

HOW DO VICTIM-FRAMING AND CELEBRITY STATUS IMPACT SOCIAL
JUDGEMENTS?

by

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Abstract

This study explored the impact of celebrity status and victim framing on social judgments. People are inclined to favor others because appearance, fame, and familiarity (Nayak, 2015). Language can also influence people's judgements; one study found that people increase their support for someone who is labeled a "victim," even when they are the alleged perpetrator of a sexual assault (Flusberg et al., 2022). The primary goal of this study was to examine how language and fame interact to shape people's social evaluations. Six hundred participants across six conditions, read an article about a domestic abuse case revolving a celebrity couple or a stranger couple. The U.S subjects read an article that either framed the male alleged perpetrator as a victim, the female accuser as a victim or no victim-framed protagonist. Results indicated a main affect for support for each protagonist when framed as the victim compared to the baseline condition. Participants in the celebrity status condition were less likely to support the female accuser across all conditions compared to the stranger condition. The research suggest that people evaluations of others can be based off familiarity and language manipulation.

Keywords: Social judgements, victim-framing, language effect, celebrity status

How Do Victim-Framing and Celebrity Status Impact Social Judgments?

A recent noteworthy trial between Amber Heard and Johnny Depp showcased public favoritism for Depp from the American collective. After numerous abuse allegations against the famed Pirates of The Caribbean actor, sales for the Captain Jack Sparrow outfit soared for Halloween 2022 (Chilton, 2022). Not only does celebrity impact judgements, but it can create social change as well. Volodymyr Oleksandrovysh Zelensky, the president of Ukraine, made his way into the political world after starring on big hit TV shows back as early as 1998. What are the factors that shape how people forms judgements of others based on their celebrity status?

There are many factors that affect the way individuals unconsciously evaluate others, such as attractiveness, perceived competence, and similarity. Attractiveness has a certain appeal to people in American cultures. Known as the “attraction effect”, infants as young as two prefer people who are judged as attractive (Slater et al., 1998). A comparative study by Anderson in 2008 aimed to see how attractiveness is viewed in two cultures and how it influences general life outcomes. Students representing The United States and Ghana were recruited to reflect on their general life outcomes such as achievements and career progress. A separate survey was taken from opposite genders that rated the attractiveness of the original participants representing the

United States and Ghana. A trend in the data revealed that American participants who were rated as more attractive had higher self-reported ratings of general life outcomes. Conversely, Ghanaian participants exhibited an opposite affect where participants who were rated as more attractive rated their general life outcomes lower. While this data shows not only that attractiveness is important to Americans, it also relates to the narrative of an independent society. Since American society has high relational mobility, social trends can be influenced by rationales from the majority population, in this case by attractiveness. High relational mobility is the propensity for individuals to partake in a society and aim to influence it and be influenced back. It's the notion that people can choose who they participate with in the social world. It also should be noted that Ghanaian cultures have higher ratings of sexually transmissible diseases, such as HIV/AIDS, which could influence general life outcomes for attractive individuals (Ghanaids, 2019). Another influence for the opposite effect shown is that Ghanaian subjects are from a collectivistic world where they hold an emphasis on family and immediate community over independence and social structures.

While attractiveness can hold value for general life outcomes in the United States, it is also known to be influential in the political world. Researchers examined electoral success in relation to five main dimensions: beauty, competence, trustworthiness, likeability and intelligence (Berggren, 2010). Half incumbent and half non-incumbent photos of Finnish political candidates were shown to 2772 participants, of which a majority were from the United States and Sweden. Subjects ranked the five dimensions across four photos through the online survey. A strong relationship between beauty and perceived competence was found, along with beauty and intelligence. In terms of electoral success, when comparing the non-incumbents, there showed significant effect of greater support when candidates had higher beauty scores.

Similar effects have been observed in other studies. Researchers at the University of St. Andrews examined the effect of attractiveness on perceived intelligence (Talamas, 2016). They gathered 100 willing students' academic performance and pictures from the University. Online participants from Amazon's Mechanical Turk rated the students' various attributes such as attractiveness, perceived intelligence, and perceived competence. Data reveal a trend that supported the notion that people rate perceived attractive people as more intelligent. However, the data showed no real correlation between perceived attractiveness and actual academic performance.

