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RESPONSE OF VICTIMS TO COUNSELORS WITH DIFFERING VIEWS OF A JUST WORLD: AN ANALOGUE STUDY

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RESPONSE OF VICTIMS TO COUNSELORS

WITH DIFFERING VIEWS OF A JUST WORLD:

AN ANALOGUE STUDY

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degree of

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By

WILLIAM ROBERT WAYNE

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RESPONSE OF VICTIMS TO COUNSELORS

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APPROVED BY

Dorothy a. Foster

Gregg A. Eichenfield, Ph.D.

Lauren Wispé

Paul H. Klein

Robert Ragland

DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between the "belief in a just world" and preference for "meaning" or attributional counseling among "victims" in an analogue situation. It was hypothesized that those who believe the world to be just would prefer a counseling approach which enabled them to place their "accident" into a meaningful framework as an aid to cognitive adaptation. It was further hypothesized that if counseling preference was measured in a relatively disguised way there would be higher satisfaction with "meaning" counseling. Forty undergraduate student volunteers, selected on the basis of their Just World Scale scores, were asked to try to identify with the main character in an account of an accident. They were then given a counseling treatment which emphasized either the "meaning" or the "randomness" of their situation. Satisfaction with counseling was then assessed using a questionnaire addressing satisfaction with counseling and a semantic differential. Analyses of variance procedures failed to confirm the hypothesized preferences. However, correlational data revealed interesting relationships among some of the variables.

RESPONSE OF VICTIMS TO COUNSELORS

WITH DIFFERING VIEWS OF A JUST WORLD:

AN ANALOGUE STUDY

The subject of victimization has been of increasing interest within psychological research in recent years. This attention has been manifested not only by the quantity of professional books and articles, but also by publications directed toward the general public (Kushner, 1981; Ryan, 1971).

This interest has largely been the result of the disturbing research observation that many people seem to blame or derogate victims for the unfortunate event that has happened to them (Lerner, 1971; Lerner & Matthew, 1967; Lerner & Simmons, 1966; Walster, 1966). An equally compelling but much less studied aspect of victimization has been the discovery that victims often feel guilty and blame themselves for the unpleasant events in their lives (Bulman & Wortman, 1977; Rubin & Peplau, 1973). The "belief in a just world" hypothesis developed by Lerner (1980) is one very plausible explanation for why victims are often blamed and even blame themselves. According to this hypothesis, people who believe the world to be just utilize an attributional process that provides them with meaning and control in their lives. This belief refers to a set of basic assumptions which underlie the way in which people orient themselves to their environment. It is tied to an image of a meaningful and predictable world where people basically get what they deserve. In such a world people are able to plan, to work for and obtain the things they want, and to avoid that which is

frightening or painful. Although others have suggested possible motivational states to explain the phenomenon of blaming the victim, none of these states are mutually exclusive and virtually all can be conceptually fitted into a "just world" paradigm (see Kelly, 1971; Shaver, 1970; Walster, 1966).

It has long been known that people who find meaning in their everyday experiences tend to suffer less anxiety, stress and depression. Antonovsky (1979) describes a sense of "coherence" as a general attitude of those who consistently enjoy good health: that the world is comprehensible; that one at least participates in the shaping of one's own destiny. Lerner's (1980) "belief in a just world" conceptualization includes each of these characteristics as functional components and adds one more, the sense of justice or appropriateness. Because it represents such a fundamental and basic belief, it is hypothesized to exist at two levels, one within a person's awareness and the other out of the person's awareness. Lerner states that people may and often do deny believing in a "just world," while continuing to design their lives as if the world were just. Their psychological needs then require them to either deny or modify their experience of injustice. Failure to do so means that a person has accepted that some events in life are purely arbitrary and cannot be avoided. The consequences of this position are potentially devastating, as has been documented by many researchers. Living in a chaotic environment, where one has no control over outcomes or is "helpless" to affect one's fate, has often been associated with impaired physical and emotional functioning (Beck, 1967; Lefcourt, 1976; Seligman, 1975; Wortman & Brehm, 1975).

Lerner (1974) states that the desire to live in a "just world" often leads not to justice but to justification. If people cannot prevent suffering, they are often prone to deny its existence or to conclude that it is in fact deserved. The latter

conclusion requires distortions of reality and is not always easily accomplished. Lerner (1980) contends that this requires reinterpreting an event in one of three ways so that the injustice no longer exists. First, a person can reinterpret the outcome, whereby a victim's suffering is actually deemed beneficial in some way. Evidence that victims themselves do this is available in a survey reported by Lerner (1980), which found the very poorest families to be the least likely to see any injustice in their situation. Second, a person can reinterpret the "cause," where suffering becomes justified if someone "has it coming." Finally, one can reinterpret the character of the victim. Many have commented on the fact that in this culture people are often judged to be inferior or deserving of punishment based upon little information of either actual behavior or character (Kelman, 1973; Ryan, 1971). During a recent highly publicized rape trial in New Bedford, MA. reporters had no trouble finding uninformed people on the street who were quite willing to condemn the woman victim. For victims, particularly those who have a large investment in a "just world," accepting that they deserved their fates should be difficult, but possibly not as difficult as risking their belief in a "just world."

In a study of twenty-nine accident victims who were paralyzed downward from the waist or neck, Bulman and Wortman (1977) found that all but three explained their becoming paralyzed in terms which provided meaning for the event. The majority felt that it was part of "God's plan." Others thought that what happened was natural and just, while some described the accident as a positive event in their lives. The findings also suggested that blaming others was a predictor of poor coping while self blame was a predictor of good coping.

According to Janoff-Bulman (1979), in describing self blame as adaptive or maladaptive, a distinction should be made between behavioral self blame and

characterological self blame. She suggests that behavioral self blame may be considered adaptive whereas characterological self blame is typically seen as less alterable and more permanent. While a more recent study confirmed the association between behavioral self blame and less depression, characterological self blame was seen as a strong concomitant of depression rather than a cause of it (Peterson, Schwartz, & Seligman, 1981). Some caution should be exercised in discussing the relationship of attribution to depression since at least with victims we are considering a largely reactive phenomenon (Jones, 1979).

In the counseling of victims, particularly those who believe the world to be just, it would appear that facilitating the search for "meaning" should be a high priority, since personal adjustment following a life crisis is at least partially determined by the causal inferences a person makes (Dweck, 1975; Janoff-Bulman, 1979). Therefore, counseling approaches which offer causal attributions would appear to be preferable for helping victims.

Recently, there has been increasing interest in the role of causal attributions in counseling (Claiborn, 1982; Claiborn, Crawford, & Hackman, 1983; Hoffman & Teglasi, 1982). Strong and Claiborn (1982) emphasize that interpretation, defined loosely as presenting the client with a way of labeling or construing events that is discrepant from the client's own way, is essential in providing the client with a meaningful framework to use in understanding experiences and formulating solutions to problems. In their social influence approach to counseling, persuading the client into a new and meaningful framework is central to the process. Similarly, Frank (1973) concluded that healing and change are largely a function of belief, ideology, charisma, and ritual. Within this context, the content of the "meaning" conveyed is not nearly as important as its believability or persuasive power. He further was of the

opinion that differing counseling procedures would be demonstrated to be of similar efficacy, since their ultimate functions are the same. Indeed, recent research has suggested that the major counseling orientations are not significantly different in terms of successful outcomes (Bergin & Lambert, 1978; Smith, Glass, & Miller, 1980). Hoffman and Teglasi (1982) state that the one common function of the various approaches is that of providing the client with a causal framework. They think that this structure is particularly important in the initial phases of counseling when clients have difficulty defining their problem.

