The Role of Emotions in Judgments of Crime Victims

OLOF WREDE

Dedicated to my parents Ulla & Casper

Doctoral Degree in Psychology
Abstract

Wrede, O. (2015). *The role of emotions in judgments of crime victims*. Department of Psychology, University of Gothenburg, Sweden

A growing body of evidence shows that crime victims' emotional expressions can influence legal judgments, such as credibility assessments. However, the role of emotions in judgments of crime victims in interpersonal settings outside the legal arena has not been explored, and a range of potentially moderating factors have been overlooked. Recent social functionalist models of emotion would predict that different emotional expressions, in interaction with expresser and context characteristics, affect observers' judgments of a victim. In three studies, totaling 5 experiments and 1099 participants, these issues were addressed. **Study I** focused on people's expectations about likely emotional responses to criminal victimization. In an experimental online questionnaire, respondents expected female (vs. male) victims to experience more situation-focused (e.g., fear) and inward-focused (e.g., sadness) emotions, and less other-focused (e.g., anger) emotions. **Study II** investigated observers' inferences about victim vulnerability as a function of type of expressed emotion (anger vs. sadness; Experiment 1 and 2), victim gender (Experiment 1), and presentation mode (text vs. audio vs. video; Experiment 2). Results showed that, across all presentation modes, victims expressing sadness (vs. anger) were perceived as less resilient and in greater need of social support. However, the effect was observed only for male victims. Importantly, the effects was mediated by perceived victim warmth. The effect of emotion type and the mediation of warmth was supported in both experiments. **Study III** examined the role of observers' imagined own emotional responses to a crime when judging victims' credibility. Female participants perceived female victims of rape (Experiment 1) as more credible when victims' displayed emotions matched the participants' own imagined emotional reactions. The influence of this emotional overlap was replicated when male participants judged the credibility of a male robbery victim (Experiment 2). Furthermore, higher perceived intensity of victims' emotional responses was associated with higher perceived credibility in both experiments. Taken together, the results of the current studies indicate that people have specific expectations about, and make social inferences from, crime victims' emotional responses. These inferences appear to be moderated by victim gender, type and intensity of emotions expressed, and observers' own self-simulated emotional responses to crimes. In short, this thesis suggests that emotions play an influential role in judgments of crime victims.

Olof Wrede, Department of Psychology, University of Gothenburg, P.O. Box 500, 405 30, Gothenburg, Sweden. Phone: + 46 317861635, e-mail: olof.wrede@psy.gu.se

Svensk sammanfattning (Swedish summary)

Att bli utsatt för brott innebär flera prövningar för den drabbade. Förutom själva brottshändelsen kan tiden efter brottet vara kritisk för offrets förmåga att hantera situationen, bland annat är den sociala omgivningens bemötande av stor vikt i denna fas. Speciellt viktigt är det sociala stöd som offret erbjuds. Stödet har en avgörande roll för offrets mentala hälsa. Brottsoffer erbjuds dock inte alltid socialt stöd i samma utsträckning. I extrema fall erbjuds inte offer stöd överhuvudtaget. Istället verkar det som att vissa offerreaktioner väcker misstro hos omgivningen.

Psykologisk forskning har undersökt hur emotionella uttryck bedöms och uppfattas i exempelvis förhandlingar, politik samt inom domstolar och andra delar av rättsväsendet. Dessa fynd kan sammanfattas i modeller som förklarar sociala funktioner av emotioner. Kortfattat predicerar dessa modeller att åskådares bedömningar av andras emotioner påverkas dels av de uttryckta emotionerna, dels av egenskaper hos åskådarna.

Bedömningar av emotionella uttryck i rättväsendet är relativt väl utforskade. Där har forskningen visat robusta fynd för vad som kallas the emotional victim effect (EVE). Kortfattat innebär EVE att offer som uttrycker tydliga negativa emotioner uppfattas som mer trovärdiga än offer som uttrycker vaga negativa emotioner eller positiva emotioner. Dessutom tyder annan socialpsykologisk forskning på att det finns olika förväntningar för hur kvinnor och män ska reagera emotionellt i olika utsatta situationer. Idag har vi dock begränsad kunskap om hur brottsoffers emotionella uttryck bedöms och uppfattas i sociala sammanhang.

Kortfattat är syftet med föreliggande avhandling att utifrån fynden om EVE och sociala modeller av emotioner inta ett *interpersonellt* perspektiv på emotioner. Synen på emotioner är således att de är bärare av social information. Specifikt undersöker avhandlingen hur människor bedömer och uppfattar brottsoffers emotionella reaktioner utanför rättsväsendet.

I Studie I undersöktes om det finns förväntningar på vilka emotioner kvinnliga respektive manliga brottsoffer ska reagera med efter att ha blivit utsatta för brott. I ett experiment fick 404 försöksdeltagare läsa fem brottsvinjetter (misshandel, våldtäkt, hot, rån, inbrott). Sedan fick de rapportera sannolikheten att offret upplevde sju olika emotioner uppdelade i tre grupper: situationsfokuserade emotioner (oro, rädsla), utåtfokuserade emotioner (ilska, hat) samt inåtfokuserade emotioner (skam, skuld, ledsenhet). Gruppindelningen och etiketterna bygger på tidigare forskning. Proceduren upprepades för varje brottstyp, först för ett kvinnligt offer och sedan för ett manligt. Resultaten av Studie I visade att oavsett brottstyp förväntades kvinnliga brottsoffer reagera med mer situationsfokuserade (oro, rädsla) och inåtfokuserade (skam, skuld, ledsenhet), och mindre utåtfokuserade (ilska, hat) emotioner än manliga brottsoffer.

I Studie II undersöktes hur brottsoffers uttryckta emotioner påverkar omgivningens bedömningar av offrets behov av stöd. I två experiment fick totalt 340 försöksdeltagare läsa en text, lyssna till en ljudinspelning eller se en video av ett kvinnligt eller manligt brottsoffer som uttryckte ilska eller ledsenhet över att ha blivit utsatt för ett knivrån. I båda experimenten bedömde försöksdeltagarna hur mycket socialt stöd de trodde att brottsoffret behövde. Sammantaget visade resultaten från Studie II att brottsoffer som uttrycker ledsenhet uppfattas som i mer behov av stöd än brottsoffer som uttrycker ilska. Viktigt är dock att försöksdeltagarna endast gjorde skillnad på arga och ledsna uttryck vad gäller behov av stöd när de bedömde ett manligt offer. Kvinnliga offer bedömdes vara i lika stort behov av stöd oavsett emotionsuttryck.

Ett annat viktigt fynd var att effekten av emotionerna medierades av hur varma försöksdeltagarna upplevde att offren var.

I Studie III undersöktes hur bedömarnas egna förväntningar på hur de själva hade reagerat i en brottsoffersituation påverkar trovärdighetsbedömningar av en person som faktiskt har blivit utsatt för brott. I två experiment fick totalt 355 personer bedöma hur de själva skulle reagera emotionellt efter att ha blivit utsatt för en våldtäkt eller ett knivrån. Deltagarna fick också bedöma trovärdigheten hos ett brottsoffer som faktiskt har blivit utsatt. Resultaten visade att ju högre överensstämmelsen mellan de egna förväntningarna på emotionell reaktion och ett offers faktiska emotionella reaktion är, desto större trovärdighet tillskrev bedömarna brottsoffren.

Studierna visar att det verkar finnas förväntningar på vilka emotioner kvinnliga respektive manliga brottsoffer ska uppvisa efter brott. Kvinnor förväntas reagera med mera situationsfokuserade och inåtfokuserade, men mindre utåtfokuserade emotioner än män. Fynden ger stöd åt tidigare forskning angående könsbetingade stereotyper om emotioner, och kan vara en del av förklaringen till exempelvis varför offer ibland kan bemötas med skepsis. Vidare tyder resultaten på att specifika emotionella reaktioner bedöms som signaler på behov av socialt stöd. Detta gäller särskilt bedömningar av manliga bedömares emotionsuttryck, och upplevelsen av hur varma dessa uttryck är verkar kunna förklara effekten. Om bedömarna dessutom upplever att offret reagerade emotionellt på ett liknande sätt som bedömarna själva tror att de skulle reagera i en liknande situation, så upplever bedömarna att offrens trovärdighet ökar. Resultaten är i linje med tidigare forskning om EVE och modeller för sociala funktioner av emotioner, men utvidgar fenomenet till bedömningar utanför rättsväsendet. Sammantaget styrker avhandlingen vikten av en nyanserad förståelse av emotioners roll i bedömningar av brottsoffer.

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All the mentioned people deserve great credit for their contributions to this thesis. You enabled it, but I am solely responsible for any errors. That I now write the last words of this project is hard to fully understand, I will have to think about it for a while. But that is something really enjoyable, to just keep on asking questions.

Olof Wrede
Gothenburg, November 2015

Preface

This thesis is based on the following three papers, which are referred to by their Roman numerals:

I.   Wrede, O., & Ask, K. (2015). More than a feeling: Gender-specific stereotypes about victims' emotional responses to crime. *Violence and Victims, 30,* 902-915. doi:10.1891/0886-6708.VV-D-14-00002

II.   Wrede, O., Ask, K., & Strömwall, L. A. (2015). Sad and exposed, angry and resilient? Effects of crime victims' emotional expressions on perceived need for support. *Social Psychology*, *46*(1), 55–64. doi: 10.1027/1864-9335/a000221. Used by permission from Social Psychology ©2015 Hogrefe Publishing

III. Wrede, O., Ask, K., Strömwall, L. A., & Styvén, C. (2015). *"I believe you, I would feel the same way": Emotional overlap and perceptions of victims' credibility*. Manuscript in preparation.

Contents

INTRODUCTION

Crimes are often inherently emotional events. Survivors of violence describe a range of emotional effects, ranging from mild worry to intense fear or anger (Frieze, Hymer, & Greenberg, 1987). People expect the emotional nature of crimes to be reflected in the victims' emotional expressions after the event; for instance, that the intensity of emotional reactions is proportional to the severity of the crime (Rose, Nadler, & Clark, 2006). Could it be that people use the victim's emotional expressions to draw conclusions also about circumstances other than the crime itself, such as the victim's personality, need for support, or credibility? If so, are these inferences conditional on contextual factors, such as the type of crime or the gender of the victim? And, given that people often do not have any previous experience of criminal victimization, how do they decide what is to be considered a "reasonable" emotional reaction? In this thesis, I argue that people may infer a range of information about the victim and the crime event from the emotions that victims express in interpersonal settings.

Although effects of crime victims' emotional expressions in legal settings are rather well documented in the scientific literature (e.g., Magnussen & Wessel, 2010), the current knowledge about effects in interpersonal settings outside the legal arena is surprisingly meagre. What happens in the social day-to-day life after a crime is of great importance to the mental health of victims (Campbell, 2008; Campbell et al., 1999; Freeman & Smith, 2014; Lueger-Schuster et al., 2015). Victims who are met with skepticism or inadequate care may not successfully recover from the victimization, and may experience a "secondary victimization" (Shapland, Willmore, & Duff, 1985). How people decide on the appropriate treatment of crime victims is likely influenced by inferences about the victim and about the crime event. Hence, if a victim's emotional expressions are misconstrued by others, the victim may encounter neglect, careless treatment, or prejudiced disbelief.

In this thesis, I will address three main research questions: First, what kind of emotional responses do people expect from crime victims? Second, how do crime victims' emotional expressions influence perceptions of their need for social support? Third, what is the role of people's imagined own emotional reactions to crimes when they make inferences from crime victims' emotional expressions?

KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Victimization and emotion

Criminal victimization is a complex phenomenon that involves many elements, including characteristics of the perpetrator, the victim, the criminal event, and the social environment (Karmen, 2012). Emotional processes may be relevant to several aspects of these elements. It is therefore important to distinguish between such aspects in order to clarify which ones are studied in this thesis.

One aspect, the crime event itself, is the starting point of several psychological mechanisms. Many features of crime events (e.g., duration, severity), and their relationship to emotional processes, are worthy of scientific investigation. It is important to note, however, that the focus of this thesis is not on emotional responses that occur during the criminal event. Rather, the thesis will focus on victims' emotions, and observers' judgments thereof, which take place following the crime event.

