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Perspective-Taking of the Defendant: Does Race Influence the Final Sentencing Verdict for Mock Jurors?

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Does Race Influence the Final Sentencing Verdict for Mock Jurors?

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Biography

Matthew A. Pardo was born to Pedro Juan Pardo (who immigrated from Cuba) and Anna Donato Pardo (1st generation Italian/American) in Lawrenceville, GA. He was raised in Gainesville, Florida playing various sports/activities including soccer, basketball and chess. Matthew graduated cum laude with his Bachelor of (Science or Arts) in psychology from the University of West Florida.

While attending college, he studied abroad in Spain with Florida State University. He then served with AmeriCorps ACES in Pensacola, FL. Matthew was instrumental in launching and maintaining a new partnership with Westminster Village, a food service program for seniors. He assisted with flood recovery, Backpack4Teens Program, a new client appointment system for Manna Food Pantries. He then served as an AmeriCorps ACES member at Every Child A Reader in Escambia County while working as a Behavior Technician at Lakeview Center. In addition to service, Matthew enjoys traveling; he has had the opportunity to travel to many countries including: Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Denmark, France, Hungary, Italy, Netherlands, Senegal, Serbia, Spain, and Turkey. In 2015, Matthew matriculated to DePaul University in Chicago, IL. to pursue a Master of Science degree in general psychology.

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Abstract

The main objective of this study is to test whether there are disparities in a final sentencing verdict, of a guilty defendant that identifies as either African-American or Caucasian. Using a mock-jury design, participants were randomly assigned to the police report of Jamal Washington (representing the African-American defendant), or Greg Sullivan (representing the Caucasian defendant). Additionally, participants were randomly assigned to either take the perspective of the defendant or not to take the perspective of the defendant (control). This combination of race and perspective-taking as manipulations allows for the examination of the extent of racial schemas in courtroom settings through the measurements of empathy, leniency, perceived recidivism, retributive justice, and a final sentence.

Furthermore, in order to better understand sentencing decisions for a guilty defendant, this study incorporates a forgiveness scale that includes measurements of self-forgiveness, forgiveness of others, and situational forgiveness. The inclusion of the forgiveness scale assessed if one's ability to forgive a transgression (self, other, and/or situational) alters participants' assessments of the guilty defendant.

Results from the present study saw significant differences in the perspective-taking condition where perspective-takers shower higher levels of empathy, leniency and reductions in retributive justice than participants in the control group. Additionally, for the race condition participants granted the African-American defendant (Jamal) a significantly longer sentence than the

Caucasian defendant (Greg). Furthermore, interaction between race and

perspective-taking was non-significant. Lastly, for the forgiveness subscales

(self, other, and situational), only other-forgiveness was significantly correlated to

the dependent variables; though, other-forgiveness had a minimal influence on the

dependent variables.

The pattern of the current study suggests that perspective-taking is

advantageous within mock-jury scenarios, though there also seemed to be a racial

bias/out-group bias against Jamal. Furthermore, while the interaction of

perspective-taking and race was non-significant, trends suggest that "Greg"

benefitted more than "Jamal" from the effects of perspective-taking; thus, adding

more potential evidence that racial/out-group was captured in the present study.

Introduction

Approximately 3% of African-American males in the United States reside in a state or federal prison facility, as compared with 0.5% of Caucasian males (Carson, 2014). Studies of state felony defendants indicate that higher percentages of African Americans (38%) are held in pre-trial detention compared to Caucasians 32% (Cohen & Reaves, 2007). National arrest rates indicate that African-Americans are arrested at higher rates (2.3 times higher) than that experienced by Caucasians (Snyder & Wangota, 2014). Recent estimates indicate that, by age 23, 49% of African-American males experienced an arrest, compared to 38% of Caucasian males (Brame, Bushway, Paternoster, & Turner, 2014). From a statistical standpoint, it seems that African-Americans may engage both in more crime and in more types of crime that could result in arrest, pre-trial detention, conviction, and incarceration (Beaver et al., 2013). However, statistics alone do not fully explain crime rate differences seen among African-Americans and Caucasians. Instead, observed differences in criminal processing and sanctioning among African-Americans and Caucasians stem from discriminatory laws, enforcement of these laws, and punishment practices (Beaver et al., 2013; Spohn, 2013).

Though sentencing guidelines differ by state in the United States, the crime of vehicular manslaughter is decided by the jury. A study by Glaeser and Sacerdote (2003) found that offenders convicted of vehicular homicide are given, on average, shorter sentences than offenders who were found guilty of other types of homicide. The authors found that the gender of the offender does not

statistically affect the length of the sentence, but that the offender's race does. The identity of the victim is a more important predictor of sentencing length, with longer sentences given to offenders in cases where the victim was female and/or had no violent criminal record. This study was designed to assess the victim's perspective by concentrating on the defendant sentence by race.

Literature Research

When arrested for the same crime, African-American male defendants receive much longer prison sentences (20% longer) than Caucasian men (Rehavi & Starr, 2014; United States Sentencing Commission, 2013). Additionally, African-American males are six times more likely than Caucasian offenders to spend at least part of their sentence in prison (Mears, Cochran, & Lindsey, 2016). While there are noticeable differences in the sentencing of African-American and Caucasian defendants, it must be acknowledged that may be some other contextual factors that explain the disparity in sentencing between the two defendants. For example, African-American defendants, on average, have more extensive criminal histories, are more likely to have at least one aggravating factor within the description of their offense and are more likely to have a publicly funded attorney than Caucasian defendants (Rehavi & Starr, 2014).

While the statement above may explain some of the variance in courtroom sentencing, it should be recognized that there may be other contextual factors that explain some of the differences between criminal sentences for African-American and Caucasian offenders. One possible explanation for the disparities in criminal sentences may be because of the developed schemas about ethnicity-based

behaviors and expectations solely by racial stereotypes (that African-American individuals are more likely to be violent than Caucasian individuals). Playing into these schemas, Correll, Park, Judd, and Wittenbrink (2002) created an experimental paradigm that simulated a police-like scenario forcing participants into making a split-second decision to either shoot or not shoot an individual who either had a weapon or did not have a weapon. Results from their experiment indicated that participants were more likely to mistakenly not shoot the Caucasian target when armed, and reacted slower when shooting the Caucasian target when compared to when the target was African-American. When the target was unarmed, participants made more errors shooting the African-American target more often than when the target was Caucasian.

While Correll et al. (2002) experiment exposed a negative implicit bias towards African-Americans, it is possible that their design is not an accurate representation of everyday life for the average person. Most people do not have to make split-second decisions with a gun. While this is true, it should not take away from the authors' findings; their results show that African-American targets were more quickly and erroneously perceived to be hostile than Caucasian targets (Correll et al., 2002). Would results similar to Correll et al. (2002) be demonstrated in a courtroom setting? Would African-American defendants receive harsher sentences than Caucasian defendants because of threats to existing negative stereotypes?

Addressing a very similar question, van Prooijen and Coffeng (2013) examined the extent of racial bias/social categorizations against Moroccans in the

Netherlands by using perspective-taking techniques on the offender. *Perspective-taking* is defined as actively imagining the world from another's vantage point (Galinsky, Wang, & Ku, 2008). Typically, the process of perspective-taking results in the observer valuing targets more than non-perspective takers, having more nurturant feelings towards the target, and lastly, an increased likelihood to forgive the targets' transgressions (Batson, Eklund, Chermok, Hoyt, & Ortiz, 2007; Batson, Lishner, Cook, & Sawyer, 2005; McCullough, Worthington Jr, & Rachal, 1997).

An example of the effectiveness of perspective-taking manipulations is seen in Skorinko, Laurent, Bountress, Nyein and Kuckuck (2014) study where they examined the role of valuing the defendant as an antecedent of empathic concern. In their mediation model, Skorinko et al. (2014) hypothesized that perspective-taking of the defendant would lead to higher levels of empathy, thus creating a sense of leniency towards the defendant. Additionally, in their mediation model, it is hypothesized that perspective-taking towards the defendant would indirectly result in lowered perceptions of culpable beliefs, ultimately leading to a lowered probability of a guilty verdict for the defendant.

Results from Skorinko et al. (2014) study found that perspective-taking of the criminal defendant condition led to more favorable perceptions of the defendant (higher levels of leniency and empathy, and perceptions of the defendant being less likely to recidivate in the future). Additionally, when the focus of the perspective-taking tasks was shifted to the victim of the crime, participants had more favorable views of the victim through increased levels of

empathy. An inverse relationship between the perspective-taking of the victim and perceptions of the defendant was observed. Increased empathy towards the victim led to less favorable views for the defendant. When participants took the perspective of the victim, participants were less likely to empathize and be lenient with the defendant, which lead to an increase in perceived culpability, likelihood of recidivism, and probability of being guilty (Skorinko et al., 2014).

However, van Prooijen and Coffeng (2013) hypothesized that perspective-taking techniques would not be as effective when the target is from a minority group. Instead, perspective-taking might increase the observers' racial bias and stereotyping. In their experiment, van Prooijen et al., (2013) directed participants to take the perspective of an offender named Ahmed or Alex for stealing (representing a stereotypical offense for Moroccans) or in a negligent car accident (representing an ambiguous offense).

For the crime of negligence, there were marginally significant main effects on the offender's name; participants granted Alex a lighter sentence than Ahmed. Furthermore, there was a significant difference between the perspective-taking condition and the control condition. Participants in the perspective-taking condition granted a lighter sentence than participants who were in the control condition. Conversely, for the crime of theft, results revealed only a significant interaction effect for the perspective-taking condition; perspective-taking increases punishment for Ahmed, while decreasing the punishment for Alex (van Prooijen et al., 2013). The authors suggest that this discrepancy between punishments for Ahmed and Alex was because of preferential treatment.

Participants were more likely to empathize and be more lenient with Alex when compared to Ahmed.

This follows with the findings of Bodenhausen and Wyer (1985) where it is indicated that stereotypic transgressions are seen as more likely to recur than are non-stereotypic ones, and that they are punished more severely. However, when no stereotype was activated (through the name of the transgressor), information about the target's past life with implications for why the transgression occurred resulted in greater leniency. This could explain why Alex was granted a lesser punishment when compared to Ahmed; participants in the perspective-taking condition for Ahmed may have believed that his behavior is indicative of his character.

Exploring more in to this thought, Prooijen et al., (2013) ran a correlation, as an exploratory analysis, of stereotypic appraisals and retributive justice judgements. Within this analysis, van Prooijen et al., (2013) found a strong negative correlation between retributive justice judgments when participants took the perspective of Ahmed, $r = -0.68$, $p = .002$, but not for the other three conditions (PT-Alex, Control-Alex, Control-Ahmed) $r = -0.15$, $p = .26$. This led van Prooijen et al., (2013) to suggest that when making punishment judgements, perspective-taking manipulations may be a "double-edge sword", where decisions depend on the target's ethnicity.