Although most counseling approaches provide causal frameworks, there is evidence to suggest that certain victims receive counseling that is significantly different. Janoff-Bulman (1979) points out that an often used technique for counseling rape victims involves repeatedly telling the woman that there is nothing she could have done to avoid the rape, that it was a senseless, random event, and that it was entirely the rapist's doing and outside her control. As previously discussed, depriving a person of the sense of "meaning" and the sense of personal control usually has significant negative consequences. If the victim also has a strong "belief in a just world," the consequences would likely be even more severe. In this event, it might be important to consider including some form of attributional framework within counseling.

This study was designed to determine if "victims" who believe in a "just world" prefer a counseling approach which suggests there is a meaning for what has befallen them. Specifically, there were two major hypotheses, one for each of the dependent measures. Using the counseling evaluation questionnaire as the dependent measure, it was hypothesized there would be a significant interaction effect between scores on the Just World Scale and satisfaction with type of counseling. Thus, it was expected subjects with high scores on the Just World

Scale (high JW's) would be significantly more satisfied with "meaning" counseling than "random" counseling. Those with low Just World Scale scores (low JW's) would be significantly more satisfied with "random" counseling than "meaning" counseling.

The second hypothesis was based on the following rationale: since the semantic differential is believed to be capable of picking up more subtle differences in meaning, it was hypothesized that it would detect the less "cognitive" and more affective reactions associated with basic underlying belief systems (Osgood, Suci, & Tannenbaum, 1957; Kerlinger, 1964). Therefore, using the semantic differential as the dependent measure, there would be a significant main effect for kind of counseling with both high and low JW's choosing more positive adjectives to describe "meaning" counseling.

METHOD

Subjects

The subject population for this study consisted of undergraduate psychology student volunteers from a large midwestern university. Forty students were selected from this group on the basis of their pretest Just World Scale scores, the number having been determined using a power formula with alpha set at .05, the desired power at approximately .80 and an effect size of .5. Twenty subjects each were selected from the upper and lower thirds of the distribution of scores for utilization in the study.

Even though previous research (e.g., Rubin & Peplau, 1973) has been unable to determine any clear sex differences in the "belief in a just world," men and women were assigned equally to the two treatment conditions.

Instruments

The problem of outcome measurement is a difficult one since external criteria for counseling efficacy are rare and often controversial. Measures of self reported satisfaction with counseling were selected for use as dependent measures in this study. As Rogers (1961) noted ". . . any advance in therapy, any fresh knowledge of it, any significant new hypotheses in regard to it--must come from the experience of the therapists and clients, and can never come from science (p. 212)."

The demographic questionnaire (Appendix C) is a pre-assessment instrument, constructed of general information questions, which was utilized to obtain demographic data from each subject.

The Just World Scale (Appendix D) developed by Rubin and Peplau (1975), is a twenty item, self reporting questionnaire in which the respondent is asked to indicate on a six point continuum the degree of agreement or disagreement with each statement. Approximately half of the items, selected at random, have been designed to represent agreement with a "just world" orientation (scored positively) and the other items to represent an "unjust world" orientation (scored negatively). Kuder-Richardson internal consistency reliability scores for the Just World Scale are reported at .80 and .81 respectively for samples from the Boston area and the Oklahoma area. Predictive and construct validity claims for the scale are documented by studies in the Rubin and Peplau (1975) article, particularly with respect to the derogation of victims.

The Counseling Evaluation (Appendix E) questionnaire is a modified version of the questionnaire utilized by the University of Oklahoma Counseling Center for evaluation of services. It consists of a series of statements assessing overall satisfaction with counseling. Subjects indicate on a seven point scale their level

of agreement or disagreement with each statement. Two open ended questions and one yes-no question were added to allow the subjects to respond in an unrestricted fashion regarding their impressions of counseling and whether they would have sought counseling if the event depicted in the situational account had actually happened to them. Split-half reliability for this form has been computed at .90.

Because of its ability to detect more subtle differences in meaning, in this case satisfaction with counseling, a semantic differential (Appendix F) was utilized as a second dependent outcome measure. Twenty adjective pairs were rated on seven point scales. In order to counteract response bias the positive direction was reversed on half of the pairs. Primarily evaluative and potency adjective pairs were selected in constructing the form on the basis of their relevance for a counseling experience (Osgood, Suci, & Tannenbaum, 1957; Kerlinger, 1964).

Procedure

Instructions, consisting of an explanation of what would be required from each volunteer and general information about the nature of the study, were given to all participants. Each subject was also given an informed consent document and a pre-assessment questionnaire.

The subjects, having been selected on the basis of their Just World Scale scores, were asked to read a situational account of an automobile accident (Appendix G) in which he/she was one of the principal characters. They were given the instruction to try to identify with what the character would be thinking and feeling. In an attempt to increase their identification with the character the story was embedded with visceral, auditory, and emotive cues, such as "squealing tires," "you are shaking and your heart is pounding," etc.

Each of the subjects was assigned to a counselor representing one of the two treatment conditions. Half of the subjects (equal numbers of high and low JW's) received a "counseling" treatment from a counselor pretrained to respond in a primarily supportive fashion, using largely restatements and reflections, with an attitude of "life is often unpredictable and what happened to you was just a chance occurrence" (random condition). The other half saw a counselor pretrained to ascribe "meaning" or significance to what had befallen them even if "we cannot understand it now" (meaning condition). "Counseling" sessions lasted approximately twenty minutes and each was audio taped and reviewed to ensure compliance with the "counseling" modes. Two experienced male counselors were trained for the experiment using direct instruction, role playing, and feedback over a two week period of time until clear differentiation of counseling modes was obtained. In order to counterbalance their effect, each counselor presented both treatment conditions on alternate days during the study. Other factors such as office layout and dress were held constant.

After "counseling," each of the subjects completed the counseling evaluation questionnaire, the semantic differential and was debriefed.

RESULTS

A 2 (high or low Just World Scale score) X 2 (counseling treatment) analysis of variance was performed for each of the dependent measures of satisfaction with counseling.

_____

Insert Table 1 about here

_____

The first hypothesis, that there would be a significant interaction effect between scores on the Just World Scale and satisfaction with type of counseling

using the counseling evaluation questionnaire, was not supported by the data. Those who scored high on the Just World Scale were not significantly more likely to prefer "meaning" counseling than "random" counseling. And those who scored low on the Just World Scale were not significantly more likely to prefer "random" counseling.

The second hypothesis, that there would be a significant main effect for type of counseling, with both high and low JW's choosing more positive adjectives to describe the "meaning" counseling on the semantic differential, also was not supported by the data.

A correlation matrix revealed interesting relationships among some of the variables, however.