A second aspect concerns victims' *experienced* emotions. This represents the intrapersonal, subjective features of emotional responses. Crime victims may experience a variety of emotions after the event (e.g., anger, sadness, anxiety, shame, fear; Frieze et al., 1987), but these experiences are not necessarily available to outside observers. Nevertheless, observers may have expectations about which types of emotions crime victims "should" experience.

A third aspect concerns victims' *expressed* emotions. In contrast to emotional experiences, emotional expressions are visibly displayed in interpersonal settings. Accordingly, victims' emotional expressions may serve a communicative function; they can inform others about victims' appraisals of the situation and of their ability to cope with the situation.

A final aspect concerns the social inferences that observers may make from victims' emotional expressions. Observers perceive and interpret victims' emotional expressions, and combine the external input with their prior expectations and previous knowledge. This way, observers' may, for instance, make inferences about victims' credibility, mental status, and need for support.

The empirical studies that comprise this thesis mainly address the third and fourth of these aspects and, to a lesser extent, the second.

Emotions

Emotions can be distinguished from related terms like general affect and mood. Emotions are relatively short and physiologically intense episodes, whereas moods are long lasting and inherit less intense physiological arousal (Mulligan & Scherer, 2012). Moreover, emotions are assumed to be directed to specific objects (e.g., persons or events) whereas moods are assumed to be more diffuse and difficult to attribute to a single cause. In this thesis, the focus is on emotions that are responses to criminal victimization. Researchers generally agree that emotion consists of several components (see, e.g., Lazarus, 1991; Lazarus, 1991b; Mulligan & Scherer, 2012; Sander, Grandjean, & Scherer, 2005; Scherer, 1984; Scherer, 2005; Scherer, Schorr, & Johnstone, 2001). The multi-component approach holds that emotions consist of (1) a subjective experience of the emotion, (2) physiological responses, (3) cognitions about the present emotion and associations to previous similar situations, (4) facial expressions, (5) cognitions about the emotion, and (6) action tendencies (e.g., behavioral readiness evoked by the emotion). Although there has been a comprehensive debate about an exact definition of emotions (for overviews, see Dixon, 2012; Russell, 2012), the integrated approach presented above is commonly accepted by researchers and has inspired the thesis. I will refer to it as the 'multi-component view'.

It should be noted that other researchers have limited the definition of emotions to fewer dimensions. One example is to define emotion by activation (or arousal) and valence (see Russell, 1980; Russell & Barrett, 1999). This circumplex approach posits that the valence (e.g., discomfort or pleasure) and the activation (e.g., arousal or sleepiness) cover the essence of

emotions. Importantly, models with fewer dimensions do not deny the fact that emotions are experienced and expressed as the above multi-component view postulates. Hence, the term emotional responses will be used throughout the present thesis as a generic construct that includes both emotional experiences and expressions.

Furthermore, in line with suggestions regarding the pronounced effectiveness of emotion as a social stimulus (see e.g., Carretié, 2014), I treat expressed emotions as a salient stimulus that can quickly capture observers' attention. When the targets' emotions reach the observers, they can be viewed as containers of information about the targets (Hareli & Hess, 2012; Van Kleef, 2009). This informational view on emotions will be discussed in detail below. Taken together, the view on emotions in the thesis may be expressed as follows: Emotions consists of several components, some of which are cognitive and may be carriers of social information.

The multi-component approach to emotion springs from a long tradition of theorizing on the nature of emotion. Broadly put, different basic theories of emotion contain similar components, but differ in whether they prioritize physiological or cognitive aspects in the chain of components that constitute emotions. Two well-known examples that highlight physiological aspects are the James-Lange and the Cannon-Bard theories of emotions. The core idea in the James-Lange theory (James, 1884; Lange, 1885) is that specific somatic patterns, evoked from external stimuli (e.g., a threat by a bear) not only accompany the emotion as a necessary component, but precede and generate the emotional experience. The cognitive interpretation of the situation and the bodily reactions come second. Cannon (1927) and Bard (1929) questioned the James-Lange theory. In their theory of basic emotions, they proposed that bodily reactions and cognitive interpretations (i.e., the emotional experience) of the bodily reactions occur at the same time. It is important to point out here that the Cannon-Bard theory postulates that physiological responses and cognitive components (emotional experience) occur independently.

While still acknowledging the physiological aspects of emotions, other theorists highlight cognitive components of emotion. Schachter and Singer (1962) observed that the same bodily reaction may accompany different emotions. Hence, they created a theory of emotions that emphasizes physiological arousal and the cognitive interpretation, identification and labeling of the physiological arousal. Hence, their theory is often called the 'two factor theory'. According to the Schacter-Singer theory, physiological arousal is important in the creation of emotions, but, as mentioned above, this arousal can be the same in several different emotional states. To illustrate, the cognitive interpretation and labeling may determine whether a pounding heart is experienced as either fear or love. Hence, the Schachter-Singer theory postulates that the cognitive interpretation of the situation is as important to the genesis of emotion as the physiological arousal (Schachter & Singer, 1962).

Since the thesis focuses on social inferences of crime victims' emotional responses, the theories that emphasize cognitive aspects of emotions (e.g., Arnold, 1960; Lazarus, 1966; Schachter & Singer, 1962) contribute the most to this endeavor. These theories enable the view that observers can draw inferences about targets' cognitive interpretation of a given situation. Translated to the present context, cognitively oriented theories of emotion enable observers to draw inferences about the cognitive components in the crime victims' emotions. To illustrate, if a crime victim responds emotionally with fear, observers may infer that the victim interprets the situation as dangerous. In contrast, physiologically focused or circumplex theories arguably do

not offer the same possibility. These theories are not specific about how victims' cognitions about their victimization are manifested in their emotional reactions.

Appraisal processes in emotion. Appraisal theories focus on the cognitive aspects of the multi-component view. The core idea is that emotions do not just occur without a preceding cognitive evaluation or appraisal of the situation. Instead, emotions are adaptive responses that reflect appraisals or evaluations of the environment that are important for a person's well-being (Moors, Ellsworth, Scherer, & Frijda, 2013). As such, the view on emotions is that they are determined by thoughts (Ellsworth & Smith, 1988; Lazarus, 2001; Scherer, 1987; Smith & Ellsworth, 1985; Weiner 1985; Weiner, 2014). In line with appraisal theories, a victim of a crime reacts with a certain emotion (e.g., fear) because she or he has made an appraisal of the whole or parts of the event (e.g., "that person was pointing a knife at me, it was dangerous").

Appraisal theorists often divide the appraisal process into two main steps. Primary appraisals function as a relation between personal goals and the event (Lazarus, 2001). If the event is congruent with personal goals, then the person who experiences this congruence may react with positive emotions. If, on the other hand, the event is incongruent with personal goals, then the person may react with negative emotions. Secondary appraisals concern, among other things, who or what is held responsible for the event (e.g., a perpetrator). Another commonly used term for appraising responsibility is 'agency appraisals' (Ellsworth & Smith, 1988). If a person holds others responsible for negative events, then these agency appraisals are often correlated with negative other-focused emotions. For example, appraising responsibility of a negative event to a specific person's deliberate actions often generates anger (Weiner, 1985). Furthermore, secondary appraisals also refer to a person's ability to cope with the situation (Lazarus, 2001). For example, a crime victim may perceive his or her ability to cope as limited (i.e., appraisal) and respond with sadness or anxiety.

Observers of targets who express emotions may speculate about how the target appraises a certain event. Using the robbery example again, observers may infer that the victim is reacting with fear because the victim appraised the robbery as dangerous, and her- or himself as being helpless. This reflects the view on emotions as carriers of social information, and the empirical studies in the thesis rely on this assumption.

Social judgments

Much of human social life is affected by observers' social judgments of targets (Asch, 1946; Kelley, 1950; Mesquita, Marinetti, & Delvaux, 2012; Nisbett & Ross, 1980). For example, interactions between people are affected by observers' judgments of targets' personalities, competence, intentions, etc. Numerous social judgments are made every day in interpersonal settings and the research literature on these processes is vast. Therefore, it is important to outline which social judgments this thesis focuses on.

Vulnerability judgments. After a criminal event, issues about how to cope with the situation may arise, both for the victims and for people in contact with the victims. For example, practical issues (e.g., contact with the police, medical care) and issues about daily life matters may arise. Mental health consequences, such as various symptoms from experiencing traumatic

events, may also arise (Campbell, 2008). Hence, observers of crime victims likely need to make judgments regarding the crime victims' psychological status. Perceived vulnerability refers to observers' judgments of targets' abilities to cope with a given situation (Perloff, 1983). Judgments of targets' needs for social support, in turn, are a subgroup of perceived vulnerability judgments. They refer to observers' judgments of targets' needs for emotional, financial, informational, or relational (belonging) support (Uchino, Uno, & Holt-Lunstad, 1999). In these vulnerability judgments, observers may integrate several factors, such as the target victim's personality, competence, as well as facts about the situation (e.g., what recently occurred). Emotions may also play an important role in observers' vulnerability judgments. That is to say that, based on the type and intensity of the victim's emotional expressions, observers may infer the extent to which a victim needs to be given social support. Perceived vulnerability has been extensively studied in, for example, clinical settings (e.g., Söllner et al., 2001). Vulnerability judgments of crime victims may have consequences for the provision of social support to crime victims. Observers are likely to provide more support to victims that appear to be in greater need.

    Credibility judgments. Observers may also make judgments about crime victims' credibility. In general, credibility is often defined as variations of observers' perceptions of the accuracy, objectivity, reliability, fairness, trustworthiness of sources (Self, 1996) or of their believability (Hilligoss & Rieh, 2008; Tenney, MacCoun, Spellman, & Hastie, 2007). Other definitions broaden the concept of credibility to also include the content of the message. In those cases, the focus is on the perceived combined persuasiveness of the target and the message the target is sending (Metzger, Flanagin, Eyal, Lemus, & McCann, 2003). Credibility judgments may thus be based on different types of information. One example of persuasive factors, which may ultimately increase perceived credibility, is which types and intensity of emotions a target is expressing while communicating the message (research on credibility and victims' emotions will be summarized below). Taken together, credibility may be viewed as a perceived quality of a source that, importantly, does not only reside in the perceived target, but also in the observer (Tseng & Fogg, 1999). Essentially, discussing perceived credibility of targets is thus always closely related to discussing personal facts about the observers making credibility judgments.

    Credibility judgments are conducted in various settings. For example, observers judge the credibility of the source when they consume information from media (Tseng & Fogg, 1999), and people make credibility judgments in both private and business relationships (Tenney et al., 2007). In fact, some authors argue that observers make credibility judgments of targets all the time (Tenney et al., 2007). In legal settings, credibility judgments occur in every step of the legal chain: statements from witnesses, suspects and victims are all subjected to judgments of credibility in both police investigations and in the court room. These judgments are often pivotal; for example, a witness who is judged not to be credible may not be asked by the prosecutor to appear in court in order not to jeopardize the prosecutor's case. In Sweden, credibility assessments in courts are guided by rulings of the Supreme Court (Strömwall, 2010), and include indicators such as length of statement, richness in detail and coherence. However, these indicators are not based on empirical research (Willén & Strömwall, 2012).

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THE EMOTIONAL CRIME VICTIM: PREVIOUS RESEARCH

Mechanisms behind credibility judgments

Previous research shows that credibility judgments of victims are not reliable constructs (Leippe, Manion, & Romanczyk, 1992). In brief, observers' credibility judgments of crime victims are subject to moderating variables on two levels: legal and extralegal (Campbell, Menaker, & King, 2015). Legal variables are evidentiary information that personnel in the legal system are required to consider. For example, legal variables that are known to affect observers' credibility judgments include medically confirmed victim injuries (Frazier & Haney, 1996), witnesses supporting the victims' statements (Rose & Randall, 1982), and the severity of the offense (Spohn & Tellis, 2012).