The authors stated that "perspective taking leads to more severe retributive justice judgments if the offender belongs to an ethnic group that is stereotypically associated with the crime, but not if the offender is not from a stereotyped ethnic

group" (van Prooijen et al., 2013, p. 394). More specifically, the authors suggest that taking the perspective of an outgroup member activates associative links between stereotypes and the target's behaviors (van Prooijen et al., 2013). Therefore, participants may believe that an outgroup member conducted the offence intentionally, and thus leading to harsher retributive justice judgments.

Therefore, the study was modeled after aspects of Skorinko et al., (2014) design (using a mock-courtroom design, incorporating perspective-taking tasks), but without the perspective-taking of the victim; rather, all of the focus centers on a guilty defendant. Participants were asked to either take the perspective of the defendant or not take the perspective of the defendant (control group) in deciding the final judicial sentence for a guilty defendant. Additionally, this study was designed to also use van Prooijen et al. (2013) design by the inclusion of the race of the defendant in order to examine the extent of racial schemas influence on the empathetic concern for the defendant, leniency towards the defendant, perceptions of the defendant's likelihood to recidivate, retributive justice, and final sentencing verdict for a guilty defendant.

Race of the Defendant

A major limitation in the Skorinko et al. (2014) study was that they did not account for the defendant's race in their design. It is possible that there may be significant differences in mock jurors' perceptions of a Caucasian and African-American defendants (similar to the discrepancies seen in van Prooijen et al., 2013). This expectation involves racial biases against African-Americans which indicate that African-Americans are more likely to be perceived as violent and

criminal when compared to Caucasians (Devine, 1989; Johnson, Whitestone, Jackson, & Gatto, 1995). Therefore, this study looks to extend on the results of Skorinko et al. (2014) mock jury design by using the two independent variables perspective-taking and the race of the defendant.

Exploring studies of actual juror decision making in the criminal justice system, suggests that African-Americans defendants receive harsher treatment than Caucasian defendants (Norris, Fielding, Kemp, & Fielding, 1992; Wortley, 1996). Baldus and colleagues used archival data from thousands of capital cases from the states of Georgia, Nebraska, and Philadelphia and found that the race of the defendant does indeed, influence death sentences. African American defendants were four times more likely to receive the death penalty than Caucasian defendants (Baldus, Pulaski, & Woodworth, 1983; Baldus, Woodworth, Grosso, & Christ, 2002; Baldus, Woodworth, Zuckerman, Weiner, & Broffitt, 1998). Additionally, several archival studies have demonstrated similar results that African-Americans defendants are not only granted longer sentences, but are sentenced to the death penalty more often than Caucasian defendants (Austin & Allen, 2000; Mustard, 2001; Williams & Holcomb, 2001).

Experimental research, focusing on mock juror decision making (by the basis on the defendant's race), has found similar results. That is, when compared to Caucasians, African-Americans are more likely to be found guilty (Johnson et al., 1995). Additionally, it has been shown that mock jurors assign harsher sentences to African-American defendants, when compared to Caucasian defendants (DeSantis & Kayson, 1997). Additional research using mock juror

methods have found that an array of defendant characteristics (socioeconomic status, ethnicity, religion, race, and attractiveness) can bias mock jurors' judgements and, therefore, influence decisions of culpability and/or sentencing (Frederick, 1987; Perez et al., 1993; Bagby, Parker, Rector, & Kalemba, 1994; Albonetti, 1997).

Both archival and experimental mock-jury studies (mainly – Johnson et al., 1995; DeSantis & Kayson, 1997; Baldus et al., 1998; Austin & Allen, 2000) have demonstrated that there are discrepancies in courtroom settings for African-American and Caucasian defendants. Therefore, the study aims to extend the literature by using a mock jury design that uses a perspective-taking manipulation to examine the extent of racial bias in courtroom settings. Specifically, this study seeks to extend the literature using mock jurors to assess the dependent variables of an overall sentencing verdict, empathy, leniency, the perceived likelihood of recidivism, retributive justice, and assessments of forgiveness based upon the independent variable of the defendant's race.

Sentencing

Rather than assessing defendant culpability (similar to Skorinko et al., 2014) and retributive justice towards an offender (similar to van Prooijen et al., 2013), this study looks to extend the literature by including a *final sentencing verdict* for a guilty defendant the main dependent variable. To the author's knowledge, there has yet to be an experiment that incorporates a perspective-taking (or role taking manipulation) with a sentencing verdict. Therefore, this

study seeks to explore how influential perspective-taking manipulations are on sentencing verdicts.

Though, previous research has demonstrated that race of the defendant plays a significant role in decision making tasks, specifically regarding sentencing verdicts. For example, in a meta-analytic review using the responses of 3,141 participants, Mitchell, Haw, Pfeifer, and Meissner (2005) found that participants were more likely to exhibit a racial bias, where participants rendered longer sentences for other-race defendants. Therefore, the study seeks to explore whether racial biases towards outgroup members, in mock juror settings, will occur when combined with a perspective-taking manipulation.

Empathy

To replicate and extend the findings of Skorinko et al. (2014), the proposed design uses *empathy* as the second dependent variable. According to Clark (1980), empathy is defined as "the capacity of an individual to feel the needs, the aspirations, the frustrations, the joys, the sorrows, the anxieties, the hurt, indeed, the hunger of others as if they were his or her own" (p. 188). It has been suggested that feelings of empathy towards a target creates conditions for self-other identification and psychological indistinguishability (Aron & Aron, 1986; Cialdini et al., 1997). Davis, Conklin, Smith, and Luce (1996) demonstrated that empathetic induction led participants to attribute self-descriptive traits. Therefore, one consequence of the merging of the self and other could be more favorable attitudes and behaviors towards the target (Johnson et al., 2002).

Previous research demonstrated that inducing empathy for a target can lead to greater willingness to volunteer to help that target (Batson, Klein, Highberger, & Shaw, 1995). Batson et al. (1995), demonstrated that empathetic induction led to a violation of participants' sense of morality. In the Batson et al. (1995) study, participants were asked to share resources to some individuals using empathy. The researchers created two groups: either inducing empathy before participants were asked to share their resources or, acting as the control, not inducing empathy before participants were asked to share their resources. The results from Batson et al. (1995) demonstrated that participants who were not induced to feel empathy were less likely to allocate their resources; they made their allocation decisions by the principles of justice and fairness. In contrast, participants who were induced to feel empathy were far more likely to disregard morals, thus they were more likely to give preferential treatment to the target.

While this study does not look to induce empathy, these studies demonstrate the important role influence has on empathetic feelings towards a target and its' influence on decision making. Rather, the study assesses participants' feelings of empathy through perspective-taking of either an African-American or Caucasian defendant. As previously discussed, perspective-taking has been demonstrated to having more nurturant feelings and more empathy for the target (Batson, Eklund, Chermok, Hoyt, & Ortiz, 2007; Batson, Lishner, Cook, & Sawyer, 2005; McCullough, Worthington Jr, & Rachal, 1997). Though these studies did not address race in their design. Using transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS) to measure empathy, Avenanti, Bueti, Galati, and Aglioti

(2005) found that participants exhibited an in-group bias (through measurements of muscle-specific corticospinal inhibition), when watching a needle penetrate the target's hand. In other words, there were notable differences in regional brain activity when the target's hand was of the same race, suggesting that there was an unconscious racial bias for empathy.

Using these results from Avenanti et al. (2005), this study seeks to extend the literature regarding empathy through a mock jury design. This study seeks to understand how participants' level of empathy potentially varies using a perspective-taking manipulation, and by manipulating the race of a guilty defendant.

Leniency

The proposed design includes *leniency* as a third dependent variable. According to Fox, Caspy and Reisler (1994) leniency refers to the degree in which raters grant high/low scores, causing a reduction in validity due to the differences seen in the assigned scores versus scores at the mid-point. In Skorinko et al. (2014) design, a leniency prompt was used; however, this study was not designed to include a leniency prompt. The main objective of this study is to understand how mock-jurors formulate final sentences based on the criteria of the defendant's race.

Previous research demonstrates that jurors may be more lenient toward defendants that are seen as similar to the juror or members of juror's in-group (Kerr, Hymes, Anderson, & Weathers, 1995). In contrast, jurors are more disciplinary toward defendants who are members of the juror's out-group (Kerr et

al., 1995). Additionally, in their meta-analytic review, Mazzella and Feingold (1994) suggested that when juries considers a defendant to be more likable, they treat them more leniently.

In their study, Johnson et al. (2002) found that Caucasian participants reported greater feelings of empathy, and thus assigned more lenient punishments to the Caucasian defendant when compared to the African-American defendant. Additionally, Kerr et al. (1995) study showed that Jewish and Christian participants were more lenient toward members of their own faith and harsher toward members of the other faith. Thus, these two studies demonstrate that there is a direct link between empathy and leniency in a mock jury setting.

The opposite effect opposite effect has been observed, where participants are more likely to be more lenient towards out-group members when compared to in-group members. For example, Feather and Souter's (2002) research found that participants had more favorable views of an Aboriginal Australian offender when compared to a White Australian for the same offense of theft. Participants in this experiment saw an Aboriginal Australian offender less responsible and less deserving of a sentence for the crime of theft than a White Australian who committed the same offense.

To summarize, there has been inconclusive/contradictory results over the influence of juror leniency on defendants based on in-group/out-group status. This study looks to address these inconclusive/contradictory results by analyzing participants' group status with the race of the defendant to determine the extent that leniency is or may be influenced by in-group/out-group bias.

Recidivism

This study was designed to measure the perceived likelihood of recidivism as a fourth dependent variable. *Recidivism* is defined as the risk of either re-arrest, re-conviction, and/or re-incarceration (McGovern, Demuth, & Jacoby, 2009). Skorinko et al. (2014) found that the more culpable the defendant is, the more likely participants perceived that the defendant would recidivate. Additionally, Skorinko et al. (2014) found that perspective taking of the defendant leads to a lowered perception of recidivism.

