Scripps Senior Theses   Scripps Student Scholarship

2020

The Trauma of Dishonor: Exploring the Ramifications of Dishonor in Classical and Modern Society

Tamara Wachsman

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarship.claremont.edu/scripps_theses

Part of the Ancient History, Greek and Roman through Late Antiquity Commons, and the Clinical Psychology Commons

**THE TRAUMA OF DISHONOR: EXPLORING THE RAMIFICATIONS
OF DISHONOR IN CLASSICAL AND MODERN SOCIETY**

BY

TAMARA R. WACHSMAN

**SCRIPPS COLLEGE
PSCYHOLOGY & CLASSICAL STUDIES THESIS**

**PROFESSOR MA
PROFESSOR BJORNLIE
PROFESSOR GROSCUP**

MAY 4, 2020

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements

Preface

Ancient Greek and Roman life were fraught with great trauma on a daily basis. As war and rape were major stress events in the classical world, the resulting trauma was often depicted in various epics and plays. Though not recognized as a psychological disorder at the time, the consequences of a traumatic event were often manifested in the actions of heroes such as Odysseus, Achilles, and Hercules. While male trauma in the classical world has been examined, frequently overlooked were the women of the time, who were subject to just as much, if not more, trauma than their male counterparts. This thesis explores the occurrences and effects of trauma in the classical world, and how they can inform modern research attempting to understand trauma.

The research focuses on the trauma that might arise from dishonor, and how the effects and responses to loss of honor both relate to and differ from the more fundamental traumas of serious injury, sexual violence, and threat of death in both ancient and modern contexts. Connections are also drawn between dishonor and moral injury when bridging the various types of trauma. As honor was so highly ranked in classical society, it follows that the reactions to dishonor were of similar scale and type to reactions to combat and assault. This indicated the need to examine whether dishonor could be considered a trauma, that could result in a trauma-based disorder. The research questions of interest are as follows: Can dishonor be considered a traumatic event? Are the effects of the trauma of dishonor equivalent to the more fundamental traumas of serious injury, sexual violence, and threat of death? What factors impact whether dishonor is perceived as traumatic?

Sources such as ancient plays, epics, letters, and other primary source historical texts were examined for evidence of trauma and resulting psychological disorders and manifestations. How the ancient Greeks and Romans understood and wrote about memory and the legacy of trauma were compared and contrasted to the western contemporary concept

of post-traumatic stress disorder. Additionally, the impact of factors such as gender, causes, presence of support systems, the role of the mythical (such as gods, monsters, and fate), and treatment on trauma in the Graeco-Roman world were analyzed.

Overlap between psychological and classical research is supported by how Sigmund Freud utilized classical studies to coin numerous concepts, such as the Oedipus complex, and psychological motifs can be uncovered in many ancient Greek and Roman works. Likewise, just as the past informs the present, the present can inform our understanding of the past. While it is not possible to conduct in-person research on the people of ancient times, modern research is able to guide an archival analysis of trauma and its effects in the classical world. Ancient sources were utilized to examine the trauma of dishonor in a case study format, comparing it to other trauma case studies based in ancient Greece and Rome. The research conducted helped categorize what constituted trauma and dishonor in antiquity, and the various psychological consequences. The analysis of the classical sources informs the design of a modern psychological study examining perceptions of trauma of dishonor.

With a basis in both ancient and modern contexts, the current research explored trauma and its effects, and dishonor as a type of trauma. Key traumatic events and areas that were utilized as comparisons to dishonor include male and female combat, sexual assault, wartime, natural disasters, and the memory and repercussions of the trauma as depicted in ancient sources. Combat experience, in both the ancient and modern world, is a major contributor to trauma. During the classical period, fighting was close combat (Melchior, 2011), which meant that the killer often looked into the eyes of their victim (Van Wees, 2004), humanizing them. Indeed, the Greeks favored face-to-face combat on open terrain, considering other forms of battle to be dishonorable (Robinson, 2006). Additionally, the ancient fighters were often career soldiers with no choice, forced onto the battlefield (Ustinova & Cardeña, 2014). However, war also impacts noncombatants, and is traumatic for

families of soldiers and the civilians living near the battlefield. The victors would often rape

the enemy women and take survivors as slaves. The aftermath of war was frequently just as

traumatic as the battles themselves.

Though traumatic events are recognizable throughout history, the resultant disorders

have customarily been studied strictly in modern contexts. It is currently recognized that one

of the consequences of trauma is post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). PTSD occurs after

someone has experienced or witnessed a traumatic event. People with PTSD often experience

nightmares and flashbacks of the trauma, re-experiencing them continually, which makes it

difficult to recover. Other symptoms include avoidance of activities that may be reminders of

the traumatic event, reduced responsiveness, and increased arousal, negative emotions, and

guilt (Comer, 2015). People with stress disorders may also develop depression, anxiety, or

become suicidal. The most common traumatic events that trigger PTSD are combat, disasters,

abuse, and victimization (sexual assault, terrorism, and torture; Comer, 2015). However, it

must be considered that PTSD is a relatively new concept, coined after the Vietnam War in

the 1970s. The disorder was developed with a western, modern culture in mind, and as such

cannot be accurately applied to other cultures and time periods. Investigation of emotions in

the classical world has indicated that ancient peoples, such as the Romans, could have

experienced emotions differently from modern individuals (Kaster, 2005). How people

respond to traumatic events, and even whether they are traumatic in the first place, are

informed by the society and traditions they are raised in. Cultural differences preclude the

repercussions of trauma in antiquity from being reliably interpreted as PTSD, though the

symptoms can be compared to better understand how trauma was experienced. As risk of

exposure to trauma has been present since the beginning of humanity, psychological

consequences of trauma have been present throughout history, and even in mythology. Thus,

this thesis is centered on trauma itself, rather than examining the possible existence of PTSD

in the ancient world.