Moderating factors in the extralegal area of information that affect observers' credibility judgments of victims, on the other hand, include the target's confidence (the higher the confidence, the higher the perceived credibility; Tenney et al., 2007) or age (the higher the age, the higher the perceived credibility; Leippe et al., 1992). Furthermore, victim behaviors such as the degree of collaboration and consistency of statements may also moderate (professional) observers' perception of victims' credibility (the higher the collaboration and consistency, the higher the perceived credibility; Alderden & Ullman, 2012). Another important moderator, as mentioned above, is the type and intensity of the crime victim's emotional display. For example, researchers have found support for a proportionality rule that states that for victims to be perceived as credible, their emotional reactions should be proportional to the severity of the crime (Rose et al., 2006). If the emotional reaction is perceived as being either too strong or too weak, then observers tend to become skeptical towards the victim. Apart from the above-mentioned 'proportionality rule', few mechanisms behind this influence are known. Hence, further studies on the processes behind observers' credibility judgments of crime victims' emotional responses are needed. This thesis investigates one such possible mechanism, which will be developed below. First, we turn to another line of research that underscores the role of emotions in observers' credibility judgments of crime victims.

The emotional victim effect

There is great individual variation in how people respond emotionally to criminal victimization. For instance, emotional reactions such as anger, numbness, confusion, fear, shock, anxiety, and shame have been identified in victims (Frieze et al., 1987). Thus, the same emotional reaction should not be expected from all crime victims. However, an increasing number of studies have shown that crime victims' emotional displays have a profound influence on their seeming credibility (Ask & Landström, 2010). This research has found consistent evidence for an Emotional Victim Effect (EVE). This is the effect when victims, who express strong negative emotions when talking about their victimization, are perceived as being more credible than victims who display little emotion or few positive emotions (Ask & Landström, 2010; Bollingmo, Wessel, Eilertsen, & Magnussen, 2008; Bollingmo, Wessel, Sandvold, Eilertsen, & Magnussen, 2009; Golding, Fryman, Marsil, & Yozwiak, 2003; Hackett, Day, & Mohr, 2008; Kaufmann, Drevland, Wessel, Overskeid, & Magnussen, 2003; Landström, Ask, Sommar, & Willén, 2013;

Lens, Van Doorn, Pemberton, & Bogaerts, 2013; Salerno, 2012). Parallel effects have been observed in witnesses (Castelli & Goodman, 2014; Wessel et al., 2012; Wessel, Magnussen, & Melinder, 2013); findings that further underscore the importance of emotional expressions in legal settings.

Most researchers in the area take a stereotype-based approach when they discuss why EVE occurs. They assume that people have stereotypical expectations about what constitutes a "normal" reaction to victimization. Victims who do not display such a reaction are assumed to lack credibility (Klippenstine & Schuller, 2012; Winkel & Koppelaar, 1991). Although EVE appears to have multiple causes (Ask & Landström, 2010), recent evidence supports the notion that the violation of stereotypical expectations is indeed one of the causes (Ask & Landström, 2010; Hackett et al., 2008).

At present, however, there are several substantial gaps in the literature concerning such stereotypes. First, previous research has typically treated emotions in an all-or-nothing fashion (i.e., comparisons of displaying emotions vs. not displaying emotions) or, at best, in terms of valence (i.e., positive emotions vs. negative emotions). Researchers have largely neglected the diverse effects of separate and distinct emotions (e.g., anger, sadness, fear; Fontaine, Scherer, Roesch, & Ellsworth, 2007; Lerner & Keltner, 2000). Second, researchers have not directly measured the content stereotypes; they have rather, through indirect observations of the effects of experimental manipulations, inferred the existence of stereotypes. Third, demonstrations of EVE have focused on a limited range of crimes (typically, sex crimes) and of victim categories (typically, female victims).

It is important to investigate whether stereotypical ideas about victims' emotional reactions may be generalized across different crimes and whether they are contingent on victim gender. Attention to distinct emotion categories may reveal different patterns for female victims and male victims. One possible explanation for such different gender victim patterns is the stereotypical gendered expectations about emotional expressions. Previous research has found differences in expected emotional expressions in general (Plant, Hyde, Keltner, & Devine, 2000). However, as of yet, we do not know which emotional expressions people expect from crime victims. Study I in this thesis focuses on these expectations.

Besides great variability in emotional responses to crimes, people also respond emotionally differently to negative events in general (Watson & Clark, 1984). In fact, there is considerable variation in individual emotional responses to negative events (Frazier, Steward, & Mortensen, 2004; Lazarus, 1999). Mirroring this individual diversity, studies of emotional reactions to negative events point to the moderating effects of personality traits (Watson & Clark, 1984), clinically relevant patterns of neural activity (Diler et al., 2013), attachment patterns (Gentzler & Kerns, 2006), cognitive coping strategies (Garnefski, Kraaij, & Spinhoven, 2001) and self–esteem (Brown & Dutton, 1995). Together, these works underscore the intrapersonal sources of individual variation in emotional reactions to negative events. But there is also an important social aspect to this individual variation.

Regardless of the type of emotional reaction, people who have been exposed to negative events are likely to share their emotions with others. Research on social sharing of emotion has found that after negative events (e.g., exposure to crimes), victims have a propensity to share their emotions (Rimé, 2007). Observers' inferences about victims' vulnerability may affect observers' social treatment of victims, and thus by extension the mental health of victims

(Campbell, 2008; Freeman & Smith, 2014; Lueger-Schuster et al., 2015). Indeed, because social support may reduce stress and promote healthy behaviors (Holt-Lunstad & Uchino, 2015), it is crucial for people's mental health after negative events in general (Arnberg, Hultman, Michel, & Lundin, 2012) and for crime victims in particular (Kaniasty & Norris, 1992; Yap & Devilly, 2004). Thus, it is important to study how observers make judgments of victims' vulnerability in general, and how they judge victims' need for social support in particular.

EMOTIONS IN SOCIAL COGNITION

Emotion norms and display rules

What is regarded as an appropriate emotional response to criminal victimization? Despite the known variety of emotional responses to negative events, observers may have stereotypical norms about the nature of emotional responses to criminal victimization. Norms are rules or principles in groups, implicit or explicit, which members understand and which guide and govern members' behavior (Cialdini & Trost, 1998). Similar to norms, display rules are principles regarding what members of groups are allowed to display. For example, one group may allow its members to express more sadness than another group. Accordingly, emotion norms guide and govern group members' emotions (Heise & Calhan, 1995). These governing rules become integrated early in peoples lives via socialization processes (Malatesta & Haviland, 1982).

Norms and display rules may be context-specific, and may influence group members in many ways. For example, emotion display rules may affect the well-being of employees at work sites both negatively or positively depending on the level of congruence between expressed emotions and the display rules. The higher the congruence, the higher the well-being (Ybema & Van Dam, 2014). Drawing on the knowledge mentioned above, it is likely that crime victims are subject to both emotion norms and display rules.

Emotion norms may differ between cultures and contexts. For example, culture may moderate which emotions observers experience when witnessing crimes (Matsumoto & Hwang, 2014), and context may lead to different expectations about which emotions people of different genders should display (Shields, 2000). Accordingly, norms about emotions may be seen as culturally inherited and nurtured. Despite the possible influence of cultural differences on emotional phenomena, the studies in this thesis focus solely on Western cultural settings due to practical constraints. It should be mentioned that some authors proclaim that even if culture may moderate emotional phenomena, these variations may be viewed as dialects. Patterns in one culture can be mirrored also in others (e.g., Matsumoto & Hwang, 2014).

Inferences from emotions

While the effects of crime victims' emotional responses on observers' social judgments have not been well researched (with the exception of credibility judgments), emotional expressions in other settings have been studied extensively. Research on the social psychology of emotions treats emotions as a natural part of social life. It investigates how emotions affect observers' judgments of others, and concludes that emotions influence social cognition is several ways (Mesquita et al.,

2012). It is possible to discern at least two lines of research that have burgeoned in the last decades, investigating two different aspects of the emotional influence: (1) how individuals' own emotions affect their social cognition, and (2) how targets' emotions affect observers' social perception.

Intrapsychological inferences from emotions. A large body of research has investigated how observers' self-experienced affective states influence their judgment processes. One attempt at integrating these findings is the affect infusion model (AIM) (Forgas, 1995). This model takes its starting point in moods and not emotions. However, AIM may still inspire research on the social aspects of emotion by introducing a connection between the observers' own affective state and perceptions of other people. Specifically, AIM assumes that observers' own affective information becomes infused in, and influential on, their judgment processes. The infusion, or influence of affect on social judgment, is especially substantial when elaboration of new information is needed. For example, fearful people may be more averse to risk taking than angry people (Lerner & Keltner, 2001), disgust can make people averse to make buying decisions in economic situations (Lerner, Small, & Loewenstein, 2004), and happiness may increase people's judgments of others' trustworthiness compared to anger (Dunn & Schweitzer, 2005). In simple judgmental processes, however, affect may not be as influential (Forgas, 1995).

Criminal victimization contains several elements (e.g., what happened, where, for how long, who was involved), and judgments in such a situation may thus require elaboration. Hence, AIM would propose that observers may be affected by their own emotional state when making social judgments of victims. For example, a sad observer may think of a victim as in need of more support than a happy observer. It is, however, important to point out that this thesis focuses on interpersonal aspects of emotions. AIM is not applicable in this effort as it does not concern the communicative aspect of emotions.

Social inferences from emotions. Researchers have identified that humans tend to make inferences from others' emotional responses already as infants (e.g., Hertenstein & Campos, 2004). In order to understand the effects of this seemingly fundamental psychological phenomenon, social functionalist models are of relevance (Hareli & Hess, 2012; Hess & Hareli, 2015; Fischer & Manstead, 2008; Van Kleef, 2009). Here, the term 'function' means that emotions have the potential of being useful and adaptive—a view introduced by Aristotle and developed by early theorists such as Charles Darwin and Sigmund Freud (Van Kleef, 2009)—but not that they always are (Parrott, 2001). However, early theories of emotions as adaptive were limited to the intrapsychological domain and neglected interpersonal aspects (Van Kleef, 2009). Developing the ideas of emotions as important social signals or functions in all dimensions of human life, from individual to cultural (for overviews, see Bericat, 2015; Keltner & Haidt, 1999), modern social functionalist models generally explain functions for both observers and targets in interpersonal interactions.

One recent social functionalist model that is particularly relevant for this thesis is the emotions as social information (EASI) model (Van Kleef, 2009, 2010; Van Kleef, De Dreu, & Manstead, 2010). With the purpose of explaining how targets' emotional expressions regulate observers behaviour in social interactions, the EASI model offers two possible paths for this regulation. It posits that targets' emotional expressions can affect the observer by creating an affective response and/or by causing the observer to draw social inferences about the target. For example, a target's expression of anger could first evoke surprise (affective response) in the

observer and/or create the impression that the target is dominant (social inference). In the latter case, the target's emotional expressions are thought to provide relevant information about the situation (for an example, see Van Doorn, Van Kleef, & Van der Pligt, 2015). This thesis adopts the notions regarding observers' social inferences of targets' emotional expressions found in the EASI model.

A second relevant theoretical framework is the social perceptions of emotions in context (SPEC) model (Hareli & Hess, 2012). Similarly to the EASI model, SPEC also explains how targets' emotional expressions regulate observers in social interactions. However, the SPEC model tries to achieve more by elaborating on the notion of context. In the model, context is broadly defined and it includes information about the situation, about the target and about the observer. SPEC assumes that at the start of the inference process, observers gather knowledge about which emotion the target expresses (i.e., emotion identification). Then, the model emphasizes that observers combine knowledge about the expressed emotion with background information (norms and personal/situational information). Together, these two sources of information produce the outcome of the inferential process. Using targets' emotional expressions, observers infer what the target will do next and who the target is. Observers make these inferences about targets' behavioral intentions by attributing information (e.g., degree of engagement) to the targets' emotional expressions. This type of attribution is related to 'action tendencies'—a heightened propensity for actions that are associated with, and facilitated by, the experience of specific emotions (Frijda, 1986). The complexity of SPEC, and its emphasis on background information, makes it particularly relevant for this thesis. To illustrate, an observer of an emotionally expressive crime victim may swiftly go from identification of the emotional expression to considering information about the victim's disposition, as well as display rules of emotions that apply in the specific setting, etc. These factors combined produce the outcome of the observer's inferential process.