Insert Table 2 about here

Those subjects who believed the world to be just (high JW's) also reported having a more positive general outlook on life, in response to an item on the demographic questionnaire (r = .50, p. < .001). High JW's were also more likely to rate the counseling they received in a positive way on the semantic differential questionnaire (r = .29, p. < .07).

As would be expected, the subjects who rated the counseling they received in a positive way on the counseling evaluation questionnaire reportedly would be somewhat more likely to seek counseling in similar circumstances than would the others (r = .26). Those subjects who rated their counseling as positive on the counseling evaluation questionnaire also tended to choose adjectives that would rate their counseling as positive on the semantic differential questionnaire (r = .45, p. = .003).

Those subjects who rated the importance of religion in their lives as high reported having a more positive general outlook on life than did their counterparts ($r = .28$, $p. = .08$). A Chi Square analysis on this variable showed that among those who reported that religion was of little importance in their lives (those whose scores fell below the median) and who received counseling in the "meaning" condition, all reported that they would seek counseling if the situation had actually happened to them.

Stepwise regression equations were performed for the variables 'seek counseling,' the counseling evaluation, and the semantic differential in order to determine if prediction could be improved by some combination of variables. This procedure added little new information and statistical significance was not achieved.

DISCUSSION

The study was designed primarily to determine if "victims" would prefer counseling which emphasized the meaning for their unfortunate situation or one which emphasized the randomness and unpredictability of such an event, based upon the extent to which they believed the world to be just. This relationship was not supported by the data. Two dependent measures were included in the study. The first was meant to assess satisfaction with counseling on a direct and unambiguous level, and a second was designed to be more subtle and to possibly reflect an underlying belief in a just world which would not be admitted or recognized rationally. Neither of these dependent measures was shown to significantly discriminate persons on the basis of their Just World Scale scores.

Several factors may have accounted for the lack of significant differences. The "random" condition may not have been construed as sufficiently different than the "meaning" condition, in that being told you had no way to avoid the

accident and that it really was an "accident" may actually still have provided the subject with a kind of meaning or justification of the event. Of course, the fact that this was an analogue situation and that the "victims" were not actually victims may have reduced the emotional impact to such an extent as to eliminate measureable differences. It is also possible that the situational account would have affected the subjects as predicted, but that the time between reading the account and seeing a counselor was too short to allow the predicted differences in coping to develop. Hill (1982) makes the observation that while analogue studies in counseling offer the ability to test cause and effect, they suffer from limited generalizeability and often produce conflicting results due to the difficulty of controlling for many factors without sacrificing realism. Another factor is the possibility of a demand characteristic for evaluating the counselor (in either condition) positively. A counselor seen only once who is friendly and trying to be helpful is likely to be described positively, regardless of how beneficial his/her services were. This positive bias is a common finding when satisfaction with counseling is assessed. In this study out of a possible 35 points on the counseling evaluation questionnaire the mean score was 28.97. For this reason, it is possible that an effect size of .5 was unrealistic and that a larger sample might have revealed the predicted differences. Finally, it may be very presumptuous to assume that any belief can be isolated from other cognitions and contexts and operationalized in a format such as this. Taylor (1983) states that "specific cognitions may mean different things under different circumstances, they may be functionally overlapping rather than functionally distinct, and they may satisfy several functions simultaneously (p. 1167)." She suggests that this complexity arises largely due to an individual's use of illusion in the efforts at cognitive adaptation to threatening events. That

illusion may be considered as adaptive is certainly consistent with the "just world" hypothesis. Lerner (1980) describes the "belief in a just world" as a fundamental delusion that is necessary to the functioning of most, if not all, people.

One finding of this study which lends support to its theoretical basis is reflected by the high correlation obtained between "belief in a just world" and a positive general outlook ($r = .50$, p. $< .001$). If a person has a positive general outlook he/she might be expected to have the sense of coherence as well as the sense of self efficacy or control which are associated with the "belief in a just world." As we might expect, these subjects (high JW's) were also most positive about the counseling they received, according to the semantic differential post questionnaire. The correlation between "belief in a just world" and scores on the semantic differential approached statistical significance for the study ($r = .29$, p. $= .07$). One can speculate that the relationship may have been even stronger had many of the subjects not already had an adaptive conceptual framework such as religion. Since we have suggested that a sense of meaning or coherence is important for adaptation, it is not surprising that those who rated religion as important in their lives also had a more positive general outlook on life ($r = .28$, p. $= .08$). A closer inspection of the importance of religion variable revealed a surprising result. Among those who reported that religion was of little importance in their lives and who received counseling in the "meaning" condition, all reported that they would have sought counseling if the situation had actually happened to them.

Insert Table 3 about here

This finding, although not specifically predicted, is consistent with the overall conceptual theme of the study and may have importance for counselors. If "victims" do not already have an adaptive conceptual framework for coping which can tolerate unforeseen negative events, they may seek out sources of "meaning" when something such as this happens to them. The implications for counseling could be stated more strongly if the hypothesized relationships had been supported, however, the inclusion of some form of attributional framework in the counseling of victims should still be considered as potentially helpful until further research determines otherwise.

In summary, the relationship between the "belief in a just world" and a preference for attributional counseling among "victims" was not supported by the present study. Although the main hypotheses of this study were not supported by the data, enough questions remain regarding the design and methodology to warrant further research studies before declaring that the predicted relationships do not exist. Analogue studies can be useful when exploring constructs within counseling which are not usually considered or are completely new since they offer the researcher additional control and hopefully more internal validity. This researcher believes that the tradeoff between internal and external validity represented by the decision to use an analogue in the study of victims can still be justified although it should not preclude the study of actual victims whenever possible. While the situational account utilized in this study was successfully piloted, in no way could its effect have been considered to be equivalent to what actual victims experience.

Future studies might include larger sample sizes and further field testing of the factors which lead to identification with victimizing situations, such as video and audio taped scenarios. Both short and relatively long delays might be

introduced between the stimulus event and the subsequent treatment in order to determine how these might affect identification. The counseling treatments could be expanded to include additional controls and other types of beliefs which may impact victims. If actual victims are to be utilized, great care should be taken to ensure that all contextual factors are considered as well as individual differences. Other more innovative designs, such as single case experiments and field experiments utilizing victims of major disasters might then be attempted.

The treatment of victims in counseling is an area worthy of much more attention than it has been given in the past, particularly since victims of many kinds seek help daily and since we all eventually become victims at some point in time.

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Table 1

Analyses of Variance

Counseling Evaluation

Source	df	MS	F
Counseling Treatment (A)	1	.63	.04
High or Low Just World Score (B)	1	18.23	1.27
Interaction (A X B)	1	4.23	.29
Error	36	14.39	

Semantic Differential

Source	df	MS	F
Counseling Treatment (A)	1	296.98	2.07
High or Low Just World Score (B)	1	24.02	.17
Interaction (A X B)	1	.07	.00
Error	36	143.71	

Critical value for F (p < .05) = 4.17

Table 2

Correlation Coefficients

	Religion	Outlook	J-World	Couns-Ev.	Seek-Cng.	Sem-Diff	Cnslr
Religion	---	.28*	.05	.13	-.20	.01	-.03
Outlook		---	.50***	.24	.18	.05	-.13
Just World			---	.05	-.05	.29*	-.07
Counseling Evaluation				---	.27*	.45***	.09
Seek Counseling					---	.06	.25
Semantic Differential						---	-.04
Counselor							---

*p < .10   **p < .05   ***p < .01

Table 3

Comparison of Variables

Religion and Seek Counseling

		SEEK COUNSELING	
	Counseling Type	Would	Would not
HIGH RELIGION	Meaning	20%	80%
	Random	44%	56%
LOW RELIGION	Meaning	100%	0%
	Random	27%	73%

APPENDIX A

PROSPECTUS

INTRODUCTION

The subject of victimization has been of increasing interest within psychological research in recent years. This attention has been manifested not only by the quantity of professional books and articles, but also by publications directed toward the general public (Kushner, 1981; Ryan, 1971).

