, because they were not exposed to live testimony, they knew their judgments would not have a direct impact on a defendant’s life, and they rendered verdicts without deliberation (Diamond, 1997; Weiten & Diamond, 1979).

Another potential caveat of this study is using written materials instead of using videotapes, potentially lacking realism; however, research suggest there are sometimes few differences between mock jurors’ decisions using written vs. more elaborate methods (Bornstein, 1999; Devine et al., 2000; Goodman et al., 1984, 1987;). Furthermore, using actors could affect participants’ decisions based on age, race, attractiveness, etc., and thus using written materials allows for this control. I also used pre-deliberation measures (i.e., participants filled out the dependent measures without deliberating) and did not have mock jurors deliberate. Research suggests, however, that jury verdicts often represent individual jurors’ verdicts before deliberation (Haegerich & Bottoms, 2002; Kalven & Zeisel, 1966; Sandys & Dillehay, 1995).
Conclusion

This study is the first to assess how jurors perceive a defendant’s history of witnessing domestic violence, the attributions and emotions that inform these decisions, how gender may play an important role in decision-making. Another unique contribution is testing what Stevenson and colleagues were unable to test—specifically, how emotions affect jury decision-making. Although an emotionally void and unbiased jury would be ideal, it is hardly the case that jurors, especially in the most heinous and severe cases, will disregard emotions and make unbiased decisions. Therefore, it is necessary to understand how and when attributions and emotions affect jurors’ sentencing judgments.

Furthermore, juror individual differences affect sentencing decisions, and it is important to understand why their decisions differ. The jury system is constructed to form a diverse group of community members to make decisions about cases. However, it is very important to understand how this diversity affects decisions, and the psychological processes involved in these differences. Future research should investigate gender and other individual differences to fully understand how these differences affect perceptions of defendants in these types of cases. This study has important implications for the legal system, as well as the public, and helps portray a more complete picture of the decision-making process in the sentencing phase of a capital trial.
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*Table 1.* Means for all dependent variables broken down by witnessing domestic violence, attributions, and juror gender.
Figure 1. Mean levels of empathy as a function of witnessing domestic violence and attributions.

*p < .10, **p < .05
*p < .10, **p < .05

Figure 2. Mean levels of perceptions that the defendant just snapped as a function of witnessing domestic violence and attributions.
Figure 3. Mean levels of sympathy as a function of witnessing domestic violence and attributions.
Figure 4. Mean levels of similarity as a function of witnessing domestic violence and attributions.
Figure 5. The percent of participants who voted for the death penalty as a function of participant gender and attributions.

*p < .10, **p < .05
Figure 6. Mean levels of control attributed to the defendant as a function of participant gender and attributions.

*p < .10, **p < .05
Appendix A: Recruitment email

University of Illinois at Chicago
Recruitment Message to Participate in Research
Sentencing in Capital Cases

Recruitment Message:

To whom it may concern,

You have received this message as an offer to participate in an online research survey being conducted by researchers at the University of Illinois at Chicago (Research Protocol # 2010-0277). The purpose of the study is to gain a better understanding of American’s views about people who commit crimes. You must be at least 18 years old and U.S. citizen to participate. You will be asked two screening questions. If you meet study qualifications, you will be asked to complete a brief questionnaire (approximately 15-20 minutes). Once you have completed the questionnaire, you will be given a $5 Amazon gift card. If you would like to participate, please click on the following link: [insert link here].

Thank you for your time,

Carrie E. Reynolds and Bette L. Bottoms, Ph.D.

Questions and requests for information regarding this research should be directed to:

Carrie E. Reynolds
University of Illinois at Chicago - Psychology Department
Behavioral Sciences Building (MC 285)
1007 West Harrison Street
Chicago, IL 60607-7137

Phone: 312-996-3036
Fax: 312-413-4122
Email: creyno5@uic.edu
Appendix B: Consent

University of Illinois at Chicago
Information Sheet for Participation in Research
Sentencing in Capital Cases

To Potential Research Participants:

You are being asked to complete this survey because you met the initial study criteria as defined by your answers to the screening questions and we are interested in perceptions of crime. Please read this form before agreeing to participate.