The authors of SPEC specify a part of the model further by elaborating on the concept of 'reverse engineering' of appraisals (Hareli & Hess, 2010; Hess & Hareli, 2015). Reverse engineering may be thought of as thinking backwards. Thus, according to the notion of reverse engineering of appraisals, the logic of the appraisal processes of emotion is reversed. When observers perceive targets' emotional expressions, they infer what had caused the targets' emotional expression (Hess & Hareli, 2015). For example, observers may believe that a target is angry because the target has lost something meaningful. Observers then use the reverse engineering logic to also infer that the target's anger means that the target has, for example, high social status and/or is competent to take action in that specific situation (i.e., can change the situation).

Supporting the social functionalist models of emotion, empirical research has found that observers can perceive others' emotional expressions as signals or information about the target's personality, motives, status, etc. For example, expressions of anger and sadness have quite robust effects on observers. Observers may for instance perceive angry expressions as motives for aggression (Heerdink, Van Kleef, Homan, & Fischer, 2015), and the perception of anger is stronger if the observers perceive the target as capable of doing harm (Holbrook et al., 2014). Furthermore, targets who express anger are perceived as being more dominant and having higher status than targets who express sadness (Knutson, 1996). Perhaps because of the dominance signals, other researchers have found that angry expressions may evoke rejection in

groups (Heerdink, Van Kleef, Homan, & Fischer, 2015) and lessen peoples' tendency to offer charity (Van Doorn, Van Kleef, & Van der Pligt, 2014). Sad expressions, in turn, indicate need (Horberg, Oveis, & Keltner, 2011), low dominance (Knutson, 1996), low status (Tiedens, 2001) and may evoke social acceptance in groups (Heerdink et al., 2015).

      Basic aspects in social cognition: Warmth and competence. One reason why certain emotional expressions (e.g., sadness) from targets have different effects on observers than others (e.g., anger) may be that the two emotions provide distinctly different information along the two universal dimensions of social perception—warmth and competence.

      Early works on social impression formation pointed out the importance of "warm" and "cold" personality traits (Asch, 1946; Kelley, 1950). Perceivers in these studies formed more positive impressions of, and inferred more positive characteristics from, individuals with warm as opposed to cold traits. Recent authors have highlighted that the social goodness (warmth) and capability (competence) of others are central concerns of social perceivers (Carrier, Louvet, Chauvin, & Rohmer, 2014; Cuddy, Fiske, & Glick, 2008; Fiske, Cuddy, & Glick, 2006). Together these two dimensions account for the great bulk of the variance in global impressions of others (Wojciszke, 2005a, 2005b). According to Cuddy et al. (2008), the warmth and competence dimensions are so salient in observers' minds because they reflect evolutionary pressures: The necessity to determine, first, the benevolence of others' intentions (warmth) and, second, their ability to act on those intentions (competence). Indeed, eye tracking studies show that observers quickly search for emotional expressions in targets' faces (Thomas, Wignall, Loetscher, & Nicholls, 2014), supporting the idea of observers' need to swiftly determine the intentions of targets.

      The categorization of social targets in the warmth–competence space, in turn, predicts how people behave toward targets (Cuddy, Fiske, & Glick, 2007). Being primary (i.e., relating to others' intentions), perceived warmth predicts active behaviours: Targets perceived as warm are likely to receive help (because their warmth indicates friendly intentions to observers), whereas colder targets are likely to elicit harm. Being secondary (i.e., relating to others' ability to act on their intentions), perceived competence predicts more passive behavioural tendencies: People tend to passively support competent targets (e.g., convenient cooperation) and to passively harm incompetent targets (e.g., neglect; Cuddy et al., 2007).

      To the author's knowledge, no previous study has investigated how observers infer vulnerability or credibility from victims' emotions outside legal settings. The role of warmth and competence in these inferences also appears to be neglected. In criminal victimization, processes of social inference are important to study because they can influence much of victims' well-being in the aftermath of a criminal event. Moreover, it is important to study observers' inferences of crime victims' emotions in order to investigate the replicability of social inferences of emotions in a novel, applied setting.

The influence of the self and role-fulfillment in social cognition

When observers perceive social targets, they often have limited information on which to base their judgments. Observers can use different strategies to compensate for this scarcity of diagnostic information. One possibility is to use their selves as information—the assumption that observers use their self as a template (Chambers & Davis, 2012; Funder, 1982), and rely on simulation strategies (Goldman, 1992; Gordon, 1986; Tamir & Mitchell, 2013; Van Boven,

Loewenstein, Dunning, & Nordgren, 2013) when making social judgments. The core idea in these models is that when observers make social judgments of targets, they do not only use information about the target. They complement the perceived information with information about themselves.

More specifically, when observers lack appropriate information for making a judgment of a target (e.g., information about the target's status, characteristics, etc.), they may use what is available. One set of information that observers always have access to when making social judgments, regardless of how much they know about the target, is knowledge about themselves (Tamir & Mitchell, 2013). For example, observers may refer to expectations of how they would react themselves in the target's situation, which roles they would possess in specific situations, etc. This information can form the building blocks of the observers' social judgments (Holmes, 2002). Thus, self-simulation or perspective taking is fundamentally egocentric—the core of observers' judgments of others is judgments about themselves.

A large amount of empirical findings support the egocentric view of social judgments (Van Boven et al., 2013). For example, when asked to imagine the feelings of a woman with serious health problems, participants in a study by Davis et al. (2004) showed increased activation of self-focused thoughts compared to a control group. Similarly, participants in a study by Van Boven and Loewenstein (2003) explicitly reported that they mentally changed places with targets (hikers in a critical dilemma situation) when asked how they thought the targets felt in the situation. It thus appears that the observers' selves play an important role in social cognition. Self-simulations may play a particularly salient role when observers are in an emotionally "cold" situation (e.g., normal, daily life) and the targets of judgments are in emotionally "hot" situations (e.g., critical dilemmas or events; Van Boven et al., 2013).

Models of egocentric strategies have inspired the research in this thesis. Specifically, Study III investigates whether observers use self-predictions of how they would react emotionally to the crime when making judgments of actual victims. These imagined responses may not correspond with how they would actually react if they in fact were exposed to the crime (Woodzicka & LaFrance, 2001). Nevertheless, how much the observers' own imagined experience and the actual expressions of the targets match or overlap may serve as input to social judgments. In particular, when tasked with judging the credibility of a victim's account of the crime event, people may use the perceived overlap between the self-predicted reactions and the victims's actual reactions as an indicator of the story's believability. If the overlap is large (i.e., the emotions expressed by the victim correspond well with the observer's self-prediction), the story appears plausible. If, in contrast, the overlap is small (i.e., the victim's emotions are incongruent with the observer's self-prediction), it may raise suspicion as to whether the event actually transpired as claimed.

Although the role of self-knowledge in credibility judgments has not been studied previously, the above hypothesis receives preliminary support from research on affective 'role fulfillment' (Martin, Abend, Sedikides, & Green, 1997). Role fulfillment refers to observers' evaluations of how much a target matches the role the observer had ascribed to it beforehand. Through a series of experiments, Martin et al. (1997) showed that when observers were asked to evaluate happy and sad stories, the favorability of their judgments was predicted by the extent to which the observers' affective state (which had been manipulated) matched the valence of the story. That is to say that happy stories were preferred by happy observers, whereas sad stories

were preferred by sad observers. Martin et al. concluded that people evaluate affective information by asking themselves "What would I feel if…" and then gauging the extent to which their actual feelings fulfill the predicted affective state.

Taken together, the above models would suggest that observers of crime victims may use self-simulation and role-fulfillment processes in an emotional fashion. Observers may match the "How would I react?" question with victims actual emotional responses. The degree of emotional overlap (i.e., overlap between own expected emotional reactions and victims' actual emotional reactions) may form an influential factor in the observers' credibility judgments.

Potential moderators of emotional influence

Target gender. Social inferences from emotional expressions may be gender-related (Plant, Kling, & Smith, 2004). While people in Western societies typically expect women to be more emotional than men (Barrett & Bliss-Moreau, 2009; Fabes & Martin, 1991; Grossman & Wood, 1993; Hess et al., 2000; Plant et al., 2000; Timmers, Fischer, & Manstead, 2003), there are also differences in the emotions that are typically associated with men and women. Men are expected to experience and express more pride and anger, whereas women are expected to experience and express most other emotions (and express them more intensely; Bijlstra, Holland, & Wigboldus, 2010; Hess et al., 2000; Plant et al., 2000). The emotion-perception literature supports these gender-specific expectations. For instance, people more easily detect anger in male faces than in female faces (Becker, Kenrick, Neuberg, Blackwell, & Smith, 2007). Moreover, men tend to perceptually "grab" (focus exclusively on) expressions of anger in other people's faces, whereas women are more likely to "grab" expressions of happiness in the faces of others (Neel, Becker, Neuberg, & Kenrick, 2012). This finding is interesting because it underscores not only the prioritized attention to emotion as stimuli, but also that emotions may be perceived differently depending on the observer's gender.

In recent years, research on gender stereotypes of emotion has shifted towards situational factors (Shields, 2000), acknowledging that stereotypes depend on context (Hutson-Comeaux & Kelly, 2002). This tendency mirrors a great shift in emotion research towards a focus on the situation (Kayyal, Widen, & Russell, 2015; Stephan, Walter, & Wilutzky, 2014). Because stereotypical expectations may not be stable over different contexts, it is important to study such stereotypes in the specific context of criminal victimization. It is possible that people expect male and female victims to experience different emotions because they attribute different characteristics to men and women. For instance, the stereotypical assumptions that women have lower status than men and are less able to cope with negative events may produce differences in expected emotional reactions. High-status individuals are expected to experience more anger and pride, and to respond to negative events with anger (Tiedens, Ellsworth, & Mesquita, 2000). Conversely, low-status individuals are expected to experience more sadness and appreciation, and to react to negative events with fear (Tiedens et al., 2000). Conceivably, people may expect the same differences between male and female crime victims as traditional gender roles assign a higher status to men than to women (Conway, Pizzamiglio, & Mount, 1996; Eagly & Mladinic, 1989).

Besides its influence on observers' expectations, target gender may also moderate observers' inferences from crime victims' actual emotional expressions. For example, in line with

the mentioned findings of different status allocated to target gender (Conway et al., 1996; Eagly & Mladinic, 1989) and emotion types (Knutson, 1996; Tiedens, 2001), observers may infer that a male victim who expresses sadness is in particularly great need for support, because sad expressions are not expected from males (Bijlstra et al., 2010; Hess et al., 2000; Plant et al., 2000). This is consistent with research on behavioral attribution, demonstrating that extreme or atypical behaviors affect social judgments more strongly than do less extreme behaviors, because atypical or unusual behaviors are considered more diagnostic about a person's true character (Jones & Davis, 1965; Kelley, 1973; Skowronski & Carlston, 1989).

Presentation modality. People may learn about victimization from a variety of sources, including television, written materials, audio recordings, and face-to-face communication. Emotion researchers have studied social judgments of emotional expressions using different modalities, such as photographs (Barrett & Bliss-Moreau, 2009; Bijlstra et al., 2010), videos (Hareli, Shomrat, & Hess, 2009; Wessel et al., 2012), and texts (Hareli & Hess, 2010; Hareli, Sharabi, Cossette, & Hess, 2011). Most studies, however, have not compared presentation modalities with each other. The results of studies making such comparisons are somewhat ambiguous. Some studies suggest that presentation modalities can affect the recognition of emotions (e.g., Gitter, Kozel, & Mostofski, 1972), implying that recognition is more accurate in videos than in static visual presentations (i.e., photo), and that recognition is the poorest in audio presentations. However, other studies suggest that presentation modalities do not affect recognition of emotions (e.g., Elfenbein & Ambady, 2002). Effects of presentation modality have been documented in specific areas of the legal system. For example, the use of text rather than video may improve eyewitness accuracy evaluations (Lindholm, 2008).

Different presentation modalities may influence social judgments of emotions differently because of variations in the amount of information they provide. To illustrate, research on evidence in courts shows that judges and jurors are more persuaded by vivid (vs. pallid) information (Bell & Loftus, 1985). In addition, vivid testimonies grab people's attention to a greater extent and are more easily recalled (Bell & Loftus, 1985). Research has shown similar presentation modality effects in other legally relevant areas, such as lie detection (Bond & DePaulo, 2006) and witness reliability assessments (Landström, Granhag, & Hartwig, 2005). This phenomenon is called the 'vividness effect' (Nisbett & Ross, 1980). Information is vivid when it is emotionally interesting and specific as well as image-provoking and direct in a sensory, temporal or spatial way. In terms of presentation modalities, presentations rich in perceptual details (e.g., video) would be considered vivid, whereas presentations lacking such details (e.g., text) would be considered pallid. Based on this logic, it would be expected that emotional expressions communicated via vivid presentation modalities would be more attention-grabbing and have a larger influence on social judgments than more pallid modalities.