As previously mentioned, Skorinko et al. (2014) did not account the defendant's race in their design. For example, younger persons, males, and African-Americans are associated with higher risks of violent recidivism (Piquero, Jennings, Diamond, & Ringle, 2015). Additionally, using data for over 140,000 released prisoners from 15 states (Langan and Levin, 2002), McGovern et al. (2009) found that African-Americans pose higher recidivism risks than Caucasians. Furthermore, African-American offenders are more likely than Caucasian offenders to be rearrested and resentenced to prison (McGovern et al., 2009). Based on the results of the above two studies (McGovern et al., 2009; Piquero et al., 2015) it is believed that subjects will judge the likelihood of recidivism higher towards the African-American defendant compared to the Caucasian defendant.

Retributive Justice

Emulating van Prooijen et al. (2013), this study was designed to measure *retributive justice* as a fifth dependent variable. *Retributive justice* is defined as

the sense that offenders received fair and appropriate punishment, proportionate with the severity of the transgression (e.g., Carlsmith & Darley, 2008; Gerber & Jackson, 2013; Gollwitzer & Bücklein, 2007; Hogan & Emler, 1981; van Prooijen & Kerpershoek, 2013; Vidmar, 2002). Previous studies have demonstrated that negatively stereotyped ethnic groups often receive harsher punishments than offenders who are from non-stereotyped groups (Graham, Weiner, & Zucker, 1997; Johnson, Whitestone, Jackson, & Gatto, 1995; Sweeney & Haney, 1992).

This study seeks to replicate the findings of van Prooijen et al. (2013) that perspective-taking of an ethnic minority will ultimately lead to a more severe punishment. Rather than using targets representing Morocco and the Netherlands, the present study includes an African-American and Caucasian target.

Forgiveness

Lastly, to address individual differences, this study includes *forgiveness* (specifically self-forgiveness, other-forgiveness, and situational-forgiveness) as a covariate. The act of forgiveness involves transforming negative thoughts, affects, behaviors or motivations towards the 'offender' to more positive ones (Enright and Fitzgibbons, 2000 and McCullough et al., 2003). Because forgiveness is a situational variable, it is believed that some individuals are more prone to forgive than others (Emmons, 2000 and Koutsos et al., 2008).

To explain why we forgive, researchers linked the social-exchange theory to forgiveness (Exline, Baumeister, Bushman, Campbell and Finkel, 2004). According to Emerson (1976), the social-exchange theory is explained as "a two-sided, mutually contingent, and mutually rewarding process involving

'transactions' or 'exchanges'" (p. 336). Using the social-exchange approach, Exline et al. (2004) argues that transgressions are similar to societal/personal debts; therefore, the larger the transgression, the larger the debt that is owed. Exline et al., argues that the act of forgiving is a way to reduce or cancel out the debt that is owed.

While the act of forgiving may reduce/cancel owed debts, there are individual differences in forgiving; some people are more prone to forgive than others. According to Excline et al. (2004), predictors to un-forgiveness are entitlement, narcissism, and empathy. Therefore, it can be inferred that those who are less likely to forgive are more likely to feel entitled, have higher amounts of narcissistic beliefs, and have lowered empathy for the transgressor. Additionally, those who are less likely to forgive have increased amounts of skepticism and reservations about forgiveness in general (Excline et al., 2004).

It was demonstrated that taking the perspective of a target is associated with the ability to forgive (Welton, Hill, and Seybold, 2008). It is believed that this association between perspective-taking and the ability to forgive is facilitated through feelings of empathy; it has been demonstrated that empathy is correlated with forgiveness (Welton et al., 2008). Macaskill, Maltby, and Day (2002) found that those with higher levels of empathy find it easier to forgive, when compared to those with lower levels of empathy.

Therefore, in order to better understand sentencing decisions for a guilty defendant, measurements of forgiveness were assessed. This study was designed to asses if one's ability to forgive a transgression will alter one's sentencing

verdict for a guilty defendant. To the author's knowledge, there has not been a study that incorporates a mock jury and a sentencing decision with one's ability to forgive. Therefore, it is of interest to assess whether or not mock jurors' sentencing verdict and ability to forgive covary.

Rationale

Bertrand and Mullainathan (2004) proposed a study, using mock resumes, to explore if there was racial discrimination in the job market; the experiment manipulated the applicants name using stereotypical African-American (Jamal) or Caucasian (Greg) sounding names. The results from Bertrand and Mullainathan's study showed clear discrimination against African-Americans. Resumes with the names of Greg received 50 percent more callbacks for interviews when compared to the resumes of Jamal.

Using race as a moderator, van Prooijen, et al. (2013), designed a study to assess the benefits and limitations of perspective-taking tasks on either an in-group (represented by the name of Alex) or an out-group offender (represented by the name of Ahmed). Results from their study showed that overall, Alex received a lighter sentence than Ahmed, thus showing a favorable bias towards an in-group offender. Additionally, when taking the perspective of Ahmed, participants granted Ahmed a harsher punishment than the control group, thus showing limitations to perspective-taking manipulations on out-group populations.

Using a *mock jury design*, Skorinko et al. (2014) created study addressing the influence of perspective-taking manipulations on courtroom decisions, specifically regarding guilty and non-guilty verdicts. When participants were

asked to take the perspective of the defendant, the defendant was rated with more empathy, was seen more leniently, participants perceived the defendant as less likely to recidivate and was seen less likely to be guilty when compared to the control group. Though, when participants were asked to take the perspective of the victim, participants were less likely to empathize and be lenient with the defendant, the defendant was seen to more likely to recidivate, and thus, was seen to be more than likely guilty of the crime. Thus, results from Skorinko et al. (2014) exposed the importance influence of juror perspective-taking on courtroom verdicts.

The study incorporates elements of the three studies above (namely: Bertrand & Mullainathan, 2004; Skorinko et al., 2014; van Prooijen et al., 2013) by incorporating the defendant's race, using perspective-taking tasks, and addressing the effects of sentencing verdicts through the inclusion of previous and novel dependent variables used in mock-courtroom designs. This study uses the names of "Jamal" and "Greg" (Bertrand & Mullainathan, 2004), the mock-jury design (Skorinko et al., 2014), and the perspective-taking tasks from (van Prooijen et al., 2013; Skorinko et al., 2014). Lastly, this study builds off of prior mock-juror designs by incorporating previously used dependent variables of: empathy, leniency, and recidivism (from Skorinko et al., 2014), and retributive justice (van Prooijen et al., 2013) by adding additional dependent variables of: courtroom sentencing and forgiveness to obtain a better scope of how mock-jurors sentence guilty defendants.

In contrast from previous studies, the design of this study avoids the subjective nature of assessing a guilty/non-guilty verdict. Instead, participants are being asked to sentence a guilty defendant. Additionally, another differing factor from previous mock juror studies is that the focus of this study does not include any reference to the victim. To avoid any potential confounds of emotion-based decision-making, due to the victim's influence, the focus is exclusively on the defendant.

Statement of Hypotheses

This experiment evaluated if the combination of a perspective-taking manipulation, and the race of the defendant would impact perceivers' (mock jurors) assessment of the defendant sentencing. It was predicted that the perspective-taking manipulation will influence the participants' level of empathy and leniency, perceptions of defendant recidivism, perceived punishment and overall sentencing for the defendant. Additionally, it was suggested that the race of the defendant will influence how participants rate the defendant. It was predicted that participants will rate the African-American defendant with a harsher sentence, less empathy and leniency, perceive the defendant to have an increased likelihood of recidivism, and lastly, grant a more severe punishment, Hypothesis I: *It is predicted that there will be a main effect for perspective-taking.*

> *Perspective-takers will have significantly higher levels of empathy, leniency, lowered perceptions of recidivism, grant a less severe punishment, and grant a shorter sentence for the defendant compared to non-perspective-takers.*

Hypothesis II: *It is predicted that there will be a main effect between the race of the defendant. Participants will rate the African-American defendant with significantly lower levels of empathy and leniency, heightened perceptions of recidivism, grant a harsher punishment, and grant a longer sentence compared to the Caucasian defendant.*

Hypothesis III*: It is predicted that there will be an interaction effect between perspective-taking and race. Participants in the perspective-taking condition for Greg Sullivan will have higher levels of empathy and leniency, lower perceptions of recidivism, and grant a less severe punishment and sentence than participants in the perspective-taking of Jamal Washington.*

Research Questions

Research Question I: *How might one's self-reported level of self-forgiveness influence a sentencing verdict relative to perspective-taking and race of the defendant?*

Research Question II: *How might one's self-reported ability to forgive of others influence a sentencing verdict relative to perspective-taking and race of the defendant?*

Research Question III: *How might one's self-reported ability to forgive situations influence a sentencing verdict relative to perspective-taking and race of the defendant?*

Methods

Participants

Participants were recruited through Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTURK), to have a more representative sample of the United States. The rationale for using MTURK rather than a university sample is that students are often excluded from jury duty due to their affiliation to a university. Therefore, to a get a more representable sample of possible jurors, MTURK will be used to collect participants. Another advantage that MTURK has over the traditional university sample is that collecting a sample from MTURK allows for a greater range of ages. When compared traditional samples collected from Introduction to Psychology students, MTURK has a significantly higher mean age (Buhrmester, Kwang, & Gosling, 2011; Casler, Bickel, & Hackett, 2013; Paolacci, Chandler, & Ipeirotis, 2010). Additionally, according to Hauser and Schwarz (2016), MTURK participants tend to be more attentive to novel instructions and pass at higher rates at manipulation checks than do subject pool participants in an unsupervised survey.

In the experiment, participants collected from MTURK was limited to individuals who are Amazon MTURK workers that have completed a minimum of 100 surveys, have a 97% approval rating, and reside in the USA. Similar to jury selection, participants were not excluded on the basis on age nor race; all ages (18+) were allowed to participant in this study. Furthermore, in order to obtain a detailed demographic of the participants, all participants were asked to fill in their ethnicity/race, religious affiliation, political affiliation, employment

status, and region of residence. Participants from MTURK were compensated 25 cents for completing the survey.

The sample consisted of 300 participants, but was reduced to 231 participants after accounting for accuracy within the comprehension checks (recall of defendant's name, crime and sentencing range, and stating the defendant's race). The sample consisted of 133 females and 98 men (2 did not answer); their ages ranged from 19 to 85 years of age (M = 39.19, SD = 13.445). Of the 231 participants, 24 identified as Hispanic/Latino. The majority of participants classified as 195 Caucasians/Whites, though there were 17 African-Americans/Blacks, 14 Asians, 5 Native Americans/Alaskan Natives, 4 Other Races, and 3 preferred not to answer. Majority of the participants identified as Christian (109), while the remaining identified as Agnostic Atheist (38), Nonreligious Secular (10), Spiritualism (4), Wiccan Pagan Druid (3), Buddhism (2), Hinduism Sikhism (2), Judaism (2), Islam (1), Unitarian-Universalism (1), not listed (4), and declined to answer (25).