Automatic judgements justified only by physical traits can be harmful to societies and political narratives. A study concerning competence and physical appearance analyzed the likelihood of American and Korean participants electing officials based solely on pictures of the candidates (Na et al., 2015). Subjects were presented with 90 pairs of past candidates who were running for office against each other. They asked them to rate their competence in the first task, and then rate which candidate they would vote for in the second. Data from American and Korean participants demonstrated a strong correlation between voting intentions and competence ratings. Presenting visual stimuli of people to the subjects created a bias that isn't contingent on any substantial factors pertaining to actual intelligence. People tend to bypass any real cognitive strategies to approaching initial stimuli because the first mental response is typically the easiest for decision making.

Research has shown attractiveness, perceived intelligence, and perceived competence can influence judgements. Another highly motivational force for likeability is familiarity and similarity. Bocian and colleagues assessed perceived similarity in individuals who held aligned political beliefs, along with ratings of morality, trust, likability, and competence (Bocian et al.,

2018). This study looked at individuals' similarity when comparing certain socio-political views on topics such as abortion rights, capital punishments, gay marriage, and others. After filling out their personal answers on the questionnaire, researchers analyzed and coded the answers to be compared to other participants as similar or non-similar, based solely on their original answers. Researchers then had participants read another subject's questionnaire, either in the similar or non-similar condition. They then asked them to rate statements related to morality, trust, likability, and competence on a 10-point scale. Results showed higher ratings of each variable measured when individuals were in the similar condition. This displays a trend towards unconscious biases when making judgements on others based off perceived similarity. More specifically, perceived familiarity based on aligned beliefs leads to supporting individuals more than those perceived as less familiar.

In addition to physical features and character attributes, relative familiarity, or exposure, has the ability to affect perceptions of others. The mere exposure effect is the unconscious bias towards aligning oneself to a particular construct after being repeatedly exposed to it (Zajonc, 1968). The concept can present itself in many ways and implies that greater exposure leads to easier mental processing and therefore more positive judgments. One study investigating the mere exposure effect exposed participants to randomized photographs and abstract figures in either 5 millisecond or 500 millisecond intervals (Bornstein et al., 1992). Following the exposure task, subjects were given a discrimination task and a liking assessment for the images they were shown. Data revealed that the longer participants were exposed to the stimulus in time and frequency, the greater they were able to recognize the stimulus. The liking assessment provided evidence that the longer participants were exposed to the stimulus the greater their score for liking the stimulus.

Bocian and colleagues conducted another study that examined participants ratings of others based off of three different main variables, not only likability, but morality and competence of men based off different exposure times (Bocian et al., 2018). The subjects were randomly assigned into five different sequential conditions where they were shown novel faces of men in randomized intervals ranging from 0 to 20 times. The stimulus of the male faces was presented for 17 milliseconds, then followed by random refresher screen for 17 milliseconds. After being exposed to the stimuli, they filled out a questionnaire that asked them various questions about each man using a 7-point Likert scale, with 1 being “he definitely is not” to 7 being “he definitely is.” Subjects rated the men based on three main variables: likeability, morality, and competence. The longer participants were exposed to a picture, the greater the rating of likability, morality and competence. The stimulus influenced memory which in turn created positive judgements in the subjects. This shows that not only does the mere exposure effect allow people to have higher recognition for a stimulus through repeated exposure, but also that exposure can lead to perceived attributions. If this is the case, then it could be said that people gravitate towards familiarity and those that are perceived to be morally just and competent.

The previous research focused on how unconscious biases influence judgements toward individuals based on factors like similarity and familiarity. Additional research suggests that the way language is used and the way a person is described can also impact judgements of others. Metaphors and analogies can be used to aid people in creating mental representations of different situations. When explaining a difficult situation, oftentimes phrases like ‘climbing a mountain’ are used to create a visual picture in the mind that evokes a particular feeling that can convey the narrative. These metaphors not only provide people with clearer mental imaging but can also

influence judgements and behaviors A meta-analysis of 91 articles found there to be greater impact towards readers when there was a metaphor frame present compared to when there was no metaphor language present (Brugman et al., 2019).

