

# Sexual Abuse

## Development and validation of the Beliefs about Revenge Pornography Questionnaire

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## Abstract

The non-consensual sharing of private sexual images (so-called ‘revenge pornography’) has become an increasingly prominent topic in social and legislative discussions about sexual crime but has received relatively little attention within psychological research. Here, we leveraged existing theorizing in the area of sexual offending proclivity to systematically develop and validate a measure of beliefs about this type of offending. There is currently a lack of validated assessment tools in this area, and these are important to better understand the role of offense-supportive cognition in predicting both proclivity of these offenses and judgements of both victims and perpetrators. Using an international community sample ( $N = 511$ ) we found our ‘Beliefs about Revenge Pornography Questionnaire (BRPQ)’ to be comprised of four underpinning domains: ‘Victims as Promiscuous’, ‘Victim Harm’, ‘Avoiding Vulnerable Behaviors’, and ‘Offense Minimization’. Concurrent validity is demonstrated through relationships with trait empathy, belief in a just world, dark personality traits, and rape myth acceptance. Randomly dividing the sample, we also show that the BRPQ was associated with both proclivity ( $n = 227$ ) and social judgements of this type of offending ( $n = 232$ ). Implications and future directions are discussed. An open-access preprint is available at <https://psyarxiv.com/6qr7t/>.

*Key words:* revenge pornography; scale development; offense proclivity; victim blaming; image-based sexual abuse

## Development and validation of the Beliefs about Revenge Pornography Questionnaire

The high profile leaking of private sexual images of celebrities such as Jennifer Lawrence, Kim Kardashian, and Kate Upton has helped to not only catapult the term ‘revenge pornography’ into the public’s consciousness, but has also captured the attention of legislative bodies, politicians, legal scholars, and social scientists (e.g., Fido & Harper, 2020; Hall & Hearn, 2017; Henry & Powell, 2016; McGlynn et al., 2017). Now identified as a criminal offense in several countries and local jurisdictions (for review of global legislative developments, see Fido & Harper, 2020), ‘revenge pornography’ is defined as the non-consensual distribution of explicit, private sexual images or videos of another individual, which typically are shared with the intention to cause shame, humiliation, embarrassment, or distress to that person (Citron & Franks, 2014; Patella-Rey, 2018), or for the perpetrator to gain popularity (e.g., bragging about sexual conquests; Ringrose et al., 2013). There is a growing body of research emerging that focuses on social judgments of ‘revenge pornography’ (see e.g., Bothamley & Tully, 2018; Fido et al., 2021; Pina et al., 2017), but little is known about what people think about his type of behavior, nor what can predict such beliefs. Therefore, a gap exists for a standardized test that accurately measures these beliefs so that our knowledge in this area can be better measured and therefore understood. It is this gap that we seek to fill with this paper.

There is currently a lack of clarity over how to best conceptualize so-called ‘revenge pornography’. At the social level, one approach (likely related to the popularity of this colloquial label) asserts that this behavior is exclusively committed by ex-lovers following the breakdown of a relationship. Although a notably common motivation (Burriss, 2014; Walker & Sleath, 2017), the term ‘revenge’ depicts a narrow, incomplete view of this type of behavior. This narrow view ignores the possibility of other motivations, such as blackmail, coercion, entertainment, financial gain, notoriety, or sexual gratification (Franks, 2015;

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3 Harper, Fido et al., 2021; Henry & Powell, 2016). It can therefore be argued that the  
4 terminology itself further adds to the misunderstanding of the act being facilitated purely for  
5 the purposes of revenge. The term *pornography* is also inaccurate as it suggests that the  
6 distribution of content is consensual, and thus fails to capture the breaches of trust and  
7 privacy that the behavior embodies, alongside the severity of the harm caused to the victim  
8 (Henry et al., 2017). Accordingly, it could be argued that terminologies such as *revenge* and  
9 *pornography* may contribute to public misconceptions about the offense and further  
10 stigmatization of the victim. However, we do adopt this label in our scale for several reasons.  
11 For example, a lot of work has been conducted already using this label that examine public  
12 judgements of this behavior (e.g., Bothamley & Tully, 2018; Fido & Harper, 2020; Hall &  
13 Hearn, 2017; Walker & Sleath, 2017), and we believe that it is important to use language that  
14 most people will recognize, particularly when surveying public attitudes (as is our aim here)<sup>1</sup>.  
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31 There is a paucity of available data on social attitudes about the non-consensual sharing  
32 of private sexual materials. However, recent US-based research provides evidence for a high  
33 level of support for the criminalization of ‘revenge pornography’ (Lageson et al., 2018). This  
34 was particularly the case among women in this sample, but support for criminalization was  
35 reduced in cases whereby the victim had self-produced and initially distributed such material  
36 themselves. This might indicate a degree of ‘just world’ thinking (Lerner, 1980), where  
37 individuals make assumptions that the world is fair, and people get what they deserve  
38 (Strömwall et al., 2013).  
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49 Alternatively, those with a higher degree of trait-level empathy might be better able to  
50 sympathize with victims of the non-consensual sharing of private sexual images, regardless  
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56 <sup>1</sup> The decision to use the lay label of ‘revenge pornography’ should not be taken as our endorsement of this  
57 narrow conceptualization as a legitimate or accurate depiction of the motivations underpinning this behavior, but  
58 merely represents a pragmatic decision in the context of this project. In this work, our aim is to develop and  
59 validate a domain-specific measure of beliefs about this type of offending behavior in a manner consistent with  
60 other areas of the sexual offending literature. However, within this paper, we will refer to the non-consensual  
sharing of private sexual images as a more accurate portrayal of the phenomenon under investigation.

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3 of their history of sexting, and recognize the normative (or, at times, coercive) nature of this  
4 emergent socio-sexual behavior. Empathy is considered a multifaceted construct that helps  
5 people to act in altruistic ways and acquire social and moral norms (Decety & Cowell, 2014;  
6 Zaki, 2018). Where an individual is unable or unwilling to act empathically, antisocial or  
7 criminal behavior including sexual violence may occur (Ward & Durrant, 2013). In the only  
8 existing work to examine the effects of empathy on judgements of the non-consensual  
9 sharing of private sexual images, Fido et al. (2021) reported weak relationships ( $r < .20$ )  
10 between empathy and leniency judgements about a hypothetical case, potentially suggesting  
11 an attenuating effect of empathy over the direct effects of other factors, rather than empathy  
12 having a direct effect on judgements in its own right. They cited so-called 'dark' personality  
13 traits (Jonason & Tost, 2016) such as sadism, narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy  
14 as potential drivers of negative social attitudes (and proclivities for) engaging in the non-  
15 consensual sharing of private sexual materials (for evidence of sadism impacting criminal  
16 activity, including 'revenge pornography' offending, see Buckels, Jones et al., 2013;  
17 Buckells, Trapnell et al., 2014; Fido et al., 2021; Russell & King, 2016). As such, it is  
18 important to control for these kinds of personality characteristics when examining social  
19 attitudes about this emergent form of sexual offending. However, of perhaps more direct  
20 importance is understanding specific belief structures that may be supportive of such acts.

### 21 **Why Do We Need a Measure of Beliefs?**

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There is a vast amount of work within the sexual offending literature that examines the  
role of offense-supportive cognition in predicting a proclivity towards sexual aggression (e.g.,  
Bohner et al., 2005; Bumby, 1996; Hermann et al., 2012; Polaschek & Gannon, 2004;  
Polaschek & Ward, 2002; Ward, 2000) and judgements of sexual aggression (e.g., Harper,  
Franco et al., 2020; Süssenbach et al., 2012). At a societal level we refer to widespread  
offense-supportive beliefs as rape myths. These are defined as a complex set of prejudicial,

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3 stereotyped, and false beliefs about rape victims, rape perpetrators and the crime of rape  
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5 (Burt, 1980). Although some aspects of this definition have been queried (see Reece, 2012),  
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7 such beliefs may commonly serve to place blame on the victim, absolve or excuse the  
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9 perpetrator of sexual violence, and minimize or justify the crime of rape (Bumby 1996; Burt,  
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11 1980; Harper, Franco et al., 2020; Hermann et al., 2012). Common examples of rape myths  
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13 include that victims 'ask for it' by wearing sexually provocative clothing, that men  
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15 commonly do not mean to commit sexual offenses (but rather their sexual arousal gets the  
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17 better of them), that some women report sexual offenses that did not really happen, and that  
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19 women can manipulate men into behaving in sexually inappropriate ways (McMahon &  
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21 Farmer, 2011; Polaschek & Gannon, 2004; Polaschek & Ward, 2002).

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26 The endorsement of such beliefs has profound effects on judgements of sexual  
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28 aggression, with subsequent effects of victims blaming themselves for their experiences,  
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30 decreased willingness to seek support after victimization, and low conviction rates  
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32 (Hildebrand & Najdowski, 2014; Watts et al., 2017). Although rape myths and beliefs about  
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34 sexual assault are widely studied (see Helmus et al., 2013), there has been virtually no  
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36 examination of such cognitive processes related to the non-consensual sharing of private  
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38 sexual images, that uses a systematically developed and validated scale that measure beliefs  
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40 about this behavior. In one related study, Branch et al. (2017) found that participants believed  
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42 that those who sext would be more likely to 'hook up', indicating the presence of subtle rape  
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44 myths linking normative sexual behavior in the modern era with sexual promiscuity. This  
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46 may support the research of Hatcher (2016), wherein rape myth acceptance predicted victim  
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48 blaming. It may be that in the case of a sexual assault, a woman is seen as 'asking for it'  
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50 because of her perceived sexual promiscuity or dress (Edwards et al., 2011), with this same  
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52 judgement being made in cases when a victim has previously distributed self-produced  
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54 sexually suggestive materials.  
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3 We should highlight why we seek to study *beliefs* about the non-consensual sharing of  
4 private sexual materials, rather than *myths*. Although it is accurate to state that no victim is  
5 responsible for their experiences, it is equally true to suggest that the self-production and  
6 consensual dissemination of private sexual materials does place somebody at a greater level  
7 of vulnerability to become a victim of such materials becoming more widely available. This  
8 is highlighted in psychoeducational programs designed to reduce risk of victimization,  
9 wherein education providers speak about the inherent dangers of making such material  
10 privately available, and thus losing control over its dissemination (Döring et al., 2014). We  
11 also know that around 80% of victims self-produce the sexual content that is ultimately  
12 shared (Citron & Frank, 2014), and it may be that this self-production leads to victim blaming  
13 at a social level (Campbell & Raja, 2005).  
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28 We know that victim blaming is high for sexual crimes, and labelling theory exerts how  
29 individuals are impacted by how society views them (Becker, 2018). Victims of the non-  
30 consensual sharing of private sexual materials often suffer high levels of embarrassment,  
31 guilt, self-blame, and shame (Bates, 2017), some which may be a result of the blame imposed  
32 upon them by society, in that they internalise these societal views. Victims are also at risk of  
33 harm for continuous and prolonged periods of time (Bates, 2017), as social media platforms  
34 and photo sharing sites allow for their photos/content to continue to exist or easily re-emerge  
35 at any time, to potentially millions of people (Citron & Franks, 2014). They also exhibit  
36 greater levels of anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, maladaptive coping mechanisms and  
37 suicidal ideation at similar rates to victims of rape and sexual abuse (Bates, 2017). Therefore,  
38 it is crucial to understand public beliefs about the non-consensual sharing of private sexual  
39 materials so that we can better understand both judgments about the crime itself, the  
40 perpetrator, and the victim, including blame, and to also understand proclivities to engage in  
41 this form of sexually harmful behavior.  
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3 There are currently no systematically developed or validated measures of beliefs about  
4 the non-consensual sharing of private sexual materials as a specific behavioral pattern. Such  
5 beliefs have been measured in relative ad-hoc ways thus far. For example, Bothamley and  
6 Tully (2018) used eight self-written items to measure perceptions of victim blame and the  
7 psychological harms associated with victimization. This scale was subsequently used in Fido  
8 et al. (2021) as a single-factor measure of ‘offense leniency’. Zvi and Bitton (2020) used a  
9 similar approach, instead using a smaller number of face-valid items tapping into victim  
10 blame. Alternatively, other studies have simply adapted belief scales from the broader rape  
11 myth and cognitive distortion literature (e.g., Starr & Lavis, 2018). In the only specific  
12 measure of beliefs about the non-consensual sharing of private sexual materials, Powell et al.  
13 (2019) used existing rape myth scales to develop their ‘Sexual Image-Based Abuse Myth  
14 Acceptance Scale’. Although this measure was a positive step forward for the field, the paper  
15 reported minimal psychometric data, information about item construction, and scale  
16 validation. As such, we believe that there is still room within the literature for a new,  
17 systematically developed and validated, measure of beliefs about the non-consensual sharing  
18 of private sexual materials.