For political affiliation, there seemed to be an even representation; 58 participants identified as Moderate, 57 identified as Liberal, 55 identified as Conservative, 42 identified as very Liberal, 17 identified as very Conservative and 2 declined to answer. Majority of the participants self-identified as full-time (144) though there was 32 part-time employment, 31 not employed, 18 retired and 6 declined to answer. Most of the participants were from the Southeast (75), though the remaining were from the Midwest (46), West (45), Northeast (43), and

Southwest (21). Lastly, 48 participants reported that they had previously been on a jury and 84 participants expressed that they had once been a victim of a crime.

General Procedure and Materials

All participants signed up for an online study named *Answer Survey About a Case*. After assessing the survey, participants were asked to sign to read over the information sheet and "click next" if they wanted to proceed with the survey. their name electronically to acknowledge that they have read the informed consent. Participants then read over the "juror instructions" (Appendix A). These instructions explain that they have been personally selected to help render a final sentence for a man who has been found guilty of vehicular manslaughter and leaving the scene of the crime. A scenario around a vehicular manslaughter and leaving the scene of the crime are used in this experiment because previous research established a lack of ethnic stereotypes associated with these crimes (Skorinko et al., 2014).

Participants then were asked to read a police report, which includes the sex, ethnicity, criminal history, detailed event of the crime and the sentencing range for the specific crime, ranging from 1-15 years (Appendix B & C). To help reduce potential confounding variables, the defendants have the same criminal history (no criminal history) and have committed the same crimes of: vehicular manslaughter and leaving the scene of the crime.

Additionally, this police report included the defendant's name: "Jamal Washington" representing the African-American defendant, or "Greg Sullivan" representing the Caucasian defendant. The first names of Greg and Jamal were

selected from a past field experiment dealing with racial discrimination in the labor market (Bertrand & Mullainathan, 2004). The defendant surnames were generated from the 2000 US Census Bureau wherein 89.87% of the people with the surname of "Washington" identified as African-American/Black, while 5.16% identified as Caucasian/White. For those with surname "Sullivan", 89.45% identified as Caucasian/White descent, while 6.78% identified as African-American/Black descent.

Participants then were randomly assigned to either take the perspective of the defendant (perspective-taking condition) or not to take the perspective of the defendant (no perspective-taking). Once assigned to the perspective conditions, participants were instructed to fill out an open-ended prompt regarding the police report (see Experimental Procedure). Following the completion of the prompt, participants were instructed to fill out the comprehension checks (Appendix D). Next, participants were asked to respond to the dependent variables: sentencing verdict, empathy, leniency, perceived recidivism, retributive justice, and level of forgiveness (Appendix E). Following the completion of the dependent variables, participants filled out the control checks (Appendix F). Lastly, participants were instructed to fill out their demographic information (Appendix G).

Dependent Measures

The first set of instructions for the dependent variables asked the participants to recommend a **final sentence** by completing a sliding scale (ranging from 1 to 15 years) that asks the following question: "*In years*, *what is the recommended final sentencing for the defendant?*"

The next set of instructions were for the dependent variables of empathy, leniency, perceived recidivism, and retributive justice. To prevent order effects, these variable (empathy, leniency, perceived recidivism, and retributive justice) were randomized; creating a total of 24 order combinations for the dependent variables.

When reporting their level of **empathy** towards the defendant participants used a Likert-type scale, responses regarding empathy for the defendant ranged from a 1 = *none/not at all* to 7 = *very much*. Replicating (Skorinko et al., 2014), empathy toward the defendant was measured with three items: "*How much empathy did you feel for the defendant in this case?*", "*How easily could you put yourself in the defendant's shoes?*", and "*How motivated were you to put yourself in the defendant's shoes?*" (Skorinko et al., 2014, p. 307).

Participants rated their level of **leniency** towards the defendant following a Likert-type scale; responses regarding leniency for the defendant ranged from a 1 = *none/not at all* to 7 = *very much*. Replicating (Skorinko et al., 2014), leniency toward the defendant was measured with: "*How much sympathy do you feel for the defendant?*", "*To what extent do you feel a sense of leniency towards the defendant?*" (p. 311). An additional question of "*How likely is it that the defendant made a mistake?*" was added to make leniency a 3-item composite.

Participants rated the perceived likelihood of **recidivism** for the defendant, they followed a Likert-type scale; responses regarding the likelihood of recidivism ranged from 1 = *not at all* to 7 = *very much*. Replicating Skorinko et al., 2014), recidivism was measured with: "How likely is it that the defendant

would commit a similar crime in the future?" (p. 305). Two additional items of: "*How likely is it that the defendant will be re-arrested in the future?*" "*How likely is it that the defendant will be convicted of any crimes in the future?*" was added to make recidivism a 3-item composite.

Additionally, participants were asked to assess perceptions of **retributive justice** using the following retributive justice scale ($\alpha = .92$) from van Prooijen et al. (2013):

> "*How severely should the defendant be punished?'', ''What punishment does the defendant deserve?*''; ''*What punishment would you consider fair?*'', ''*What punishment would you consider justified?*'', and ''*What punishment would you consider appropriate?*'' (p. 388).

Following a Likert-type scale, responses regarding punishment ranged from 1 = *very mild punishment* to 7 = *very severe punishment*.

Lastly, participants' level of **forgiveness** was assessed using Thompson, Snyder, Hoffman, Michael, Rasmussen, Billings, Heinze, Neufeld, Shorey, Roberts, & Roberts (2005) **Heartland Forgiveness Scale** (Cronbach's alpha ranging from 0.86 – 0.87). The Heartland Forgiveness Scale (HFS) consists of 18-items with three 6-item subscales of *self-forgiveness* (Cronbach's alpha ranging from 0.72 – 0.75; sample item: *"With time I am understanding of myself for mistakes I've made"), forgiveness of others* (Cronbach's alpha ranging from 0.78 – 0.81; sample item: *"I continue to punish a person who has done something that I think is wrong"*), and *situational forgiveness* (Cronbach's alpha ranging

from 0.79 – 0.82; *"Eventually I let go of negative thoughts about bad circumstances that are beyond anyone's control"*).

According to Thompson et al. (2005), the HFS has strong convergent validity; the HFS is strongly correlated with other dispositional forgiveness measures such as the *Multidimensional Forgiveness Inventory* (MFI) and the Mauger et al. (1992) forgiveness scale. Specifically, the HFS showed a strong correlation between following scales: the HFS *Self-Forgiveness* and Mauger et al. *Forgiveness of Self* ($r = 0.61$, $p < .001$), the HFS *Forgiveness of Others* and Mauger et al. (1992) *Forgiveness of Others* ($r = 0.53$, $p < .001$), the HFS *Self-Forgiveness* and the MFI *Self-Forgiveness* ($r = 0.33$, $p < .001$), and the HFS *Forgiveness of Others* and the MFI *Other-Forgiveness* ($r = 0.47$, $p < .001$).

Participants were directed with the following instructions from Thompson et al. (2005):

> *In the course of our lives negative things may occur because of our own actions, the actions of others, or circumstances beyond our control. For some time after these events, we may have negative thoughts or feelings about ourselves, others, or the situation. Think about how you typically respond to such negative events. Next to each of the following items write the number (from the 7-point scale below) that best describes how you typically respond to the type of negative situation described. There are no right or wrong answers. Please be as open as possible in your answers* (p. 358).

Respondents indicated the extent of which each item is true or false of them using a 7-point scale with four verbal anchors: *1=Almost Always False of Me, 3=More Often False of Me, 5=More Often True of Me, and 7=Almost Always True of Me* (Thompson et al., 2005).

After the completing the above items, the experiment was over, and participants were debriefed, thanked and compensated for their participation in the study.

Experimental Procedure

Participants in the **perspective-taking of "Greg Sullivan"** received the following instructions; a modified version of PT from Galinsky and Moskowitz (2000) study:

> *Imagine the day of the crime from the Greg Sullivan's perspective. Now, imagine that you are Greg Sullivan. See the events of the day through Greg Sullivan's eyes and experience these events as if you were walking in his shoes. In the space below, please describe what happened that night, as well as your thoughts and feelings that led up to this event.*

Participants in the **non-perspective-taking of "Greg Sullivan"** received the following instructions:

> *Please summarize the case from what you recall from the provided police report. Write down the most important details that will help you decide your final verdict.*

Participants in the **perspective-taking of "Jamal Washington"** received the following instructions; a modified version of PT from Galinsky and

Moskowitz (2000) study:

>*Imagine the day of the crime from Jamal Washington's perspective. Now, imagine that you are Jamal Washington. See the events of the day through Jamal Washington's eyes and experience these events as if you were walking in his shoes. In the space below, please describe what happened that night, as well as your thoughts and feelings that led up to this event.*

Participants in the **non-perspective-taking of "Jamal Washington"** received the following instructions:

>*Please summarize the case from what you recall from the provided police report. Additionally, write down the most important details that will help you decide your final verdict.*

After reading the instructions for the perspective condition, participants were granted with as much time as the need to respond to their instructions in an open response format.

Comprehension and Control Checks

In order to control for potential confounds based on participant attentiveness, various control checks assessed the attention level of the participants. Therefore, participants were asked to recall the defendant's name, state the race of the defendant, and recall the committed crimes and the sentencing range for the crimes of vehicular manslaughter and leaving the scene of the crime.

To assess the effectiveness of the mock-jury scenario, participants were asked to rate various aspects of the case. Participants were asked to assess the police report, the defendant's actions and the entirety of the case. Using a Likert-

scale (ranging from 1 to 7), participants rated the following questions:

"Have you ever been a victim of a crime?"

"What is the likelihood of the crimes of leaving the scene of the crime

and vehicular manslaughter"

"How realistic is the police report?"

"How believable is this case?"

"How believable is the defendant's actions of leaving the

scene of the crime?"

"*How much do you feel like you are on a jury*"

"Have you ever been on a jury?"

"How realistic is the sentencing range for this crime?"

Lastly, to assess the influence of MTURK's compensation process, participants rated their motivation for completing this survey. Participants completed the following questions:

"How much did the compensation aspect motivate you to

take this survey?"

"*Were you compensated fairly for your time*?"