Another study that investigated metaphor framing looked at attitudes towards climate change (Flusberg et al., 2017). Researchers had subjects randomly assigned to one of three conditions where they read a paragraph about how the United States was addressing climate change. The paragraphs they read presented the condition in the title as either “War Against,” “Race Against,” or “The Issue of” climate change. In the metaphor conditions, language related to the metaphors was repeatedly used throughout the paragraph. Researchers asked subjects to rate their belief in the government’s ability to reduce the carbon footprint across the globe, their perceived urgency and risk surrounding climate change, and their willingness to change their behavior towards in climate-conscious ways. Participants in the ‘war’ metaphor condition gave higher risk and urgency ratings than the participants in the ‘race’ against climate change condition. Data also revealed a main effect for the war condition when subjects rated their willingness to change for the benefit of climate change. Metaphors that hold readers responsible by highlighting negative implications, like war and the adverse risks of it, have the ability to create a harsher judgement from people. When there is a mental image of war and the hostilities that come with war available in the mind over non-substantial language like “Issue” or “Race Against”, subjects can be inclined towards a particular behavior that evokes a sense of urgency in action.

Another language manipulation study focused on the way metaphor framing can influence people’s judgements of crime (Thibodeau, 2013). . Subjects were presented with an article about progressing crime in a city and were randomly assigned to one of two frames: crime

was metaphorically described as either a “Beast” or a “Virus”. After reading the article, researchers asked participants what needs to be done to minimize crime in the city. When the participants rated the different possible approaches towards the crime problem, the data was separated into two categories: enforcement based, or reformation based. Enforcement based crime reduction was distinct, with responses ranging from increased street patrols and increased prison sentences. Whereas approaches like education reform and economic welfare were considered reformation focused crime reduction. Across several experiments, people were more likely to endorse enforcement tactics towards a crime solution when that crime was described as a “beast” than a “virus.” When linguistic framing is used, people can make causal references about the situation based only on immediate information and can appoint restrictive narratives to a person or context. For example, reading an article about crime in a city as a ‘Beast’ only deepens the perspective that it is explicitly bad and not based on any implicit factors such as community outreach programs, education, taxation, and general well-being of citizens. The linguistic frame can also imply an adversary, where ‘the Beast can be defeated’ type mindset, which could only further an aggressive perspective.

Not only do metaphors sway opinions but referring to a group of people with a specific label can influence readers’ disposition towards that group. One study tested this idea in the context of individuals’ prejudice towards immigrants (Rucker et al., 2019). In this study, they randomly assigned participants into either a Negative or Neutral label condition that compared negative (“illegal aliens,” “illegal immigrants,” “undocumented aliens”) to neutral (noncitizen) labels. Subjects read two sentences that asked them to consider their thoughts on whichever immigrant group label they were assigned by answering a series of questions. They ranked the warmth towards the group on a slide scale from 0 being cold to 100 being warm. They

expressed the social distance they would maintain towards the group by responding to a series of statements on a scale from 1 being strongly agree to 6 being strongly disagree (example: “I would feel ok if (group label) moved onto my street”). The final measure was negative treatment towards the group label condition, in which participants ranked six-items (example: “I would likely turn in/report”) on a scale from 0 being strongly agree to 6 being strongly disagree. Data analysis found a significant effect of greater prejudice when participants were in the negative label conditions compared to the neutral label condition. Moreover, the subjects revealed that the negatively framed group labels would influence them towards negative treatment of these groups. These findings demonstrate an implicit bias induced by the language manipulation. Descriptive words have the capability to associate different meanings towards a person or a group.

One recent study that addressed language manipulation and social judgements incorporated victim-framing to see how its influence on subjects’ ratings of support towards protagonist of a sexual assault case (Flusberg et al., 2020). In a set of four experiments, participants read a brief news report describing an alleged sexual assault on a college campus where a male student was accused of assault by a female student. The report either described the accuser as the victim of assault (Assault Victim condition), the alleged perpetrator as the victim of false allegations (Allegation Victim condition), or neither protagonist as the victim (Baseline condition) where no victim-frame was present. Following the article, subjects responded to eight questions regarding level of support for the characters. From a scale of 0 to 6, they rated how much empathy they had toward the individuals, how believable their stories were, how much harm each experienced, and how responsible each was (reverse-coded). An overall support score revealed support for the alleged perpetrator was greater when the placed under a victim-frame

compared to baseline or when their accuser was victim-framed. Similarly, data revealed that support for the accuser was greater when she was victim-framed. The second experiment was a replication of the first with an added section that asked participants to copy and paste a specific part of the article that influenced their ratings of the characters. Subjects who cited the victim-frame as influential were more likely to be affected by the victim-frame, a finding that was replicated in two further experiments.