The majority of this interest has been a result of the disturbing research observation that many people seem to blame or derogate victims for the unfortunate event that has happened to them (Lerner, 1971; Lerner & Matthews, 1967; Lerner & Simmons, 1966; Walster, 1966). An equally compelling, but much less studied aspect of victimization, has been the determination that victims often feel guilty and blame themselves for the unpleasant events in their lives (Bulman & Wortman, 1977; Rubin & Peplau, 1973).

In an effort to understand the processes which underlie this phenomenon, researchers have hypothesized various possible motivational states. Among them are the desire to maintain belief in a just world (Lerner, 1965, 1971, 1975, 1980), the desire to protect oneself from becoming a victim (Walster, 1966), the desire to maintain a belief in personal control over one's environment (Kelly, 1971; Walster, 1966), and the desire to protect oneself from blame (Shaver, 1970).

According to Lerner (1980), the "belief in a just world" refers to a set of basic assumptions which underlie the way in which people orient themselves to their environment. These more or less articulated assumptions have a functional component which is tied to an image of a meaningful and predictable world

where people get what they deserve and deserve what they get. In such a world, people are able to avoid that which is frightening or painful.

Each of the other possible motives mentioned are reasonable in some situations, however each can be fitted into the "belief in a just world" paradigm. Certainly in a "just world" people could avoid blame, avoid becoming a victim, and have personal control if only they could understand the "rules."

Counselors are faced with victims of many kinds, yet current training in counseling techniques does not address the complex issues of victimization. As Lerner (1980) suggests, victims who believe they deserve their fate not only feel guilty, but seek a restoration of meaning and thus control over future events in their lives. Within this framework, the amount of dissonance the victim feels should be associated with the degree to which they believe in a "just world."

In counseling models where self blame is regarded as maladaptive, this dissonance may be increased. Beck (1967), in his conceptualization of depression, discusses self blame as a symptom which is related to harsh self-criticism and low evaluation of self worth. In contrast, Bulman (1979) in a study on depression and rape, suggests that behavioral self blame or faulting a specific behavior, as distinguished from characterological self blame or faulting one's overall character, may be considered a predictor of good coping among victims.

The superiority of counseling orientations which emphasize making causal attributions over those that do not has recently been supported (Hoffman & Teglasi, 1982; Strong & Claiborn, 1982). However, the results do not indicate a general utilization of causal attributions would be advisable. For example, Forsyth and Forsyth (1982) found that the effectiveness of causal counseling may depend on the individual's locus of control. Zuckerman and Gerbasi (1977) have

shown that "belief in a just world" consistently correlates with locus of control measures as well as the reaction to victims.

What appears to be lacking are studies which can link the "belief in a just world" with a preference for attributional counseling. More specifically, victims who have a high degree of "belief in a just world" should prefer a counseling approach which suggests there is a meaning for what has befallen them. If this can be demonstrated, counselors may be better able to understand the needs of victims and thereby increase their effectiveness in working with them.

LITERATURE REVIEW

It has long been known that people who find meaning in their everyday experience tend to suffer less anxiety, stress and depression. Antonovsky (1979) describes a sense of "coherence" as a general attitude, characteristic of those who consistently enjoy good health, that the world is comprehensible; that one's own life is meaningful, orderly, and reasonably predictable; and that one at least participates in the shaping of one's own destiny.

These characteristics are also functional components of Lerner's (1980) "belief in a just world" conceptualization. However, the "belief in a just world" incorporates an additional characteristic not included in the previous list, the sense of justice or appropriateness. Thus, for those who believe in a "just world," the world is not only understandable, predictable and controllable, but also appropriate. It is a world where people get what they deserve and where things work out as they "should" or "ought."

In a similar vein, attribution theory, as formulated by Heider (1958), assumes that people are motivated to seek meaning in their own behavior as well as in the world about them. Therefore, attributional processes are important in the individual's attempts to understand and interpret the possible causes for

his/her own actions, feelings and attitudes. Indeed, not only does a sense of meaning and coherence seem to be a basic motivation, but there is ample evidence that when these elements are lacking serious consequences occur. Living in a chaotic environment, where one has no control over outcomes or is "helpless" to affect one's fate, has been associated with impaired physical and emotional functioning (Lefcourt, 1976; Wortman & Brehm, 1975).

Beck (1967), in his research on depression, noted that hopelessness, powerlessness, and a sense of futility have been associated with depression for centuries. In the learned helplessness model of depression, described by Seligman (1975), the affective, cognitive and behavioral components of depression are the consequences of learning that outcomes are uncontrollable.

Lerner (1980) contends that since "the belief in a just world" is based on such fundamental characteristics, it represents a nearly universal and basic belief. And, although the sense of justice varies greatly among people in both form and content, he believes there are important constancies in the origins and functions of the process of judging appropriateness.

If people learn how things "should" turn out or "ought" to be, then they logically develop expectancies about events in the environment. If the expectancies or beliefs are based on insufficient information and thus become disconfirmed, dissonance should occur. Aronson (1969) states that psychological inconsistency seems typically to arise from the "violation of an expectancy" (p.7). This view is compatible with the earlier contention by Festinger (1957) that two elements are dissonant if one does not, or would not be expected to, follow from the other. The more central and important the prior confirmation associated with the belief, the greater will be the emotional disturbance (Rokeach, 1971).

These theories of cognitive consistency predict that when new information is introduced producing an inconsistency among beliefs, then one or more of them will change so that greater consistency is achieved. Lerner (1980) puts it, "whenever an expectation about one's self or the environment is disconfirmed, people are upset and motivated to remove that undesirable state of affairs" (p. 10). The negative state elicited by the dissonant cognitions is the sense of injustice, the feeling that there has been a violation of that which is judged to be "appropriate."

"Belief in a Just World"

The "belief in a just world" hypothesis, as suggested earlier, does not simply represent a transitory or momentary cognitive state, but rather a basic and enduring part of the way in which a person orients him/herself to the world (Lerner, 1980). As such, it is likely that someone with this "belief" would interact with the environment from information based in accessible memory and associations as well as from information that is not readily accessible or is out of the person's awareness. Lerner (1980) suggests that people have a commitment to "reality," that they cannot deny that unexplainable injustices can and do occur and that most people will tell you that it is an imperfect world. However, these same people will design their lives on the assumption that they do live in a just world and their psychological needs will require them to either deny or modify the experience of injustice. Failure to deny or modify the perception of injustice would imply that a person has accepted that some events in life are purely arbitrary and cannot be avoided. As discussed previously, the consequences of that position are considerable.