When examining trauma within classical contexts, it is imperative to consider the cultural-specific mechanisms that may have allowed people to cope with certain forms of trauma, and therefore may have mediated how people experienced trauma, or at least differentiated it from the modern experience of PTSD. Factors such as the institutionalization of violence in military training, especially in the Roman army, could have had profound impacts on how what would now be considered a traumatic violent event was interpreted and internalized in the ancient world. Not only did the Roman army inflict violence on non-Romans, but the daily maintenance of discipline in the Roman army inflicted violence on its own soldiers (Phang, 2008), which may have inured the same soldiers to the experience of violence in conflict. An indication of the extent to which soldiers were exposed to institutionalized violence is *fustuarium*, which entailed soldiers liable to punishment for infractions of discipline being cudgeled to death by members of their own unit (Nippel, 1995; Phang, 2008). Another aspect of military culture that could have mediated how ancient soldiers experienced violence, and thus may have muted evidence of PTSD in ancient sources, is the culture of martial honor. Martial honor is evident in customs such as *tropaea*, trophies marking victories, and in the communal approval of violence, as demonstrated by public triumphs (Beard, 2009).

While cultural factors make it difficult to identify the presence of trauma and the resulting effects, the presence of cultural differences are in and of themselves a point of intrigue. As trauma is a response that is governed by not only evolutionary responses to imminent threat, but also culturally defined responses to threat, it is expected that cultures that place a higher value on honor are more likely to experience trauma with dishonor than other cultures. How the representation of trauma and its effects in the ancient world and modern day differ is an area of interest rather than a detriment to the research. In order to

explore instances of trauma and their effects, and the categorization of dishonor as a form of trauma, a range of primary sources were surveyed.

There has been little to no research on the possibility of dishonor being traumatic. In order to remedy this gap, the first step is to define and explore trauma within both the context of current psychological standards, as well as within the classical world. A variety of secondary sources provide assistance in determining the cultural differences between trauma and traumatic disorders in ancient and modern society. Indeed, examples abound. In the paper *A Roman PTSD? Psychological trauma and the soldiers of Rome*, Joseph Hall (n.d.) examines accounts of Roman soldiers, and concludes that while there is a presence of adverse reactions to trauma in ancient Rome, it cannot be outright labeled as PTSD due to cultural differences. In contrast, in the article *Combat Stress Disorders and Their Treatment in Ancient Greece*, Yulia Ustinova & Etzel Cardeña (2014) argue that there is a clear presence of the symptomology of PTSD in ancient Greece, and that modern Western approaches to trauma can be applied to different cultures. Alan Greaves (2013) bridges the opposing conclusions with the claim that conditions similar to PTSD might have existed in the ancient world, though he argues that it is not appropriate to retroactively diagnose the historical and fictional persons with the condition. Within this thesis, various disorders associated with trauma were explored with the purpose of identifying connections between their diagnosis criteria and symptoms with dishonor.

Given the general presence of violence in particular segments of ancient life, the present research analyzes selections from primary sources for evidence of dishonor being traumatic in ancient Greece and Rome. The role of dishonor as a form of trauma is supported by ancient sources and is the main argument of the thesis. Aspects of dishonor under consideration include shame, humiliation, violence, and aggression. These factors were

utilized to explore the intricacies of dishonor and its impact upon the human psyche, as well as how it relates to the repercussions of trauma.

Drawing from this panoply of source material, the present research will focus primarily on two case studies, on Homer's *Iliad*[1] and Virgil's *Aeneid,*[2] from ca. 8th century BC and 19 BC, respectively, investigating the potential of dishonor as a form of trauma, based on primary source depictions. The Homeric epic provides one of the earliest written accounts of traumatic events, specifically of wartime trauma. As a Roman juxtaposition, the *Aeneid* provides an example of the aftereffects of violent trauma and loss of home, as well as serves to show how trauma is passed down through the generations. The experimental study consists of a modern psychological investigation of the perceived trauma of dishonorable events, allowing for comparison with the perceived trauma of established traumatic experiences. Finally, the implications and connections of both the classical and psychological research will be discussed. This thesis will employ conventions typical of modern psychological analysis and also classical literary analysis to better understand the trauma of dishonor.