Previous research has touched up on factors that influence judgements such as perceived attributes, metaphors, and labels. These characteristic judgements are typically perceived in a positive manner when there's greater exposure to a person or situation. Conversely, these judgements are harsher when negatively connotated labels or frames are present towards a particular narrative. However, to date no study has examined how familiarity and victim-framing intersect in shaping social judgments. Is victim-framing equally effective when the individual is a celebrity? We tested the possibility by adapting the experiment design of Flusberg et al. (2020). Participants were randomly assigned to read about a domestic abuse case between a boyfriend and girlfriend. We manipulated the two key independent variables: public figure/stranger (celebrity status) and victim-framing/no-victim frame (language manipulation). Each article either had the boyfriend or the girlfriend labeled as the victim, and a baseline condition where there was no language manipulation present. After reading one of the six articles, participants rated their support for the protagonist in the story. We hypothesized that when the victim-frame will be present, subjects will respond to the context with a greater support for the victim, because it creates the construct that there is an adversary who has done some sort of wrongdoing. When the causal reference is an adversary, our mental process then has greater 'evidence' to go against the adversary, without any real evidence present. The word 'Victim' implies a weak person,

someone who has been hurt, wronged, or negatively affected. People associate this word to personal experiences with being a victim. With limited information, people will draw these conclusions based off automatic processes because it creates a visual context in the reader's mind. Using a familiar person with the visual representation of being a victim, or being wronged, compared to a random person being victim-framed, we think participants will have higher ratings of empathy towards the more exposed person. We also hypothesized a greater correlation between the support ratings towards the famous person against the stranger protagonist when labeled as the victim of abuse allegations, based off the previous research where familiarity leads to greater support.

Methods

Participants

Six hundred participants were recruited from CloudResearch Connect, an online crowdsourcing platform similar to Amazon's Mechanical Turk but implementing stricter quality controls. 28 people failed the attention check and were removed, leaving data from 582 participants for analysis. Of the 582 participants, 49% were female, 50% were male and 1% were non-binary or preferred not to provide their gender.

Design

The study utilized a 2X2 between-subjects design with two independent variables and four conditions. The two independent variables manipulated were victim-framing (assault victim vs. allegation victim vs. baseline) and celebrity status (celebrity vs. stranger). The main dependent variable measured was the level of *support* for each protagonist in the story.

Materials and Procedure

The study was created using an online platform Qualtrics. Subjects began the experiment with an attention check, followed by the consent form. When participants selected the “Next button” on the consent form it brought them to the directions for the experiment.

After consenting to the study, participants were randomly assigned to one of the six conditions. All conditions consisted of a news articles focusing on either a celebrity or stranger facing allegations of domestic abuse, adapted from Flusberg et al (2022) and online articles about a real allegation against actor Nicolas Cage. Either the alleged perpetrator (celebrity or stranger) was framed as the victim of false allegations (Allegation Victim condition), the accuser was framed as the victim of assault (Assault Victim Condition), or neither was framed as the victim (Baseline Condition). See Appendix for full text of the six stimulus paragraphs.

Following the article, participants rated their level of support for both protagonists by answering a set of questions using a 7-point Likert scale. They rated how much *empathy* they had towards both individuals, how *believable* each individual’s story was, the amount of *harm* both individuals went through, and the amount of *responsibility* both individuals held for the alleged incident. Participants also provided their *general opinion* for both individuals as a free response. They then were prompted to answer an open-ended question that asked what the most influential part of the article was for their decisions towards everyone. They were asked to copy and paste sections of the article to show specifically what impacted them.

The final section of the experiment asked subjects to complete a short demographics questionnaire, which asked about age, gender, race, highest level of education, annual income, and political affiliation. Following the demographic questionnaire, subjects were debriefed on the nature of the study and thanked for their time and dedication to research in the field of Psychology. Participants were provided with the phone number for the National Domestic

Violence hotline in case of emotional discomfort. The average time to complete the study was approximately 7 minutes.

The responses to the Likert-scale DV questions were coded into a single score of *support* for each individual presented in the article. Since previous data has shown that victim-framing increases support for individuals, we hypothesize the results will be similar for this experiment. We also hypothesize victim-framing may be more impactful when the individual is a public figure as opposed to a stranger. This would imply that familiarity and exposure do influence people's judgements.