How does this belief develop? In Western societies there is a great deal of emphasis on people getting what they deserve. The Protestant Ethic associates

hard work with financial success and virtue. Authorities, such as parents, policemen, and judges are idealized. Fairy tales and popular myths link virtue and attractiveness with success and rewards. They also teach that misbehavior and wickedness are punished. Popular religious instruction often includes rewards and punishments and asserts that even if these do not occur immediately, they are ultimately inevitable.

The linking together of all things positive (goodness, happiness, beauty, virtue, etc.) in a causal manner, as well as all negative things, is evidence, according to Heider (1958), that our minds naturally seek a "balance" or psychological harmony. In other words, he feels that this is an innate way of viewing the world, common to us all.

Lerner (1974) proposes that, in addition to social learning influences, certain developmental processes are involved. He thinks that young children eventually graduate from the "pleasure principle" to the "reality principle," in which the ability to delay gratification plays a major role. At this point, the child learns that giving up immediate rewards will lead to greater rewards later. Mischel (1974) also emphasizes that the trust or belief that one will receive the delayed rewards one deserves is important for developing the ability to delay gratification. Lerner (1974) additionally implies that "belief in a just world" is related to a sense of personal efficacy, or personal control over outcomes.

Another developmental view comes from the cognitive-developmental approach of Piaget (1965). In his examination of the systematic developmental changes that occur in children's perceptions, he found that in young children there exists a common belief that "a fault will automatically bring about its own punishment" (p. 256). He called this phenomenon "immanant justice." He noted that this belief declines with age from approximately age six to age twelve and

that experience with personal injustice hastens its decline. But, even though the belief declines with age, he maintains that it persists to some degree in adults.

Whatever the origins of the "belief in a just world," it seems that most people have some degree of the belief during childhood. The extent to which they retain the belief is probably modified by experiences with injustice. None of the hypothesized bases of the belief are mutually exclusive and all could play a part in its development. The observation by Lerner (1980), that the belief is pervasive and serves both individual and societal needs, seems well founded.

In an effort to explore the "belief in a just world" more fully, Rubin and Peplau (1975) developed the Just World Scale. The twenty item scale is based on the assumption that there is "an attitudinal continuum extending between two poles of total acceptance and total rejection of the notion that the world is a just place" (p. 66). For each item, the person is offered three levels of agreement and disagreement from which to select, encompassing a six point continuum. Scores are summed for all the items, yielding a minimum score of 20, with a maximum score of 120 indicating complete affirmation of the justness of one's world. Internal consistency reliabilities (coefficient alpha or KR-20) for the two norming samples were reported at .80 and .81 for groups of undergraduate students from the Boston and Oklahoma areas respectively. The first predictive validity study was carried out during the 1971 national draft lottery (Rubin & Peplau, 1973). In that study, 58 draft eligible young men were given questionnaires before and after the lottery. Some of the results reported were a strong association between the person's fate in the lottery and his subsequently measured "self esteem." There also was a tendency for those who scored in the upper third on the Just World Scale to reject or disparage the lottery "losers." Additional studies which contribute construct and predictive

validity for the Just World Scale are reported by Rubin and Peplau (1975) and Lerner (1980).

With a useful instrument to measure "belief in a just world," researchers have been able to determine some of its correlates. Rubin and Peplau (1975) cite studies which demonstrate correlations of varying degrees between the "belief in a just world" and authoritarianism, trust, religiosity, the protestant ethic, and an internal "locus of control." The latter of these, the internal locus of control, refers to those individuals who believe they are able to control their own rewards and punishments, rather than being at the mercy of external forces (Rotter, 1966). This view is certainly consistent with the "just world" hypothesis. It is not, however, synonymous with the "belief in a just world." On the basis of factor analytic studies, Zuckerman and Gerbasi (1977) have suggested that "belief in a just world" may only be one of four dimensions underlying an internal locus of control (the others being belief in a difficult world, a predictable world, and a politically responsive world). As Rubin and Peplau (1975) point out, the consistent correlations with religiosity and authoritarianism suggest that some people with high Just World scores believe in a just world that is governed by external forces, such as fate, a just Deity, or other authorities. Their overall impression is that people vary widely in their "belief in a just world," but that those who demonstrate high Just World scores have a naive view of social reality and may be fixated at primitive stages of cognitive functioning.

Victims

One of the most disturbing manifestations of the "belief in a just world" lies in its relationship to the treatment of victims. As Lerner (1980) has stated, people act in ways designed to maintain their "belief in a just world" when confronted with victimization. People will act to prevent injustice when it is in

their power to do so, as is evidenced by our many social agencies and charities. However, there are limits to this "rationality" and altruism. When the personal cost is too high, or as Lerner puts it, one fears losing his/her place in a "just world," we are not so charitable. For example, Walster, Berscheid, and Walster (1973) found that if the resources available would be only partially effective in eliminating the victim's deprivation, then the act of help was avoided entirely.

Lerner (1974) states that the desire to live in a "just world" often leads not to justice but to justification. People, secure in the belief that the world is a just place, are often prone either to deny the existence of suffering or to conclude that it is in fact deserved. In order to accomplish the first of these, one merely needs to avoid information regarding injustice. This is not always possible, but a person can arrange to not visit hospitals, ghettoes, etc. Concluding that suffering is deserved, however, requires distortions of reality and is not so easily accomplished. Lerner (1980) contends that this requires reinterpreting an event in one of three ways so that the injustice no longer exists. First, a person can reinterpret the outcome, whereby a victim's suffering is actually deemed beneficial in some way. Evidence that victims themselves do this is available in a survey reported by Lerner (1980), which found the very poorest families to be the least likely to see any injustice in their situation. Second, a person can reinterpret the "cause," where suffering becomes justified if someone "has it coming." Finally, one can reinterpret the character of the victim. Many have commented on the fact that in this culture people are often judged to be inferior or deserving of "punishment" by the acts they commit or would be likely to commit, based on little information (Kelman, 1973; Ryan, 1971).

These distortions are at the heart of the literature on victimization. Schwartz (1975) lists the step by step cognitive stages he has found people to go through when confronted with someone in need. Basically, they involve an initial perception and assessment, then they proceed through a "cost accounting" phase before deciding on what (if any) action to take. Typically, the person will take whatever action is in his/her own "justified" self interest. Others have also found that people will opt for indirectly helping or justification for not helping when costs in terms of social sanctions are relatively high (Miller & Ross, 1975; Rawlings, 1970; Walster et. al., 1973).

That victims themselves go through a similar evaluation process seems likely, given that they have the same investment in a "meaningful" and "just world." According to the "just world" paradigm, if one cannot eliminate suffering, he/she must either deny its existence or conclude that it is in fact deserved. For victims, the first of these options is much less available.

In a study of twenty-nine accident victims who were paralyzed from the waist or neck, Bulman and Wortman (1977) found that all but three explained their becoming paralyzed in terms which provided meaning for the event. Some thought what happened was natural and just. Others described the accident as a positive event in their lives, while the majority felt that it was part of "God's plan." The findings also suggested that blaming others or feeling that one could have avoided the accident were successful predictors of poor coping. Self blame was a predictor of good coping. That those who could find meaning in their fates were able to cope more effectively is consistent with the "just world hypothesis."