[1] R. Fagles, trans., 1998
[2] R. Fitzgerald, trans., 1990

Trauma

Trauma is defined as an experience of certain life stressors that are followed by a series of cognitive or emotional reactions (Gold, Cook, & Dalenberg, 2017). Traumatic events vary in terms of source, severity, nature, extent of affected areas, type of exposure, relationship to perpetrator, and more (Stricker & Widiger, 2003). While stress arises during ordinary circumstances, trauma is a specific event that occurs outside of ordinary human experience, and would be considered exceedingly distressing by everyone (Everstine & Everstine, 1993; Gold, Cook, & Dalenberg, 2017). The main forms of trauma are typically identified as threat of death, injury, and sexual assault (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). The traumatic reaction is event-specific and is exacerbated by the personal significance of the event (Everstine & Everstine, 1993).

The major responses to traumatic events are reexperiencing, avoidance, and hypervigilance (Bower & Sivers, 1998). Bower & Sivers (1998) conclude that this is due to flashbacks of the event, and activation of fear memories, which in turn incite the victims' hypervigilance, and attempts to avoid any distressing stimuli that could be associated with the trauma. Additionally, the trauma encourages such strong reactions due to it violating the victims' belief system concerning the benevolence, justice, and meaningfulness of their world (Bower & Sivers, 1998). These responses are cognitive, though are greatly impacted by emotional reactions, such as fear and anxiety, that arise in response to the traumatic event.

Symptoms of psychological stress in response to trauma can often be categorized as being within an anxiety- or fear-based context, though the most common clinical responses are symptoms relating to melancholy, aggression, or detachment (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). These symptoms can manifest in the form of difficulty experiencing positive emotions, irritable behavior, and lack of interest in previously enjoyable activities, as well as a variety of other issues (Weathers, Litz, et al., 2013). An additional trauma symptom

is sleep disturbances, though Lavie (2001) found patients with PTSD to have less dream recall and deeper sleep than normal persons, perhaps an effect of avoidance of reminders of the trauma.

The DSM-5 (American Psychiatric Association, 2013) identifies five main traumatic disorders: reactive attachment disorder, disinhibited social engagement disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), acute stress disorder, and adjustment disorders. Traumatic disorders can evolve in response to traumatic events that threaten a person's safety or incite feelings of helplessness (Paciaroni & Arnao, 2016). While all of the disorders require exposure to a traumatic or stressful event, the criteria for diagnosis, the type of trauma/stressor, and the symptoms of the disorders vary. For the purposes of the current study, the criteria and symptomatology of PTSD are of most interest. The three distinct symptoms of the disorder are identified by Yehuda (2002) as hyperarousal for at least a month, reexperiencing the event, and avoidance of stimuli associated with the event. Lifetime PTSD prevalence ranges from approximately 7% to 10% of the population (Gold, Cook, & Dalenberg, 2017). The criteria for a PTSD diagnosis include exposure to an extreme stressor or traumatic event that incites feelings of fear, helplessness, or horror (Yehuda, 2002), which can arise with a variety of experiences based on how they are interpreted within various cultures. These stressful events are typically physically threatening to ones' wellbeing, including events such as natural disasters, sexual assault, and serious injury (Weathers, Blake, et al., 2013). Individuals with weak social support systems are more likely to develop post-traumatic stress disorder (Comer, 2015). Moreover, predisposing factors include other kinds of psychological disorders in the family, high risk childhood, and being female (Comer, 2015). With the knowledge of psychology constantly evolving, the criteria for a diagnosis of a disorder are still being studied.

Mol et al. (2005) examined the possibility that life events that do not fulfill the criteria for a PTSD diagnosis could generate as many symptoms of PTSD as traumatic events. The researchers had participants complete a PTSD symptom checklist concerning the worst event they had experienced, and indicate whether it was a life event (events such as non-sudden death of a loved one, burglary without confrontation with the burglar, and problems with work) or traumatic event (events such as sudden death of a loved one, witnessing violence, and accidents). The results indicated that people whose worst event was a life event had more PTSD symptoms than people whose worst event was traumatic, though there was no clear explanation for the finding. As the current research explored whether dishonor, which is not typically categorized as a traumatic event, is actually traumatic, this research provides the basis for how it might be possible. The A1 criteria (which concerns whether the stressor constitutes a traumatic event) for a PTSD diagnosis greatly limits what is considered a major traumatic event, and this research opens the door to research the possibility that the A1 criteria are too specific.

Trauma in the Classical World

> "From the [..., the ...] was [...] evenly in/on the land.
> [The ...] struck, the palace(s) was collapsed.
> [The ...] spread panic rapidly among its Black-headed who dwelt there.
> [The...] established its abandoned places in Sumer.
> In its vast [...] cities are destroyed, the people are seized with panic.
> Evil came upon Ur ...."[3]
>
> "They weep bitter tears in their broad squares where merriment had reigned.
> With their bliss (fullness) having come to an end, the people do not sleep
> soundly."[4]

Ezra (2001) identifies the oldest post-traumatic response in recorded history to be the death in the battle of King Urnamma (2111-2094 BC), as recorded on a cuneiform tablet. The events described indicate a major trauma followed by psychiatric symptoms, including sleep