1. The purpose of this research is to investigate beliefs about crime.
2. If you agree to participate, you will be asked to complete questionnaires assessing your attitudes about certain crimes (e.g., capital crimes).
3. Your participation will take no more than 15-20 minutes.
4. The information we collect will be used solely for research purposes.
5. All information collected as part of this research will be stored in a locked cabinet. We will not even record your name as a participant, only your PIN will be linked to your survey responses. Thus, your answers will remain completely confidential and your data will be stored in a completely confidential manner. The security of online surveys can never be 100% guaranteed but your privacy and confidentiality will be protected to the extent technologically possible.
6. Participation in this study involves minimal risk. You will receive a $5 Amazon gift card for participating in this study.
7. Your participation is completely voluntary. You may withdraw at any time without consequence.
8. This study is being conducted by Dr. Bette L. Bottoms and Carrie Reynolds at the University of Illinois at Chicago. You may ask any questions you have about this study now. If you have questions later, you may contact the researchers at (312) 996-5153.
9. If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, you may call the Office for the Protection of Research Subjects (OPRS) at 312-996-1711 (local) or 1-866-789-2614 (toll-free) or e-mail OPRS at uicirb@uic.edu.

If you agree to participate, please fill out the online survey accompanying this document.

Your completion of the survey indicates that you agree to the study as explained to you in this document.

Remember, although we hope you will answer all our questions, you may stop at any time or skip any questions you do not want to answer.

If you agree to participate in this research please enter your PIN and hit “continue”.
Appendix C: Death Qualification measure

Jurors called to serve in a case involving the death penalty are asked the following question by the judge before the trial begins. Please read the following statements completely and then check the statement that would come closest to your attitude if you were a juror in a death penalty case (choose only ONE statement).

________ If the defendant was found guilty for a murder for which the law allowed the jury to impose a death sentence, I would always vote to sentence the defendant to death.

________ I am in favor of the death penalty, but I would not necessarily vote for it in every case where the law allowed the jury to choose it. I would consider the facts of the particular case and then decide whether the defendant should be given the death sentence.

________ I have certain reservations about the death penalty but they would not prevent or substantially interfere with my voting for a death sentence if the facts of the case showed that the defendant should be given the death sentence.

________ I have such strong reservations about the death penalty that they would prevent or substantially interfere with my voting for a death sentence, no matter what the facts of the case were.
Note to committee members: Parts in all CAPS are parts of the testimony that differ depending on condition.

Appendix D: Case Summary: Non-witness/No Attributions Condition

The following is a summary of a capital murder case. There were two parts of this capital murder trial. In the first part, the defendant was found guilty of murdering his wife during a domestic dispute. You are now a juror in the second part of this trial. Your job is to determine the defendant sentence of death or life imprisonment. That is, you need to decide whether the defendant should be sentenced to death or life in prison.

Below is a summary of the second part of this trial, during which evidence is presented by both sides of the case. The prosecution argues for the defendant to be given the death penalty, and the defense argues for the defendant to be given life in prison. Please read the summary very carefully and answer the subsequent questions.

Mr. John Henry Smith, age 32, was found guilty of one count of murder for murdering his wife, Mrs. Deborah Smith. According to testimony and police reports that detail the defendant’s confession, John Henry Smith came home on the night of August 23, 2009 from work. The defendant and his wife began to argue. The argument escalated and the defendant physically harmed the victim, punching her multiple times in the face and pushing her multiple times into a wall. The defendant also threw her into furniture, continued to punch and kick her, and ultimately the defendant strangled her to death. According to the coroner’s report, the victim suffered broken ribs, a broken jawbone, deep bruising to the face, and a broken arm. The ultimate cause of death was by strangulation.