In another study, by Comer and Laird (1975), subjects were told they would have to eat a worm as part of the experiment. There were three kinds of reactions to this information. They devalued themselves, they altered their self

image in a positive way, or they decided that eating a worm wouldn't be so bad after all. In each case, the subjects seemed to need to see the experimental condition as "meaningful" for them.

According to Janoff-Bulman (1979), in describing self blame as adaptive or maladaptive, a distinction should be made between behavioral self blame and characterological self blame. She suggests that behavioral self blame allows the victim to avoid the next conclusion-characterological self blame, which is much less appealing. The former is typically seen as more alterable and less permanent than the latter. While a more recent study confirmed the association between behavioral self blame and less depression, characterological self blame was seen as a strong concomitant of depression rather than a cause of it (Peterson, Schwartz, & Seligman, 1981). Some caution should be exercised in discussing the relationship of attribution to depression, especially since with victims we are considering a largely reactive phenomenon (Jones, 1979). Both types of self blame are predictable from the "just world" hypothesis, therefore Lerner (1980) does not make a distinction between the two directly. If a victim is responsible for his/her own distress because of something he/she did or failed to do, the "justice" is served. But, if the victim is not behaviorally responsible, then the answer must involve the person's character, since people "get what they deserve."

<center>Attribution in Counseling</center>

In the counseling of victims, particularly those who believe the world to be just, it would appear that facilitating the search for "meaning" should be a high priority, since personal adjustment after a life crisis is at least partially determined by the causal inferences a person makes (Dweck, 1975; Janoff-

Bulman, 1979). Therefore, counseling approaches which offer causal attributions appear to be the preferable method for helping victims.

Recently, there has been increasing interest in the role of causal attributions in counseling (Claiborn, 1982; Claiborn, Crawford, & Hackman, 1983; Hoffman & Teglasi, 1982). Strong and Claiborn (1982) emphasize that interpretation, defined loosely as presenting the client with a way of labeling or construing events that is discrepant from the client's own way, is essential in providing the client with a meaningful framework to use in understanding experiences and formulating solutions to problems. In their social influence approach to counseling, persuading the client into a new and meaningful framework is central to the process. Similarly, Frank (1973) concluded that healing and change are largely a function of belief, ideology, charisma, and ritual. Within this context, the content of the "meaning" conveyed is not nearly as important as its believability or persuasive power. He further concluded that the differing counseling procedures are of similar efficacy, since their ultimate functions are the same. Indeed, recent research has suggested that the major counseling orientations are not significantly different in terms of successful outcomes (Bergin & Lambert, 1978; Smith, Glass, & Miller, 1980). Hoffman and Teglasi (1982) feel that the one common function of the various approaches is that of providing the client with a causal framework. They state that this structure is particularly important in the initial phases of counseling when clients have difficulty defining their problem. The results of their study indicated the superiority of attributional counseling over non-attributional counseling in the treatment of shyness.

Although most counseling approaches provide causal frameworks, there is evidence to suggest that certain victims receive counseling that is significantly

different. Janoff-Bulman (1979) points out that an often used technique for rape victims involves repeatedly telling the woman that there is nothing she could have done to avoid the rape; that is was a senseless, random event; and that it was entirely the rapist's doing and outside her control. As discussed previously, depriving a person of the sense of "meaning" and the sense of personal control usually has significant negative consequences. If the victim also has a strong "belief in a just world," the consequences would likely be even more severe (Lerner, 1980). In this event, it would be important to consider including some form of attributional framework within counseling. However, it may not be as important for some clients as others.

In the attempt to determine for whom attributional approaches are best, researchers have largely focused on locus of control measures. Forsyth and Forsyth (1982) concluded that the effectiveness of causal counseling depends on an individual's locus of control. For example, they found that stressing internal and controllable causes produced more positive affective reactions and performance evaluations among internal locus of control respondents. Other researchers have also focused on control measures in describing the benefits of attributional approaches to counseling (Altmaier, Leary, Forsyth, & Ansel, 1979; Bulman & Wortman, 1977).

As mentioned previously, "belief in a just world" has been found to be consistently correlate with locus of control measures (Zuckerman & Gerbasi, 1977). In a factor analytic study of Rotter's (1966) I-E scale, Zuckerman and Gerbasi (1977) identified a "just world" component within the scale.

What appears to be lacking are studies which attempt to link directly the "belief in a just world" with a preference of attributional counseling.

Summary

Counselors are regularly faced with victims of many kinds, yet current training in counseling techniques does not address the complex issues of victimization. One very plausible explanation for why victims are often blamed and even blame themselves for the unpleasant events in their lives, the "belief in a just world" hypothesis, was developed by Lerner (1980). According to this hypothesis, people who believe the world to be just utilize an attributional process that provides them with meaning and control in their lives. These are people who believe in an orderly and predictable world where people basically get what they deserve. This belief is postulated to develop early in childhood so that it becomes an integral part of the way in which people orient themselves to the world. Because it represents such a fundamental and basic belief, it is hypothesized to exist at two levels. At the surface and cognitive level, it operates within a person's awareness. However, it also exists at a deeper level, often out of the person's awareness. Lerner (1980) states that people may deny believing in a "just world," while continuing to design their lives based on the assumption they do live in a "just world." According to this view, victims, who believe in a "just world," experience a loss of meaning and a sense of control and seek to restore these elements to their lives. Given that attributional approaches to counseling are designed to accomplish exactly this, they should be preferred over other approaches by these people.

Statement of the Problem

The proposed study will attempt to determine if those victims who believe in a "just world" prefer a counseling approach which suggests there is a meaning for what has befallen them.

Method

Instructions, consisting of an explanation of what will be required from each volunteer and general information about the nature of the study, will be given to all participants. Each subject will be given an informed consent document (appendix B), a brief pre-assessment demographic questionnaire (appendix C), and the Just World Scale (appendix D).

The subject population will be drawn from undergraduate psychology student volunteers at the University of Oklahoma. The age range will be from seventeen years to twenty-one years. Forty subjects will be utilized, the number having been determined using a power formula with alpha set at .05, the desired power at approximately .80 with an effect size of .5.

After pretesting, twenty subjects who have high JW scores (upper one third using normative data) and twenty subjects who have low JW scores (lower one third) will be asked to read a situational account of an accident in which he/she is one of the principal characters (appendix G). Those whose JW scores place them within the middle third will not be utilized in the study.

Since previous research (e.g., Rubin & Peplau, 1973) has been unable to determine any clear sex differences in the "belief in a just world," it will not be analyzed separately. However, some effort will be made to assign men and women equally to the two treatment conditions.

Each of the subjects will then be assigned to a counselor representing one of the two treatment conditions. Half of the subjects (equal numbers of high and low JW's) will receive "counseling" from a counselor pretrained to respond in primarily a supportive fashion, using largely restatements and reflections, with an attitude of "life is often unpredictable and what happened to you was just a chance occurrence" (random condition). The other half will see a counselor

pretrained to ascribe "meaning" or significance to what has "befallen" them, even if "we cannot understand it now" (meaning condition). "Counseling" sessions will last approximately twenty minutes and will be audio taped to insure compliance with the "counseling" modes.