---

[3] Urnamma A:1-6. In Fluckiger-Hawker, 1999; as cited in Ezra, 2001
[4] Urnamma A:19-20. In Fluckiger-Hawker, 1999; as cited in Ezra, 2001

disturbances and panic. Post-traumatic disorders can evolve in response to traumatic events that threaten a person's safety, or incite feelings of helplessness (Paciaroni & Arnao, 2016). Factors in the ancient world that potentially contributed to psychiatric stress disorders resulting from experience on the ancient battlefield include risk of death and witnessing the death of fellow soldiers (Abdul-Hamid & Hughes, 2014). While these factors are also present in modern combat, there was the additional complication of higher risk of death from injuries due to less medical knowledge during the classical period. Roman combat was so violent and intense, that the reserve line would be made up of veterans due to their greater capability to watch their comrades fight and die without losing their nerve over the considerable likelihood of the same happening to them (Melchior, 2011).

Pierre Janet (1859-1947) was a French neurologist, who pioneered the empirical study of psychological trauma. One of his main conclusions was that trauma within historical context is often misattributed in terms of source and decontextualized (Abdul-Hamid & Hughes, 2014). Indeed, Greaves (2013) suggests that evidence of conditions such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in the ancient world should not be pursued with medical diagnostic criteria, but rather through literary themes. Relativists assert that the divergent modes of warfare, life experiences, and interpretation of life events between ancient and modern individuals prevents the diagnosis of combatants from one period with disorders observable in their counterparts in another period (Hall, n.d.). However, McMaster (2008) contends that there are human commonalities in balancing self-preservation with sense of honor and achievement in battle; a struggle consistent across time.

With evident similarities between ancient and modern societies, it can be determined that recognizable post-traumatic psychological symptoms were relatively frequent in the ancient world, with the brutality of ancient warfare impacting both fighters and general populace (Greaves, 2013). What are now referred to as combat stress reactions (disorders that

develop in response to traumatic experiences in war), would have been categorized as

cowardice in the past (Ntafoulis, 2016). However, strict application of modern, western

conventions and disorders, such as PTSD, to ancient Greece and Rome is problematic, due to

the cultural factors preventing the existence of a universal human response to trauma

(Greaves, 2013). The harsh realities of life in the ancient world could condition acceptance of

suffering and death (Melchior, 2011).

Even within the sub-culture of hoplite warfare, individual differences would greatly

impact people's interpretations and reactions to traumatic experiences (Greaves, 2013). One

of the main components that impact the development of post-traumatic disorders is the

presence of social support, a resource that would have been further complicated due to

ancient warriors fighting alongside friends, neighbors, and relatives (Greaves, 2013). While

soldiers would be able to gain aid from being surrounded by friends and family, seeing them

killed or injured in battle would intensify the survivor's trauma (Greaves, 2013). Various

socio-cultural factors impact how trauma is responded to by individuals, and can greatly vary

between modern societies, let alone between ancient and contemporary civilizations. Though

contemporary psychology cannot be directly applied in historical analysis, modern

conceptualization of trauma and the resultant disorders can be utilized to inform

interpretations of trauma in the classical world.

One of the prominent traumas depicted in the various primary sources is threat of, and

exposure to, death. In Homer's *Iliad,*[5] the most impactful death that occurs is the defeat of

Patroclus in battle. The ramifications of this loss of life begin in book 18, when Achilles first

learns of his dear comrade being felled, and extends through the end of the text in book 24.

When he is told of Patroclus' fate, "A black cloud of grief came shrouding over Achilles.

Both hands clawing the ground for soot and filth, he poured it over his head, fouled his

[5] R. Fagles, trans., 1998

handsome face and black ashes settled onto his fresh clean war-shirt. Overpowered in all his power, sprawled in the dust, Achilles lay there fallen..." (Homer, *Iliad* 18.25-29). His trauma from losing Patroclus causes Achilles to act with increased aggression, mercilessly slaughtering the Trojan soldiers, and being haunted by his dead friend in his dreams. An additional factor to consider is that Patroclus went into battle due to Achilles refusing to fight out of pride. Achilles likely felt guilt about not being on the battlefield to protect Patroclus, which would exacerbate the trauma of the death of his companion.

       In Virgil's *Aeneid*,[6] the trauma of burning Troy and the deaths of fellow Trojans pursues Aeneas. In Book 2, Aeneas shares the traumatic story, "Sorrow too deep to tell, your majesty, you order me to feel and tell once more [...] heartbreaking things I saw with my own eyes [...] briefly recalled, the final throes of Troy, however I may shudder at the memory and shrink again in grief, let me begin" (Virgil, *Aeneid* 2.3-17). He is haunted by the deaths he witnessed, as well as the threat of death to himself and his family by the Greeks infiltrating the city. Nearly overcome by grief at the site of the slaughter, Aeneas had attempted to kill Helen, misattributing the blame for all the death and destruction to her. Towards the end of the epic, Aeneas again experiences the bloody death of a companion. When he hears of Pallas' demise, he attacks with renewed aggression and rage. In the last book of the text, Aeneas fights Turnus, the man who killed Pallas. Though Turnus begs for mercy, Aeneas gives no leniency:

       '... you have defeated me [...] but go no further out of hatred.' Fierce under arms,

       Aeneas [...] stayed his hand [...] Then to his glance appeared the accurst swordbelt

       surmounting Turnus' shoulder [...] the strap young Pallas wore when Turnus wounded

       him and left him dead upon the field [...] For when the sight came home to him,

[6] R. Fitzgerald, trans., 1990

Aeneas raged at the relic of his anguish [...] Blazing up and terrible in his anger [...]

he sank his blade in fury in Turnus' chest. (Virgil, *Aeneid* 12.1273-1295)

Aeneas continuously experiences traumatic events throughout the epic, and is haunted by reminders of what he has gone through. This causes him to be more aggressive and unable to show mercy, even though it would be honorable to do so.