### 19 **Aims and Structure of this Paper**

20 To date, little research has been conducted to understand not only what beliefs are  
21 associated with the non-consensual sharing of private sexual images, but also how these  
22 beliefs might be predicted. In addition, once these beliefs are established, it is important to  
23 understand how they might predict both a proclivity to offend in this way and social  
24 judgements of such criminal cases.

25 We conducted four complimentary studies. Study 1 documents the systematic  
26 development and validation of a scale designed to measure beliefs about the non-consensual  
27 sharing of private sexual images as a form of image-based sexual abuse. We used a large  
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3 sample to examine the factor structure of our draft ‘Beliefs about Revenge Pornography  
4 Questionnaire’ (BRPQ). In Study 2 the demographic variables and measures of constructs  
5 theoretically associated with beliefs about the non-consensual sharing of private sexual  
6 images (e.g., rape myth acceptance, empathy, belief in a just world, sadism, and dark triad  
7 personality traits) were used to predict BRPQ factor scores to examine the construct validity  
8 of the scale. In Study 3 the sample was randomly allocated to different vignettes that explored  
9 the self-reported proclivities to engage in the non-consensual sharing of private sexual  
10 images. In Study 4, judgements of revenge pornography scenarios were then explored,  
11 controlling for pre-existing beliefs about the non-consensual sharing of private sexual images,  
12 measured using the BRPQ.  
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## 26 **Methods**

### 27 **Participants and Recruitment**

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31 We used an online cross-sectional survey design to run this project. In total, 683 people  
32 started the survey, with all participants who completed the draft BRPQ being retained. This  
33 left a final sample of 511 participants (56% female;  $M_{\text{age}} = 30.05$  years,  $SD = 10.69$ ). All  
34 participants were recruited online, using institutional research participation schemes and  
35 posts on social media websites. We posted study advertisements on personal and community  
36 Facebook pages, Twitter (with tags *#revengeporn*, *#revengepornography*, and  
37 *#imagebasedsexualabuse*), and selected forums on Reddit.com (*r/SampleSize*, *r/love*,  
38 *r/relationships*, *r/porn*, and *r/dating*). This approach to data collection allowed us to gain a  
39 more representative general community sample than merely relying on student participation  
40 schemes or populations who sign up to survey participation platforms, such as *Amazon’s*  
41 *MTurk*, or *Prolific*. The inclusion criteria were an age over 18 years, and fluency in English.  
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Most participants were from the UK (47%), US (26%), Canada (7%), or Australia (4%).

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3 From the outset we set no sample size targets due to a lack of funded support for the project  
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5 but sought to maximize the number of participants with the resources available to us.  
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### 8 **Procedure and Materials**

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10 The data reported in this paper stem from a sample of community members (see above)  
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12 who all participated in a single online survey. Within this survey, everybody completed the  
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14 first draft of the BRPQ (Study 1), and subsequently completed a series of other measures to  
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16 validate the questionnaire (Study 2). Following this, participants were randomly assigned to  
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18 one of two subsequent study branches, wherein they completed either a measure of ‘revenge  
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20 pornography’ proclivity (Study 3), or a task asking them to judge hypothetical cases  
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22 involving the non-consensual sharing of private sexual images (Study 4). As such, Studies 3  
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24 and 4 represent independent samples. We did not use any specific attention or additional  
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26 validity checks within our survey. This procedure was approved by the Nottingham Trent  
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28 University School of Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee.  
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### 32 **Demographics**

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35 Participants were asked to report their age (in years), sex (male/female/other), political  
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37 ideology (scored using a single-item 1-5 scale, where higher scores indicated higher levels of  
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39 conservatism), and nationality. In all analyses, we removed those who declared their sex as  
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41 ‘other’ ( $n = 8$ ), and coded this variable as 0 = female, 1 = male.  
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### 45 **Beliefs about Revenge Pornography Questionnaire (BRPQ)**

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47 Originally, 91 items comprised the draft BRPQ. These items were produced in a  
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49 manner such that they related to a range of themes evident within the literature related to the  
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51 non-consensual sharing of private sexual images, as well as related concepts in the areas of  
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53 rape myths, implicit theories of sexual offending, and rape culture. We used several existing  
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55 measures for inspiration when writing the initial items of the BRPQ, including Burt’s (1980)  
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57 rape myth measure, and the Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (IRMA; Payne et al., 1999).  
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3 In addition, we reviewed popular, legal, and academic discourses about the non-consensual  
4 sharing of private sexual images to add themes that were not represented in traditional sexual  
5 offending literatures. Participants responded using a six-point Likert scale anchored from  
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10 ‘strongly disagree’ to ‘strongly agree’.

### 11 12 ***Toronto Empathy Questionnaire (Spreng et al., 2009).***

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14 The Toronto Empathy Questionnaire is a 16-item scale developed by Spreng et al.  
15 (2009), who combined a multitude of empathy questionnaires to gain an all-encompassing  
16 measure. It conceptualizes empathy as a primarily emotional process, with each item  
17 measuring a single factor of empathic concern (Lamothe et al., 2014). Items include “it upsets  
18 me to see someone being treated disrespectfully”, with response options scores from ‘1 –  
19 Never’ to ‘5 – Always’. Responses were averaged, with higher scores indicate greater levels  
20 of empathy.  
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### 30 31 ***Belief in a Just World Scale (Lipkusa et al., 1996)***

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33 The Belief in a Just World Scale (Lipkusa et al., 1996) is a measure designed to assess  
34 the extent to which its respondents believe other people get what they deserve and deserve  
35 what they get (Lerner & Miller, 1978). Items include “I feel that people get what they  
36 deserve” and are rated using a six-point scale anchored from ‘strongly disagree’ to ‘strongly  
37 agree’. Responses were averaged, with higher scores indicating a greater just world belief.  
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### 45 46 ***Short Dark Triad (SD3; Jones & Paulhus, 2014)***

47 The Short Dark Triad Scale (SD3; Jones & Paulhus, 2014) consists of three separate  
48 nine-item subscales that measure trait scores of Machiavellianism (e.g., “Most people can be  
49 manipulated”), narcissism (e.g. “People see me as a natural leader”), and psychopathy (e.g.  
50 “Payback needs to be quick and nasty”). All items are responded to using a five-point scale,  
51 anchored from ‘strongly disagree’ to ‘strongly agree’, before being averaged for each dark  
52 triad domain. Higher scores represent a greater presence of each trait.  
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### ***The Assessment of Sadistic Personality (ASP; Plouffe et al., 2019)***

The Assessment of Sadistic Personality (ASP; Plouffe et al., 2019) is comprised of nine items designed to be used alongside SD3 to measure sadism, which allows for the measurement of each trait within the Dark Tetrad model of personality. Items such as “I would hurt somebody if it meant that I would be in control”) are rated using a five-point scale anchored from ‘strongly disagree’ to ‘strongly agree’. Following relevant reverse coding, an average score across all items was calculated, with higher scores indicating greater levels of sadism.

### ***Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (McMahon & Farmer, 2011)***

The updated Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance scale (IRMA; McMahon & Farmer, 2011) is a 22-item measure of adherence to myths about rape victims, rape perpetrators and the crime of rape (e.g. “When guys rape, it is usually because of their strong desire for sex”). The scale has a general rape myth construct and seven subscales. In this study, we used the IRMA to obtain an index of participants’ general adherence to rape myths. Each item was rated using a five-point scale anchored from ‘strongly disagree’ to ‘strongly agree’, before an average score across all items was calculated. Higher scores indicated more rape myth acceptance.

### ***‘Revenge Pornography’ Proclivity Scale (Study 3 only)***

The measure of ‘revenge pornography’ proclivity produced by Watson & Bartels (2017) was used to present a selection of short scenarios describing the non-consensual sharing of private sexual images. These cases were driven by one of five different motivations (relationship breakdown, infidelity, bragging, sabotage, or amusement) and were each approximately 150 words in length. To avoid participant fatigue, each respondent received five of the ten possible scenarios in a randomized order, ensuring that each motivation was presented once. We coupled each scenario with a brief proclivity measure

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3 used in Pina et al. (2017). This ten-item measure asked about participants' direct proclivity to  
4 engage in the non-consensual sharing of private sexual images ("In this situation, how likely  
5 is it that you would do the same?"), anticipated enjoyment (e.g., "How much excitement  
6 would this situation bring you?"; five items), and social approval (e.g., "In this situation,  
7 would you feel any regret over sharing the images?"; four items). Although Pina et al. (2017)  
8 used a five-point scale, we asked our participants to use a six-point scale (anchored from 'not  
9 at all' to 'very much') to avoid the use of a neutral scale midpoint.

### 19 ***'Revenge Pornography' Judgements Scale (Study 4 only)***

21 To test social judgements of the non-consensual sharing of private sexual images we  
22 adapted three scenarios from Scott and Gavin (2018). These scenarios depicted cases of the  
23 non-consensual sharing of private sexual images committed against a female victim who  
24 previously posted images of herself online in either sexually provocative or conservative  
25 poses. The third scenario omitted information about previous posting behavior. Following  
26 each scenario, participants used a six-point scale anchored from 'strongly disagree' to  
27 'strongly agree' to provide ratings of victim blame (e.g., "How likely do you think it is that  
28 [victim's name] could have avoided the incident?"; four items), perceived criminality of the  
29 behavior (e.g., "Do you think police intervention is necessary for the resolution of this  
30 situation?"; three items), and victim harm (e.g., "To what extent do you think the situation  
31 will have affected [victim's name]'s trust of others?"; five items). Scores across items on  
32 each domain were averaged, with higher scores indicating increased levels of victim blame,  
33 perceived criminality, and victim harm judgements.