Perspective taking. Perspective taking refers to the cognitive task of taking others' points of view (Batson, Early, & Salvarani, 1997; Stotland, 1969). Perspective taking affects peoples' social life in several ways, for example by tailoring observers' interactions with social targets (Davis, Conklin, Smith, & Luce, 1996). Actively taking others' point of view may for example increase observers' empathy for targets (Chambers & Davis, 2012), increase prosocial behavior (Batson et al., 1995), and reduce observers' stereotypes of outgroup members (Galinsky & Ku, 2004). If (as suggested previously) observers engage in self-simulation as a strategy to assess credibility, then the amount and type of perspective taking that takes place may influence

how strongly the observer–target emotional overlap influences the final credibility judgment. Specifically, conditions that encourage imagining how one would feel in the victim's situation (imagine-self perspective) may increase the influence of emotional overlap, because it would make any discrepancies between the self-predicted and the observed emotions more salient to the observer. In contrast, conditions that limit perspective taking and instead encourage a detached, impersonal perspective (objective perspective) may diminish the weight placed on emotional overlap, because the salience of both one's own and the target's emotions is reduced. Previous research on empathy has compared such conditions to investigate the role of the self in perspective taking, consistently finding that an imagine-self perspective increases the salience of observers' self-related thoughts and emotions relative to an objective perspective (Batson, Early, & Salvani, 1997; Chambers & Davis, 2012; Davis et al., 2004). For example, Chambers and Davis (2012) had participants listen to an interview of a student describing a problem in his or her recent life and then rate their empathic responses to the target (willingness to help, sympathy). Participants who had been instructed to focus on how they would feel in the target's situation (imagine-self) were more likely to base their empathic responses on self-simulation, compared to participants who had been instructed to think about the target's situation objectively. Perspective taking could thus, in light of the present context, moderate the effect of the mentioned emotional overlap on observers' social judgments of crime victims.

AIMS OF THE PRESENT THESIS

The research reviewed in the previous sections suggests that observers' social inferences about crime victims' emotional responses are likely to be shaped by many factors, some of which may interact with each other. In this thesis, I examine such factors conjointly in factorial experiments. The hypotheses for the studies were derived, in part, from social functionalist models of the effects of emotions in interpersonal settings (e.g., Hareli & Hess, 2012; Van Kleef, 2009). To reiterate, these models assume that emotions are carriers of social information, informing observers about the characteristics and status of the expresser, as well as about the situation in which the emotions are expressed. While these models have inspired the research in this thesis, it is important to note that the purpose was not to directly evaluate the validity of the models. Another source for the tested hypotheses is research on factors that may moderate or mediate observers' inferential processes. This includes previous findings on gendered emotion stereotypes (e.g., Plant et al., 2004), how presentation modes influence social perception (e.g., Nisbett & Ross, 1980), warmth and competence as fundamental dimensions of social cognition (e.g., Cuddy et al., 2008), and egocentric judgment strategies (e.g., Van Boven et al., 2013). As most of these factors have not been examined previously in the context of criminal victimization, an overarching goal of the thesis was to explore the applicability of basic social cognitive phenomena in a novel, applied setting, and to look at how these findings could enrich the understanding of judgments of crime victims.

Three specific aims—all serving the same overarching goal—can be specified. The first aim was to document people's expectations about how victims respond emotionally to criminal victimization. Because previous research suggests that both situational and target characteristics may shape these expectations, beliefs about female and male victims' responses to

several types of crimes were assessed separately. The second aim was to investigate the effects of victims' expressed emotions on observers' social judgments. More specifically, the objective was to explore how different types of emotion, in conjunction with the expresser's gender, lead to inferences about the victim's need for support. The third aim was to look into a novel explanation as to how crime victims' emotional expressions lead to inferences about credibility— the overlap between the expressed emotions and observers' self-predicted emotions. This was an attempt to join theoretical models of egocentric judgment strategies with the more applied domain of credibility judgments.

To address these aims, three experimental studies were conducted. Experimental methods were chosen because they allowed for the evaluation of causal hypotheses, and because they enabled orthogonal manipulations of factors that were expected to interact. In order to meet recent demands of increased replicability and generalizability of experiments (e.g., Ioannidis, 2005), large samples representative of the general public were used. The empirical studies and their methodological parameters are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. *Overview of the empirical studies included in the thesis.*

Study	Method	N	Independent/ Predictor variables	Mediator variables	Dependent variables
I	Experimental online survey	404	Victim gender Crime type		Expected emotional response
IIa	Lab experiment	161	Emotion type Victim gender	Perceived victim warmth and competence	Perceived need for support
IIb	Lab experiment	179	Emotion type Presentation modality	Perceived victim warmth and competence	Perceived need for support
IIIa	Lab experiment	167	Emotional overlap Type of Perspective taking		Perceived credibility
IIIb	Online experiment	188	Emotional overlap Victim's emotion intensity		Perceived credibility

SUMMARY OF THE EMPIRICAL STUDIES

Study I

Background. Study I investigated the expectations about emotional responses to criminal victimization. Based on the research reviewed above, people may have expectations about emotion types as responses to criminal victimization – an underinvestigated issue today. We wanted to expand the literature by investigating the public's expectations about seven different emotions (sadness, shame, guilt, anxiety, fear, anger, and hate) to a range of different crime types (battery, rape, threat, robbery, and burglary).

Consistent with previous research on expectations about emotional responses, we hypothesized that people would expect female crime victims, compared to male crime victims, to experience more situation-focused emotions (e.g., fear; H1), more inward-focused emotions (e.g., shame; H2), and less other-focused emotions (e.g., anger; H3).

Method. Respondents were 404 (54% women, M_{age} = 50.10 years) Swedish community members. We contacted 791 respondents via email; the response rate was 51.1 %. The participants took part in a 2 (victim gender: female vs. male) × 3 (emotion type: situation-focused vs. other-focused vs. inward-focused) × 5 (crime type: battery vs. rape vs. threat vs. robbery vs. burglary) repeated-measures design.

We distributed an experimental online questionnaire. The following procedure was repeated for each of the five types of crime presented in randomized order (battery, rape, threat, robbery, and burglary): First, a brief vignette described the criminal event. Second, participants were asked to rate the extent to which they expected the victim to experience each of seven emotions (hate, anger, anxiety, fear, shame, guilt, and sadness) in the days following the crime. They were asked to make these ratings twice, assuming the victim was a woman, and, again, assuming the victim was a man. The likelihood of each emotion was rated using an 11-point scale for the ratings: 0% (not at all likely) to 100% (entirely certain).

Results and discussion. Our analyses revealed main effects of victim gender and emotion type. Importantly, however, the predicted interaction between victim gender and emotion type was also detected. The ratings confirmed the predicted pattern (see Figure 1 below). The respondents expected female victims (compared to male victims) to experience more situation-focused emotions (supporting H1) and inward-focused emotions (supporting H2), and less other-focused emotions (supporting H3). A three-way Victim Gender × Emotion Type × Crime Type interaction was also detected, but the pattern of means predicted in H1 through H3 was present across all crime types.
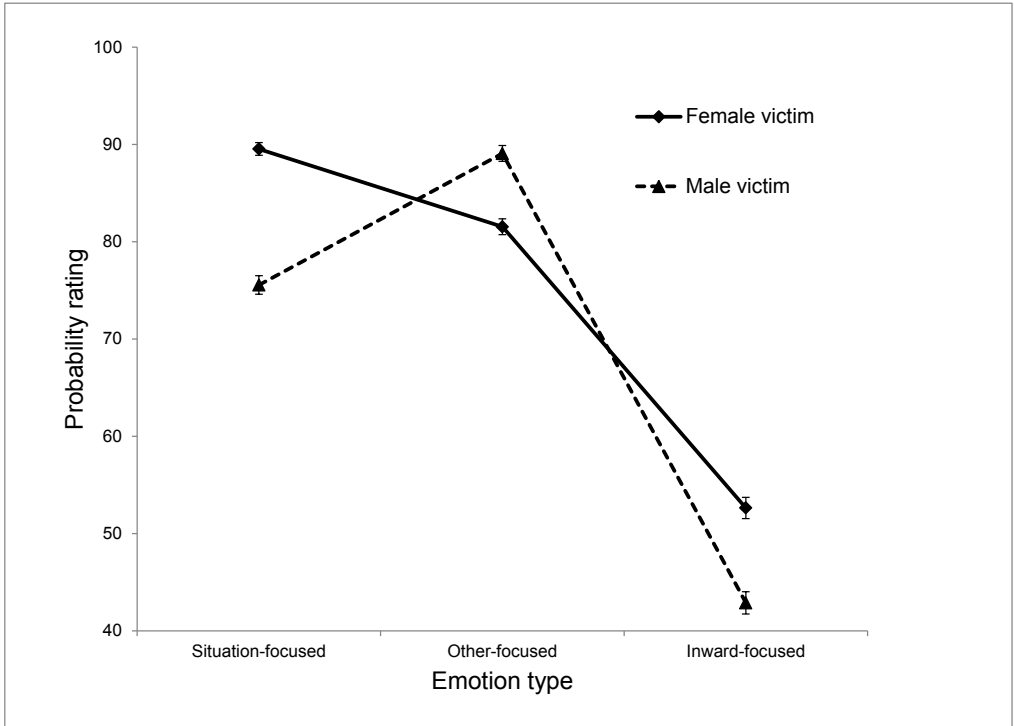
Figure 1. Mean rated likelihood of emotions as a function of emotion type and victim gender. Error bars represent standard error of the mean.

Our results therefore showed that public expectations about crime victims' emotional responses are highly contingent on the type of emotion and on the victim's gender. This is line with previous research and proposes that, in general, the public does not have the same expectations about all crime victims. Instead, details in the case (i.e., crime, gender) are associated with observers' expectations about distinct emotional responses. In all, the results suggest that the public's expectations about crime victims' emotional responses are best seen as a nuanced phenomenon.

Study II

In Study II, we investigated the effects of crime victims' emotional expressions on inferences about victims' need for support in two experiments. The influence of crime victims' emotional displays on social inferences probably depends on the observer's expectations about the types of

emotions that should be experienced after criminal victimization. Study I showed that people expect different emotional responses from male and female crime victims. This raises two interesting questions: Can certain patterns be identified in observers' judgments when emotional expressions from crime victims are perceived? And would the effect of expressed emotions on observers' inferences differ between female victims and male victims? Furthermore, referring to the mentioned impact of warmth and competence judgments in social interactions, we tested perceived victim warmth and competence as a mediator of the effect of emotional expressions on observers' perceptions of victims' need for support in both experiments.

Experiment I

Background. Experiment 1 investigated the possibility that emotional expressions have a stronger influence on judgments of male victims compared to that of female victims. This hypothesis rests on previous research that suggests that people draw stronger inferences from unusual emotional displays.

We hypothesized that the perception of sad victims, compared to angry victims, would be that they needed greater social support (H1). In addition, we hypothesized that male victims' emotional expressions (compared to those of female victims) would be seen as more informative. We predicted that the effect of the emotion type would be greater for male victims than for female victims as far as their need for support (H2). Finally, we hypothesized that the effect of emotion on rated need for support would be mediated by perceived victim warmth (H3a) and victim competence (H3b).

Method. There were 161 participants in Experiment 1 (67.1% women, M_{age} = 29.48 years), all of whom were sampled from the Swedish general public. The participants were randomly allocated to one of four cells in a 2 (victim gender: female vs. male) × 2 (emotion type: angry vs. sad) between subjects design.

The participants watched a short video sequence (M = 70 s) in which a female victim or a male victim described her or his emotional reaction (anger or sadness) to a robbery at knifepoint. We used five female actors and five male actors to reduce the risk of gender effects being attributable to actor differences. All actors followed the same manuscript. The participants rated the extent to which they thought the crime had increased the victim's need for social support, using three items rated on scales from 1 (Very little) to 9 (Very much). Participants also rated the victim's warmth and the victim's competence using three items for each construct. Finally, participants rated perceived authenticity of the victim's emotional expression in the video, using a scale from 1 (Entirely faked emotional expressions) to 9 (Entirely genuine emotional expressions). As there were no differences between judgments of authenticity, all actors were used in the main analyses.