In the *Pharsalia*[7] by Lucan (61 AD), Pompey experiences being haunted by past trauma, in the form of the ghost of his dead wife, "then the leader's weary limbs give way to drowsy sleep; then he dreamt that Julia, a phantom full of dreadful horror, raised her mourning head through gaping earth and stood upon the flaming pyre like a fury" (Lucan, *Pharsalia* 3.8-11). One of the symptoms of a post-traumatic disorder is reexperiencing the stress event in the form of nightmares or flashbacks. Pompey clearly displays this symptom, the trauma of the death of his wife following him. Comparably, in Apuleius' *The Golden Ass*[8] (158-180 AD), Lucius is repetitively threatened with death in Books 6, 7, and 8. Though he is able to escape with his life each time, he becomes panicked towards the end of the novel, unable to handle the various traumas he has gone through. Exposure to and threat of death are a trauma that can lead to incredibly adverse effects on those who experience it.

Two mythological figures who are depicted with repercussions of trauma are Orestes[9] and Hecuba[10] as depicted in the Aeschylus's play series the *Oresteia*[11] (458 BC) and

---

[7] J. W. Joyce, trans., 1993

[8] E. J. Kenny, trans., 1999

[9] Orestes was the son of King Agamemnon and Queen Clytemnestra of Argos. Aeschylus' trilogy, the *Oresteia*, is a tale of revenge and the consequences that come with it, revolving around Orestes. The first play, *Agamemnon*, centers on the revenge Clytemnestra takes on Agamemnon when he returns from fighting in the Trojan war. The second play, *Libation Bearers*, follows Orestes and his vengeance for the murder of his father. The final play of the series, *Eumenides*, brings the cycle of revenge to a close.

[10] Hecuba was the Queen of Troy, and wife of King Priam. After a ten-year siege, the Greeks destroyed the city of Troy and the men were killed while the women and children became slaves. The playwright Euripides wrote two plays revolving around the Trojan queen and what happened to her and the other women of Troy directly after the war.

[11] R. Lattimore, trans., 1953

Euripides' plays *The Trojan Women*12 (415 BC) and *Hecuba*13 (424 BC) respectively. Both

having roots in the Trojan war, their stories are nearly parallel to one another chronologically,

taking place directly following the war. An analysis of the playwrights Aeschylus' and

Euripides' depictions of the two individuals reveals extensive evidence for mental

consequences resulting from their traumatic trials. A key difference between the figures'

experiences is that Orestes is able to work through and overcome his legacy of trauma, while

Hecuba is never able to escape the trauma to do so. As a victim, Hecuba has little autonomy,

and as a female, neither the gods nor man cares about her psychological and emotional state.

These factors contribute to Hecuba being overcome by the trauma of the deaths of her sons

and daughter, causing her to display suicidal tendencies. This is a common theme throughout

the classical world as women were forced to suffer and receive no mercy. By contrast,

Orestes is able to control his fate by petitioning the gods for help. Even though he committed

atrocities, he is the one who is able to heal and regain power. While the male hero and the

female victim may both experience the same psychological disorders, it is usually the man

who is able to overcome adversity while the woman is forced to continually suffer.

Historically, the traumas of natural disasters, combat and injury, and sexual violence

could have far reaching consequences, though they were less common than exposure to and

threat of death in the sources analyzed. In the *Aeneid*, a storm is set upon the battle-weary

Trojans on the order of Juno. Aeneas is left worried and wearied, nearly overcome by the loss

of his compatriots, he "climbed one of the peaks for a long seaward view, hoping to site [the

ships]. He found no ship in sight, but three wandering stags [...] Planting his feet, he took in

hand the bow [...] shooting and shooting till he won the hunt by laying seven carcasses on the

ground, a number equal to his ships" (Virgil, *Aeneid* 1.247-262). While seven ships survive

12 W. Arrowsmith, J. F. Nims, R. Lattimore, & R. Frederick Willets, trans., 1958
13 Ibid.

the storm in the *Aeneid*, Odysseus is the only survivor in Homer's *Odyssey*[14] (8th c BC) when

Zeus starts a storm. Natural disasters were often associated with acts of the divine, which

could exacerbate the trauma, as the knowledge that a god wanted the victims to be harmed or

killed is an additional stressor.