### 51 **Study 1 - BRPQ Scale Development**

53 Responses to the draft BRPQ were entered into an exploratory factor analysis (EFA)  
54 using the *psych* package embedded into the jamovi statistics program (Revelle, 2019). An  
55 oblique rotation (direct oblimin) was used to allow factors to correlate with one another, with  
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3 factors extracted using the maximum likelihood method and via a parallel analysis. This  
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5 analysis runs 20 replications of an EFA to establish statistically meaningful factor  
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7 eigenvalues. These are then compared to the observed eigenvalues within the current dataset  
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9 to determine the number of factors to extract. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of  
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11 sampling adequacy was .94, suggesting that our data were suitable for studying in this  
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13 manner. In addition, Bartlett's test for sphericity was significant,  $\chi^2(4095) = 23460, p < .001$ ,  
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15 meaning that our scale items correlated with each other in a manner that makes them suitable  
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17 for factor analysis. We retained items in factors where their loadings were  $>.40$  (Field, 2005).  
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19 Cases with missing data were deleted listwise.  
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24 This process of factor extraction suggested that seven statistical factors underpinned the  
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26 data, accounting for 41.10% of the cumulative variance in scale responses. Model fit was  
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28 broadly acceptable:  $\chi^2(3479) = 5710, p < .001$ , RMSEA = .04 [90% CI: .03, .04], TLI = .86.  
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30 Significant item loadings are presented in Table 1, while loadings for all items of the draft  
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32 BRPQ can be found on the project's OSF page (<https://osf.io/3t6rh/>).  
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35 --- Insert Table 1 Here ---  
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38 In examining Table 1, we chose to retain components where psychometric properties  
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40 could be said to be strong. This meant that either there were at least five items within a  
41  
42 component (Osborne & Costello, 2009), or where there were fewer than five items, these held  
43  
44 together in a conceptually meaningful way (Worthington & Whittaker, 2006). Four of the  
45  
46 seven factors met these criteria. In each case, final factor scores on the BRPQ were computed  
47  
48 as mean values across all items of each respective factor (possible range = 1-6; higher scores  
49  
50 indicate greater endorsement of the respective factor).  
51  
52

53  
54 Factor 1 was labelled "Victims as Promiscuous" (14 items) and taps into themes related  
55  
56 to the characteristics of victims' sexuality that may make them more vulnerable to the non-  
57  
58 consensual sharing of private sexual images. This factor had excellent internal consistency ( $\alpha$   
59  
60

= .94;  $\omega = .94$ ). Factor 2 was labelled “Victim Harm” (12 items) and represents a cluster of items that link to the deleterious effects of being a victim of this type of offending, and the need for victims to be protected. This factor demonstrated very good internal consistency ( $\alpha = .87$ ;  $\omega = .89$ ). Factor 3 was labelled “Avoiding Vulnerable Behavior” (10 items) and relates to the strategies that people might employ to avoid becoming a victim of revenge pornography. This factor was found to have excellent levels of internal consistency ( $\alpha = .90$ ;  $\omega = .90$ ). Factor 4 was labelled “Offense Minimization” (7 items) and reflects the downplaying of the effects of ‘revenge pornography’ and its criminality. This factor possessed acceptable levels of internal consistency ( $\alpha = .74$ ;  $\omega = .74$ ).

In line with Schrieber’s (2021) guidance, we re-ran the EFA using only the included items to ensure consistency within the model, and found that all items loaded onto the expected factor (for transparency, this re-analysis is presented in the datafile at <https://osf.io/3t6rh/>).

## Study 2 - Predictors of BRPQ Scores

After identifying the factor structure of the BRPQ in Study 1, we went on to predict scores on each of these components using constructs that were theoretically associated with associated outcomes (e.g., rape myth acceptance and judgements of the non-consensual sharing of private sexual images offending). Specifically, we used demographic predictors (e.g., sex, age, political orientation) alongside psychometric measures of empathy, belief in a just world, sadism, dark triad personality traits, and rape myth acceptance.

### Sample Information

While not all participants completed all measures, a total of 511 individuals completed at least one of these control measures alongside the full BRPQ (56% female,  $M_{\text{age}} = 30.05$  years,  $SD = 10.69$ ). Samples sizes for each measured variable are provided in Table 2, alongside descriptive statistics and inter-scale correlations.

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3 --- Insert Table 2 Here ---  
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5

## 6 **Results and Discussion**

7  
8 Consistent with expectations, viewing victims of the non-consensual sharing of private  
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10 sexual images as promiscuous and seeing victimization as avoidable were negatively  
11  
12 correlated with empathy, but positively with constructs such as political conservatism, belief  
13  
14 in a just world, dark triad and sadistic personality traits, and rape myth acceptance. In most of  
15  
16 these cases, the magnitude of the relationships between the variables corresponded to a  
17  
18 medium effect size. These correlations were inverted when examining participant perceptions  
19  
20 about the harm experienced by victims. In relation to the endorsement of minimizing beliefs,  
21  
22 we observed relatively weak associations ( $r_s < .15$ ) with our observed psychological trait  
23  
24 variables. Although the coefficients for belief in a just world (positive association) and  
25  
26 sadism Machiavellianism, and narcissism (all negative associations) were statistically  
27  
28 significant, the magnitude of these relationships casts doubt over their practical meaning.  
29  
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33 Seeing victims as being promiscuous was positively correlated with viewing  
34  
35 victimization as avoidable, but negatively correlated with perceptions of victim harm.  
36  
37 Similarly, endorsing the view that people can avoid becoming victims of the non-consensual  
38  
39 sharing of private sexual images was associated with lower attributions of victim harm.  
40  
41 Attributions of higher levels of victim harm were associated with less offense minimization.  
42  
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44

45 To examine the predictors of BRPQ factor scores, we ran four linear multiple  
46  
47 regression analyses (one per BRPQ factor) with all measured demographic and psychological  
48  
49 control variables as predictors. All four models were statistically significant, with the  
50  
51 predictors explaining a substantial proportion of the variance in BRPQ factor scores; 'Victims  
52  
53 as Promiscuous': adj.  $R^2 = .419$ ,  $F(11, 411) = 28.6$ ,  $p < .001$ ; 'Victim Harm': adj.  $R^2 = .306$ ,  
54  
55  $F(11, 410) = 17.8$ ,  $p < .001$ ; 'Avoiding Vulnerable Behaviors': adj.  $R^2 = .394$ ,  $F(11, 411) =$   
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3 26.0,  $p < .001$ ; ‘Offense Minimization’: adj.  $R^2 = .078$ ,  $F(11, 411) = 4.2$ ,  $p < .001$ . Model  
4  
5 coefficients are presented in Table 3.  
6

7  
8 --- Insert Table 3 Here ---  
9

10 In relation to viewing victims as promiscuous, lower levels of empathy ( $\beta = -.15$ ,  $p =$   
11  
12  $.001$ ), higher levels of belief in a just world ( $\beta = .14$ ,  $p < .001$ ), lower levels of  
13  
14 Machiavellianism ( $\beta = -.10$ ,  $p = .040$ ), and higher levels of both psychopathy ( $\beta = .14$ ,  $p =$   
15  
16  $.0009$ ) and rape myth acceptance ( $\beta = .47$ ,  $p < .001$ ) predicted this view. These associations  
17  
18 are consistent with what we might expect in relation to this outcome. For example, if  
19  
20 somebody has the belief that the world is a fair place then they may assume that victimization  
21  
22 is deserved in some way, with perceptions of promiscuity being a potential driver of this (see  
23  
24 also Dustagheer, 2018). Specially, it may be the case among those high in psychopathy (via  
25  
26 the mechanism of aggressive narcissism) and rape myth acceptance (whereby victims of  
27  
28 sexual violence as seen as playing a role in their own victimization through the wearing of  
29  
30 provocative clothing or the outward appearance of sexual availability; Burt, 1980; McMahon  
31  
32 & Farmer, 2011; Payne et al., 1999), consistent with the broader rape myth literature. Those  
33  
34 low in empathy may fail to have the ability to identify with those who become victims of the  
35  
36 non-consensual sharing of private sexual images, and assume image-taking behavior leaves  
37  
38 the victim vulnerable (and thus somewhat culpable) to having such images shared. This is  
39  
40 particularly the case among those who score low on cognitive indices of empathy. The  
41  
42 negative association of Machiavellianism with victim blaming is contrary to what may be  
43  
44 expected from a theoretical perspective. The items are framed as general views about  
45  
46 people’s vulnerability to manipulation (rather than their propensity to engage in manipulation  
47  
48 themselves). For example, agreeing with the item “Most people can be manipulated” (an SD3  
49  
50 item for Machiavellianism) is a general perception, while “I manipulate many people” (the  
51  
52 behavioral manifestation of Machiavellianism) is congruent with the classic  
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3 conceptualization of this trait. As such, acknowledging vulnerabilities of some people to  
4  
5 being manipulated is congruent with lower victim blame scores, as such a vulnerability would  
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7 lead to lower levels of victim culpability.  
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10 When predicting the attributions of victim harm, several factors emerged as being  
11  
12 associated with this outcome. Higher levels of empathy ( $\beta = .28, p < .001$ ), sadism ( $\beta = .20, p$   
13  
14  $= .001$ ) and Machiavellianism ( $\beta = .23, p < .001$ ) all predicted greater endorsement of these  
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16 arguments. This could be related to empathy having a link to the care for the victims of such  
17  
18 offenses (and thus a recognition of the potential effects of victimization; Bates, 2017), as well  
19  
20 as sadistic and Machiavellian impulses being recognized as leading to increased amounts of  
21  
22 harm (Paulhus & Williams, 2002). In contrast, lower levels of belief in a just world ( $\beta = -.20,$   
23  
24  $p < .001$ ), psychopathy ( $\beta = -.20, p < .001$ ), and rape myth acceptance ( $\beta = -.33, p < .001$ )  
25  
26 predicted a greater level of perceived victim harm. These data are suggestive of those who do  
27  
28 not believe that the world is a fair place endorsing the view that victimization is a  
29  
30 manifestation of societal or interpersonal injustice (this inference would also explain the  
31  
32 association between rape myth acceptance and victim harm perceptions, with a third variable  
33  
34 – victim blame – potentially acting as the bridge between these constructs). Those who score  
35  
36 lower on indices of psychopathy may be more able to take the emotional perspective of  
37  
38 victims, and to be able to empathize with the deleterious effects of victimization.  
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45 Only two psychological factors predicted seeing victimization as avoidable. These were  
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47 Machiavellianism ( $\beta = .13, p = .009$ ) and rape myth acceptance ( $\beta = .45, p < .001$ ), where  
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49 those scoring higher on the acceptance of rape myths being less likely to label the non-  
50  
51 consensual sharing of private sexual images a sexual offense. It is particularly interesting that  
52  
53 rape myth acceptance was associated with a greater propensity to believe that becoming a  
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55 victim of the non-consensual sharing of private sexual images is avoidable. This may be  
56  
57 suggestive of the idea that ‘rape’ myth acceptance is not limited to a particular offense  
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3 context. That is, the effects of these beliefs translate into judgements of several types of  
4 sexual offenses, rather than just to those judgements related to rape. This is perhaps  
5  
6 unsurprising, and reflective of a broader pattern of misunderstanding and victim blaming in  
7  
8 large portions of the general population. In addition, several demographic constructs  
9  
10 predicted seeing victimization as avoidable, including sex (higher scores among men;  $\beta = .12$ ,  
11  
12  $p = .006$ ), age (higher scores as age increases;  $\beta = .12$ ,  $p = .004$ ), and politics (higher scores  
13  
14 among ideological conservatives;  $\beta = .11$ ,  $p = .007$ ). The finding in relation to respondent sex  
15  
16 may be reflective of the typical demographics of victims of the non-consensual sharing of  
17  
18 private sexual images. Given that victims are typically female (McGlynn et al., 2017), these  
19  
20 participants may feel a greater affinity to those who have been victimized in this way, and  
21  
22 more acutely acknowledge the uncontrollability of maintaining control over the distribution  
23  
24 of sexualized content. Older age predicted avoidability judgments may relate to a lack of  
25  
26 understanding about the nature of content dissemination, with this typically taking place via  
27  
28 digital platforms and social media applications (Hall & Hearn, 2017), while ideological  
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30 conservatives place moral importance on individual responsibility than do ideological liberals  
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32 (Niemi & Young, 2016).  
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### 40 **Study 3 - Predicting 'Revenge Pornography' Proclivities**