Two experienced male counselors will be trained for the experiment using direct instruction, role playing and feedback. Each will represent one viewpoint at a time during the experiment. Other factors as is possible will be held constant, such as office layout and dress.

After "counseling," each of the subjects will complete the counseling evaluation questionnaire (appendix E), the semantic differential (appendix F), and receive a debriefing. During this time, any remaining questions will be answered concerning the study and subjects will be questioned to determine if any discomfort was produced. Anyone experiencing distress will be offered counseling.

Demographic questionnaire

This pre-assessment questionnaire (appendix B), constructed of general information questions, will be utilized to obtain demographic data from each subject. Also included is a space for the subject to select an identification number to be used on subsequent forms to insure confidentiality (appendix B).

Just World Scale

The Just World Scale (appendix D), developed by Rubin and Peplau (1975), is a twenty item, self reporting questionnaire in which the respondent is asked to indicate on a six point continuum the degree of agreement or disagreement with each statement. Approximately half (11) of the items, selected at random, have been designed to represent agreement with a "just world" bias (scored positively) and the other items to represent an "unjust world" bias (scored negatively).

Kuder-Richardson internal consistency reliability scores for the Just World Scale are reported at .80 and .81 respectively for samples from the Boston area and the Oklahoma area. Predictive and construct validity claims for the scale are documented by studies in the Rubin and Peplau (1975) article, particularly with respect to the derogation of victims.

Counseling Evaluation questionnaire

This instrument (appendix E) is a modified version of the counseling evaluation questionnaire utilized by the University of Oklahoma Counseling Center for evaluation of services. It consists of a series of statements assessing overall satisfaction with counseling. Subjects indicate on a seven point scale their level of agreement or disagreement with each statement. Two open ended questions and one yes or no question have been added to allow the subjects to respond in an unrestricted fashion regarding their impressions of counseling and whether they would have sought counseling if the event depicted in the situational account had actually happened to them. Split-half reliability for this form has been computed at .90.

Semantic Differential

Because of its ability to detect more subtle differences in meaning, in this case satisfaction with counseling, a semantic differential will be utilized as a second dependent outcome measure (appendix F). Twenty adjective pairs will be rated on seven point scales. In order to counteract response bias, in half of the pairs, on a random basis, the positive direction will be reversed. In constructing the semantic differential form, primarily evaluative and potency adjective pairs will be selected on the basis of their relevance for a counseling experience (Osgood, Suci, & Tannenbaum, 1957; Kerlinger, 1964).

Design and Analysis

The experiment is a two by two factorial design with ten subjects in each of the four cells. The forty subjects will be divided into two groups on the basis of scores on the Just World Scale. Equal numbers of high JW and low JW subjects will be assigned to each of the two treatment conditions, "meaning" and "random."

Subsequent to the treatment ("counseling"), two outcome measures of counseling satisfaction will be obtained, the counseling evaluation questionnaire and a semantic differential. Scores will be collapsed across each form, yielding a single point total for each.

Two analyses of variance will be performed to determine possible relationships among the variables and to test the hypotheses. Significance level will be set at .05 for the study. Dunn's individual comparison method will be used to test for significant difference between means.

Hypotheses

Using the counseling evaluation questionnaire as the dependent measure, it is hypothesized there will be a significant interaction effect between score on the Just World Scale and satisfaction with type of counseling. Thus, it is expected subjects with high scores on the Just World Scale (high JW's) will be significantly more satisfied with "meaning" counseling than "random" counseling. Low JW's will be significantly more satisfied with "random" counseling than "meaning" counseling.

The second hypothesis is based on the following rationale: since the semantic differential is believed to be capable of picking up more subtle differences in meaning, it is hypothesized that it will detect the less "cognitive" and more affective reactions associated with basic underlying belief systems

(Osgood et. al., 1957; Kerlinger, 1964). Therefore, using the semantic differential as the dependent measure, there will be a significant main effect for kind of counseling with both high and low JW's choosing more positive adjectives to describe the "meaning" counseling.

Significance of the Study

Counselors are regularly faced with clients who have been victimized. Without knowledge of the victim's specific needs and underlying beliefs, counselors may not be able to adequately help them. In some cases counseling may cause victims to become even more distressed. If the "belief in a just world" can be linked with a preference for attributional counseling among victims, valuable information will be contributed toward better serving them.

Additionally, counselors may examine their own beliefs and their impact on clients who may or may not be victims. Since counselors are human and the "belief in a just world" is posited to represent such a fundamental part of a person's orientation to the world, it is not difficult to imagine how it might reduce the counselor's objectiveness.

The extent to which the results are predictive of what happens in real life is dependent upon the extent to which subjects can imagine themselves in that situation.

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APPENDIX B

INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

NAME: _____
(please print)

DATE: _____

The purpose of this study is to provide information as to how counselors respond to certain kinds of problems.

While participating in this study, you will be asked to complete one pencil and paper task, read a one page situational account, and complete one final pencil and paper task. The duration of your participation should be less than ninety minutes. Should questions or comments arise during the process, please feel free to ask.

You name will appear only on this form and on a list to assign course credit. All other information will be disguised by a code number and will be kept completely confidential.

By agreeing to participate in this research and signing this form you do not waive any of your legal rights.

If you wish to receive a brief summary of results by mail after completion of the research, please indicate by printing your mailing address in the space provided.

Your time and participation in this study are greatly appreciated.

Thank you,

William R. Wayne
Psychological Assistant
University of Oklahoma
Counseling Center

I hereby agree to participate

_____
(Signature)

Mailing address:

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX C

PRE-ASSESSMENT DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE

PLEASE SELECT A FOUR DIGIT IDENTIFICATION NUMBER TO BE USED ON THIS AND ALL SUBSEQUENT FORMS. YOU MAY WISH TO USE THE LAST FOUR DIGITS OF YOUR SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER OR SOME OTHER SERIES, BUT IN ANY CASE, YOU WILL NEED TO REMEMBER THE NUMBER YOU SELECT.

YOUR FOUR DIGIT IDENTIFICATION NUMBER: _____

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

1. Age: (circle)   17   18   19   20   21   22

2. Sex: (circle)   M   F

3. Race or ethnic origin: _____

4. How would you rate the importance of religion in your everyday life?
   (check appropriate space)

   ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____
   Not   average   very
   important   importance   important

5. How would you describe your usual outlook on life?
   (check appropriate space)

   ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____
   sad   blah   happy

6. What is the approximate population of your home town or city?

   _____

7. What was the approximate size of your high school graduating class?

   _____

APPENDIX D

JUST WORLD SCALE

YOUR FOUR DIGIT IDENTIFICATION NUMBER: _____

INSTRUCTIONS: Please circle the letters corresponding to your level of agreement or disagreement with each statement.