A court-appointed psychiatrist examined the defendant and testified that he believed that John Henry Smith was competent in all legally relevant ways, including competence to stand trial.

Prosecution:

The prosecuting attorney, who represents the State and argues against the defendant, argued that the defendant, John Henry Smith, should be sentenced to death. The prosecuting attorney argued that, regardless of how sorry the defendant may be for the crime, he deserves to be sentenced to death, and society needs to send a message to killers like John Henry Smith that this kind of action will not be tolerated. He must be sentenced to death.

Defense:

The defense attorney, who represents the defendant and argues in favor of the defendant, argued that the defendant, John Henry Smith, should not be sentenced to death. The defense attorney argues that it is not the jurors’ job to play God, and if they sentence him to life in prison, he won’t be harming anyone again in the future anyway. The defense attorney also argued that John Henry Smith does not deserve to die, and asks the jurors to be merciful.
Appendix E: Case Summary: Non-witness/Stable Attributions Condition

The following is a summary of a capital murder case. There were two parts of this capital murder trial. In the first part, the defendant was found guilty of murdering his wife during a domestic dispute. You are now a juror in the second part of this trial. Your job is to determine the defendant sentence of death or life imprisonment. That is, you need to decide whether the defendant should be sentenced to death or life in prison.

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A court-appointed psychiatrist examined the defendant and testified that he believed that John Henry Smith was competent in all legally relevant ways, including competence to stand trial. HE ALSO TESTIFIED THAT HE BELIEVES THAT THE DEFENDANT WILL PROBABLY BE VIOLENT AGAIN IN THE FUTURE.

Prosecution:

The prosecuting attorney, who represents the State and argues against the defendant, argued that the defendant, John Henry Smith, should be sentenced to death. The prosecuting attorney argued that, regardless of how sorry the defendant may be for the crime, he deserves to be sentenced to death, and society needs to send a message to killers like John Henry Smith that this kind of action will not be tolerated. THE PROSECUTING ATTORNEY FURTHER ARGUED THAT THE DEFENDANT IS DAMAGED GOODS AND WILL ALWAYS BE A VIOLENT PERSON. THE ATTORNEY SAID… “PEOPLE LIKE THIS DON’T CHANGE. HE’LL BE LIKE THIS FOREVER. ONCE A KILLER, ALWAYS A KILLER.” THE PROSECUTING ATTORNEY REMINDED THE JURORS THAT THE COURT-APPOINTED PSYCHIATRIST HAD TESTIFIED THAT JOHN HENRY SMITH WILL BE VIOLENT IN THE FUTURE. He must be sentenced to death.

Defense:

The defense attorney, who represents the defendant and argues in favor of the defendant, argued that the defendant, John Henry Smith, should not be sentenced to death. The defense attorney argues that it is not the jurors’ job to play God, and if they sentence him to life in prison,
he won’t be harming anyone again in the future anyway. The defense attorney also argued that John Henry Smith does not deserve to die, and asks the jurors to be merciful.
Appendix F: Case Summary: Witnessed Domestic Violence/No Attributions Condition

The following is a summary of a capital murder case. There were two parts of this capital murder trial. In the first part, the defendant was found guilty of murdering his wife during a domestic dispute. You are now a juror in the second part of this trial. Your job is to determine the defendant sentence of death or life imprisonment. That is, you need to decide whether the defendant should be sentenced to death or life in prison.

Below is a summary of the second part of this trial, during which evidence is presented by both sides of the case. The prosecution argues for the defendant to be given the death penalty, and the defense argues for the defendant to be given life in prison. Please read the summary very carefully and answer the subsequent questions.