Results

The data was analyzed by compiling all the dependent variable ratings into an overall 'support' score for the male (Support Nick) and female (Support Park) protagonists in each of the three conditions (Allegation Victim, Assault Victim, and Baseline). Note that Support Nick covers both celebrity (Nick Cage) and stranger (Nick Hatch) protagonist ratings, and Support Park covers both celebrity (Vickie Park) and stranger (Sarah Park) girlfriend protagonist ratings. The support scores were calculated by averaging participants responses to each dependent variable: the amount of empathy towards each person, amount of believability, and the amount of harm each person experienced because of the incident, and the amount of responsibility each person held for the situation (reverse-coded).

We conducted two 3 (condition: Allegation Victim vs. Assault Victim vs. Baseline) x 2 (protagonist: Celebrity vs. Stranger) factorial ANOVAs to assess the impact of celebrity status and victim framing on support for the protagonists.

First, we assessed support for the male protagonists (DV = Support Nick). We found a significant main effect of the victim-framing conditions, $F(2, 571) = 7.063, p < .001, \eta^2 = .028$.

There was no main effect of protagonist (celebrity vs. stranger), $F(1, 571) = 2.427, p = .120, \eta^2 = .004$, and no interaction between the victim framing and protagonist conditions, $F(2, 571) = .362, p = .696, \eta^2 = .001$. Post-hoc t-tests using the Tukey correction revealed that participants in the Assault Victim condition (female protagonist labeled as victim) expressed significantly less support for Nick (Cage and Hatch) than participants in the Baseline condition, $p = 0.005$, and the Allegation Victim condition (male protagonist labeled as victim), $p = 0.003$. There was no significant difference in support for Nick between the Allegation Victim and Baseline conditions, $p = 0.988$. See Figure 1.

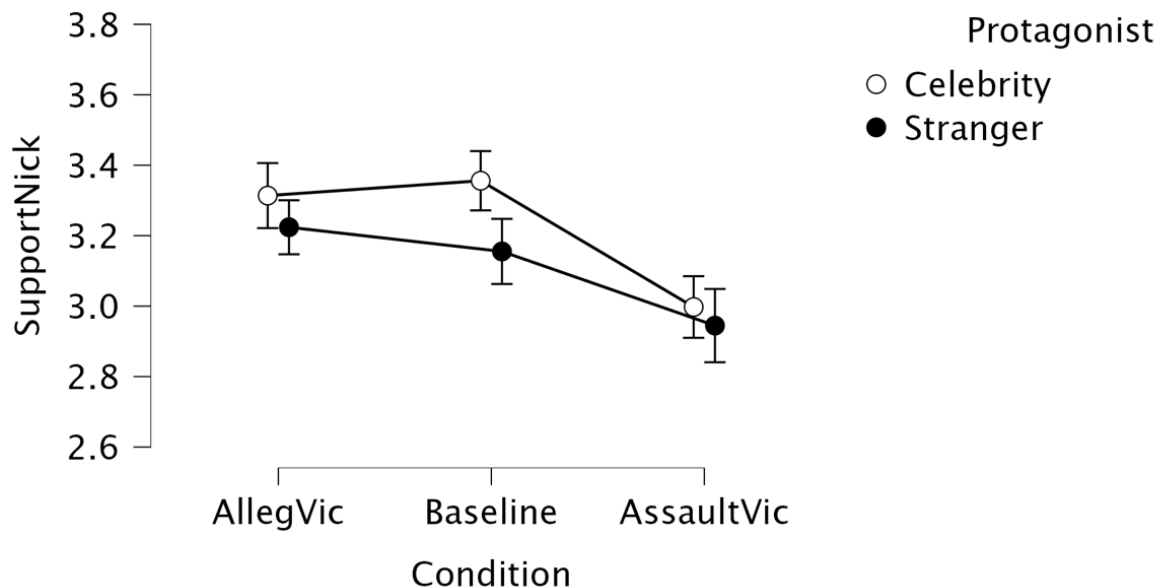


Figure 1: Average SupportNick scores by condition

The second factorial ANOVA examined the overall support for the female protagonists (DV = Support Park). Support Park includes the girlfriends involved in the assault case: Vickie Park (celebrity) and Sarah Park (stranger). The analysis revealed a statistically significant main effect for the victim-framing conditions, $F(2, 571) = 8.494, p < .001, \eta^2 = .028$. A series of post hoc t-tests using the Tukey correction were used in determining which victim frame conditions were significantly different from each other, revealing that when both the female protagonists