		TOTALLY DISAGREE	MOSTLY AGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	MOSTLY AGREE	TOTALLY AGREE
1.	I've found that a person rarely deserves the reputation he has.	TD	MD	SD	SA	MA	TA
2.	Basically, the world is a just place.	TD	MD	SD	SA	MA	TA
3.	People who get "lucky breaks" have usually earned their good fortune.	TD	MD	SD	SA	MA	TA
4.	Careful drivers are just as likely to get hurt in traffic accidents as careless ones.	TD	MD	SD	SA	MA	TA
5.	It is a common occurrence for a guilty person to get off free in American courts.	TD	MD	SD	SA	MA	TA
6.	Students almost always deserve the grades they get in school.	TD	MD	SD	SA	MA	TA
7.	Men who keep in shape have little chance of suffering a heart attack.	TD	MD	SD	SA	MA	TA
8.	The political candidate who sticks up for his principles rarely gets elected.	TD	MD	SD	SA	MA	TA
9.	It is rare for an innocent man to be wrongly sent to jail.	TD	MD	SD	SA	MA	TA
10.	In professional sports, many fouls and infractions never get called by the referee.	TD	MD	SD	SA	MA	TA
11.	By and large, people deserve what they get.	TD	MD	SD	SA	MA	TA
12.	When parents punish their children, it is almost always for good reasons.	TD	MD	SD	SA	MA	TA
13.	Good deeds often go unnoticed and unrewarded.	TD	MD	SD	SA	MA	TA
14.	Although evil men may hold political power for a while, in the general course of history good wins out.	TD	MD	SD	SA	MA	TA

INSTRUCTIONS: Please circle the letters
corresponding to your level of agreement or
disagreement with each statement.

		TOTALLY DISAGREE	MOSTLY AGREE	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	MOSTLY AGREE	TOTALLY AGREE
15.	In almost any business or profession, people who do their job well rise to the top.	TD	MD	SD	SA	MA	TA
16.	American parents tend to overlook the things most to be admired in their children.	TD	MD	SD	SA	MA	TA
17.	It is often impossible for a person to receive a fair trial in the U.S.A.	TD	MD	SD	SA	MA	TA
18.	People who meet with misfortune have often brought it on themselves.	TD	MD	SD	SA	MA	TA
19.	Crime doesn't pay.	TD	MD	SD	SA	MA	TA
20.	Many people suffer through no fault of their own.	TD	MD	SD	SA	MA	TA

APPENDIX E

COUNSELING EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

YOUR FOUR DIGIT IDENTIFICATION NUMBER: _____

Please respond to the statements below by placing a check in the appropriate space. Try to answer according to your most honest feelings about the counseling you received. Do not skip any.

strongly disagree	disagree	slightly disagree	neutral	slightly agree	agree	strongly agree

____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____

1. I feel my counselor understood me.

____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____

2. I feel more capable of dealing with my problem(s).

____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____

3. I understand myself better than before counseling.

____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____

4. Counseling has been useful to me in dealing with my problem.

____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____

5. I would recommend counseling to a friend who had a problem.

____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____

6. If the accident had really happened to you, would you have sought counseling?

(Please circle)   yes   no

7. Was there anything the counselor said or did that you found particularly helpful or not helpful?

_____

_____

8. Please add any other comments about your contact with the counselor.

_____

_____

Please place a check in the appropriate space.

strongly disagree		disagree		slightly disagree		neutral		slightly agree		agree		strongly agree
____	:	____	:	____	:	____	:	____	:	____	:	____

9. I was able to identify with the story I read about the accident.

____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____

Please explain:

_____

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX F

SEMANTIC DIFFERENTIAL

YOUR FOUR DIGIT IDENTIFICATION NUMBER: _____

Please rate your counselor by placing a check mark in the appropriate space. Even though these words may not seem to apply, try to answer the best you can according to the way you feel. <u>Do not skip any.</u>

1.	complex	___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___	simple
2.	intuitive	___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___	rational
3.	free	___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___	restrained
4.	colorful	___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___	drab
5.	partial	___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___	whole
6.	decreasing	___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___	increasing
7.	hard	___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___	soft
8.	light	___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___	dark
9.	optimistic	___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___	pessimistic
10.	cruel	___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___	kind
11.	near	___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___	far
12.	high	___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___	low
13.	meaningless	___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___	meaningful
14.	heavy	___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___	light
15.	negative	___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___	positive
16.	sharp	___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___	blunt
17.	objective	___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___	subjective
18.	weak	___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___	strong
19.	foolish	___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___	wise
20.	straight	___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___ : ___	curved

APPENDIX G

SITUATIONAL ACCOUNT OF ACCIDENT

INSTRUCTIONS: Please try to put yourself into the following situation as much as possible as you read it. Try to imagine what your feelings would be, what you would be thinking, and what you would be sensing. In other words, what it would be like if it really were happening to you.

SITUATION: You are driving down south Jenkins Avenue at dusk. There is moderate traffic moving in both directions at about 25 miles per hour. Some cars have their lights on and some don't. Out of the corner of your eye you see something moving into your path. As you slam on the brakes you hear the loud squeal of your tires and the dull thud as you hit a figure. You get out of the car to find an approximately eight year old girl, unconscious and bleeding from the nose. You can't tell if she's breathing. You are shaking and your heart is racing as people begin to gather. A roar of sirens breaks the sounds of people talking. Ambulance men dressed in white begin working rapidly as the police pull you aside to ask you questions. They seem to have an endless number of questions such as, "have you been drinking" and "how fast were you traveling?"

A day later she is in intensive care with broken ribs and a brain concussion. Her mother is pacing the hospital floor and is visibly upset. You learn from talking with her that the girl has a younger brother and that the father had abandoned the family two years previously.

After several days of being upset a friend suggests you seek counseling. You go.

APPENDIX H

TABLES OF MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS

Table of Means

Total Sample

	Mean	Std. Dev.
Age	22.2	5.65
Religion	4.5	1.95
Outlook	6.1	1.13
Population	1.2	.83
Just World	71.8	12.89
Counseling Evaluation	29.0	3.72
Identification	5.6	1.32
Seek Counseling	.5	.51
Semantic Differential	95.7	11.87

Table of Means

High Just World Group

Random Treatment

	Mean	Std. Dev.
Age	22.2	6.24
Religion	3.6	1.43
Outlook	6.5	.50
Population	1.2	.75
Just World	83.5	4.15
Counseling Evaluation	29.2	2.96
Identification	5.1	1.58
Seek Counseling	.3	.46
Semantic Differential	99.2	12.71

Table of Means

High Just World Group

Meaning Treatment

	Mean	Std. Dev.
Age	20.9	1.92
Religion	5.2	1.40
Outlook	6.7	.46
Population	1.1	.70
Just World	82.6	4.57
Counseling Evaluation	28.5	4.22
Identification	5.6	.49
Seek Counseling	.6	.49
Semantic Differential	97.6	9.10

Table of Means

Low Just World Group

Random Treatment

	Mean	Std. Dev.
Age	24.1	8.38
Religion	4.6	2.11
Outlook	5.2	1.33
Population	1.1	.83
Just World	60.9	6.17
Counseling Evaluation	30.1	3.21
Identification	6.0	1.26
Seek Counseling	.4	.49
Semantic Differential	93.7	10.08

Table of Means

Low Just World Group

Meaning Treatment

	Mean	Std. Dev.
Age	21.4	2.42
Religion	4.4	2.24
Outlook	5.8	1.17
Population	1.2	.98
Just World	60.1	7.88
Counseling Evaluation	28.1	3.86
Identification	5.7	1.42
Seek Counseling	.6	.49
Semantic Differential	92.2	13.09