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AT THE TRIAL, THE DEFENDANT’S AUNT TESTIFIED THAT THE DEFENDANT, JOHN HENRY SMITH, GREW UP HIS WHOLE LIFE WITNESSING HIS MOTHER BEING BRUTALLY BEATEN BY HIS FATHER. ON MULTIPLE OCCASIONS THROUGHOUT HIS CHILDHOOD, JOHN WOULD RUN TO HER HOUSE CRYING TO GET AWAY FROM HIS PARENTS FIGHTING. ONE TIME, JOHN HENRY SMITH EVEN STAYED WITH HIS AUNT FOR OVER A WEEK WHILE HIS MOTHER WAS IN THE HOSPITAL AFTER HIS FATHER FRACTURED HIS MOTHER’S SKULL. HIS AUNT SAID SHE FELT SO SORRY FOR HIM FOR WHAT HE WENT THROUGH AS A CHILD.

A court-appointed psychiatrist examined the defendant and testified that he believed that John Henry Smith was competent in all legally relevant ways, including competence to stand trial. THE PSYCHIATRIST ALSO STATED THAT HE BELIEVED THE DEFENDANT SUFFERED SIGNIFICANT EMOTIONAL STRESS DURING HIS CHILDHOOD DUE TO WITNESSING REPEATED INCIDENTS OF HIS FATHER BEATING HIS MOTHER.

Prosecution:

The prosecuting attorney, who represents the State and argues against the defendant, argued that the defendant, John Henry Smith, should be sentenced to death. The prosecuting attorney argued that, regardless of how sorry the defendant may be for the crime, he deserves to be sentenced to death, and society needs to send a message to killers like John Henry Smith that this kind of action will not be tolerated. He must be sentenced to death.

Defense:
The defense attorney, who represents the defendant and argues in favor of the defendant, argued that the defendant, John Henry Smith, should not be sentenced to death. The defense attorney argues that it is not the jurors’ job to play God, and if they sentence him to life in prison, he won’t be harming anyone again in the future anyway. The defense attorney also argued that John Henry Smith does not deserve to die, and asks the jurors to be merciful.
Appendix G: Case Summary: Witnessed Domestic Violence/Stable Attributions Condition

The following is a summary of a capital murder case. There were two parts of this capital murder trial. In the first part, the defendant was found guilty of murdering his wife during a domestic dispute. You are now a juror in the second part of this trial. Your job is to determine the defendant sentence of death or life imprisonment. That is, you need to decide whether the defendant should be sentenced to death or life in prison.

Below is a summary of the second part of this trial, during which evidence is presented by both sides of the case. The prosecution argues for the defendant to be given the death penalty, and the defense argues for the defendant to be given life in prison. Please read the summary very carefully and answer the subsequent questions.

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Appendix H: Illinois Pattern Jury Instructions Read to Jury by Judge

Note to committee members: A few changes have been made for better understanding of the instructions.

Please read the following jury instructions.

Illinois Pattern Jury Instructions Read to Jury by Judge

Members of the jury, this is the second part of the death penalty hearing. At this hearing you will determine whether the defendant will be sentenced to death. The law that applies to this case is stated in these instructions and it is your duty to follow all of them. You are not to be swayed by mere sentiment, conjecture, sympathy, passion, prejudice, or public opinion. By these instructions I do not mean to indicate any opinion as to the facts or as to what your verdict should be. Faithful performance of your duties as jurors is vital to the administration of justice.

It is your duty to determine the facts and to determine them only from the information you were given in the trial summary. You are to apply the law to the facts and in this way decide whether the defendant will be sentenced to death.

Only you are the judges of the believability of the evidence and of the weight to be given to the different pieces of evidence.

Aggravating factors are reasons why the defendant should be sentenced to death. Mitigating factors are reasons why the defendant should not be sentenced to death.

Under the law, the defendant shall be sentenced to death if you find after weighing the aggravating and mitigating factors that death is the appropriate sentence. If after weighing the aggravating and mitigating factors you determine that death is not the appropriate sentence, the court shall impose a sentence of natural life imprisonment, and no person serving a sentence of natural life imprisonment can be paroled or released, except through an order by the Governor for executive clemency. In deciding whether the defendant should be sentenced to death, you should consider all the aggravating factors supported by the evidence and all the mitigating factors supported by the evidence.
Appendix I: Sentencing Measures

I vote for (choose ONE):

_______ the death penalty
_______ life in prison

How confident are you in the sentence you gave above (choose ONE)?