(celebrity vs. stranger) were labeled as the victim, there was more support compared to when the male protagonist was victim-framed, $p < .001$. The ANOVA also revealed a significant main effect of protagonist (celebrity vs. stranger) that revealed overall less support for the girlfriend of the celebrity compared to the stranger, $F(1, 571) = 12.372, p < .001, \eta^2 = .021$. Participants expressed less support for the girlfriend of the celebrity male protagonist (Nicolas Cage) ($M = 3.50, SD = .86$) than the stranger male the protagonist (Nicolas Hatch) ($M = 3.83, SD = .66$). See Figure 2.

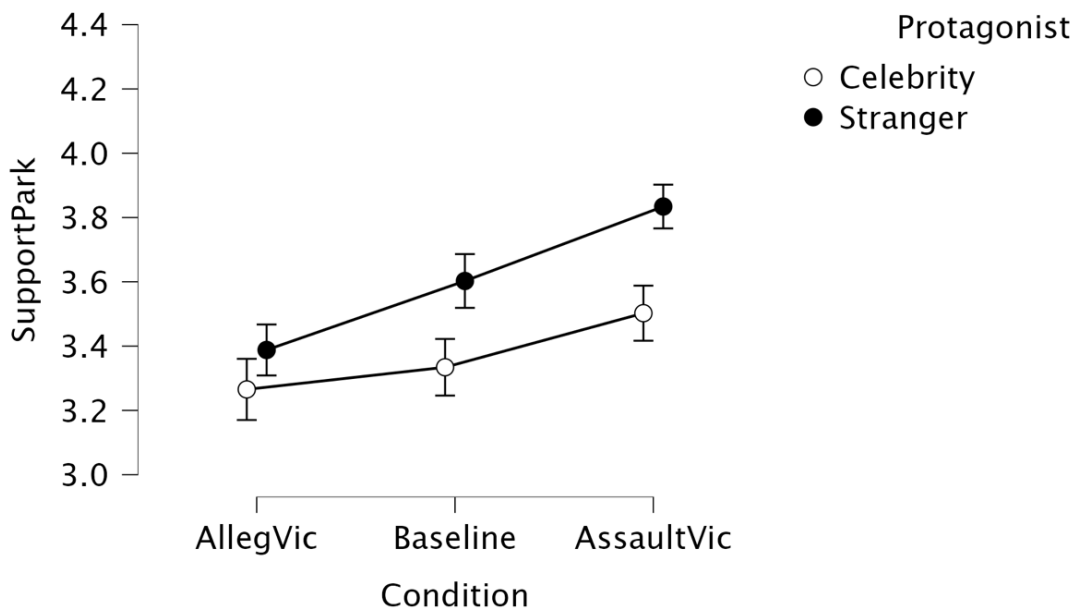


Figure 2: Average SupportPark scores by condition. Support for the girlfriend of a celebrity was overall lower than the support for the girlfriend of a stranger in each condition.

Discussion

This study examined how victim-framing and celebrity status impacts general support from the public towards domestic assault cases. Past research has revealed that when a victim-frame is present, there typically is more support for the protagonist labeled as the victim

(Flusberg et al., 2022). While this research is important for understanding the effects of language manipulation, it did not cover how judgements might differ if known alleged assailants were compared to random counterparts. The present study was designed to test this possibility. The original hypothesis was that there would be more support for the celebrity that was victim-framed compared to the stranger.

The subjects were randomized into one of the six conditions, each reading a fictionalized article about a domestic abuse case. Each article contained a language manipulation, where either the boyfriend was labeled a victim of abuse allegation, the girlfriend labeled a victim of abuse, and a baseline where no victim-frame was used. The protagonists were either a celebrity couple (Nicolas Cage and Vickie Park) or a non-familiar couple (Nicolas Hatch and Sarah Park). Subjects rated their support for each character based off empathy, believability, harm experienced, and responsibility. A section dedicated to analyzing how the participants came to their conclusion was added so they could copy and paste the most influential part of the article.