Results

Preliminary Analysis

Table 1 presents the mean sum scores (standard deviations), zero-order intercorrelate coefficients, and scale reliability for each of the primary dependent variables. As seen in Table 1, the Cronbach's alphas values for the dependent variables was found to be highly reliable, indicating a strong internal validity for

the measures. In addition, the *sentencing* verdict was significantly negatively correlated with *empathy* and *leniency*, suggesting that an increase in sentencing might lead to a decrease in *empathy* and *leniency* (and vise-versa). The sentencing verdict also was a significantly positively correlated with *recidivism* and *retributive justice,* suggesting that a decrease in the sentencing verdict leads to a decrease in recidivism and retributive justice. *Empathy* and *leniency* was strongly, positively correlated which is akin to the previous findings regarding this relationship. This suggests that an increase in *empathy* may lead to an increase in *leniency*. Both *empathy* and *leniency* also had a negative relation to *recidivism* and *retributive justice* suggesting that an increase in and *empathy* and *leniency* might lead to a decrease in *recidivism* and *retributive justice*. Lastly, *recidivism* and *retributive justice* was strongly correlated; the results suggest that harsher punishments are granted to those who are perceived to recidivate.

Table 1: Descriptive Analysis for Primary Dependent Variables

DVs	Mean Sum (SD)	Sentence	Empathy	Leniency	Recidivism	Retributive Justice
Sentence (1-item)	8.85 (4.35)					
Empathy (3-item)	10.68 (5.01)	-.32**	[.862]			
Leniency (3-item)	10.47 (4.34)	-.40**	.71**	[.776]		
Recidivism (3-item)	9.37 (4.81)	.34**	-.29**	-.40**	[.908]	
Retributive Justice (5-item)	23.36 (5.98)	.66**	-.41**	-.57**	.41**	[.981]

$n = 231$. *Note*. Values in parentheses represent standard deviations. Values in brackets refer to scale reliability.

Control checks. To ascertain the effectiveness of the experiment, all 231

participants rated 9 control check rating scale items (1 = *extremely unlikely*; 7 = *extremely likely*) regarding the study's design. The control checks were categorized into three main topics: methodological design, participant-centered, crime-centered, and MTURK's compensation aspect.

For the four methodological control check items, the first question was to *rate how realistic the police report sounded*. Overall, participants rated this question with a mean of 5.56 (*SD* = 1.26). The second question regarded *how realistic was the sentencing range for the crimes of vehicular manslaughter and leaving the scene of the crime*. Overall, participants rated this question with a mean of 5.26 (1.17). The third question was to rate *how much do you feel like you were on jury*. Overall, participants rated this question with a mean of 4.70 (*SD* = 1.55). The fourth and final question for the methodological control checks regarded *how believable was the case of a person going to trial for vehicular manslaughter and leaving the scene of the crime*. Overall, participants rated this question with a mean of 5.84 (*SD* = 1.21). In summary, participants rated their responses above the mean, suggesting that the methodological design of the case, police report, and sentencing range were believable and realistic.

For the three crime-centered control check items, the first question rated *how likely were the crimes of vehicular manslaughter and leaving the scene of the crime*. Overall, participants rated this question with a mean of 5.02 (*SD* = 1.50). The second question focused on *how realistic was the specific crime of vehicular manslaughter and leaving the scene of the crime*. Overall, participants responded with a mean of 5.26 (*SD* = 1.17). The last question focused on *how believable the*

defendant's actions of leaving the scene after committing the crime of vehicular

manslaughter. Overall, participants rated this question with a mean of 5.58 (*SD* =

1.38). Taken together, participants rated their responses above the mean,

suggesting that the selected crimes of vehicular manslaughter and leaving the

scene of the crime are likely to occur in real life settings.

The last two control check questions regarded the compensation aspect of

MTURK's survey process. That is, participants rated how fairly they were

compensated (compensation fairness) and if the compensation aspect of the

survey motivated them to take the survey (compensation motivation). For

compensation fairness, participants rated this question with a mean of 4.81 (*SD*

1.51); for compensation motivation participants rated this question with a mean of

2.99 (*SD* = 1.18). Taken together, participants reported that they were paid fairly

for their time, and that the compensation aspect did not motivate them to take the

survey.

Hypothesis I

Hypothesis I*: It is predicted that there will be a main effect for perspective-taking
        and the dependent variables. Perspective-takers will have significantly
        higher levels of empathy, leniency, lowered perceptions of recidivism,
        grant a less severe punishment, and grant a shorter sentence for the
        defendant relative to non-perspective-takers.*

A *one-way MANOVA* tested for a main effect of perspective-taking on the

dependent variables of empathy, leniency, recidivism, punishment, and sentencing

verdict. Results showed a significant main effect for the perspective-taking

condition on all five dependent variables, $F_{(5, 225)}$ 3.622, p = .004; Wilks' Λ =

.926, partial η^2 = .074, power = .922. *Univariate analysis* showed significant

main effects on the perspective-taking condition (PT vs Control) on three of the

five dependent variables; namely *empathy*, *leniency*, and *retributive justice*. See

Table 2 for the mean sum scores of perspective-taking on the dependent variables.

Table 2: Mean Sum Scores on the Dependent Variables (Perspective-Taking)

Experimental Condition	n	Sentence	Empathy	Leniency	Recidivism	Retributive Justice
C	125	8.91 (4.21)	9.70** (4.89)	9.51*** (4.22)	9.85 (4.05)	24.12* (5.84)
PT	106	8.77 (4.52)	11.89** (4.93)	11.59*** (4.22)	8.80 (4.28)	22.46* (6.60)

Note. C = control group, PT = perspective-taking. Values in parentheses represent standard deviation.
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .005$. *** $p < .0005$.

For *empathy*, there was a significant result on the experimental condition

of perspective-taking, $F(1, 229)$ 10.483, $p = .001$; partial $\eta^2 = .044$, power = .897.

Post-hoc analysis was performed with a Bonferroni adjustment, where

perspective-takers had a statistically significant increase in *empathy* (mean

difference of 2.098) when compared to the control group.

For *leniency*, there was a significant result on the experimental condition

of perspective-taking, $F(1, 229) = 13.944$, $p < .0005$; partial $\eta^2 = .057$, power =

.961. *Post-hoc analysis* was performed with a Bonferroni adjustment, where

perspective-takers had a statistically significant increase in *leniency* (mean

difference of 2.082) when compared to the control group.

For *retributive justice,* there was a significant result on the experimental

condition of perspective-taking, $F(1, 229)$ 4.468, $p = .036$; partial $\eta^2 = .019$,

power = .558. *Post-hoc analysis* was performed with a Bonferroni adjustment,

where perspective-takers had a statistically significant decrease in judgements of

retributive justice (mean difference of -1.658) when compared to the control group.

Additionally, the *univariate analysis* approached significance for the perspective-taking condition on *recidivism*, F (1, 229) 3.633, p = .058; partial η^2 = .016, power = .475. *Post-hoc analysis* was performed with a Bonferroni adjustment, where perspective-takers had a statistically significant decrease in *recidivism* (mean difference of -1.046) when compared to the control group. However, the perspective-taking condition was not significant with sentencing verdicts, F (1, 229) .058, p = .810; partial η^2 < .0005, power = .057.

Hypothesis II

Hypothesis II*: It is predicted that there will be a main effect on the race of the defendant. Participants will rate the African-American defendant with significantly lower levels of empathy and leniency, heightened perceptions of recidivism, grant a harsher punishment, and grant a longer sentence relative to the Caucasian defendant.*

A *one-way MANOVA* tested for a main effect of the defendant race on the dependent variables of empathy, leniency, recidivism, punishment, and sentencing verdict. Results showed a significant main effect for the race of the defendant condition on the all five dependent variables, F (5, 225) 2.915, p = .014; Wilks' Λ = .939, partial η^2 = .061, power = .845. *Univariate analysis* showed a significant main effect only for the race of the defendant (African-American vs Caucasian) on *sentencing*, F (1, 229) 5.322, p = .022; partial η^2 = .023, power = .632. See Table 3 for the effects of race on the dependent variables. *Post-hoc analysis* was performed with a Bonferroni adjustment, where Jamal Washington had a

statistically significant longer *sentence* (mean difference of 1.320) when

compared to the control group.

However, results from the *univariate analysis* showed non-significant

results on race and *empathy*, F (1, 229) .524, $p = .470$; partial $\eta^2 = .002$, power =

.111, race and *leniency*, F (1, 229) .720, $p = .397$; partial $\eta^2 = .003$, power = .135,

race and *recidivism*, F (1, 229) 1.855, $p = .175$; partial $\eta^2 = .008$, power = .273,

and race and *retributive justice*, F (1, 229) .305 $p = .581$; partial $\eta^2 = .001$, power

= .085.

Table 3: Mean Sum Scores on the Dependent Variables (Race)

Conditions	*n*	Sentence	Empathy	Leniency	Recidivism	Retributive Justice
Jamal	131	9.41* (4.21)	10.46 (5.12)	10.68 (4.24)	9.69 (4.22)	23.55 (6.34)
Greg	100	8.10* (4.05)	10.96 (4.79)	10.19 (4.41)	8.94 (4.12)	23.11 (5.12)

Note. Values in parentheses represent standard deviation.
* $p < .05$.

Hypothesis III

Hypothesis III*: It is predicted that there will be an interaction effect between
        perspective-taking and race. Participants in the perspective-taking
        condition for Greg Sullivan will have higher levels of empathy and
        leniency, lower perceptions of recidivism, and grant a less severe
        punishment and sentence than participants in the perspective-taking of
        Jamal Washington.*

A *two-way MANOVA* assessed interaction effects of perspective-taking

and the defendant's race on the dependent variables of empathy, leniency,

recidivism, punishment, and sentencing verdict. Results led to non-significant

interaction effects with the perspective-taking condition and the race of the

defendant condition on the dependent variables of sentencing, empathy, leniency,

recidivism, and retributive justice, F (5, 223) 1.186, p = .317; Wilks' Λ = .939,

partial η^2 = .026, power = .418. See Table 4 for the mean sum scores of

perspective-taking and race on the dependent variables.

Table 4: Mean Sum Scores on the Dependent Variables (Perspective-Taking and Race)

Condition	n	Sentence	Empathy	Leniency	Recidivism	Retributive Justice
Jamal						
C	66	9.44 (4.51)	9.14 (4.94)	9.24 (4.23)	10.50 (4.04)	24.73 (6.51)
PT	65	9.40 (4.51)	11.80 (5.10)	12.14 (4.13)	8.88 (4.26)	22.35 (6.10)
Greg						
C	59	8.32 (3.81)	10.34 (4.79)	9.81 (4.23)	9.12 (3.97)	23.44 (4.94)
PT	41	7.78 (3.41)	11.80 (4.70)	10.73 (4.28)	8.80 (4.36)	22.35 (6.12)

Note. C refers to Control condition, PT refers to Perceptive-Taking. Values in parentheses represent standard deviation.