The trauma of combat and injury was often depicted with negative effects such as

suicide. In Herodotus' *Histories*[15] (440 BC) Book 6, "Cleomenes had been more or less

insane before [...] and he began to ask the guard to give him a knife [...] Cleomenes took hold

of the weapon and began to mutilate himself [...] until he began slicing into his stomach, at

which point he died" (Herodotus, *Histories* 6.75). Cleomenes was a King of Sparta, who led

troops into battle multiple times, the trauma of combat contributing to him resorting to self-

harm after returning to Sparta. The trauma of combat also is depicted in Appian's *Civil War*[16]

(ca. 2nd C AD), which details the death of Brutus, who orchestrated his own suicide. He knew

that his army would fail as they were greatly outflanked, and could no longer withstand the

trauma of combat, choosing a swift death rather than continue to fight his enemies. Combat,

and the associated injury experienced by warriors, is a major stressor within classical sources,

resulting in extreme traumatic responses.

Sexual violence was present in almost every primary source examined. However, it

was only presented as traumatic in a few. Additionally, the focus was often not on the woman

who experienced the traumatic event, but rather how it affected the men in her life. In the first

book of Herodotus' *Histories,* the abductions and rapes of Io, Europa, and Medea are

described. Herodotus notes them not because of the impact on the women themselves, but

rather how they set up Paris stealing away Helen and causing the Trojan War and

exacerbating the conflict between the Phoenicians and Persians. Though the ancient world

[14] R. Fagles, trans., 1999
[15] R. Waterfield, trans., 1998
[16] J. Carter, trans., 1996

was fraught with trauma, ancient sources are more concerned with how traumatic events impacted the overall course of history, rather than how they affected the people who went through them.

A major aspect of trauma in the ancient world is not only the depictions in various sources, but also how the trauma experienced by the authors may have impacted their work. Morley (2017) identifies Thucydides' work as a possible product of trauma due to his own experiences during war. His practical experience as a warrior and politician lends weight to his writing, but also further complicates how reliable it is considering his perspective is biased by his own trauma. He sees no escape from the cycle of violence, recreating past trauma in order to better contend with it (Morley, 2017).

Understanding the role of trauma in the ancient world assists not only in studying the past, but also contending with the present. Meineck (2012) explores the restorative properties of contemplating classical plays and sources detailing war for modern veterans. There is a continuation of the psychological and emotional repercussions of combat for ancient and modern soldiers (Meineck, 2012). Ancient works are able to serve as an impetus for public discourse, which in turn can feed new interpretations of the material (Meineck, 2012).

(Dis)honor

Honor guides both prescriptive and proscriptive values concerning how people should behave (Saucier & McManus, 2014). A socially constructed notion, honor goes beyond a belief system, comprising a specialized code of conduct (Saucier & McManus, 2014). Cairns (2011) claims that honor is a complex negotiation between the individual and perceptions of others. He concludes that honor is the sum of value and esteem held for the individual by the public. There is a sentiment that honor is featured in delineating an individual's social identity, with people preferring to belong to groups with honorable members (Mandel & Litt, 2013). Honor is often characterized within a social organization through distinct action, motivation, and personality standards that are perceived by others as constituting an honorable persona (Cairns, 2011).

Examining the language of honor, Ermers (2018) categorizes the term "honor" as heterogenous due to the various usages within the English language that make it impossible to identify a decisive conception. Honor institutes both a rigid standard of conduct, as well as consequences when people veer from the accepted social norms (Saucier & McManus, 2014). However, due to being a socially constructed concept, the formula for how to behave honorably differs by culture. Attributes and customs differ between various societies, and multiple research studies have established the influence of culture on perceptions of honor killing (Caffaro, Ferraris, & Schmidt, 2014), further emphasizing how honorable conduct can be interpreted in various, and even opposing, manners. As honor relates to people within a social setting, the concept must be exclusively studied within the encompassing religious, social, and economic context (Moxnes, 1993).

Within numerous contexts, honor is a type of social motivation, guiding people as to how to act in various situations based on what is perceived as the cultural norm (Yao, Ramirez-Marin, Brett, Aslani, & Semnani-Azad, 2017). Cairns (2011) points out the human

desire for esteem, and how this can occur in an array of forms. Due to the encompassing effects of environment and upbringing on one's beliefs and conduct, the researcher argues for the need to delineate honor from within the context of the culture being examined, rather than applying one's own ideals and definitions to an entirely different society. How to behave in an honorable manner is culturally dependent, with honor in North America being an individualistic attribute, the individual alone being responsible for their actions, identified as both the source and owner of honor, rather than collectivist, as many Eastern cultures are, and defined by relationships with others (Uskul et al., 2012). Possible cultural aspects that might have impact include collectivist versus individualistic social organization, in addition to differing definitions of honor that are specific to a community (Caffaro, Ferraris, & Schmidt, 2014). Caffaro et al. (2014) found that the collectivist country of Turkey placed greater import on family honor, thus displaying stronger reactions to family dishonor, than the more individualistic country of Italy. Honor is able to provide a cultural explanation for behavior norms, and why social interaction might vary in different societies around the world (Yao, Ramirez-Marin, Brett, Aslani, & Semnani-Azad, 2017).