The first factorial ANOVA conducted was to analyze the support for both alleged perpetrators, Nicolas Cage and Nicolas Hatch. For both individuals (Nicolas Cage vs. Nicolas Hatch), support was higher when they were framed as victims of false allegations compared to when the ex-girlfriend (Vickie Park vs. Sarah Park) was framed as a victim. While the data didn't reveal any major difference between support for the two protagonists, it did show an effect of language manipulation for both protagonists. The original hypothesis was that Nicolas Cage, who represented the celebrity in the study, would overall have greater support than the stranger, Nicolas Hatch. These results did not support the hypothesis, being that no major difference was found between the two.

The second factorial ANOVA analyzed overall support for both ex-girlfriend protagonists, Vickie Park (the celebrity girlfriend) and Sarah Park (the girlfriend of the local plumber). Results revealed a main effect for the victim-frame conditions. Support for both girlfriends was significantly lower when the alleged perpetrators, their boyfriends, were framed as the victim, compared to when they were framed as the victim. A main effect for protagonist was also found which indicated overall more support for the girlfriend in the stranger condition compared to the celebrity condition across all victim-framing conditions. This means that people don't necessarily support the celebrity in an assault case but will alter their support of the partner who was involved. While my hypothesis sought to see a higher celebrity support score, the actual results suggest that victim-framing leads to lower support for the girlfriend when the celebrity is labeled a victim of false allegations. The overall support for girlfriend in the celebrity condition was lower than the girlfriend in the stranger condition. Suggesting that people have an easier time making judgements towards the celebrity protagonist girlfriend than actually supporting the celebrity protagonist. Not only do the results demonstrate that certain language creates an implicit bias in people with regards to victim-framing, but people will judge others based off relative celebrity status. For there to be veracity in judgements of assault cases, language that is manipulative like victim-framing should be refrained from using. Also approaching judgements of non-familiar people with an openness, especially those who are dating well-known celebrities.

Limitations and Future Research

Based off previous research that shows the typical assault is by men on women; we wanted the conditions represent the majority. The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey and the CDC did a survey in 2010 that found that 1 in 7 women experience domestic violence by their partner compared to 1 in 25 men (Black et al., 2011). However, gender reversal

in the conditions could yield to different results, as could same gendered protagonist. Some differences in results due to gender could be due to social stigmas about speaking up about domestic abuse at the hands of a female. Future research could cover how gender roles influence judgements of victim framing and celebrities. Replicating the study with a female celebrity instead of a male might bring forth different results. Another variable not accounted for was the relevancy of the celebrity and social stigma towards that individual, for overall recognition and general likeability might impact results. From the current study, there is more data to be analyzed regarding participants citing of addiction, in reference to the judgements of the protagonists. There is more data we did not analyze: what participants cited from the article as influential in their evaluations. Flusberg et al. (2020) found that only participants who cited the victim-framing language showed the victim-framing effect. In the present study we will analyze the data in the future. We can also assess whether people cite addiction or alcohol abuse in reference to what impacted them in the article. This might indicate that people's attitudes towards addiction could also could influence judgements of others and could skew data regardless of person.

While there is more to examine from the participants responses, some data showed that language manipulation and familiarity of a person impacted general support of a person involved in a domestic abuse case. When victim-framing was used, participants were more likely to support the protagonist who was framed, the similar theme found from Stephen Flusbergs' previous research (Flusberg et al., 2020). Not only were judgements affected by the language manipulation but the results suggest that celebrity status of an individual and those involved with that individual are more susceptible to social judgements. Recognizing biases towards others with regard to familiarity and language that can influence judgements is a step towards advocating for the truth.

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Appendix A: Victim-Frame and Celebrity Status Articles