Research Questions

Preliminary Analysis

Table 5 presents the mean sum scores (standard deviations), zero-order

intercorrelate coefficients, and scale reliability for each of the forgiveness

subscales. The scale reliability results from Table 5 indicates strong reliability for

the forgiveness subscales, suggesting that there is high internal validity within this

measure. The results presented in Table 5 suggest a positive relationship between

all forgiveness subscales. This suggests that higher amounts of *self-forgiveness*

led to higher amounts of *other-forgiveness* and *situational forgiveness*.

Table 5: Descriptive Analysis for the Forgiveness Subscales

Subscales	Mean Sum (SD)	Self-Forgiveness	Other-Forgiveness	Situational-Forgiveness
Self-Forgiveness	27.43 (6.52)	[.816]		
Other-Forgiveness	26.44 (6.78)	.43**	[.839]	
Situational-Forgiveness	27.65 (6.56)	.66**	.69**	[.841]

$n = 231$. *Note*. Values in parentheses represent standard deviations. Values in
brackets refer to scale reliability.
** $p < 0.01$.

Research Question I

Research Question I*: How might one's self-reported level of self-forgiveness
influence a sentencing verdict relative to perspective-taking and race of
the defendant?*

According to Thompson et al. (2005), there is unique variance in one's

ability to forgive oneself. Therefore, it may be argued that one's self-reported

level of forgiveness might impact a sentencing verdict (Table 5 for mean scores

and standard deviations for forgiveness subscales). To determine if one's self-

forgiveness is a covariate to the dependent variables of *sentencing, empathy,*

leniency, recidivism, and *retributive justice* a correlation matrix was conducted.

Results from this matrix are presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Zero-Order Correlation Table for the Forgiveness Subscales on the Dependent Variables

DVs	Self-Forgiveness	Other-Forgiveness	Situational-Forgiveness
Sentence	.02	-.03	-.00
Empathy	.06	.22**	.09
Leniency	.05	.20**	.05
Recidivism	-.07	-.16*	-.01
Retributive Justice	-.04	-.16*	-.07

$n = 231$
* $p < 0.05$. ** $p < 0.01$.

As shown from Table 6, *self-forgiveness* was not significantly correlated to any of the dependent variables. Therefore, it was concluded that *self-forgiveness* is not a covariate in this specific scenario.

Research Question II

Research Question II*: How might one's self-reported ability to forgive of others influence a sentencing verdict relative to perspective-taking and race of the defendant?*

It has been demonstrated that taking the perspective of a target is associated with the ability to forgive (Welton, Hill, & Seybold, 2008); therefore, it can be argued that one's level of forgiveness of others might impact a sentencing verdict (Table 5 for mean scores and standard deviations for forgiveness subscales). To determine if one's level of other-forgiveness is a covariate to the dependent variables of *sentencing, empathy, leniency, recidivism,* and *retributive justice* a correlation matrix was conducted. Results from this matrix are shown in

Table 6. As noted from the Table 6, *other-forgiveness* is significantly correlated

to four of the five dependent variables. Therefore, it can be concluded that other-

forgiveness is a covariate in this specific scenario.

   To follow-up with this result, a *two-way MANCOVA* (controlling for

other-forgiveness) was conducted. Results, when controlling for *other-*

forgiveness, the two significant main effects on the dependent variables remained

(see results for Hypothesis I and II) one for the perspective-taking condition, F (5,

222) = 3.681, p = .003; Wilks' Λ = .923, partial η^2 = .077, power = .926, and one

for the race of the defendant condition, F (5, 222) = 3.006, p = .012; Wilks' Λ =

.937, partial η^2 = .063, power = .857.

   To follow-up for the two main effects (perspective-taking condition and

race of the defendant) two *one-way ANCOVAs* (controlling for other-forgiveness)

were conducted. Results from the *perspective-taking condition*, after controlling

for other-forgiveness, led to significant main effects at four of the five dependent

variables, namely *recidivism*, *empathy*, *leniency*, and *retributive justice*. See

Table 7 for adjusted means for perspective-taking after controlling for other-

forgiveness).

Table 7: Adjusted Mean Scores for Perspective-Taking on the Dependent Variables with Other-Forgiveness as a Covariate

Experimental Condition	n	Sentence	Empathy	Leniency	Recidivism	Retributive Justice
C	125	8.89 (.389)	9.67** (.429)	9.47*** (.370)	9.85* (.367)	24.15* (.527)
PT	106	8.58 (.432)	11.88** (.478)	11.50*** (.411)	8.73* (.409)	22.43* (.586)

Note. C = control group, PT = perspective-taking. Values in parentheses represent standard error.
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .005$. *** $p < .0005$.

After controlling for *other-forgiveness*, a significant main effect was found for *empathy* on perspective-taking, $F(1, 226) = 11.885$, $p = .001$; Wilks' $\Lambda = .937$, partial $\eta^2 = .050$, power $= .929$. *Post-hoc analysis* was performed with a Bonferroni adjustment, where perspective-takers had a statistically significant increase in *empathy* (mean difference of 2.214) when compared to the control group.

Using *other-forgiveness* as a covariate, a significant main effect was also found for *leniency* on perspective-taking, $F(1, 226) = 13.409$, $p < .0005$; Wilks' $\Lambda = .937$, partial $\eta^2 = .056$, power $= .954$. *Post-hoc analysis* was performed with a Bonferroni adjustment, where perspective-takers had a statistically significant increase in *leniency* (mean difference of 2.027) when compared to the control group.

With *other-forgiveness* as the covariate, a significant main effect was found for *recidivism* on perspective-taking, $F(1, 226) = 4.128$, $p = .043$; Wilks' $\Lambda = .937$, partial $\eta^2 = .018$, power $= .525$. *Post-hoc analysis* was performed with a

Bonferroni adjustment, where perspective-takers had a statistically significant reduction in perceived *recidivism* (mean difference of -1.118) when compared to the control group.

After controlling for *other-forgiveness*, a significant main effect also was found for *retributive justice* on perspective-taking, F (1, 226) = 4.758, p = .03; Wilks' Λ = .937, partial η^2 = .021, power = .584. *Post-hoc analysis* was performed with a Bonferroni adjustment, where perspective-takers had a statistically significant reduction in *retributive justice* (mean difference of -1.722) when compared to the control group. Lastly, with *other forgiveness* as a covariate, *sentencing* was non-significant for the perspective-taking condition, F (1, 226) = .271, p < .738; Wilks' Λ = .937, partial η^2 < .0005, power = .063.

The results from the second *ANCOVA* (controlling for *other-forgiveness* on the race condition), led to only one main effect on *sentencing*, F (1, 226) = 5.449, p = .020; Wilks' Λ = .937, partial η^2 = .063, power = .857. See table 8 for adjusted mean scores after controlling for *other-forgiveness*.

Table 8: Adjusted Mean Scores for Race on the Dependent Variables with Other-Forgiveness as a Covariate

Conditions	*n*	Sentence	Empathy	Leniency	Recidivism	Retributive Justice
Jamal	131	9.41* (.379)	10.53 (.419)	10.74 (.360)	9.65 (.358)	23.48 (.514)
Greg	100	8.06* (.441)	11.01 (.487)	10.22 (.419)	8.94 (.417)	23.09 (.598)

Note. C refers to control group, PT refers to perspective-taking. Values in parentheses represent standard error.
* p < .05.

Furthermore, after controlling for *other forgiveness*, non-significant differences were found for the dependent variables of: *empathy*, F (1, 226) = .553, p = .458; Wilks' Λ = .937, partial η^2 = .002, power = .115, *leniency*, F (1, 226) = .880, p = .349; Wilks' Λ = .937, partial η^2 = .004, power = .154, *recidivism*, F (1, 226) = 1.679, p = .196; Wilks' Λ = .937, partial η^2 = .007, power = .252, and *retributive justice*, F (1, 226) = .247, p = .619; Wilks' Λ = .937, partial η^2 = .001, power = .079.

Lastly, with *other-forgiveness* as the covariate, the interaction of perspective-taking and race on the dependent variables was non-significant, F (5, 222) = 1.076, p = .374; Wilks' Λ = .976, partial η^2 = .024, power = .380. Adjusted mean scores for the dependent variables are presented in Table 9.

Table 9: Adjusted Mean Scores for Perspective-Taking and Race on the Dependent Variables with Other-Forgiveness as a Covariate

Condition	n	Sentence	Empathy	Leniency	Recidivism	Retributive Justice
Jamal						
C 66		9.44 (.533)	9.18 (.589)	9.28 (.507)	10.47 (.504)	24.69 (.723)
PT 65		9.39 (.538)	11.88 (.594)	12.21 (.512)	8.83 (.509)	22.28 (.729)
Greg						
C 59		8.34 (.566)	10.15 (.626)	9.66 (.539)	9.23 (.525)	23.61 (.768)
PT 41		7.78 (.677)	11.87 (.748)	10.79 (.644)	8.64 (.640)	22.57 (.918)

Note. C refers to control group, PT refers to perspective-taking. Values in parentheses represent standard error.

Research Question III

Research Question III*: How might one's self-reported ability to forgive situations influence a sentencing verdict relative to perspective-taking and race of the defendant?*

Because forgiveness is a situational variable, it is believed that some individuals are more prone to forgive than others (Emmons, 2000; Koutsos et al., 2008). It may be argued that one's level of *situation-forgiveness* might impact a sentencing verdict (Table 5 for mean scores and standard deviations for forgiveness subscales). To determine if one's level of *situational-forgiveness* is a covariate to the dependent variables of *sentencing, empathy, leniency, recidivism,* and *retributive justice* a correlation matrix was conducted. Results from this matrix are noted in Table 6.

As shown from the correlation matrix, *situational-forgiveness* was not significantly correlated to any of the dependent variables. Therefore, it was concluded that *situational-forgiveness* was not a covariate in this specific scenario.

Discussion

This study proposed and evaluated three hypotheses and three research questions. The first hypothesis predicted that perspective-taking would lead to a more positive assessment of the defendant (a lower sentence, increased empathy and leniency and decreased recidivism and judgements of retributive justice when compared to the control group). Hypothesis II predicted that the defendant's race would be influential within a sentencing verdict (participants would grant the African-American defendant with harsher sentence and punishment (retributive

justice), have less empathetic and lenient attitudes and would be perceived as more likely to recidivate than the Caucasian defendant. The third hypothesis suggested that perspective-taking and race would interact, suggesting that the perspective-takers in the African-American defendant condition would grant a more severe sentence and punishment (retributive justice), have less empathy and leniency, and would perceive the African-American defendant to be more likely to recidivate. In addition, the present study continued with three research questions about the influence of forgiveness (self, other, and situational) and its impact on a sentencing verdict.