#### 41 **Sample Information**

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44 A total of 233 participants were assigned to this branch of the survey. However, one  
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46 participant was removed as their stated age was below 18 years (despite us asking  
47  
48 participants to confirm this minimum age at sign-up), and five participants had missing data  
49  
50 on all proclivity questions. This left a final sample of 227 participants for analysis (56%  
51  
52 female;  $M_{\text{age}} = 29.92$  years,  $SD = 10.27$ ).  
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#### 56 **Results and Discussion**

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3 As above, we ran correlational analyses between all of our measured variables (Table  
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5 4). A direct proclivity for engaging in the non-consensual sharing of private sexual images  
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7 (measured by averaging proclivity items framed as “In this situation, how likely is it that you  
8  
9 would do the same?”) was significantly correlated to a moderate degree with lower levels of  
10  
11 empathy and higher levels of belief in a just world, all facets of the dark tetrad of personality,  
12  
13 and rape myth acceptance. With dark tetrad traits highly associated with low levels of  
14  
15 empathy for others and a lack of remorse for one’s own actions (Jones & Paulhus, 2014),  
16  
17 such findings are expected, and represent a potential inability to understand or resonate with  
18  
19 the impact of engaging in the non-consensual sharing of private sexual images. Importantly  
20  
21 for the BRPQ, direct proclivity was significantly related to seeing victims as promiscuous and  
22  
23 judging victimization as avoidable, and negatively related to perceptions of victim harm.  
24  
25 What this suggests is that one may be willing to engage in the non-consensual sharing of  
26  
27 private sexual images if they see their actions as being – to some extent – the fault of the  
28  
29 victim and/or that their behavior and the harm that is derived from it is minimized. Participant  
30  
31 perceptions that they would enjoy engaging in these behaviors demonstrated the same  
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33 relationships and was highly correlated with our direct proclivity score ( $r = .83$ ).  
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40 The approval facet of the proclivity measure was reverse-framed, meaning that higher  
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42 scores reflected perceptions of societal *disapproval* of the non-consensual sharing of private  
43  
44 sexual images. Conversely to that of direct proclivity, such disapproval was positively  
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46 associated with higher levels of empathy, and lower levels of belief in a just world, dark  
47  
48 tetrad personality traits, and rape myth acceptance. Further, anticipated disapproval of was  
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50 negatively associated with seeing victims as promiscuous and victimization as avoidable, but  
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52 positively correlation with perceptions of victim harm. In combination, these relationships  
53  
54 provide preliminary evidence of the concurrent validity of the BRPQ.  
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58 --- Insert Table 4 Here ---  
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We ran three linear regression models, aimed at predicting (a) a direct proclivity for the non-consensual sharing of private sexual images, (b) anticipated enjoyment when engaging in this form of behavior, and (c) anticipated social disapproval when doing so. All demographic and psychological control variables were entered as predictors. All three models were statistically significant and explained a substantial proportion of the variance in proclivity ratings; ‘direct proclivity’:  $\text{adj. } R^2 = .328, F(15, 186) = 7.55, p < .001$ ; ‘anticipated enjoyment’:  $\text{adj. } R^2 = .262, F(15, 186) = 5.76, p < .001$ ; ‘disapproval of the non-consensual sharing of private sexual images’:  $\text{adj. } R^2 = .464, F(15, 186) = 12.60, p < .001$ . Model coefficients are presented in Table 5.

In predicting a direct proclivity for the non-consensual sharing of private sexual images, we found that having a more liberal (or left-wing) political orientation ( $\beta = -.24, p < .001$ ), lower levels of Machiavellianism ( $\beta = -.20, p = .011$ ), and higher levels of both sadism ( $\beta = .20, p = .016$ ) and psychopathy ( $\beta = .23, p = .014$ ) were all significantly associated with this outcome. Although we have explored the likely relationship between dark tetrad traits and proclivity within this section above, the association between liberal political orientations and direct proclivity was surprising. Previously, ideological conservatives, relative to liberals, have been found to place a greater moral importance on individual responsibility (Niemi & Young, 2016), and so in this research, we would have expected those of right-wing orientation to report higher proclivity ratings. Examining the BRPQ specifically, seeing ‘Victims as Promiscuous’ significantly predicted a greater self-reported proclivities for engaging in the non-consensual sharing of private sexual images ( $\beta = .29, p = .004$ ), while higher scores on the ‘Offense Minimization’ factor, perhaps paradoxically, yet to a weaker degree predicted lower proclivity outcomes ( $\beta = -.17, p = .013$ ). Scores on neither ‘Victim Harm’ nor ‘Avoiding Vulnerable Behaviors’ were significantly associated with a direct self-reported proclivity for this type of behavior. Taken together, this data suggests that facets of

1  
2  
3 the BRPQ differentially predict proclivity ratings, however there is needed scope to better  
4 understand the ‘Offense Minimization’ to proclivity association, which may be underpinning  
5  
6 by an unknown mediator.  
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9  
10 Anticipated enjoyment of engaging in the non-consensual sharing of private sexual  
11 images was predicted by participants having a more liberal (or left-wing) political orientation  
12 ( $\beta = -.16, p = .025$ ), and higher levels of both sadism ( $\beta = .27, p = .002$ ) and psychopathy ( $\beta =$   
13  $.20, p = .044$ ). None of the BRPQ factors were significant predictors of this outcome. Again,  
14 the observed relationship between holding a liberal political orientation and support for (i.e.,  
15 enjoyment of) the non-consensual sharing of private sexual images deserves future qualitative  
16 attention.  
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26 Disapproval of the non-consensual sharing of private sexual images was predicted by  
27 political conservatism ( $\beta = .12, p = .048$ ) and higher levels of empathy ( $\beta = .24, p < .001$ ). In  
28 relation to the BRPQ factors, higher anticipated disapproval was predicted by lower scores on  
29 both the ‘Victims as Promiscuous’ factor ( $\beta = -.40, p < .001$ ) and the ‘Avoiding Vulnerable  
30 Behaviors’ factor ( $\beta = -.20, p = .005$ ). Perhaps paradoxically, the more that participants  
31 appeared to minimize this behavior as a serious crime, the more they anticipated disapproval  
32 of their own hypothetical offending ( $\beta = .22, p < .001$ ). However, this result might be rooted  
33 in offense-supportive cognition and an awareness of negative public attitudes about sexual  
34 crime (for a review, see Harper et al., 2017). That is, although one might not believe that their  
35 actions are *serious*, they would still expect a disapproving response from others.  
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49 --- Insert Table 5 Here ---  
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#### 51 **Study 4 - Predicting Judgements of ‘Revenge Pornography’**

##### 52 **Sample Information**

53  
54 A total of 236 participants were assigned to this branch of the survey. However, one  
55 participant was removed for declaring an age of lower than 18 years, and three participants  
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3 were removed from the dataset as they had incomplete data on the response variables. This  
4  
5 left a final sample of 232 participants for analysis (55% female;  $M_{\text{age}} = 30.64$  years,  $SD =$   
6  
7 11.17). The sample was evenly split between vignettes: sexually provocative posting ( $n =$   
8  
9 78), conservative posting ( $n = 78$ ), and control (no posting content information ( $n = 76$ )).

## 12 **Results and Discussion**

14 We ran correlational analyses between all of our measured variables, with correlation  
15  
16 coefficients presented in Table 6. Victim blaming was associated with male sex, older age,  
17  
18 and right-leaning politics. Psychologically, blaming the victim was associated with lower  
19  
20 empathy, but higher beliefs in a just world, all dark tetrad traits, and rape myth acceptance.  
21  
22 This outcome was also associated with all BRPQ factors, with seeing victims as promiscuous,  
23  
24 thinking that victimization is avoidable, and minimizing the offense linked to more victim  
25  
26 blaming, and increased perceptions of victim harm associated with lower blame scores.  
27  
28

29  
30 Increased perceptions of the criminal nature of non-consensually sharing private sexual  
31  
32 images were associated with female sex and left-leaning politics. Those scoring higher on  
33  
34 empathy, but lower on belief in a just world, psychopathy, and rape myth acceptance also  
35  
36 viewed the non-consensual sharing of private sexual images as needing police intervention.  
37  
38 On the BRPQ, increased criminality perceptions were associated with lower scores on the  
39  
40 ‘Victims as Promiscuous’, ‘Avoiding Vulnerable Behavior’, and ‘Offense Minimization’  
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42 factors, and higher score on the ‘Victim Blame’ factor.  
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46  
47 Greater anticipated victim harm was associated with female sex and left-leaning  
48  
49 politics. Psychologically, these judgements were correlated with higher scores for empathy,  
50  
51 but lower scores for belief in a just world, psychopathy, and rape myth acceptance. Victim  
52  
53 harm scores (measured in response to each vignette) were associated with lower scores on the  
54  
55 ‘Victims as Promiscuous’, ‘Avoiding Vulnerable Behavior’, and ‘Offense Minimization’  
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3 factors, and higher score on the ‘Victim Blame’ factor. These data again provide preliminary  
4  
5 support for the concurrent validity of the BRPQ.  
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7  
8 Each of the outcomes were significantly correlated to each other. Victim blaming was  
9  
10 associated with less perceived criminality and reduced anticipations of victim harm. In  
11  
12 contrast, perceptions of criminality and victim harm were positively correlated.  
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15 --- Insert Table 6 Here ---  
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17 We ran a series of linear regression models predicting (a) victim blame judgements, (b)  
18  
19 perceived criminality, and (c) anticipated victim harm, separately for each condition. All  
20  
21 models were statistically significant and explained a substantial proportion of the variance in  
22  
23 offense judgements. Tables 7a-c present model statistics and individual predictor coefficients.  
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25