	Assault Victim	Allegation Victim	Baseline
P u b l i c F i g u r e	<p>Victim of Celebrity Assault Faces Long Road Ahead – September 20, 2018</p> <p>Vienna, Austria. Vickie Park, former girlfriend of American actor Nicolas Cage, filed a complaint against the National Treasure star, alleging that Cage physically assaulted her last month at the Slash Film Festival in Vienna. According to Park, the actor was “severely intoxicated” at the time. Court documents claim Cage’s alleged behavior has been attributed to his alcohol addiction and depression, but do not go into more details about the alleged abuse. Authorities are investigating Park’s allegations, which Cage has firmly denied. Reactions online are polarized, but friends have rallied around Park. “Vickie is a victim of assault who deserves to be believed,” said a close friend of the former couple. “She has been traumatized by this experience. The investigation ahead is going to be long and grueling, but I know she will survive it.”</p>	<p>Celebrity Victim of Assault Allegations Faces Long Road Ahead – September 20, 2018</p> <p>Vienna, Austria. Vickie Park, former girlfriend of American actor Nicolas Cage, filed a complaint against the National Treasure star, alleging that Cage physically assaulted her last month at the Slash Film Festival in Vienna. According to Park, the actor was “severely intoxicated” at the time. Court documents claim Cage’s alleged behavior has been attributed to his alcohol addiction and depression, but do not go into more details about the alleged abuse. Authorities are investigating Park’s allegations, which Cage has firmly denied. Reactions online are polarized, but friends have rallied around Park. “Nick is a victim of false allegations who deserves to be believed,” said a close friend of the former couple. “He has been traumatized by this experience. The investigation ahead is going to be long and grueling, but I know he will survive it.”</p>	<p>Former Lovers Embroiled in Assault Allegations Face Long Road Ahead September 20, 2018</p> <p>Vienna, Austria. Vickie Park, former girlfriend of American actor Nicolas Cage, filed a complaint against the National Treasure star, alleging that Cage physically assaulted her last month at the Slash Film Festival in Vienna. According to Park, the actor was “severely intoxicated” at the time. Court documents filed in the case reference a history of alcohol addiction and depression, but do not go into more details about the alleged abuse. Authorities are investigating Park’s allegations, which Cage has firmly denied. Reactions online are polarized, but friends have rallied around Park. “Vickie and Nick should each be allowed to tell their side of the story,” said a close friend of both students. “This experience has been challenging for both of them. The investigation ahead is going to be long and grueling, but I know the truth will come out.”</p>
S t r a n g e r	<p>Victim of Assault Faces Long Road Ahead - September 20, 2018</p> <p>Holland, MI. Sarah Park, former girlfriend of Nicolas Hatch, filed a complaint against the local plumber, alleging that Hatch physically assaulted her last month at the Fall Film Festival in town. According to Park, Hatch was “severely intoxicated” at the time. Court documents claim Hatch’s alleged behavior has been attributed to his alcohol addiction and depression, but do not go into more details about the alleged abuse. Authorities are investigating Park’s allegations, which Hatch has firmly denied. Reactions in the community are polarized, but friends have rallied around Park. “Sarah is a victim of assault who deserves to be believed,” said a close friend of the former couple. “She has been traumatized by this experience. The investigation ahead is going to be long and grueling, but I know she will survive it.”</p>	<p>Victim of Assault Allegations Faces Long Road Ahead - September 20, 2018</p> <p>Holland, MI. Sarah Park, former girlfriend of Nicolas Hatch, filed a complaint against the local plumber, alleging that Hatch physically assaulted her last month at the Fall Film Festival in town. According to Park, Hatch was “severely intoxicated” at the time. Court documents claim Hatch’s alleged behavior has been attributed to his alcohol addiction and depression, but do not go into more details about the alleged abuse. Authorities are investigating Park’s allegations, which Hatch has firmly denied. Reactions in the community are polarized, but friends have rallied around Park. “Nick is a victim of false allegations who deserves to be believed,” said a close friend of the former couple. “He has been traumatized by this experience. The investigation ahead is going to be long and grueling, but I know he will survive it.”</p>	<p>Former Lovers Embroiled in Assault Allegations Face Long Road Ahead September 20, 2018</p> <p>Holland, MI. Sarah Park, former girlfriend of Nicolas Hatch, filed a complaint against the local plumber, alleging that Hatch physically assaulted her last month at the Fall Film Festival in town. According to Park, Hatch was “severely intoxicated” at the time. Court documents filed in the case reference a history of alcohol addiction and depression, but do not go into more details about the alleged abuse. Authorities are investigating Park’s allegations, which Hatch has firmly denied. Reactions in the community are polarized, but friends have rallied around Park. “Sarah and Nick should each be allowed to tell their side of the story,” said a close friend of both students. “This experience has been challenging for both of them. The investigation ahead is going to be long and grueling, but I know the truth will come out.”</p>