Hypothesis I

Results supported most of Hypothesis I; participants in the perspective-taking condition had significantly higher levels of empathy and leniency, and granted a significantly less severe judgement of retributive justice for the defendant. Furthermore, participants in the perspective-taking condition approached significance with the perceptions of recidivism, thus perceiving the defendant as less likely to recidivate when compared to the control group. While the two studies differ in design, the present results continued the work by Skorinko et al. (2014). In both studies, perspective-takers rated the defendant with higher levels of empathy and leniency, while perceiving the defendant to be less likely to recidivate.

However, in the present study, there were non-significant differences within the sentencing verdict between the two perspective conditions. It may seem that this is a somewhat contradictory finding because of the significant

positive correlation between retributive justice and sentencing (see Table 1) and the significant main effect of perspective-taking on judgements of retributive justice. Though, this finding may not be as unanticipated as first believed. According to Hogarth (1971), attitudes and decision-making about sentencing verdicts may be moderated by one's beliefs about the penal system. Hogarth (1971) expresses that there are three main attitudes for sentencing strategies within the legal profession: *punishment, reformation,* and *general deterrence*. Therefore, these three distinct attitudes may have been prevalent moderators within this experiment (thus leading to non-significance for the sentencing verdict), as participant attitudes about the penal system was not captured.

In summary, while differences existed for the dependent variables of: empathy, leniency, and retributive justice, the sentencing verdict was non-significant between the two conditions of perspective-taking and the control group. This result possibly suggests that perspective-taking may not be effective for crimes with severe implications.

Hypothesis II

Overall, Hypothesis II was partially supported; only a main effect of race on the *sentencing* verdict emegered. Participants granted "Jamal Washington" with a significantly longer sentence than "Greg Sullivan" (see Table 3). Contrary to the proposed hypothesis, participants displayed no racial bias when rating both the African-American and Caucasian defendant on the dependent variables of empathy, leniency, and recidivism and retributive justice.

While the present study did not replicate the findings of van Prooijen et al. (2013), (such that race led to differences in judgements of retributive justice) it found something perhaps more interesting. According to the results of the present study, participants rated both "Jamal" and "Greg" with similar judgements of retributive justice; yet, there was a significance difference in that "Jamal" received a significantly longer sentence than "Greg". So, both defendants were equally punishable, yet a significant difference remained within the sentencing verdict. This difference in sentencing confirms the finding that individuals are more lenient toward in-group wrongdoers and more harsh judgements toward out-group wrongdoers (Graham et al., 1997; 1997; Kerr, et al., 1995; Sommers & Ellsworth, 2000).

Hypothesis III

Hypothesis III suggested that there would be an interaction effect between perspective-taking and race. It was proposed that there would be an inverse relationship between perspective and race such that perspective-taking would not be effective for the African-American defendant; this hypothesis was not supported. Therefore, the present study contradicts the findings from van Prooijen et al. (2013); van Prooijen et al. (2013) found that perspective-taking led to a more severe retributive justice judgments when the offender belongs to an ethnic group that is stereotypically associated with criminal activity.

While results of the present study did not exactly support the findings from van Prooijen et al., (2013), it seemed that "Greg" benefitted more from perspective-taking than "Jamal". Results from Table 4 shows that perspective-

takers in the "Jamal" condition (9.44 years) granted a harsher sentence than perspective-takers in the "Greg" condition (7.78 years); additionally, in the control condition "Jamal" was again granted a harsher sentence (9.40 years) than "Greg" (8.32 years).

van Prooijen et al. (2013) suggested that when combined, race and perspective-taking is like a "double-edged sword" for members of the out-group. While the *two-way MANOVA* was non-significant, it does seem that "Jamal" did not experience the same benefits as "Greg" from perspective-taking. This is not necessarily a novel contribution as it has been found that participants rendered longer sentences for other-race defendants when compared to defendants of the same race (Mitchell et al., 2005).

Research Questions

A forgiveness subscale by Thompson et al. (2005) was included within this study to see if one's self-reported level of *self*, *other* and *situational forgiveness* would impact a sentencing verdict. Results from Table 6 showed that only *other-forgiveness* was correlated to the dependent measures, suggesting that other-forgiveness had some impact within the proposed sentencing verdict. While controlling for *other-forgiveness*, the two main effects of perspective-taking and race were maintained.

Results for the *one-way MANCOVA* (controlling for *other-forgiveness*) for perspective-taking resulted in significant differences in *empathy*, *leniency*, *recidivism* and *retributive justice*. This result slightly differed from the initial perspective-taking *MANOVA*, where only *empathy*, *leniency*, and *retributive*

justice were significantly different between the perspective-taking and control group. There are two parts to this result, that even when controlling for other-forgiveness, the relationship between perspective-taking empathy, leniency, and retributive justice was maintained; thus, strengthening the results section. Furthermore, the significance between recidivism and perspective-taking (when controlling for other-forgiveness) suggests that one's level of *other-forgiveness* may play role when determining the perceived likelihood of a person recidivating.

Additionally, results for the *one-way MANCOVA* for race (controlling for *other-forgiveness*) maintained the significant differences seen within the sentencing measure. This may strengthen the present study's finding that race as an influential to sentencing verdicts, wherein even when controlling for one's level of other-forgiveness, race still played an important part within granting a sentence for a guilty defendant.

Because the main effects were maintained, it suggested that the influence of one's self-reported level of *other-forgiveness* was minimal at best. This may suggest that individuals make decisions/judgements based more so on morals/ethics when compared to decisions made from an emotional standpoint. This finding follows the results from Lucas, Young, Zhdanova, and Alexander (2010) where both levels of self and other justice were not correlated with levels of forgiveness.

Theoretical Implications

The present study concluded that empathy, leniency and retributive justice were impacted through perspective-taking, but sentencing was not impacted. The

results from the present simultaneously replicated and slightly differed from Skorinko et al. (2014), primarily through the design of the study. Both studies found that perspective-taking led to increased empathy, leniency and reduction in perceived likelihood of recidivism; though, Skorinko et al. (2014) measured for culpability, while the present study measured a sentencing verdict. While both studies found similarities within empathy, leniency and recidivism, the present study added two measures that were believed to impact a sentencing decision (retributive justice and a sentencing verdict).

Replicating van Prooijen et al. (2013), retributive justice was significant within the perspective-taking condition, suggesting that perspective-taking leads to a decrease in punishment. Though, there was no relationship between perspective-taking and the sentencing verdict. This difference between a punishment recommendation and an actual sentencing verdict is quite contradictory given the significant correlation between sentencing and retributive justice (Table 1).

The results from the present study may suggest that perspective-taking is more influential within beliefs of culpability when compared to a sentencing verdict (as seen in Skorinko et al. 2014). Therefore, it is possible that perspective-taking may not be most effective when the defendant admits guilt to an offence. A possible reason for this is that we still have morals to follow, thus possibly suggesting that empathy and leniency are not as important when a defendant admits their guilt. Decety and Cowell (2014) argue that links between empathy and morality are not always direct. Rather, Decety et al. (2014) argues

that empathy and morality are two distinct processes that are neither complementary or systematically opposed to one another. It has also been argued that empathy's effectiveness in motivating moral behavior has been exaggerated (Prinz, 2011). Rather it has been suggested that guilt and reward are far more effective indicators of moral action (Prinz, 2011).

The present study concluded race led only to a difference within a sentencing verdict, which goes against the results of van Prooijen et al. (2013). van Prooijen et al. (2013) found that race led to differences within judgements of retributive justice where Ahmed (the Moroccan offender) was granted a harsher punishment than Alex (the Dutch offender). Though it can be argued that a sentencing verdict and judgements of retributive justice are similar in context. Though, it is believed that the findings in this study add further evidence that there are disparities within the criminal justice system, primarily for African-Americans. Even when admitting guilt to a crime, the African-American defendant was granted a harsher sentence than the Caucasian defendant by mock jurors. This follows the findings that African-Americans receive 20% longer sentences (for the same crime) than Caucasians (Rehavi & Starr, 2014; United States Sentencing Commission, 2013).

Van Prooijen et al. (2013) supported that an interaction between perspective-taking and race for judgements of retributive justice. In this experiment, this hypothesis was not supported, though this may be due to the differences within the design of the two studies. van Prooijen et al. (2013) had a significant interaction for perspective-taking and race for the offence of stealing, a

crime with stereotypical ties to Moroccans (van Prooijen et al., 2013). The present study used a neutral crime of vehicular manslaughter which has no stereotypical ties to race/ethnicity. This may suggest that the type of offence is important to a case (whether it is a stereotypical or a neutral crime).

Though the effectiveness for perspective-taking, when race is salient, needs to be addressed because differences within the sentencing verdicts remained for the defendants in the present study. As previously mentioned, within the perspective-taking condition, it seems that trends emerged where "Greg" benefitted more so than "Jamal" (Table 4). This may suggest that there was an in-group bias as most of the participants were of the same race as "Greg"; therefore, this may be of importance to better understanding the composition of juries. Because juries are composed of our peers, it may be important to have a diverse group of people to avoid potential in-group, out-group biases. As already mentioned, individuals are more lenient toward in-group wrongdoers and more harsh judgements toward out-group wrongdoers (Graham et al., 1997; 1997; Kerr, et al., 1995; Sommers & Ellsworth, 2000).

Limitations of the Present Study

A major limitation for the present study was the type of crime; where the scenario was centered around the death (through vehicular manslaughter) of another individual. While the crime used in the present study was adapted from a previously published study (see Skorinko et al., 2014; study 1), it is possible that vehicular manslaughter was too severe of a crime for perspective-taking to be effective, in terms of a sentencing verdict. It is possible that using a crime of

lesser impact (such as a hit-and-run) may be more beneficial to the favorable aspects of perspective-taking.

Additionally, the present study was designed to be simple and direct, where there was no ambiguity about the defendant's guilt. One strength of creating a scenario that limits the ambiguity, is that the current study avoided the subjective interpretation of trial evidence, focusing directly on sentencing and rating emotional reactions towards the defendant. Though, this comes at a cost; court cases involve many individuals (lawyers, jurors, individual testimonials, etc.) and are far more complex than what was created in this scenario.

Furthermore, the nature of the court case may not be an accurate representation of traditional cases. When a defendant expresses their guilt in a criminal offense, it seems redundant to have to bring a defendant to a trial that has a jury. While it is possible that the present case may not have gone to trial, participants self-reported above the mean that they felt as if they were in a jury. Additionally, participants rated that the depicted trial of a defendant who committed vehicular manslaughter and left the scene of the crime was realistic, as their reported scores were above the mean.