Regarding how the culture of honor shapes behavior, O'Dea, Martens, & Saucier (2019) analyzed the impact of masculine honor beliefs on perceptions of unfair fighting behavior. It was found that individuals with high masculine honor belief feel that once a man is engaged in a fight, he should try and win by any means necessary (e.g., hitting below the belt). The source showed the aggression that comes with threats to honor. That people would try to win a fight by any means necessary to protect their honor emphasizes how important the concept is to them. This in turn indicates that experiencing dishonor could result in extreme reactions and feelings. A fundamental characteristic among various honor cultures is willingness to retaliate against provocation in defense of one's reputation, as not doing so could lead to being labeled as cowardly and weak (Nisbett & Cohen, 1996). People high in

honor respond to insults with stronger negative emotions than low-honor individuals (Shafa,

Harinck, Ellemers, & Beersma, 2014). More masculine honor belief is associated with

supporting aggressive responses to provocation, especially when insults to manhood, family,

or romantic partners are involved (Saucier & McManus, 2014). However, while honor

cultures can incite aggressive responses, associated rules and values are also able to curb

otherwise undisciplined aggressive behavior (Nowak et al., 2016).

Concerning violence within honor cultures, Roberts, Miller, and Azrael (2019)

examined factors corresponding to honor-related suicides, and how they differed from non-

honor-related suicides. They found that people who committed honor-related suicides were

more likely to leave a note, discuss suicidal intent, have life event problems, and were less

likely to seek medical help for depression than individuals who committed non-honor-related

suicides. The research shows that suicide might have been a response to dishonor not only

due to the trauma of it, but also due to feelings of shame and low self-esteem that were found

among individuals who value honor. When personal reputation is publicly challenged, it

becomes increasingly difficult for the individual to escape the dishonor, and suicide is a

response to this, as well as a way for someone to control their own narrative.

In the United States, older men associate masculinity and honor, which places them at

greater risk for suicide in western and southern regions (Crowder & Kemmelmeier, 2017). It

was found that older European American men from honor cultures have the highest suicide

rates regions (Crowder & Kemmelmeier, 2017). Crowder & Kemmelmeier (2017) argue that

the phenomenon is due to men in honor cultures experiencing difficulty in maintaining their

honor as they age. This is linked to the loss of virility and risk of negative life events harming

status and reputation, which contribute to greater risk of depression and suicide. The

association of honor with depression and suicide accentuates the influence honor has on

quality of life, as well as lifespan.

Masculine honor is comprised of courage, pride, virtue, perceiving provocation to self, family, or community as a threat, and responding to such threats in a defensive capacity (Saucier & McManus, 2014). When rating the importance of the factors that comprise male honor, Saucier and McManus (2014) found that women valued the maintenance of strong male bonds with family and community more than men. The researchers identify historical female dependence on men as protectors and providers as underlying the occurrence. Concerning female and male honor values in the southern region of the United States, men and women share the southern ideology of violence being utilized to defend one's honor (Nisbett & Cohen, 1996). Additionally, Nisbett and Cohen (1996) found an impact of women being ashamed of male dishonorable actions on men, such that they would rather die honorably in war, than come home in shame as a coward. The female perspective of what constituted an honorable man appears to influence male conduct.

While men and women have distinct honor characteristics, the relationship between the genders underly these codes. Male honor is largely perceived to be dependent upon the actions of female relatives (Doğan, 2014). This informs the extreme actions and violence against women that has occurred when men feel as though they have acted dishonorably. It is not only the woman's dishonorable actions, but how they reflect upon the men in her social circle. The research of Cihangir (2013) detailed cultural and gender differences concerning gender specific honor codes, with a comparison between participants from high honor cultures and low honor culture. Specifically, the importance of sexual purity of men and women, as well as the responsibility for female sexual purity, was analyzed. It was found that male participants from high honor cultures identified more responsibility for sexual purity of female family members and violence as being honor related. Guerra, Giner-Sorolla, & Vasiljevic (2013) found feminine honor to be rooted in chastity and religious beliefs, while

masculine honor is correlated with autonomy and divinity. This divide indicates that dishonor

suffered by men and women are interpreted differently, and possibly vary in terms of impact.

Generally associated with men rather than women, a prevailing consequence of the

culture of honor is violence and aggression (Nisbett & Cohen, 1996). Gill and Brah (2014)

explored the cultural values that differentiate perceptions and actions surrounding honor-

based violence. Through the use of a case study and existing literature on the topic, the

researchers concluded that honor-based violence needs to be examined through the lens of the

culture it occurs in, and that the intersections of culture and various identities must be taken

into account. Indeed, honor changes not only between cultures, but also within cultures in

relation to sex, class, status, geographic location, and other factors (Moxnes, 1993).

Honor is deeply rooted in southern culture norms, gender roles, and personal identity

(Nisbett & Cohen, 1996). The collectivist honor culture of the southern region of the United

States underlies the use of violence and aggression for protection and restoring order (Nisbett

& Cohen, 1996). Violence is more common in cultures that place import on honor, such as in

the south, due to arguments causing affront, which demands retribution (Nisbett & Cohen,

1996). With insult damaging public perception and the reputation of a person, which would

be understood as public weakness, an aggressive response is rationalized as a way to avoid

stigma from peers (Nisbett & Cohen, 1996). However, violence is justified by the

provocation of another, rather than relied upon in daily life (Nisbett & Cohen, 1996).