26 In the control condition (with no previous social media posting context), victim  
27  
28 blaming was predicted by lower levels of empathy and Machiavellianism, but higher scores  
29  
30 on the ‘Avoiding Vulnerable Behaviors’ BRPQ factor. This suggests that an impulse to place  
31  
32 culpability on victims is linked to victim blaming even in the absence of any contextual cues  
33  
34 to self-increased vulnerability to victimization. Higher scores for both empathy and  
35  
36 Machiavellianism predicted increases in perceived criminality of the offense, suggesting that  
37  
38 a vulnerability to manipulation and an identification with victims on an emotional level is  
39  
40 associated with a greater willingness to support criminal sanctions for the non-consensual  
41  
42 sharing of private sexual images. In contrast, higher scores on the ‘Offense Minimization’  
43  
44 factor of the BRPQ were associated with a lower perception of criminality. This is  
45  
46 unsurprising, as minimizing the effects of the non-consensual sharing of private sexual  
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48 images should logically lead to reduced support for criminal sanctions. However, this  
49  
50 unsurprising result does offer support for the validity of the BRPQ in predicting meaningful  
51  
52 outcomes. These perceptions did not translate to judgements of victim harm. Instead, lower  
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54 rape myth acceptance and higher scores on the BRPQ’s ‘Victim Harm’ factor predicted  
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3 greater perceptions of vignette-specific victim harm. This indicates a potentially malicious  
4 view that harm is lower when victims ‘deserve’ what happens to them (indicative of higher  
5 rape myth acceptance). In addition, the expected predictive effect of the ‘Victim Harm’ factor  
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8 in this case provides additional evidence of the BRPQ’s validity.  
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12 When the victim had previously posted sexually provocative images online, participants  
13 with a more left-leaning political ideology, and those with higher levels of rape myth  
14 acceptance, attributed higher levels of blame to the victim. This is perhaps surprising from an  
15 ideological standpoint, whereby ideological conservatives might be expected to demonstrate  
16 sex-negative responses and place higher levels of blame on victims for posting sexually  
17 provocative content online. However, left-leaning individuals might demonstrate more  
18 punitive views towards such women for yielding to societal expectations about women,  
19 wherein it is seen that women are required to use sex to advance their social status. On the  
20 BRPQ, higher scores on the ‘Offense Minimization’ factor were again predictive of lower  
21 perceived criminality, supporting our view that this is an accurate measure of the  
22 minimization of the seriousness of this type of behavior. In addition, seeing ‘Victims as  
23 Promiscuous’ led to lower criminality judgments in this case, suggesting that the BRPQ can  
24 contribute to divergent judgments resulting from specific case details in the direction that  
25 would be expected. Lower levels of perceived victim harm were only predicted by the  
26 BRPQ’s ‘Offense Minimization’ factor when the victim had posted sexually provocative  
27 images online. This is perhaps indicative of an association between the level of harm caused  
28 by an offense and the extent to which it is seen as being deserving of criminal sanctions.  
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51 When the victim had a history of sexually conservative social media posting, rape myth  
52 acceptance was significantly and positively predictive of victim blame attributions, and  
53 negatively associated with anticipated victim harm. It is perhaps unsurprising that none of the  
54 BRPQ factors were significantly associated with victim blaming in this condition, as the  
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3 vignette contained no cues related to promiscuity or self-directed vulnerable behaviors on the  
4 part of the victim. However, lower scores on the BRPQ factor of ‘Offense Minimization’, and  
5 higher scores for ‘Victim Harm’, were predictive of higher criminality judgments. These  
6 results combine to again suggest an interplay between judgments of the behavior *and* its  
7 effects in perceptions about whether criminal justice involvement is required in cases of the  
8 non-consensual sharing of private sexual images. Lower levels of education, and higher  
9 scores on the BRPQ factor of ‘Victim Harm’ significantly predicted greater levels of  
10 anticipated victim harm for this specific case.

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22 Taken in totality, these data offer good evidence of the BRPQ’s validity as a measure  
23 that can predict meaningful outcomes, at least in the research context in relation to  
24 hypothetical case scenarios. Consistently, scores on the ‘Offense Minimization’ factor  
25 predicted criminality judgments, while ‘Victim Harm’ (as a global BRPQ factor) predicted  
26 scenario-specific anticipations of victim harm. The only exception to this was in relation to  
27 the victim with a provocative posting history, whereby perceptions of the victim’s potential  
28 promiscuity and vulnerable behaviors appears to have reduced perceptions of the harm  
29 caused by the offense.  
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40 --- Insert Tables 7a-c Here ---  
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## 42 **General Discussion**

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45 In this paper we set out with the aim to systematically develop and validate a measure  
46 of beliefs about the non-consensual sharing of private sexual images. Our motivation in doing  
47 so was rooted in the existing literature either using brief (and ad-hoc) measures of judgements  
48 about this emergent form of sexual offending (Bothamley & Tully, 2018; Fido et al., 2021) or  
49 not using transparent and systematic measures of scale development (Powell et al., 2019).  
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3 Hermann et al., 2012, 2018) the project reported here offers a domain-specific measure of  
4 empirically supported clusters of beliefs.  
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8 The belief clusters of ‘Victims as Promiscuous’, ‘Victim Harm’, ‘Avoiding Vulnerable  
9 Behaviors’, and ‘Offense Minimization’ correspond to distinct domains of beliefs, which  
10 appear to have important links to both a proclivity towards engaging in the non-consensual  
11 sharing of private sexual images. Importantly, they correspond to different aspects of views  
12 about this type of behavior, including its victims and their perceived culpability in their  
13 experiences (‘Victims as Promiscuous’ and ‘Avoiding Vulnerable Behaviors’), the impact of  
14 perpetration (‘Victim Harm’), and its legal status (‘Offense Minimization’). It is here where  
15 we make a distinction between the BRPQ and related measures of cognitive distortions and  
16 rape myths within the broader literature. Our measure is not a measure of ‘myths’ or  
17 distortions, but rather beliefs that may be best subsumed under the broader heading of  
18 offense-supportive cognition.  
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33 The systematic validation of the BRPQ identified several predictors of each cluster of  
34 beliefs, as well as establishing the measure’s concurrent validity itself. Endorsing rape myths  
35 was a substantial predictor of viewing victims as being responsible for their experiences;  
36 correlating highly with beliefs that framed victims as being promiscuous and engaging with  
37 behaviors that would leave them vulnerable. This belief was also predicted by lower levels of  
38 empathy and Machiavellianism (suggestive of the view that victims are not ‘tricked’ into  
39 victimization, but instead play an active role), and higher levels of psychopathy and belief in  
40 a just world. Attenuated beliefs about the harm felt and experienced by victims of the non-  
41 consensual sharing of private sexual images were predicted by lower levels of empathy and  
42 higher levels of psychopathy and beliefs in a just world, data which is expected given the  
43 well-documented inverse association between the traits, and the role of empathy in  
44 recognizing and understanding the role of behavior on others (Bates, 2017). This data maps  
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3 well onto our understanding of how deviant traits, such as psychopathy, contribute to  
4 perceptions of victims of image-based sexual offenses and our empathic responses to them  
5 (Fido et al., 2021). Of interest, similar patterns of responses were not observed when  
6 predicting responders' beliefs that minimized the degree of the offense. Here, our data  
7 suggest that only Machiavellianism and rape myth acceptance were significant predictors of  
8 offense minimization, and so less likely to label the non-consensual sharing of private sexual  
9 images as a sexual offense, potentially suggesting that rape myth acceptance translates into  
10 broader judgements of sexual offenses, and is not restricted to rape, specifically.

11  
12 Collectively, these findings are consistent with literature that finds judgements of  
13 sexual violence – in a general sense – are associated with beliefs about the fairness of the  
14 world, 'dark' personality traits, and stereotypical beliefs about sexual violence. The data are  
15 therefore supportive of the view that the non-consensual sharing of private sexual images, as  
16 a form of image-based sexual abuse, should be classified as a sexual offense from a  
17 legislative perspective (Fido & Harper, 2020; McGlynn et al., 2017). Importantly, however,  
18 they also suggest that views about this form of behavior may be less dimensional than they  
19 are in relation to other forms of sexual violence and be centered more directly around views  
20 about victim culpability and offense motivations.

21  
22 Importantly, the BRPQ does seem to possess good concurrent validity. Indeed, across  
23 all clusters of 'Victims as Promiscuous', 'Victim Harm', 'Avoiding Vulnerable Behaviors',  
24 and 'Offense Minimization', there were moderate to strong correlations with self-reported  
25 proclivity, anticipated enjoyment, and greater levels of approval of this kind of offending. In  
26 addition, seeing the victims as being responsible for their experiences (e.g., 'Avoiding  
27 Vulnerable Behaviors') was associated with greater levels of victim blame (irrespective of  
28 their previous online posting activity), with those seeing the non-consensual sharing of  
29 private sexual images as not being a sexual offense (i.e., 'Offense Minimization') predicting  
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3 lower perceptions of criminality. This is consistent with broader work in the area of sexual  
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5 offending, where victim blaming and other offense-supportive cognitions are associated with  
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7 a host of undesirable outcomes, including increased rates of sexual aggression proclivity and  
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9 more lenient judgements of offense case studies (Bohner et al., 2005; Harper, Franco et al.,  
10  
11 2020). As such, the argument that the non-consensual sharing of private sexual images  
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13 operates as a sexual offense from both a legislative and psychological perspective is  
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15 supported here (Fido & Harper, 2020; McGlynn et al., 2017).  
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19 The existing literature within the area of image-based sexual abuse is rooted in  
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21 sociological conceptualizations of this behavior and explains it as a gendered type of sexual  
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23 offending with desires for power, control, and dominance as its core motivations (e.g.,  
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25 McGlynn, 2018; McGlynn et al., 2017). However, data reported here, specifically that around  
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27 proclivity to engage in the non-consensual sharing of private sexual images, suggest a  
28  
29 potential disconnect between elite (sociological) views and the opinions and beliefs held and  
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31 expressed by the lay public. Arguably this lay conceptualization is more representative of  
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33 social thinking about the non-consensual sharing of private sexual images, and has clear links  
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35 to jury decision-making and offense motivations. That is, although the academic zeitgeist is  
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37 to view the non-consensual sharing of private sexual images (among a constellation of image-  
38  
39 based sexual abuse offenses; Harper, Fido et al., 2021) through the sociological lens, if the  
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41 public do not endorse this view (favoring, for example, explanations that focus on sexual  
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43 arousal) then cases that do not possess these sex-related features may be viewed less harshly.  
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45 This becomes even more important when considering that the legislative discussions around  
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47 image-based sexual abuse lay on the foundations of academic discourse, and thus may omit  
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49 important details needed to ensure convictions – and therefore justice – after victimization.  
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#### 55 **Limitations and Future Use of the BRPQ**

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3 Like any empirical study, our project here does have some limitations. The initial draft  
4 of the BRPQ was based on parallel items that were constructed using existing rape myth  
5 questionnaires and measures of other sexual offense-supportive cognitions. Although we did  
6 not pre-test these items using an expert panel, we make the full draft available via the OSF  
7 (<https://osf.io/3t6rh/>). We invite other research teams to examine this draft list of candidate  
8 items and seek to confirm our factor structure in independent samples, and in other legislative  
9 contexts.  
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19 We believe that the BRPQ has the potential to inform our understanding of the  
20 psychological responses of lay members of the public to the non-consensual sharing of  
21 private sexual images, and perhaps to other forms of image-based sexual abuse. It may be  
22 that similar themes are related to views about behaviors such as upskirting, cyber-flashing,  
23 and deepfake pornography production – all of which have been identified as forming the  
24 constellation of image-based sexual abuse (Fido & Harper, 2020). Parallel versions of the  
25 BRPQ may be developed to test these ideas in relation to the full range of image-based sexual  
26 abuse offenses. It may also be said that we studied only a select number of correlates of the  
27 BRPQ. Although these were constructs known to be associated with judgements of ‘revenge  
28 pornography’ (Dustagheer, 2018; Fido et al., 2021), we did not examine the relationships  
29 between the BRPQ and constructs such as ambivalent sexism, masculinity, or attitudes  
30 related to the sexual double standard. These may all be related in meaningful ways to  
31 proclivities towards and judgements of the non-consensual sharing of private sexual images  
32 as they relate to gendered interactions and relationships. Further validation is necessary to  
33 identify the unique contributions of the BRPQ’s belief domains after controlling for these  
34 other notable covariates. Additional validation studies might also embed attention checks  
35 (e.g., mandated responses to non-scored questions) and validity checks (e.g., asking raters to  
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3 place each BRPQ item into one of the four factor headings). Such checks were not used in the  
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5 current study.  
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## 7 **Conclusions**