Another limitation with the current study was the lack of racial diversity. The majority of the participants identified as Caucasian/European American. There may have been different results if there was a more diverse representation among the races of the participants. Additionally, this may explain the main effect of race on *sentencing*. The results from previous studies support this idea

(e.g. Johnson et al., 2002; Kerr et al., 1995), suggesting that in-group bias may be present when race is salient.

Furthermore, the present study may have indirectly created a scenario where race was influential to a sentencing verdict. Participants selected the defendant's race after finding out his name; this selection procedure occurred before participants filled out the dependent variables. This procedure may have confounded the results, mainly the sentencing verdict, because it arguably made race an important factor to a sentencing decision. Though, through the control checks and as previously mentioned, participants rated that the design of the experiment (mock-jury aspect) was effective and realistic, as their scores were above the mean.

Future Directions on Perspective-Taking and Race

Perspective-taking was seen to be effective for mock-jurors, though race was also influential for sentencing verdicts. Therefore, the combination between race and perspective-taking is a key ingredient for future studies. The results from this study did not necessarily provide the needed evidence that perspective-taking reduces the gap for race on sentencing, though the results also did not show that perspective-taking increases the sentencing based on race. What can be inferred from this study is that there were disparities present between African-Americans and Caucasians within criminal sentencing and this is something that needs to be further explored.

The present study used a scenario focused on a guilty individual who committed vehicular manslaughter and left the scene of the crime. Therefore,

future studies might explore if there are sentencing disparities seen within other offences. For example, a study around the crime of fraud may be a good avenue to explore another non-stereotypical offence. Furthermore, the generalizability of the present study needs to be addressed with future studies using different crimes for African-Americans and Caucasians. Other races/ethnicities need to be studied to see if there are other disparities present within mock jury scenarios.

Future studies also should include a culpability verdict within their design to see if a guilty verdict differs based on race. Skorinko et al. (2014) did not account for race within their design, but found that perspective-taking led to a decrease in culpability. In a different design, van Prooijen et al. (2013) found that race is influential when determining a punishment; therefore, combining these two designs (perspective-taking and race) seems important to understanding the interplays of race and culpability.

Lastly, the inclusion of exploring forgiveness as a covariate for mock-jurors may be a needed addition for future sentencing/cuplabiltiy verdicts. Other-forgiveness was seen to be influential within recidvism within the context of this study. Because individuals report various levels of forgiveness (Thompson et al. 2005), it seemed plausible that one's level of forgiveness may impact a verdict. Because the inclusion of the forgiveness scale in the present study was a new addition to studies on the topic of perspective-taking, it seems beneficial for others to utilize this measure.

In summary, perspective-taking was an effective strategy for improving empathetic concern, lenient attitudes, and reducing beliefs of recidivism and

retributive justice judgements; though the overall sentencing verdict was not influenced by perspective-taking. Additionally, race was influential with the sentencing verdict; "Jamal" was granted a significantly longer sentence than "Greg". While it was hypothesized that perspective-taking and race would interact, this hypothesis was found to be non-significant; though it seems that a trend emerges where "Greg" benefitted more from perspective-taking than "Jamal". Lastly, the present study questioned if one's level of forgiveness may influence a sentencing verdict; it was found that one's level of forgiveness did not influence a sentencing verdict. Rather, it seems that the participants used ethical/moral judgements instead of deciding with their emotions.

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Appendix A. Juror Instructions

Dear Juror:

You have been personally selected to help render a final sentence for a man who has been found guilty of vehicular manslaughter and leaving the scene of the crime. Your duty, as a juror, is to determine an appropriate sentence for this defendant. Please read all future documents with careful consideration.

Appendix B. Police Report: Greg Sullivan

August 4th, 2015: At 2:53 AM, an officer responded to a call about a person who was lying dead at a crosswalk at an intersection. According to the investigation, the victim had been lying in the road for approximately 30 minutes before officer arrival. The victim remains unidentified, and there were no eyewitnesses at the scene of the crime. However, video surveillance from cameras at the intersection was obtained.

Through this video recording, officers identified the exact time of the crime and car model-type (including the license plate of the vehicle). According to the surveillance camera, a Caucasian man left the scene of the crime 10 seconds after striking the pedestrian. After running the license plate, we found a match between the model-type, and color of the vehicle that was in the video surveillance. Using the license plate and characteristics of the vehicle, we found a match to a man named Greg Sullivan. Therefore, officers went to Greg Sullivan's address and questioned him about the night of 4th. Greg Sullivan admitted to committing the crimes and was arrested for vehicular manslaughter and leaving the scene of the crime.

Currently, Greg Sullivan awaits official sentencing. The sentencing for vehicular manslaughter and leaving the scene of the crime ranges between 1-15 years.

Appendix C. Police Report: Jamal Washington

August 4th, 2015: At 2:53 AM, an officer responded to a call about a person who was lying dead at a crosswalk at an intersection. According to the investigation, the victim had been lying in the road for approximately 30 minutes before officer arrival. The victim remains unidentified, and there were no eyewitnesses at the scene of the crime. However, video surveillance from cameras at the intersection was obtained.

Through this video recording, officers identified the exact time of the crime and car model-type (including the license plate of the vehicle). According to the surveillance camera, a man left the scene of the crime 10 seconds after striking the pedestrian.

After running the license plate, we found a match between the model-type, and color of the vehicle that was in the video surveillance. Using the license plate and characteristics of the vehicle, we found a match to a man named Greg Sullivan. Therefore, officers went to Jamal Washington's address and questioned him about the night of 4th. Jamal Washington admitted to committing the crimes and was arrested for vehicular manslaughter and leaving the scene of the crime.

Currently, Jamal Washington awaits official sentencing. The sentencing for vehicular manslaughter and leaving the scene of the crime ranges between 1-15 years.

Appendix D. Comprehension Checks

What is the name of the defendant?

What crimes is the defendant guilty of?

What is the race of the defendant?

State the sentencing range for this scenario.

Appendix E. Dependent Measures

Empathy

How much empathy did you feel for the defendant in this case?

How easily could you put yourself in the defendant's shoes?

How motivated were you to put yourself in the defendant's shoes?

Leniency

How much sympathy do you feel for the defendant?

To what extent do you feel a sense of leniency for the defendant?

How likely is it that the defendant made a mistake?

Recidivism

How likely is it that the defendant would commit a similar crime in the future?

How likely is it that the defendant will be re-arrested in the future?

How likely is it that the defendant will be convicted of any crimes in the future?

Retributive Justice Scale

How severely should the defendant be punished?

What punishment does the defendant deserve?

What punishment would you consider fair?

What punishment would you consider justified?

What punishment would you consider appropriate?

Final Sentencing Verdict

In years, what is the recommended final sentencing for the defendant?

Heartland Forgiveness Scale

Forgiveness of Self

Although I feel badly at first when I mess up, over time I can give myself some

slack.

I hold grudges against myself for negative things I've done.

Learning from bad things that I've done helps me get over them.

It is really hard for me to accept myself once I've messed up.

With time I am understanding of myself for mistakes I've made.

I don't stop criticizing myself for negative things I've felt, thought, said, or done.

Forgiveness of Others

I continue to punish a person who has done something that I think is wrong.

With time I am understanding of others for the mistakes they've made.

I continue to be hard on others who have hurt me.

Although others have hurt me in the past, I have eventually been able to see them

as good people.

If others mistreat me, I continue to think badly of them.

When someone disappoints me, I can eventually move past it.

Forgiveness of Situations

When things go wrong for reasons that can't be controlled, I get stuck in negative

thoughts about it.

With time I can be understanding of bad circumstances in my life.

If I am disappointed by uncontrollable circumstances in my life, I continue to

think negatively about them.

I eventually make peace with bad situations in my life.

It's really hard for me to accept negative situations that aren't anybody's fault.

Eventually I let go of negative thoughts about bad circumstances that are beyond anyone's control.

Appendix E. Comprehension Checks

What is the name of the defendant?

What crimes is the defendant guilty of?

What is the race of the defendant?

State the sentencing range for this scenario.

Appendix F. Control Checks

Have you ever been on a jury?

Have you ever been a victim of a crime?

What is the likelihood of these crimes?

How realistic is the police report?

How realistic is this case?

How believable is the defendant's actions of leaving the scene of the crime?

How much do you feel like you are on a jury?

How realistic is the sentencing range for this crime?

How much did the compensation aspect motivate you to take this survey?

Were you compensated fairly for your time?

Appendix G. Demographics

What is your gender?
A.　　Male
B.　　Female
C.　　Decline to answer

What is your age?

Are you Hispanic or Latino? (A person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.)
A.　　No, not Hispanic or Latino
B.　　Yes, Hispanic or Latino
C.　　Decline to answer

How would you describe yourself? (Choose one or more from the following racial groups)
A.　　American Indian or Alaska
B.　　Asian
C.　　Black or African-American
D.　　Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
E.　　White or Caucasian
F.　　Other Race
G.　　Decline to answer

Do you consider yourself to be a religious person?
A.　　Yes
B.　　No
C.　　Decline to answer

If YES, what religion are you affiliated with?
A.　　Nonreligious Secular
B.　　Agnostic Atheist
C.　　Christianity
D.　　Judaism
E.　　Islam
F.　　Buddhism
G.　　Hinduism Sikhism
H.　　Unitarian-Universalism
I.　　Wiccan Pagan Druid
J.　　Spiritualism
K.　　Native American
L.　　Baha'i
M.　　Not Listed
N.　　Decline to answer

Are you now employed full-time, part-time, not employed, or retired?
A.   Full time
B.   Part time
C.   Not employed
D.   Retired
E.   Decline to answer

How would you describe your political views?
A.   Very conservative
B.   Conservative
C.   Moderate
D.   Liberal
E.   Very Liberal
F.   Decline to answer

Which region of the country do you live in?
A.   Midwest - IA, IL, IN, KS, MI, MN, MO, ND, NE, OH, SD, WI
B.   Northeast - CT, DC, DE, MA, MD, ME, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VT
C.   Southeast - AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, SC, TN, VA, WV
D.   Southwest - AZ, NM, OK, TX
E.   West - AK, CA, CO, HI, ID, MT, NV, OR, UT, WA, WY
F.   Decline to answer

What is your education level?
A.   Completed some high school
B.   High school graduate
C.   Completed some college
D.   Associate degree
E.   Bachelor's degree
F.   Completed some postgraduate
G.   Master's degree
H.   Ph.D., law or medical degree
I.   Other advanced degree beyond a Master's degree
J.   Decline to answer