Results and discussion. Victims were found to be in greater need of support when they expressed sadness as opposed to anger. This finding supports H1. There was no main effect of victim gender. The interaction between victim gender and emotion type was significant, thus supporting H2 (see Figure 2). Male victims who expressed sadness were rated as needing greater support than those who expressed anger. However, for female victims, expressions of sadness were rated similar to expressions of anger. Mediation analysis showed that the effect was

mediated by the fact that victims expressing sadness (vs. anger) were perceived as warmer, and that perceptions of warmth (for males) predicted the perceived need for support (see Figure 3). This supports H3a. Perceived competence, however, did not mediate the effect. Thus, H3b did not receive support.

Taken together, we found full support for the emotion hypothesis (H1), indicating that emotion type affected the participants' judgments of victims' need for support. We also found support for our second hypothesis, as judgments of male and female victims were differently affected by emotional expressions. Finally, the results suggest that people use the perception of warmth as a basis for judging victim's need for support, but only for male victims.
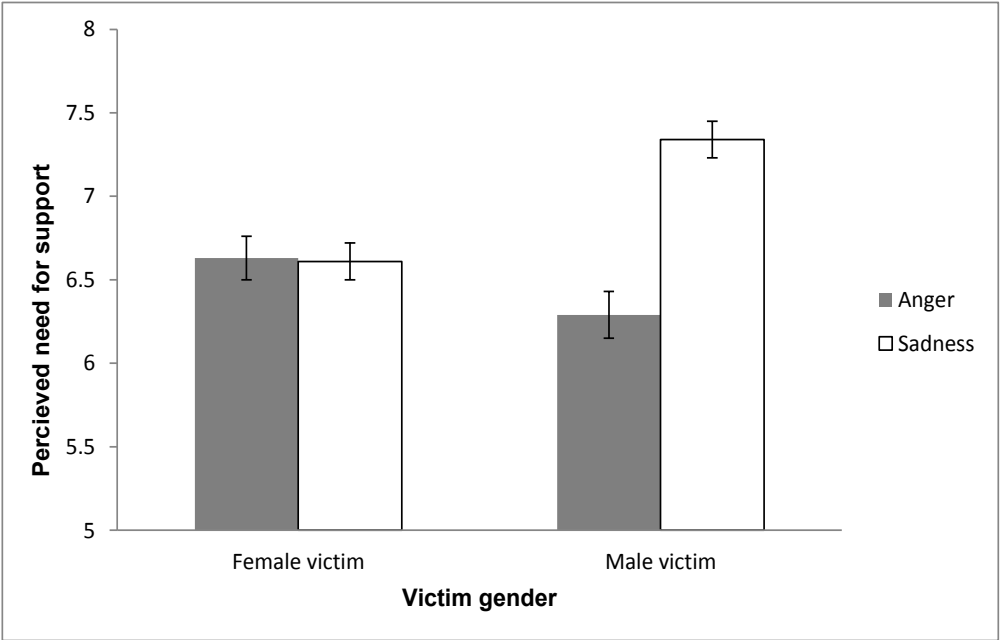

Figure 2. Mean rated need for support by victim gender and emotion type in Experiment 1. Error bars represent standard error of the mean.
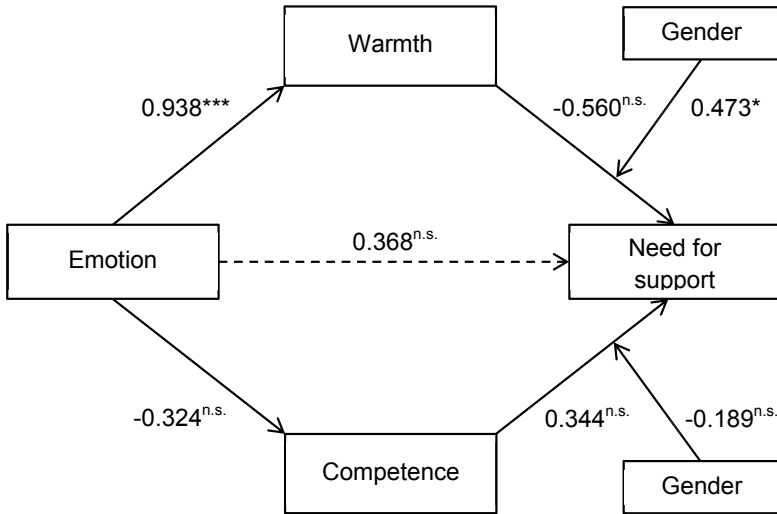
Figure 3. Indirect effect of emotion on rated need for support via perceived victim warmth, moderated by victim gender (Experiment 1). Reported values are unstandardized coefficients. *p < .05. ***p < .001.

Experiment 2

Background. People may learn about crime episodes via several presentation modalities, and the effects of crime victims' emotional expressions on observers' social judgments may differ across presentation modalities. Experiment 2 investigated whether the observed differences between expressions of anger and sadness in Experiment 1 could be generalized to presentation modalities other than videos (i.e., audio and text).

As in Experiment 1, we hypothesized that the perception of a victim who expressed sadness would be that he needed greater social support (H1) than when he expressed anger. In addition, we hypothesized that the effects of emotional expressions would differ across presentation modalities. Specifically, we predicted that, in measuring the need for support, video presentations would produce strongest effects of emotion, audio presentations would produce the second strongest, and text presentations would produce the least strong (H2). Furthermore, as in Experiment 1, we hypothesized that the effect of emotion on rated need for support would be mediated by perceived victim warmth (H3a) and victim competence (H3b).

Method. There were 179 participants in Experiment 2 (64.2% women, M_{age} = 27.11 years), all of whom were sampled from the Swedish general public. The participants took part in a 2 (emotion type: angry vs. sad) × 3 (presentation medium: video vs. audio vs. text) between-subjects design. They were randomly distributed to the different conditions.

The participants watched a video presentation, listened to an audio presentation, or read a text transcript. In all presentation modalities, a male victim described a robbery at knifepoint while expressing either anger or sadness. For the video condition, the participants watched the video of one actor from Experiment 1 (the actor rated the most authentic). For the audio condition, the participants listened to the audio channel of the video. For the text situation, the participants read a verbatim transcript of the victim's statement. We used the same dependent measure (need for support) as in Experiment 1. Also, using the same scales as in Experiment 1, participants rated the victim's warmth and competence.

Results and discussion. Results showed that for the dependent variable need for support, there was a main effect of emotion, which indicated that when the victim expressed sadness he were thought to need more support than when he expressed anger. This finding supported H1. There was no main effect of presentation modality and no interaction. Thus, H2 did not receive support. Reflecting the results of Experiment 1, mediation analysis showed that the effect was mediated by the fact that when the victim expressed sadness (vs. anger) he was perceived as warmer. This supports H3a. Perceived competence, however, did not mediate the effect. Thus, H3b did not receive support.

The results of Experiment 2 again demonstrate that people make inferences about crime victims' need for support based on victims' emotional expressions. The results also suggest that presentation modality does not affect judgments of need for support. This suggests, at least for social support judgments, that inferences drawn from emotional expressions may be relatively robust across presentation modalities. Possible explanations for this finding, as well as implications of the mediation of warmth, are discussed in the General Discussion.

Study III

Study III broadens the scope of the thesis by opening for a previously unexamined mechanism behind social judgments of crime victims, by entering observers' self-related beliefs. Referring to the mentioned self-simulation and role-fulfillment processes, the beliefs of interest in both experiments were the observers' own imagined emotional reactions to criminal victimization. To my knowledge, this is the first study to investigate this issue.

Experiment 1

Background. The aim of Experiment 1 was to investigate the association between observers' imagined own emotional responses to criminal victimization and perceived victim credibility (in the appended article corresponding to Study III, 'victim' is referred to as 'complainant' because that term was used in the stimulus material. For ease of presentation, however, 'victim' is used throughout this thesis). Furthermore, Experiment 1 investigated moderating effects of perspective taking in such judgments. We hypothesized that higher emotional overlap (between observers' self-predictions and the victim's expressed emotions)

would be associated with higher perceived victim credibility (H1). Moreover, we hypothesized that the influence of emotional overlap would be moderated by the type of perspective taking that participants engage in. Specifically, we predicted that the correlation between emotional overlap and credibility judgments would be stronger for participants instructed to imagine themselves in the victim's situation (imagine-self) compared with participants who did not receive any perspective taking instructions (control; H2a). Conversely, we predicted that the correlation would be weaker for participants instructed to assume an objective perspective compared to participants in the control condition (H2b). Finally, we expected to replicate the widely documented Emotional Victim Effect (Ask & Landström, 2010; Kaufmann et al., 2003), and thus predicted that the perceived intensity of the victim's emotional display would be positively correlated with perceived victim credibility (H3).

Method. Participants were 167 female (M_{age} = 24.91, SD = 5.43) university students in their first term of their teacher training. Participants were randomly allocated to one of three perspective taking conditions: imagine-self, objective, and control, with perceived credibility as the dependent measure.

First, participants were informed that they would read a written statement in which a female victim reported a rape. Participants were told that the transcript came from an actual police interview with the victim. They also received background information about the case intended to create ambiguity concerning the victim's's credibility (e.g., the accused claimed that the sexual intercourse was consensual). Second, to manipulate the perspective condition, participants in the experimental conditions were instructed to either imagine themselves in the victim's situation (*imagine-self*) or to remain objective and focus on the information provided by the victim (*objective*) while reading the victim's statement. Participants in the *control* condition received no perspective-taking instructions. Third, participants were presented with the transcript. They read the victim's report of what had happened and how she reacted emotionally during the event. Included was also information about how the victim reacted during the interview (e.g. "…sits quietly and hides her face in her hands").

After reading the transcript, participants were asked to rate their perception of the victim's credibility on three items using 7-point Likert scales (e.g., 1 = *not at all credible*, 7 = *entirely credible*; Cronbach's α = .91). Next followed nine items representing distinct emotions (discomfort, agitation, fear, anger, sadness, despair, disgust, shame, and guilt). Using these items, participants were asked to rate the victim's emotions during the interview using scales from 1 (*to a small extent*) to 7 (*to a large extent*). Finally, the same nine emotion items and scales were used when participants were asked to rate their own predicted emotions were they in the same situation as the victim. The overlap between the perceived victim emotions and participant's self-predicted emotions was calculated as the Euclidian distance between the two sets of ratings (i.e., the sum of the absolute values of the self-victim difference for each rated emotion).

Results and discussion. Results showed that higher emotional overlap was associated with higher perceived victim credibility, thereby supporting H1. However, the perspective taking condition did not moderate the influence of emotional overlap. Thus, H2a and H2b did not receive support. Finally, higher perceived overall intensity of the victim's emotional expressions was associated with higher perceived credibility, thereby supporting H3. Importantly, emotional overlap remained a significant predictor of credibility judgments when controlling for the overall intensity of the victim's emotional expressions.

Experiment 1 provided evidence that emotional overlap is associated with perceived credibility, and suggested that the relationship is relatively independent of the type of perspective taking people engage in. In sum, it appears that observers use their own imagined reactions as templates when assessing the credibility of others' expressions—an egocentric judgment process.

Experiment 2

Background. Experiment 2 was conducted to address the fact that Experiment 1 used a scenario for which participants expected very intense emotional reactions and perceived the victim's emotions to be less intense than those expected. To exclude the possibility that emotional overlap plays a role only in extreme scenarios, Experiment 2 therefore used a less severe type of crime (mugging) and manipulated the intensity of the victims' emotions (mild vs. intense). This would reveal whether the influence of emotional overlap on credibility judgments is independent of whether the self–victim comparisions are made upwards or downwards. Moreover, Experiment 2 used a sample of male participants reading about a male victim, and the order in which participants made credibility ratings and emotion ratings, respectively, was varied. As in Experiment 1, it was hypothesized that higher emotional overlap would be associated with higher perceived victim credibility (H1). Furthermore, drawing on the research of EVE, it was predicted that intense (vs. moderate) emotional reactions would lead to higher perceived credibility (H2).