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

If you had the option to sentence John Henry Smith to a specific number of years in prison, how many years in prison would you sentence him to?

_______ year(s)
Appendix J: Attributions of behavior measures

1. John Henry Smith had complete control over his behavior.

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<td>Somewhat Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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2. John Henry Smith just snapped—this was a one-time crime of passion.

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<td>Somewhat Disagree</td>
<td>Somewhat Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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3. It is John Henry Smith’s character to kill—it’s just the kind of person he is.

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<th>-1</th>
<th>+1</th>
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<td>Somewhat Agree</td>
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4. John Henry Smith will always be violent toward women.

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<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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5. John Henry Smith will always be a violent person.

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<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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</table>
Appendix K: Emotions and feelings of similarity measures

Sympathy:

1. I feel sorry for John Henry Smith, the defendant.

   -3   -2   -1   +1   +2   +3
2. I have sympathy for John Henry Smith, the defendant.

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<td>Somewhat Disagree</td>
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<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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</table>

Empathy:

3. I feel like I can easily take the perspective of John Henry Smith, the defendant.

<table>
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<td>Somewhat Disagree</td>
<td>Somewhat Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. I can really see myself in John Henry Smith’s, the defendant’s, shoes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-3</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>+2</td>
<td>+3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Somewhat Disagree</td>
<td>Somewhat Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Anger:

5. I feel anger toward John Henry Smith.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-3</td>
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<td>+2</td>
<td>+3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Somewhat Disagree</td>
<td>Somewhat Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Similarity:

6. I think I have a lot of things in common with John Henry Smith, the defendant.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-3</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>+1</td>
<td>+2</td>
<td>+3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Appendix L: Sentencing goal measures

Please indicate the extent to which you disagree or agree with each of the following potential reasons you may have chosen your sentence (i.e., life or death). For example, if one of the following potential reasons was not one of your reasons you chose your sentence, you should circle “strongly disagree.” If it was one of your reasons, you should circle one of the “agreement” responses.
Earlier, I chose the sentence I chose (i.e., life or death):

a) because justice will be served

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>-3</th>
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<th>-1</th>
<th>+1</th>
<th>+2</th>
<th>+3</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Somewhat Disagree</td>
<td>Somewhat Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b) because the punishment will make John Henry Smith suffer

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>-1</th>
<th>+1</th>
<th>+2</th>
<th>+3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Somewhat Disagree</td>
<td>Somewhat Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

c) because the punishment will send a message to others that crimes such as this will be punished severely

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th>-1</th>
<th>+1</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Somewhat Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

d) to keep John Henry Smith from committing a crime in the future

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>-3</th>
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<th>-1</th>
<th>+1</th>
<th>+2</th>
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<td>Agree</td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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</table>

Appendix M: Perceptions of testimony measures

Please indicate on the following scale the extent to which you did not value or valued the psychiatrist's testimony.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>-3</th>
<th>-2</th>
<th>-1</th>
<th>+1</th>
<th>+2</th>
<th>+3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Did not value at all Extremely valued

Please indicate on the following scale the extent to which you did not believe or believed the prosecuting attorney's arguments.

-3 -2 -1 +1 +2 +3

Did not believe at all Completely believed

Please indicate on the following scale the extent to which you did not believe or believed the defense attorney's arguments.

-3 -2 -1 +1 +2 +3

Did not believe at all Completely believed

Appendix N: Manipulation Checks

Please answer the following question by choosing either YES or NO.

Did the materials you read (i.e., the case summary) say that John Henry Smith grew up witnessing his mother being beaten by his father?
Please answer the following question by choosing either YES or NO.

Think about exactly what you read in the case summary. In that summary, did anyone argue that John Henry Smith would probably always be a violent person?