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10 Despite knowing that offense-supportive cognitions are important predictors of sexual  
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12 offending proclivity and judgements of sexual aggression, no authors had previously  
13  
14 developed a measure of such beliefs in relation to the non-consensual sharing of private  
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16 sexual images. Our new BRPQ fills this gap in the literature, reporting beliefs that take a  
17  
18 tripartite structure and cover domains related to victim culpability, offense motivations, and  
19  
20 the legal status of the non-consensual sharing of private sexual images as an offending  
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22 behavior. The development of such a measure opens up many possibilities for specifically  
23  
24 examining this type of offending behavior as a specific sexual crime. We believe that it is  
25  
26 likely that – as in the case of sexual violence in a general sense – attitudes that blame victims  
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28 and endorse stereotypical beliefs act as barriers to effective legislative action. It is only by  
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30 systematically exploring the structure of these beliefs in the manner that we have done here,  
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32 by understanding their correlates and effects, and by seeking to address antisocial beliefs  
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34 through education, that we can begin to turn the tide on the non-consensual sharing of private  
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36 sexual images as a growing social problem.  
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**Table 1.** Significant item loadings for the first draft of the BRPQ

	<b>Factor</b>						
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
If an individual isn't a virgin, then it shouldn't be a big deal if sexual pictures or videos are shared of them	<b>0.66</b>						
It's not a big deal to share naked pictures of an ex who cheated on you	<b>0.64</b>						
People who show off their bodies or post provocatively on social media deserve to be victims of revenge pornography	<b>0.57</b>						
Victims of revenge pornography should feel flattered that their images have been shared	<b>0.56</b>						
If a person shares sexual photos or videos with someone, then it should be seen as 'fair game' for that person's friends to also see the content	<b>0.53</b>						
Usually it is only individuals who dress in sexualised way who are victims of revenge pornography	<b>0.53</b>						
Only individuals from working class communities commit revenge pornography	<b>0.50</b>						
If a person has been sent pictures or videos of someone or had permission to take them, you can't really call it revenge pornography when they are shared	<b>0.50</b>						
Victims of revenge pornography enjoy the attention it brings	<b>0.49</b>						
It cannot be classed as revenge pornography if the images/videos are shared by a partner	<b>0.49</b>						
Celebrities deserve to have their private images shared more so than non-celebrities	<b>0.46</b>						
One reason that individuals report revenge pornography is that they want others to see intimate images of themselves	<b>0.43</b>						
An individual shouldn't get upset if their partner sends nude pictures of them to others	<b>0.43</b>						
Only promiscuous individuals are victims of revenge pornography	<b>0.40</b>						
If a person shares a nude or sexual picture of their partner to their friends when they are drunk, they can't really be held responsible	<b>0.40</b>						

	Factor						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Being a victim of revenge pornography negatively impacts an individual's self-esteem		<b>0.64</b>					
Being a victim of revenge pornography can affect other relationships with family and friends		<b>0.62</b>					
Being a victim of revenge pornography can cause psychological distress		<b>0.62</b>					
The act of revenge pornography can create feelings of fear for victims		<b>0.59</b>					
Victims of revenge pornography find it difficult to trust others		<b>0.59</b>					
Victims of revenge pornography often experience feelings of humiliation		<b>0.58</b>					
People commit revenge pornography in order to embarrass the victim		<b>0.56</b>					
People commit revenge pornography to feel a sense of dominance and control over the victim		<b>0.53</b>					
Police often do not investigate accusations of revenge pornography thoroughly enough		<b>0.47</b>					
News outlets should not release the names of victims of revenge pornography to the public		<b>0.45</b>					
Most people who commit acts of revenge pornography are not charged or convicted		<b>0.42</b>					
It is preferable that a same sex officer conduct the questioning when someone has reported being a victim of revenge pornography		<b>0.40</b>					
Most revenge pornography cases do not lead to an arrest		<b>0.40</b>					
An individual who sends illicit photos or videos of themselves to others should expect them to be shared				<b>0.80</b>			
An individual should expect for their intimate pictures or videos to be shared if they give them to somebody else				<b>0.79</b>			
People should know better than to take sexually explicit selfies or videos in the first place, even if they never send them to anyone				<b>0.70</b>			
An individual who sexts others should expect to be a victim of revenge pornography				<b>0.69</b>			

	<b>Factor</b>						
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
If an individual sends a sexual image/video to their partner, they should not be surprised if it ends up online			<b>0.68</b>				
People should not allow their partner to take a nude picture of them			<b>0.60</b>				
Celebrities who take explicit pictures or videos of themselves should not expect that those images will remain private			<b>0.52</b>				
People should take responsibility to make sure that they do not become a victim of revenge pornography			<b>0.52</b>				
It is easy to avoid being a victim of revenge pornography if you behave correctly			<b>0.52</b>				
When an individual teases other people with sexual images, eventually those images are going to be shared			<b>0.51</b>				
Being a victim of revenge pornography isn't as bad as being raped				<b>0.59</b>			
Revenge pornography is the worst crime that could happen to someone				<b>-0.52</b>			
Certain people enjoy lots of individuals looking at intimate pictures or videos of them				<b>0.49</b>			
Sharing naked pictures of another with your friends is not as bad as posting them on the internet				<b>0.48</b>			
People who share private photos of their ex-partner are sometimes just showing them off				<b>0.47</b>			
Perpetrators of revenge pornography should be given harsh criminal sentences				<b>-0.43</b>			
A person convicted of revenge pornography should have to register as a sex offender				<b>-0.43</b>			
Most charges of revenge pornography are unfounded					<b>0.54</b>		
Revenge pornography is only committed by an individual known to the victim						<b>0.63</b>	
Revenge pornography is unlikely to be committed by strangers						<b>0.62</b>	
In reality, most revenge pornography cases are committed by current or former romantic partners						<b>0.52</b>	

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	<b>Factor</b>						
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
People who commit revenge pornography are usually scorned ex-lovers						<b>0.48</b>	
Revenge pornography is committed by sexually deviant people							<b>0.58</b>
All perpetrators of revenge pornography have mental health problems							<b>0.44</b>
Most people commit revenge pornography because it gives them a thrill from breaking the law							<b>0.43</b>

For Peer Review

**Table 2.** Descriptive statistics and zero-order correlations (Pearson's *r*) between the measured variables (Study 2)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1. Sex	-														
2. Age	.22***	-													
3. Education	.03	.08	-												
4. Politics	.15**	.17***	-.02	-											
5. Empathy	-.35***	.02	-.02	-.18***	-										
6. BJWS	.14**	.04	-.04	.26***	-.21***	-									
7. Sadism	.11*	-.15**	.04	.15**	-.40***	.15**	-								
8. Machiavellianism	.20***	-.13**	.01	.22***	-.44***	.12*	.46***	-							
9. Narcissism	.11*	-.09*	.03	.15**	-.11*	.13**	.38***	.37***	-						
10. Psychopathy	.19***	-.03	-.03	.14**	-.39***	.12*	.64***	.50***	.42***	-					
11. IRMA	.34***	.06	-.02	.36***	-.43***	.28***	.45***	.48***	.27***	.44***	-				
12. BRPQ 1: Victims as Promiscuous	.29***	.04	-.04	.27***	-.40***	.34***	.34***	.30***	.24***	.39***	.63***	-			
13. BRPQ 2: Victim Harm	-.23***	-.03	.06	-.21***	.39***	-.35***	-.14**	-.13**	-.13**	-.26***	-.42***	-.65***	-		
14. BRPQ 3: Avoiding Vulnerable Behavior	.35***	.17***	-.06	.33***	-.33***	.23***	.27***	.36***	.13**	.24***	.60***	.57***	-.36***	-	
15. BRPQ 4: Offense Minimization	.15***	.14**	-.09*	.04	-.06	.12*	-.10*	-.13***	-.12**	-.01	.06	.10*	-.30***	.07	-
<i>M</i>	0.43	30.05	15.03	2.35	2.81	2.78	1.99	2.86	2.48	2.09	1.81	1.50	4.97	2.51	3.43
<i>SD</i>	0.50	10.69	4.39	1.11	0.48	0.87	0.61	0.68	0.63	0.61	0.67	0.66	0.63	1.01	0.46
<i>α</i>	-	-	-	-	.79	.88	.80	.81	.78	.75	.94	.94	.87	.90	.74
<i>n</i>	502	506	468	507	486	487	484	485	484	484	485	508	508	508	509

**Note.** 'Sex' is coded as 0=female, 1=male. BJWS = Belief in a Just World Scale; IRMA = Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale; BRPQ = Beliefs about Revenge Pornography Questionnaire

\*  $p < .05$  \*\*  $p < .001$  \*\*\*  $p < .001$

**Table 3.** Multiple linear regression predicting BRPQ factor scores

	<b>BRPQ 1: Victims as Promiscuous</b>		<b>BRPQ 2: Victim Harm</b>		<b>BRPQ 3: Avoiding Vulnerable Behaviors</b>		<b>BRPQ4: Offense Minimization</b>	
	<i>B</i> [95% CI]	$\beta$	<i>B</i> [95% CI]	$\beta$	<i>B</i> [95% CI]	$\beta$	<i>B</i> [95% CI]	$\beta$
Intercept	<b>0.80 [0.17, 1.43]</b>		<b>4.24 [3.57, 4.90]</b>		0.83 [-0.12, 1.79]		<b>4.02 [0.28, 3.48]</b>	
1. Sex	0.03 [-0.08, 0.14]	0.02	0.00 [-0.12, 0.12]	0.00	<b>0.24 [0.07, 0.41]</b>	<b>0.12**</b>	0.07 [-0.02, 0.17]	0.08
2. Age	0.00 [-0.00, 0.00]	0.00	0.00 [0.00, 0.01]	0.05	<b>0.01 [0.00, 0.02]</b>	<b>0.12**</b>	0.00 [-0.00, 0.01]	0.07
3. Education	0.00 [-0.01, 0.01]	-0.02	0.01 [-0.01, 0.02]	0.04	-0.01 [-0.03, 0.00]	-0.06	-0.01 [-0.02, 0.00]	-0.07
4. Politics	0.02 [-0.03, 0.07]	0.04	-0.02 [-0.08, 0.03]	-0.04	<b>0.10 [0.03, 0.18]</b>	<b>0.11**</b>	0.00 [-0.04, 0.04]	0.00
5. Empathy	<b>-0.21 [-0.34, -0.08]</b>	<b>-0.15**</b>	<b>0.39 [0.25, 0.53]</b>	<b>0.28***</b>	-0.08 [-0.27, 0.12]	-0.04	-0.08 [-0.19, 0.03]	-0.08
6. BJWS	<b>0.11 [0.05, 0.17]</b>	<b>0.14***</b>	<b>-0.15 [-0.22, -0.09]</b>	<b>-0.20***</b>	0.03 [-0.06, 0.13]	0.03	0.04 [-0.01, 0.10]	0.08
7. Sadism	-0.02 [-0.14, 0.09]	-0.02	<b>0.21 [0.09, 0.33]</b>	<b>0.20***</b>	0.09 [-0.08, 0.27]	0.06	-0.09 [-0.18, 0.01]	-0.11
8. Machiavellianism	<b>-0.10 [-0.20, 0.00]</b>	<b>-0.10*</b>	<b>0.22 [0.12, 0.33]</b>	<b>0.23***</b>	<b>0.19 [0.05, 0.34]</b>	<b>0.13*</b>	<b>-0.13 [-0.22, -0.05]</b>	<b>-0.20**</b>
9. Narcissism	0.05 [-0.04, 0.15]	0.05	-0.04 [-0.14, 0.06]	-0.03	-0.11 [-0.25, 0.03]	-0.07	<b>-0.09 [-0.17, -0.01]</b>	<b>-0.12*</b>
10. Psychopathy	<b>0.16 [0.04, 0.27]</b>	<b>0.14**</b>	<b>-0.22 [-0.34, -0.09]</b>	<b>-0.20***</b>	-0.15 [-0.33, 0.03]	-0.09	0.07 [-0.03, 0.17]	0.09
11. IRMA	<b>0.47 [0.38, 0.57]</b>	<b>0.47***</b>	<b>-0.32 [-0.43, -0.22]</b>	<b>-0.33***</b>	<b>0.68 [0.53, 0.82]</b>	<b>0.45***</b>	0.08 [-0.00, 0.17]	0.12