Method. Participants were 188 male (M_{age} = 27.94 years) Swedish community members recruited for an online experiment. They were randomly allocated to one of four conditions in a 2 (emotion intensity: high vs. low) × 2 (judgment order: credibility judgment first vs. emotion ratings first) between-groups design. The same dependent measure as in Experiment 1 was used (perceived credibility).

First, participants were informed that they would read a transcribed statement in which a male victim reported a mugging at knife-point. Participants were told that the transcript came from an actual police interview with the victim. Second, participants were presented with the transcript. They read the male victim's report of what had happened and how he reacted emotionally during the event. Included was also information about how the victim reacted during the interview. Half of the participants read the intense version (e.g., "Erik sobs and talks quietly"), the other half read the low intensity version (e.g., "Erik looks composed"). Finally, using the same measures as in Experiment 1, participants were asked to rate the victim's credibility (α = .85), the perceived victim emotions, and their self-predicted emotions. Half the participants rated perceived credibility first and then the emotional responses. The other half rated these measures in the opposite order.

Results and discussion. As in Experiment 1, higher self–victim emotional overlap was associated with higher perceived credibility, again supporting H1. In addition, the manipulated intense (vs. mild) emotional expression was associated with higher perceived credibility, in support of H2. Importantly, the influence of emotional overlap was not conditional on the intensity of the victim's expressions.

The results of Experiment 2 replicated the findings of Experiment 1, using a distinctly different type of crime (mugging vs. rape) and participant/victim gender (male vs. female). Furthermore, the results provide additional support for the Emotional Victim Effect, showing that more intense emotional responses are associated with higher perceived credibility. Taken

together, observers seem to use themselves as templates when drawing inferences about credibility from victims' emotions; the stronger the match between the self-simulations and the victim in terms of emotional responses, the higher the perceived credibility.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Summary and integration of main findings

The research reported in this thesis started out with an investigation of observers' expectations regarding emotions that may occur in response to criminal victimization. Study I added important nuances to previous knowledge about stereotypes concerning crime victims' emotional responses. Across five different crime types, respondents expected female victims to react with more situation-focused (e.g., fear) and inward-focused (e.g., sadness) emotions, but less other-focused emotions (e.g., anger), than male victims. Thus, rather than viewing victims' emotions as an undifferentiated cluster of feelings, people seem to hold emotion-specific beliefs that are sensitive to characteristics of the victim (e.g., gender).

Study II showed that people use crime victims' emotional expressions to make inferences about the victims' need for support. Participants ascribed a higher need for support to victims who expressed sadness as opposed to anger. Importantly, this effect was only found for male victims. Furthermore, perceived victim warmth, but not perceived victim competence, mediated the effect of expressed emotion on judged need for support only for male victims. These findings were stable across different presentation modalities (i.e., video, audio, text). The type of vulnerability judgments examined in Study II has received very little attention in previous research, and the study thus broadens the literature on social perceptions of crime victims.

In Study III, the role of observers' self-knowledge in their inferences about crime victims' credibility was investigated. The results showed that the perception of crime victims' credibility depends, in part, on the overlap between the observers' own expected emotional responses to the crime and the emotions expressed by the victim. Larger emotional overlap was associated with higher perceived credibility across two crime types and victim genders, and the association was unaffected by observers' perspective taking strategy and the victim's emotional intensity. Thus, the documented influence of emotional overlap appears to be stable across several conditions.

Together, the empirical studies suggest that crime victims' emotional responses, when expressed in interpersonal settings, may become subject to two social cognitive processes: (1) the comparison with observers' expectations about emotional reactions to criminal victimization, and (2) observers' inferences about victim characteristics. This research has contributed with describing the contents of (1), and has given a deeper understanding of (2) by documenting the role of interpersonal warmth and emotional overlap in these processes. While previous research has focused on crime victim's emotions, the research presented here adds two important factors to this area of investigation: characteristics of the victim and observers' self-knowledge. As an illustration of the former, observers expect different emotional responses, and react to them

differently, depending on the victim's gender. As an example of the latter, observers may consult their own expected emotional reactions to the same crime. Together, perceptions of the situation, the target, and the self combine to shape observers' social judgments of the victim. In contrast to most previous research, the current research goes beyond considering the mere presence or absence of emotions as determinants of judgments of crime victims. Thus, it introduces a more nuanced approach to the topic and suggests additional determinants to consider in future research.

Theoretical implications

An overarching goal of the empirical studies was to explore the applicability of basic social cognitive phenomena in a novel, applied setting. Theoretical implications of these applications, as well as the novel findings about mechanisms behind credibility judgments of crime victims, are discussed below.

Social judgment and social functionalist models of emotion. The findings in this thesis can contribute to the further development of social functionalist models of emotions (Hareli & Hess, 2012; Hess & Hareli, 2015; Van Kleef, 2009). In explaining how observers make inferences from targets' emotional expressions, these models integrate external contextual variables (e.g., information about the situation) and information about the target (e.g., gender, ethnicity). These explanations can account for parts of the findings in the current studies (e.g., the gender effect in Study II). However, the role of observers' self-knowledge appears somewhat overlooked in the models. According to the current findings, observers' self-knowledge may in fact be an influential point of reference when people make inferences from others' emotional expressions. Specifically, participants in Study III appear to have used the degree of overlap between their self-predicted emotions and the target's actual expressed emotions as input when judging the target's credibility. This suggests that subjective self-knowledge may be an important contextual variable that may increase the explanatory value of social functionalist models of emotion perception. Although further research on the topic is needed, one might speculate whether observers' inferences about others' emotions may depend as much on the actual emotional expressions as on imagined ones. In any event, when applied to judgments of crime victim credibility, neither the EASI (Van Kleef, 2009) model, the SPEC (Hareli & Hess, 2012) model, nor the reverse engineering of emotions process (Hareli & Hess, 2010; Hess & Hareli, 2015) appear to be complete without taking observers' self-predicted emotional reactions into account. Furthermore, such an integration of self-knowledge would be probably be fruitful to relate to recent understandings of egocentric dual judgment processes in social judgments (Van Boven et al., 2013). More generally, future attempts to apply social functionalist models of emotion in new contexts may continue to reveal additional relevant contextual factors.

When discussing contextual variables, it is interesting to note that the type of crime did not strongly moderate the judgments in the current studies. In fact, the observed general patterns were consistent across a range of crime types that varied in severity (Study I and III). This should not be taken as suggesting that the situational context is irrelevant. Instead, it may be that the criminal victimization setting (regardless of crime type) in itself provides sufficient contextual information to elicit a certain type of judgments. To further investigate the role of situational

context, it would be useful to make direct comparisons between judgments made in criminal and non-criminal settings.

Mediating mechanisms. The observed mediating effect of the fundamental social cognition aspect of perceived victim warmth (Study II) can offer deepened theoretical understanding of social judgments of crime victims. If further replicated, this finding calls for a broad theoretical approach to the role of emotions in judgments of crime victims. Explanatory models, such as social functionalist models of emotions (Hareli & Hess, 2012; Hess & Hareli, 2015; Van Kleef, 2009), and more specific models of emotional influence, such as EVE (e.g., Ask & Landström, 2010), should all be enhanced with perceived warmth. Importantly, as perceived victim warmth was influential only for male victims, it would be valuable to further investigate gender as a moderator of the influence of perceived warmth in social judgments.

It is interesting to note that competence (Cuddy et al., 2007) did not mediate the effect of victims' emotions on observers' judgments of need for support. Recent theorizing offers two plausible reasons for why perceived competence may play a less pronounced role than perceived warmth in judgments of crime victims. First, perceived warmth is considered to be a primary concern of social perceivers (Wojciszke, 2005a, 2005b). This notion is supported by numerous studies showing that observers' inferences about targets' warmth occur both rapidly and spontaneously (e.g., Fiske et al., 2006). In contrast, perceived competence is considered a secondary concern that is not quite as rapid (Wojciszke, 2005b). One speculation is that criminal victimization as such increases the salience of warmth, whereas future research could shed light on its relation to the salience of perceived competence. Second, the influence of perceived warmth versus competence is dependent on the type of relationship between observers and targets (Wojciszke & Abele, 2008). When observers perceive strangers, perceived warmth dominates. When observers perceive others who are close to them, then perceived competence is salient. Participants in the studies comprising this thesis made judgments of victims they did not know personally, which may explain the found dominance of warmth.

Emotional victim effect (EVE). Observers' tendency to perceive emotionally intense (vs. calm) victims as more credible was detected in the thesis, providing further support to the great bulk of previous findings on this effect. Importantly, the thesis offers evidence that this effect is present also for male victims and for various types of crimes, factors that previously have been somewhat neglected in the field. Besides replication of the effect, the thesis also offers suggestions for a more nuanced understanding than that displayed in previous research. Rather than investigating degrees of emotion (e.g., intense vs. mild), the thesis proposes that emotion type in interaction with victim gender should also be acknowledged.

Furthermore, the thesis suggests that previously underinvestigated facts about the observers should be noted when investigating EVE. Specifically, as the observers' emotional overlap with target victims influenced credibility judgments, the thesis proposes that an emotional victim-observer effect (EVOE) may be a more appropriate term for this phenomenon. It would take both aspects (i.e., the self and the target) of credibility judgments of emotional crime victims into account. For example, this notion would suggest that emotional overlap may be as influential on credibility judgments of crime victims as emotion intensity. Importantly, this notion is speculative and further studies should examine the possibility that EVOE more fully captures the phenomenon than does EVE.

Emotion norms and display rules. This thesis adds knowledge about emotion norms and display rules (e.g., Cialdini & Trost, 1998) by offering descriptions of how the phenomena may unfold in criminal victimization. The thesis did not focus directly on rules and norms, as participants were not asked to rate "shoulds" and "musts" regarding crime victims' emotional responses. However, both the findings of nuanced stereotypical beliefs about emotional expressions to criminal victimization (Study I), and the fact that observers perceived only male (vs. female) victims in greater need of support when they expressed sadness (vs. anger) (Study II), may be interpreted as signs of gendered emotion norms and display rules in criminal victimization. This suggests that emotion norms and display rules in criminal victimization are subject to contextual nuances. Researchers may fruitfully search for additional contextual parameters. For example, one may examine the possible impact of victims' history (e.g., victims who are offenders themselves vs. innocent victims), culture, severity of the crime (e.g., armed robbery vs. pickpocketing), socioeconomic status of the victim, etc.

Moreover, if norms and display rules about emotions in criminal victimization receive further empirical support, then they raise an important practical question. How would they affect crime victims' mental health? As previous studies have underscored the importance of compliance with emotion norms to mental health in other contexts (e.g., employees at work; Ybema & Van Dam, 2014), future studies could study corresponding effects in criminal victimization.

Practical implications

Outside the legal system. Taken together, the thesis suggests that victims' emotional responses add to the likely complexity of criminal victimization. Hence, victims' emotional responses cannot be overlooked in social settings; the focus should not be solely on facts about what happened during the criminal event. Instead, organizations and support authorities should acknowledge the impact of emotions in their work with crime victims. When people representing such organizations take on specific cases, the topic of emotions should be recognized. For example, victim gender and emotion type should be put on the table so that possible stereotypical beliefs may be counteracted. Likewise, people working in such organizations should acknowledge their own expected reactions to criminal victimization.

Another setting including crime victims is the clinical one. Professionals who encounter crime victims in their daily clinical work may also gain from having knowledge about stereotypical beliefs that victims may be subject to by their social sourroundings, and how people connected to the victims their daily lives make inferences about their emotional responses. With this knowledge, clinicians could increase the victims' understanding of the premises in their social lives. Moreover, clinicians may benefit from acknowledging their own expectations about emotional responses to criminal victimization, if they do so in their clinical supervision. The supervisors could then, for example, highlight the threat of emotional biases in judgments of crime victims. Speculatively, the findings of the studies comprising this thesis could therefore be applied to clinical psychology. Future research could study the interesting topic of how different groups of professionals make judgments of emotional crime victims.