YES  NO

Appendix O: Personal Experience with Domestic Violence measure

Domestic violence is defined as “a pattern of assaultive and/or coercive behaviors, including physical, sexual, and psychological attacks, as well as economic coercion, that adults or adolescents use against their intimate partners.”
1. When you were growing up, did you ever witness domestic violence between your mother and her intimate partner, with your mother as the victim and her intimate partner as the perpetrator? (That is, that perpetrator may have been your father or stepfather, or your mother’s boyfriend.) (Circle one)

   YES       NO

2. Are you or have you ever been a victim of domestic violence as defined above, perpetrated by an intimate partner? (Circle one)

   YES       NO
Approval Notice
Initial Review (Response To Modifications)

April 21, 2010

Bette Bottoms, PhD
Psychology
1007 W. Harrison St., 1046B B.S.B.
M/C 285
Chicago, IL 60612
Phone: (312) 996-2635 / Fax: (312) 413-4122

RE: Protocol # 2010-0277
“Sentencing in Capital Cases”

Dear Dr. Bottoms:

Your Initial Review application (Response To Modifications) was reviewed and approved by the Expedited review process on April 21, 2010. You may now begin your research

Please note the following information about your approved research protocol:

**Protocol Approval Period:** April 21, 2010 - April 20, 2011

**Approved Subject Enrollment #:** 2,500

**Additional Determinations for Research Involving Minors:** These determinations have not been made for this study since it has not been approved for enrollment of minors.

**Performance Site:** UIC

**Sponsor:** None

**Research Protocol:**
- a) Sentencing in Capital Cases; Version 3.9; 08/31/2009

**Recruitment Material:**
- a) UIC Psychology Student Subject Pool recruitment procedures will be followed for this research

**Informed Consents:**
- a) Debriefing Information; Version 2; 03/31/2010
- b) Sentencing in Capital Cases; Version 3; 04/19/2010

Your research meets the criteria for expedited review as defined in 45 CFR 46.110(b)(1) under the following specific category:
(7) Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including but not limited to research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies.

Please note the Review History of this submission:

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Submission Type</th>
<th>Review Process</th>
<th>Review Date</th>
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<td>Expedited</td>
<td>03/22/2010</td>
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<td>04/19/2010</td>
<td>Response To Modifications</td>
<td>Expedited</td>
<td>04/21/2010</td>
<td>Approved</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please remember to:

→ Use your research protocol number (2010-0277) on any documents or correspondence with the IRB concerning your research protocol.

→ Review and comply with all requirements on the enclosure, "UIC Investigator Responsibilities, Protection of Human Research Subjects"

Please note that the UIC IRB has the prerogative and authority to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modifications, or monitor the conduct of your research and the consent process.

Please be aware that if the scope of work in the grant/project changes, the protocol must be amended and approved by the UIC IRB before the initiation of the change.

We wish you the best as you conduct your research. If you have any questions or need further help, please contact OPRS at (312) 996-1711 or me at (312) 996-2014. Please send any correspondence about this protocol to OPRS at 203 AOB, M/C 672.

Sincerely,

Sandra Costello
Assistant Director, IRB # 2
Office for the Protection of Research Subjects

Enclosures:
1. UIC Investigator Responsibilities, Protection of Human Research Subjects
2. Informed Consent Documents:
   a) Debriefing Information; Version 2; 03/31/2010
   b) Sentencing in Capital Cases; Version 3; 04/19/2010

cc: Gary E. Raney, Psychology, M/C 285
VITA

NAME: Carrie E. Reynolds

M.A., Psychology, University of Illinois at Chicago, Chicago, Illinois, 2011

TEACHING: Department of Psychology, University of Illinois at Chicago, Chicago, Illinois, 2008-2011
EXPERIENCE: Introduction to Research in Psychology, Statistical Methods in Behavioral Science, Theories of Personality, Social Psychology

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS:
American Psychological Association (APA)
American Psychology and Law Society (APLS)
Society of Personality and Social Psychology (SPSP)
Psi Chi