**Note.** *B* represents the unstandardized coefficient, whereas  $\beta$  represents the standardized coefficient for comparison across variables. ‘Sex’ is coded as 0=female, 1=male. BJWS = Belief in a Just World Scale; IRMA = Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale; BRPQ = Beliefs about Revenge Pornography Questionnaire. Significant predictors are presented in **bold** typeface.

\*  $p < .05$     \*\*\*  $p < .001$

**Table 4.** Zero-order correlations (Pearson's *r*) between the measured variables (Study 3)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
1. Sex	-																	
2. Age	.19**	-																
3. Education	-.02	.08	-															
4. Politics	.05	.08	-.06	-														
5. Empathy	-.35***	.04	.02	-.12	-													
6. BJWS	.03	-.01	-.06	.31***	-.13*	-												
7. Sadism	.09	-.20**	.08	.09	-.38***	.11	-											
8. Machiavellianism	.20**	-.15*	.01	.22***	-.43***	.04	.45***	-										
9. Narcissism	.13	-.17*	.05	.23***	-.15*	.09	.42***	.42***	-									
10. Psychopathy	.17*	-.12	.05	.09	-.41***	.06	.67***	.52***	.51***	-								
11. IRMA	.32***	.02	.02	.31***	-.41***	.19**	.42***	.50***	.32***	.48***	-							
12. BRPQ 1: Victims as Promiscuous	.23***	.02	-.03	.27***	-.22***	.30***	.43***	.29***	.31***	.51***	.63***	-						
13. BRPQ 2: Victim Harm	-.20**	.01	.09	-.28***	.41***	-.31***	-.28***	-.19**	-.20**	-.34***	-.47***	-.67***	-					
14. BRPQ 3: Avoiding Vulnerable Behaviors	.35***	.14*	-.04	.34***	-.30***	.22***	.23***	.35***	.18**	.26***	.58***	.51***	-.37	-				
15. BRPQ 4: Offense Minimization	.31***	.06	.01	.00	-.25***	-.11	.22***	.33***	.06	.22***	.34***	.12	-.24***	.32***	-			
16. Direct Proclivity	.05	-.07	-0.01	-.07	-.26***	.16*	.43***	.11	.21**	.45***	.32***	.45***	-.20**	.17**	-.05	-		
17. Enjoyment Proclivity	.08	-.14*	.01	-.04	-.28***	.14*	.46***	.17*	.20**	.45***	.31***	.37***	-.18**	.17*	.00	.83***	-	
18. Approval Proclivity	-.13*	.06	-.06	-.10	.40***	-.13*	-.32***	-.17*	-.25***	-.40***	-.39***	-.63***	.46***	-.36***	.03	-.54***	-.53***	-

**Note.** 'Sex' is coded as 0=female, 1=male. BJWS = Belief in a Just World Scale; IRMA = Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale; BRPQ = Beliefs about Revenge Pornography Questionnaire

\*  $p < .05$  \*\*  $p < .01$  \*\*\*  $p < .001$

**Table 5.** Multiple linear regression predicting proclivities for the non-consensual sharing of private sexual images

	<u>Direct Proclivity</u>		<u>Perceived Enjoyment</u>		<u>Anticipated Disapproval</u>	
	<i>B</i> [95% CI]	$\beta$	<i>B</i> [95% CI]	$\beta$	<i>B</i> [95% CI]	$\beta$
Intercept	0.58 [-0.86, 2.02]		0.78 [-0.87, 2.42]		<b>3.26 [1.51, 5.01]</b>	
1. Sex	-0.09 [-0.28, 0.10]	-0.06	-0.01 [-0.23, 0.21]	-0.01	0.12 [0.11, 0.36]	0.06
2. Age	-0.00 [-0.01, 0.01]	-0.02	-0.01 [-0.02, 0.00]	-0.10	0.00 [-0.01, 0.01]	0.05
3. Education	-0.01 [-0.03, 0.01]	-0.05	-0.00 [-0.02, 0.02]	-0.02	0.01 [-0.01, 0.03]	0.04
4. Politics	<b>-0.16 [-0.25, -0.07]</b>	<b>-0.24***</b>	<b>-0.12 [-0.22, -0.02]</b>	<b>-0.16*</b>	<b>0.11 [0.00, 0.22]</b>	<b>0.12*</b>
5. Empathy	-0.17 [-0.39, 0.05]	-0.12	-0.22 [-0.47, 0.03]	-0.14	<b>0.47 [0.21, 0.73]</b>	<b>0.24***</b>
6. BJWS	0.07 [-0.04, 0.17]	0.08	0.06 [-0.06, 0.17]	0.07	0.11 [-0.00, 0.24]	0.11
7. Sadism	<b>0.25 [0.05, 0.45]</b>	<b>0.20*</b>	<b>0.37 [0.14, 0.59]</b>	<b>0.27**</b>	-0.03 [-0.27, 0.21]	-0.02
8. Machiavellianism	<b>-0.21 [-0.37, -0.05]</b>	<b>-0.20*</b>	-0.17 [-0.36, 0.01]	-0.15	0.16 [-0.04, 0.35]	0.11
9. Narcissism	-0.01 [-0.16, 0.15]	-0.00	-0.03 [-0.21, 0.15]	-0.02	-0.16 [-0.35, 0.03]	-0.10
10. Psychopathy	<b>0.28 [0.06, 0.50]</b>	<b>0.23*</b>	<b>0.26 [0.01, 0.51]</b>	<b>0.20*</b>	-0.10 [-0.37, 0.17]	-0.06
11. IRMA	0.17 [-0.02, 0.37]	0.16	0.15 [-0.08, 0.37]	0.12	-0.06 [-0.30, 0.17]	-0.04
12. BRPQ1: Victims as Promiscuous	<b>0.30 [0.10, 0.50]</b>	<b>0.29**</b>	0.16 [-0.06, 0.39]	0.15	<b>-0.56 [-0.80, -0.32]</b>	<b>-0.40***</b>
13. BRPQ2: Victim Harm	0.15 [-0.03, 0.32]	0.14	0.15 [-0.05, 0.35]	0.13	0.14 [-0.08, 0.35]	0.10
14. BRPQ3: Avoiding Vulnerable Behaviors	0.03 [-0.09, 0.14]	0.04	0.04 [-0.09, 0.17]	0.05	<b>-0.20 [-0.34, -0.06]</b>	<b>-0.20**</b>
15. BRPQ4: Offense Minimization	<b>-0.15 [-0.27, -0.03]</b>	<b>-0.17*</b>	-0.12 [-0.26, 0.01]	-0.13	<b>0.27 [0.12, 0.41]</b>	<b>0.22***</b>

**Note.** *B* represents the unstandardized coefficient, whereas  $\beta$  represents the standardized coefficient for comparison across variables. 'Sex' is coded as 0=female, 1=male. BJWS = Belief in a Just World Scale; IRMA = Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale; BRPQ = Beliefs about Revenge Pornography Questionnaire. Significant predictors are presented in **bold** typeface.

\*  $p < .05$       \*\*  $p < .01$       \*\*\*  $p < .001$



**Table 6.** Zero-order correlations (Pearson's *r*) between the measured variables (Study 4)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
1. Sex	-																	
2. Age	.24***	-																
3. Education	.05	.01	-															
4. Politics	.25***	.28***	-.02	-														
5. Empathy	-.36***	-.01	-.08	-.22***	-													
6. BJWS	.27***	.08	-.02	.18**	-.29***	-												
7. Sadism	.14*	-.13*	-.00	.17*	-.43***	.17**	-											
8. Machiavellianism	.16*	-.12	-.02	.22**	.42***	.20**	.49***	-										
9. Narcissism	.07	-.06	.01	.09	.07	.18*	.26***	.32***	-									
10. Psychopathy	.20**	.06	-.09	.21**	-.37***	.17**	.62***	.49***	.33***	-								
11. IRMA	.35***	.06	-.06	.40***	-.45***	.37***	.46***	.45***	.21**	.40***	-							
12. BRPQ 1: Victims as Promiscuous	.31***	.07	-.04	.30***	-.36***	.38***	.26***	.30***	.17**	.28***	.62***	-						
13. BRPQ 2: Victim Harm	-.24***	-.06	.02	-.18**	.33***	-.42***	-.03	-.04	-.07	-.18**	-.41***	-.63***	-					
14. BRPQ 3: Avoiding Vulnerable Behaviors	.32***	.17**	-.10	.37***	-.35***	.23***	.31***	.37***	.10	.23***	.61***	.60***	-.33***	-				
15. BRPQ 4: Offense Minimization	.35***	-.09	.04	.14*	-.29***	.24***	.11	.15*	.04	.13*	.37***	.25***	-.31***	.24***	-			
16. Victim Blaming	.40***	.17**	-.03	.35***	-.47***	.28***	.28***	.29***	.15*	.30***	.68***	.58***	-.39***	.65***	.30***	-		
17. Perceived Criminality	-.32***	-.03	.01	-.29***	.38***	-.29***	-.14*	-.13	.02	-.16*	-.46***	-.51***	.48***	-.40***	-.58***	-.46***	-	
18. Perceived Harm	-.17*	-.07	-.09	-.19**	.31***	-.35***	-.09	-.01	-.01	-.17*	-.37***	-.43***	.62***	-.25***	-.40***	-.30***	.63***	-

**Note.** 'Sex' is coded as 0=female, 1=male. BJWS = Belief in a Just World Scale; IRMA = Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale; BRPQ = Beliefs about Revenge Pornography Questionnaire

\*  $p < .05$  \*\*  $p < .01$  \*\*\*  $p < .001$

**Table 7a.** Multiple linear regression predicting judgements of the non-consensual sharing of private sexual images (control condition)