On a general level, support organizations and support authorities should also acknowledge the impact of emotions in their information campaigns, etc. A good example of such an initiative is the Victim Support Europe, an umbrella organization for all national victim

support authorities in the EU. On their web page (http://victimsupporteurope.eu/), they offer advice on how to deal with victimization, both for the victims themselves and for professionals in contact with victims. However, emotional content is somewhat neglected and could benefit from getting more attention. For example, the organization could provide advice for professionals in contact with victims, such as "Be aware of stereotype expectations about how a victim should react (e.g., be sad or angry). Victims may react very differently." and "No matter which emotional expression the victim is showing (e.g., sadness or anger), ask victims about their need for support. The emotional expression may not tell the whole story."

Likewise, if the current speculation that EVE should be developed to EVOE holds true, it underscores the importance of acknowledging all parts in the social interaction after criminal events. More specifically, there is a risk that some observers of emotional victims may focus solely on the victims' emotions, while neglecting the influence of their own self (i.e., emotional overlap). In the worst case, observers may accuse victims of trying to manipulate credibility judgments by expressing intense emotions. If observers apply knowledge about EVE in this accusative manner, it would be a far too simplistic usage of knowledge about this phenomenon. Thus, in light of the new knowledge of the influence of emotional overlap on credibility judgments of crime victims, I suggest the following: To avoid unwarranted usage of knowledge about EVE outside the legal system, the influence of the observers' own characteristics (e.g., own imagined responses to crime, emotional overlap) should be highlighted. Naturally, this reasoning also applies to situations inside the legal system.

Inside the legal system. The chain of legal stages from a criminal event to possible court proceedings contains several situations where emotions plays a crucial role in judgments of crime victims (Campbell, Menaker, & King, 2015). First, if a crime becomes reported, the first professionals representing the legal system (e.g., police) who interact with the victim may be influenced by both the victim's actual emotional expressions and their own stereotypical beliefs about emotional reactions. For example, when a police officer takes the first notes from a rape victim, the officer's judgments of the victim's credibility and need for support may be influenced by those factors. This could be problematic, especially if the officer judges the victim as not credible. This could lead to less efforts in investigating the crime—both in initial and late parts of the legal chain due to what is referred to as 'downstream orientation' of justice, that professionals early in the chain consider how professionals in later parts (e.g., prosecutors) will respond to a case (Campbell et al., 2015). Even if the first legal person interacting with the victim has assessed the victim as credible, at later stages including other professionals (e.g., prosecutors and judges) the same risk for biased judgments is present. As such, the thesis suggests several potentially biased judgment situations in the treatment of crime victims inside the legal system. These deserve further research attention.

Besides the EVE, there are additional examples of manifestations of crime victims' emotional expressions in the legal system. While EVE may occur spontaneously, Victim Impact Statements (VISs), victims' oral or written statements in court, are deliberate parts of court proceedings. If taking a VIS, the victim is given a possibility to express harm (e.g., psychological) suffered after the crime in question (Erez, 2004). VISs can thus be seen as research-based interventions in court proceedings with possible therapeutic benefits for victims (Chalmers, Duff, & Leverick, 2007; Lens et al., 2014). Furthermore, they can have an impact on observers' judgments of (Blumenthal & Wevodau, 2009; Peace & Forrester, 2012) and emotions towards

(Boppre & Miller, 2014) victims. Several countries have introduced VIS in their courts (Lens et al., 2014; Wevodau, Cramer, Kehn, & Clark, 2014). Researchers on VIS try to provide answers about VISs on two levels. First, they try to find out how VISs affect court proceeding (e.g., effects on jurors' judgments). Second, researchers try to investigate the effects of VISs on the victims' mental health. The research presented in the thesis offers indirect suggestions to both fields.

Study I shows which emotional expression may be expected from a victim in a specific case (i.e., victim gender). This could help in making an informed judgment of whether a specific victim should take a VIS. Study II, on the other hand, shows that angry male victims may not benefit from taking a VIS, as they may be perceived as needing little social support. Study III points to the rather complicated issue of addressing which expected emotional responses the observers of the victim have. Such a procedure is unlikely to be implemented, but an informed decision on whether or not to take a VIS could acknowledge the fact that observers partly use information about themselves when they make credibility judgments of victims' emotional expressions. Rather than always giving victims this possibility, this thesis suggests that one should consider in which circumstances and for whom VISs are constructive.

Limitations

One limitation of this thesis is that it does not, with one exception, concern the intensity of experienced and expressed emotions (e.g., level of arousal, extremeness of expressions). In our studies, we have manipulated different emotion types, but not different degrees of the emotions (except for Study III, Experiment 2). Although using very few participants, neuropsychological studies indicate that people differ in their capacity to recognize distinct emotions, such as anger, depending on the intensity of the expression (Wang, Liu, & Yan, 2014). Hence, it is important to acknowledge intensity to make sure that manipulations of emotions actually are recognized in the first place. We addressed this issue by labeling our emotion manipulations with words (oral or written).

An important related issue is proportionality of the intensity of the emotion. Connecting to the proportionality rule about crime victims' emotional responses, observers' judgments and perceptions of victims for support may also be affected by levels of emotional expressions. It may be that in Study II, the degrees of emotional expressions were perceived as proportionate to the crimes. If the expressions had been more or less strong, then vulnerability judgments might have been affected negatively. Future studies could therefore investigate the effects of different degrees of displayed emotions.

Furthermore, when studying the role of emotions in judgments of crime victims, it is important to discuss the authenticity of the emotional displays. The actors in our video and audio conditions were instructed to express discrete emotions that were as credible as possible, and participants rated the displays as authentic. However, emotional displays from victims in real life naturally differ from acted ones—even if they are authentic. The difference between natural and acted emotions evokes the question whether the effects of emotional responses on observers' inferences in our studies would differ from the effects of naturally occurring emotional responses. While this thesis did not focus on this question explicitly, the results nevertheless offer some suggestions. The fact that the same effects occurred in both text, video and audio

conditions suggests that acted emotions (video and audio) do not differ from other forms of display (text). Future research could investigate this suggestion further. The reasons for not investigate natural emotional responses in this thesis were both practical and ethical. The logistics of studying crime victims' emotional responses in real-life settings were beyond our possibilities. More importantly, we considered the study of victims' natural emotional responses as unethical as conducting such studies could endanger their mental well-being. Finally, the use of acted emotional responses makes the results comparable with a large bulk of the previous studies on emotional responses in social settings (cf. Plant et al., 2000; Tiedens, 2001).

The results also raise external validity questions regarding the relationship between the victim and the observer. To avoid confounding, our participants did not have any established relationships with the victims in our stimuli. In everyday life, established relationships (e.g., friendships) are of course a likely scenario when crime victims reveal their emotional responses. Established relationships offer possibilities for more contextual information that is important for how observers make inferences from targets' emotional expressions (Hess & Hareli, 2015). For example, knowing the goals, values and temperament of a crime victim probably refine which inferences observers make of the emotional expressions from that specific crime victim. Indeed, previous research suggests that the type of relationship an observer desires affects how that person judges targets (Clark & Taraban, 1991). More specifically, observers may judge a crime victim differently if they have an established relationship with the victim, or want to establish a relationship with the victim. Such observers are less likely to be neutral. Indeed, newly proposed models further underscore that judging someone close is different from judging a stranger, as people routinely construct and incorporate representations of responses from those who are close to them (Smith & Mackie, 2015).

Furthermore, research on emotional expressions in relationships has shown that observers high in emotion attention (i.e., the propensity to pay attention to emotions) might misperceive close friend's angry expressions as sad expressions (Zhang & Parmley, 2014). This suggests that relationship closeness can alter specific observers' perceptions of targets' emotional expressions in quite remarkable ways. In relation to the main topic of the present thesis, observers with close relationships to target victims might make more propitious judgments of all emotion types compared to the effects found in our studies. Likewise, if observers experience a competitive relationship with the target victims, they might react more unconcernedly to that victim's loss (i.e., cost of criminal victimization) than observers who do not compete in any way with the victim (Wang, Qu, Luo, Qu, & Li, 2014). Indeed, the EASI model predicts that if there is cooperation (likely when people encounter crime victims), observers are more likely to respond with affective reactions (e.g., emotional contagion) than strategic inferences (Van Kleef et al., 2010). Taken together, although collaboration is perhaps most likely between observers and crime victims, the state of research on emotional expressions in relationship settings suggests that relationship topics will probably be of interest in future studies on crime victim emotional responses. However, concerning the early stage of the research niche in which the present thesis takes its place, investigating effects without the moderation of relationship type (i.e., no knowledge about target) was arguably most appropriate.

Future directions

The thesis has investigated effects of crime victims' emotional expressions on observers' social judgments with an assumption that should be debated. I have discussed inferences of credibility and need for support from emotional expressions as being problematic. However, this is not the only possibility. Some might argue that the link between emotional expressivity and credibility could actually be true. Others might argue that there is an actual connection between certain distinct emotions and vulnerability (e.g., need for social support). Indeed, crying is often associated with depression, even though this connection lacks empirical support in real life cases (Vingerhoets, Rottenberg, Cevaal, & Nelson, 2007). Nonetheless, the idea of an "honest signal" from emotional expressions should also be considered in future research on emotions in criminal victimization.

Emotions have several nuances and dimensions (Barrett & Bliss-Moreau, 2009; Ekman, 2003; Motley & Camden, 1988). Pure emotional expressions are probably rare (Izard, 1971; Plutchik, 1980). Thus, future studies on crime victims' emotional expressions in interpersonal settings should include mixed emotions (e.g., emotional responses that include both anger and sadness). Mixed emotional expressions may be more difficult to judge socially. Consequently, they may need more complex theoretical explanations than those offered in this thesis. They may also have more complex practical consequences, which is supported by recent findings. For example, changes in emotional expressions (e.g., from happiness to negative emotions) influence observers' certainty (Sacharin, Sander, & Scherer, 2012). Moreover, if targets switch from expressing sadness to anger (or vice versa), observers integrate both expressions when they make social judgments of the target (Hareli, David, & Hess, 2015). Furthermore, researchers investigating charity behavior have identified that mixed emotions may cause alterations in the attitudes of observers towards targets in need (Bennett, 2014). Hence, effects of mixed emotions need to be properly studied (Fernando, Kashima, & Laham, 2014; Nelson & Russell, 2014).

Related to the above point, one idea for future research is to examine the effects of crime victims' emotional responses when observers and victims interact over time. In this thesis, victims' emotions were used as stimulus in rather static social contexts (e.g., observing a victim making a statement on video). This methodology enabled the understanding of direct, moderated and mediated effects of discrete victim emotions due to its high degree of experimental control. However, when it is possible for observers to interact with victims, a complex dynamic social situation might occur (see, for instance, Fogel, 1993; Parkinson & Manstead, 2015). Observers may ask victims questions about their emotional responses. The answers may provide new information on which to base inferences. Observers may also react emotionally themselves. This may affect their information processing (as proposed by AIM; Forgas, 1995). In contrast, social functionalist models of emotions may provide only a partial picture of what is happening psychologically in these situations. Instead, other models (e.g., sociodynamic model of emotions; Mesquita & Boiger, 2014) may offer explanations to observers' social judgments in *dynamic* settings.

Finally, the dependent variables used in this thesis measured different aspects of observers' appraisals of target victims. While these provide an interesting picture about observers' perceptions of crime victims, it is not obvious how these perceptions are translated into

observers' actual behavior. Perceptions of victims as in need for support, for example, may not necessarily lead observers to provide actual support. Hence, although the measured variables arguably are *potential* predictors of such behavior, future research could investigate direct behaviors.

Conclusions

This thesis suggests that crime victims' emotional responses are influential on observers' social judgments. This influence seems to have several important features. Mainly, this thesis has shown that victim gender together with emotion type, in addition to perceived victim warmth, affect observers' judgments of victim credibility. Moreover, in support of previous findings on EVE, emotion intensity was influential. Finally, the observers' proposed own emotional reactions affect how they judge the crime victims. Thus, this thesis supports a dual view on observers' judgments of crime victims, and may complement recent social functionalist models of emotions such as EASI and SPEC. In its contributions to the general question of what emotions *do*, it supports the theory of emotions as crucial functional parts of people's social interactions.

Adding to the body of research on crime victims, this research is the first to use judgments of need for support in criminal victimization. Moreover, this thesis raises issues for future research on social effects of targets' emotional responses in severe situations, like criminal victimization, by highlighting the important role of emotions.

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