	<u>Victim Blame</u>		<u>Perceived Criminality</u>		<u>Victim Harm</u>	
	<i>B</i> [95% CI]	$\beta$	<i>B</i> [95% CI]	$\beta$	<i>B</i> [95% CI]	$\beta$
Intercept	1.65 [-1.92, 5.22]		4.92 [1.09, 8.75]		2.08 [-0.80, 4.96]	
1. Sex	0.12 [-0.32, 0.56]	0.05	-0.05 [-0.52, 0.41]	-0.03	0.15 [-0.20, 0.51]	0.09
2. Age	0.00 [-0.02, 0.02]	0.02	0.00 [-0.02, 0.02]	-0.05	0.00 [-0.02, 0.01]	-0.06
3. Education	-0.01 [-0.05, 0.03]	-0.03	0.00 [-0.04, 0.04]	-0.00	-0.01 [-0.04, 0.03]	-0.03
4. Politics	0.08 [-0.11, 0.26]	0.07	-0.07 [-0.27, 0.13]	-0.07	-0.06 [-0.21, 0.09]	-0.08
5. Empathy	-0.68 [-1.25, -0.12]	-0.27*	0.75 [0.15, 1.36]	0.36*	0.22 [-0.24, 0.67]	0.13
6. BJWS	-0.05 [-0.30, 0.19]	-0.04	0.04 [-0.22, 0.31]	0.04	-0.15 [-0.35, 0.05]	-0.14
7. Sadism	-0.19 [-0.62, 0.24]	-0.12	0.06 [-0.40, 0.52]	0.05	0.30 [-0.04, 0.65]	0.29
8. Machiavellianism	-0.48 [-0.85, -0.11]	-0.28*	0.43 [0.04, 0.82]	0.30*	0.17 [-0.13, 0.46]	0.14
9. Narcissism	0.29 [-0.05, 0.64]	0.14	0.31 [-0.07, 0.68]	0.17	0.18 [-0.10, 0.46]	0.13
10. Psychopathy	0.11 [-0.35, 0.57]	0.06	0.08 [-0.42, 0.58]	0.05	-0.36 [-0.74, 0.01]	-0.30
11. IRMA	0.46 [0.02, 0.91]	0.30*	-0.27 [-0.75, 0.20]	-0.21	-0.40 [-0.75, -0.04]	-0.37*
12. BRPQ1: Victims as Promiscuous	0.29 [-0.29, 0.87]	0.12	-0.51 [-1.13, 0.11]	-0.26	0.46 [-0.01, 0.93]	0.29
13. BRPQ2: Victim Harm	0.20 [-0.26, 0.66]	0.09	-0.03 [-0.52, 0.47]	-0.01	0.80 [0.43, 1.17]	0.52***
14. BRPQ3: Avoiding Vulnerable Behaviors	0.63 [0.36, 0.91]	0.51***	0.10 [-0.19, 0.40]	0.10	0.08 [-0.14, 0.03]	0.10
15. BRPQ4: Offense Minimization	0.00 [-0.26, 0.27]	0.00	-0.59 [-0.87, -0.30]	-0.47***	-0.19 [-0.40, 0.03]	-0.18
Model summary	$F(15, 57) = 9.72, p < .001, \text{adj. } R^2 = .645$		$F(15, 57) = 4.53, p < .001, \text{adj. } R^2 = .424$		$F(15, 57) = 5.95, p < .001, \text{adj. } R^2 = .508$	

**Note.** 'Sex' is coded as 0=female, 1=male. BJWS = Belief in a Just World Scale; IRMA = Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale; BRPQ = Beliefs about Revenge Pornography Questionnaire. *B* values whose confidence intervals do not include zero are statistically significant.

\*  $p < .05$     \*\*  $p < .01$     \*\*\*  $p < .001$

**Table 7b.** Multiple linear regression predicting judgements of the non-consensual sharing of private sexual images (provocative dress condition)

	<u>Victim Blame</u>		<u>Perceived Criminality</u>		<u>Victim Harm</u>	
	<i>B</i> [95% CI]	$\beta$	<i>B</i> [95% CI]	$\beta$	<i>B</i> [95% CI]	$\beta$
Intercept	-1.50 [-6.38, 3.39]		7.44 [3.22, 11.66]		6.22 [2.02, 10.43]	
1. Sex	0.24 [-0.28, 0.75]	0.10	-0.14 [-0.58, 0.31]	-0.07	0.16 [-0.28, 0.60]	0.10
2. Age	0.02 [0.00, 0.04]	0.18	0.01 [-0.01, 0.03]	0.08	0.00 [-0.02, 0.01]	-0.06
3. Education	0.04 [-0.03, 0.11]	0.11	0.03 [-0.03, 0.10]	0.12	0.00 [-0.07, 0.06]	-0.02
4. Politics	-0.25 [-0.48, -0.02]	-0.24*	-0.10 [-0.30, 0.10]	-0.12	-0.09 [-0.28, 0.11]	-0.13
5. Empathy	-0.35 [-0.93, 0.24]	-0.12	0.28 [-0.23, 0.79]	0.13	0.10 [-0.40, 0.61]	0.06
6. BJWS	0.21 [-0.15, 0.57]	0.14	-0.24 [-0.55, 0.08]	-0.20	0.07 [-0.24, 0.38]	0.07
7. Sadism	-0.40 [-0.91, 0.11]	-0.20	-0.11 [-0.55, 0.33]	-0.07	-0.18 [-0.62, 0.26]	-0.14
8. Machiavellianism	0.08 [-0.40, 0.56]	0.05	0.43 [0.02, 0.84]	0.31*	0.20 [-0.21, 0.61]	0.17
9. Narcissism	0.25 [-0.20, 0.71]	0.12	0.53 [0.14, 0.92]	0.32**	0.00 [-0.39, 0.39]	-0.00
10. Psychopathy	-0.18 [-0.64, 0.27]	-0.09	-0.21 [-0.60, 0.18]	-0.13	-0.14 [-0.53, 0.24]	-0.11
11. IRMA	0.74 [0.26, 1.22]	0.40**	0.04 [-0.38, 0.45]	0.03	-0.02 [-0.43, 0.40]	-0.01
12. BRPQ1: Victims as Promiscuous	0.18 [-0.30, 0.66]	0.10	-0.63 [-1.04, -0.22]	-0.45**	-0.35 [-0.76, 0.06]	-0.30
13. BRPQ2: Victim Harm	0.24 [-0.36, 0.85]	0.09	-0.25 [-0.78, 0.27]	-0.13	0.31 [-0.22, 0.83]	0.18
14. BRPQ3: Avoiding Vulnerable Behaviors	0.35 [0.08, 0.61]	0.30*	-0.15 [-0.38, 0.08]	-0.17	0.01 [-0.21, 0.24]	0.02
15. BRPQ4: Offense Minimization	0.15 [-0.14, 0.45]	0.10	-0.42 [-0.67, -0.16]	-0.35**	-0.30 [-0.56, -0.05]	-0.30*
Model summary	$F(15, 55) = 6.30, p < .001, \text{adj. } R^2 = .532$		$F(15, 55) = 4.34, p < .001, \text{adj. } R^2 = .417$		$F(15, 55) = 1.99, p = .034, \text{adj. } R^2 = .174$	

**Note.** 'Sex' is coded as 0=female, 1=male. BJWS = Belief in a Just World Scale; IRMA = Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale; BRPQ = Beliefs about Revenge Pornography Questionnaire. *B* values whose confidence intervals do not include zero are statistically significant.

\*  $p < .05$     \*\*  $p < .01$     \*\*\*  $p < .001$

**Table 7c.** Multiple linear regression predicting judgements of the non-consensual sharing of private sexual images (conservative dress condition)

	<u>Victim Blame</u>		<u>Perceived Criminality</u>		<u>Victim Harm</u>	
	<i>B</i> [95% CI]	$\beta$	<i>B</i> [95% CI]	$\beta$	<i>B</i> [95% CI]	$\beta$
Intercept	3.04 [-1.05, 7.12]		6.15 [2.58, 9.72]		3.02 [-0.20, 6.25]	
1. Sex	0.37 [-0.22, 0.95]	0.12	0.06 [-0.46, 0.57]	0.02	0.07 [-0.39, 0.53]	0.03
2. Age	0.00 [-0.02, 0.03]	0.02	0.00 [-0.02, 0.03]	0.04	0.00 [-0.02, 0.02]	0.03
3. Education	0.01 [-0.05, 0.08]	0.04	-0.03 [-0.08, 0.03]	-0.10	-0.05 [-0.10, 0.00]	-0.21*
4. Politics	0.10 [-0.14, 0.35]	0.08	-0.11 [-0.32, 0.10]	-0.11	0.02 [-0.17, 0.21]	0.02
5. Empathy	-0.44 [-1.14, 0.25]	-0.14	0.08 [-0.53, 0.68]	0.03	-0.02 [-0.56, 0.53]	-0.01
6. BJWS	-0.22 [-0.56, 0.12]	-0.13	0.01 [-0.29, 0.31]	0.01	-0.25 [-0.52, 0.02]	-0.19
7. Sadism	-0.30 [-0.95, 0.36]	-0.11	0.28 [0.30, 0.85]	0.12	-0.15 [-0.67, 0.37]	-0.07
8. Machiavellianism	0.01 [-0.51, 0.52]	0.00	-0.14 [-0.59, 0.31]	-0.07	0.29 [-0.12, 0.70]	0.16
9. Narcissism	-0.14 [-0.68, 0.40]	-0.06	0.09 [-0.39, 0.57]	0.05	-0.03 [-0.46, 0.40]	-0.02
10. Psychopathy	0.47 [-0.18, 1.11]	0.19	-0.19 [-0.75, 0.37]	-0.09	0.03 [-0.48, 0.54]	0.02
11. IRMA	0.88 [0.28, 1.48]	0.38**	0.06 [-0.46, 0.58]	0.03	0.10 [-0.37, 0.57]	0.06
12. BRPQ1: Victims as Promiscuous	0.30 [-0.33, 0.93]	0.16	-0.16 [-0.71, 0.39]	-0.11	0.25 [-0.25, 0.75]	0.18
13. BRPQ2: Victim Harm	-0.23 [-0.79, 0.33]	-0.13	0.49 [0.00, 0.98]	0.33*	0.93 [0.48, 1.37]	0.69***
14. BRPQ3: Avoiding Vulnerable Behaviors	0.25 [-0.12, 0.61]	0.19	-0.24 [-0.56, 0.08]	-0.22	-0.20 [-0.49, 0.09]	-0.20
15. BRPQ4: Offense Minimization	-0.23 [-0.56, 0.11]	-0.14	-0.46 [-0.76, -0.17]	-0.33**	-0.16 [-0.43, 0.10]	-0.13
Model summary	$F(15, 52) = 6.73, p < .001,$ adj. $R^2 = .562$		$F(15, 52) = 6.22, p < .001, \text{adj. } R^2 = .539$		$F(15, 52) = 5.89, p < .001, \text{adj. } R^2 = .522$	

**Note.** 'Sex' is coded as 0=female, 1=male. BJWS = Belief in a Just World Scale; IRMA = Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale; BRPQ = Beliefs about Revenge Pornography Questionnaire. *B* values whose confidence intervals do not include zero are statistically significant.

\*  $p < .05$     \*\*  $p < .01$     \*\*\*  $p < .001$