Southerners are more in favor of violence within the context of honor culture, though only in

defense of honor rather than in the abstract, due to violence being utilized for self-protection

and social control (Nisbett & Cohen, 1996).

Continuing research on how honor impacts perspective, Canto, Perles, and San Martín

(2017) explored the impact of the culture of honor on victim blaming in rape scenarios.

Participants read one of three vignettes depicting either stranger rape, acquaintance rape by a

coworker the married victim had been flirting with, or marital rape following an argument. The researchers found an impact of honor, assessed by a culture of honor scale, on the extent of victim blaming in the acquaintance rape scenario, followed by the marital rape scenario, and lastly the stranger rape scenario, with individuals who place higher value on honor having a higher rate of victim blaming. The victim blaming appeared to be tied to the sexual assault victim challenging the codes of the culture of honor, such as flirtation out of marriage or not providing sexual obedience to her husband.

Dishonor, especially when evoked by an individual who brings it upon their family, is so powerful due to it not only having the ability to harm pride or social status, but reputation of morality as well (Ermers, 2018). Honor itself has various moral implications, and possibly even functions as a moralization purpose (Guerra, Giner-Sorolla, & Vasiljevic, 2013), allowing for actions and behaviors to be categorized as upstanding versus disreputable. In situations where honor is a cultural or interpersonal factor, precedence is given to morality over competence when people are passing judgments on others or themselves after being insulted (Shafa, Harinck, Ellemers, & Beersma, 2014). Certainly, appreciation of moral behavior is necessary for a conscientious apprehension of honor (Cross et al., 2014). The relationship between honor and morality is relevant when considering how dishonor can shape impressions of both other people as well as oneself, and how morality guides acceptable behavior.

(Dis)honor in the Classical World

Though honor might vary based on context, specifically by time periods and societies, the concept still remains the same in a general sense, making it necessary to pay attention to both the differing particulars and the wider similarities of honor across cultures (Cairns, 2011). Throughout the past and present, the honor system has been utilized to encourage people to succeed so that society can prosper (Robinson, 2006). Serving as an ethical system,

honor is closely related to rights and morality, and the height of one's own honor is limited only by the honor and respect they owe others (Cairns, 2011). In ancient Greece, behavior that encouraged shame was seen as a moral failing, and led to condemnation that could cause debilitating guilt (Konstan, 2003).

It is easy to think that honor has become more complex over time, relegating a simple definition to the past – likely due to the limited information available. Yet, the poems of Homer illustrate that honor was an intricate concept in the classical world (Cairns, 2011). The warrior's quest for honor depicted by Homer served as the fundamentals for later Greek societies and ethics (Moxnes, 1993). The contradiction of honor is that the concept was – and still is – both universal and individual, internalized and externalized. People behave with honor to either receive praise of others, or live up to their personal standards; the two forms of motivation corresponding with one another (Robinson, 2006). The ongoing negotiation between recognition by others and the individual's own values emphasize the ties between personal identity and group membership – self-esteem being driven by the esteem of others (Cairns, 2011). Hellenistic society placed the community first, with the individual – and their own honor – being a part of the community before anything else (Moxnes, 1993).

Honor is directly related to value, specifically the value of an individual denoted by both the self and the esteem of others (Cairns, 2011). According to the works of Homer, one's value in ancient Greece was based in ability as a warrior, social rank, age, skills, familial relations, and companions, while honor was the recognition of one's value (Cairns, 2011). In ancient Rome, honor could also be generated through public generosity, as well as in the courtroom, as orators, or through clientage – a shift from honor gained through the glory of war (Lendon, 2011). No matter the method, the underlying need of young men to prove themselves in order to gain honor was a common factor (Moxnes, 1993).

Crook (2009) stresses the public court of reputation (PCR), and how it allots honor and shame to both mortals and gods alike. The power of public shame and dishonor was one that not even an emperor could stand against (Crook, 2009). Shame was one of the most powerful weapons in ancient Rome, the effects even continuing after death (Lendon, 2011). By emphasizing the negativity of dishonor, various militaristic cultures, especially Rome, are able to show that death is not the worse fate one could encounter (Robinson, 2006). Rather, it is better to die in battle than live through cowardice. Fear of disgrace pushed people just as much, if not more, than desire of honor. Due to the ancient world being made up of societies that were small and had little privacy, there was no escape from the judgements of others, which in turn shaped individual identity (Robinson, 2006).

The complexity of Roman honor was that it could be based in morality or expediency depending on the virtues a Roman values (Robinson, 2006). This made Romans unpredictable as an insult could be responded to with either clemency or violence. When a Roman responded to an insult, they showed that the insult had been interpreted as a challenge – and therefore, a threat to one's honor (Crook, 2009). While an attack on one's honor required revenge, interestingly, Romans rarely acted with violence in these cases (Lendon, 2011). Indeed, there appeared to be high tolerance for mockery and insult, with such abuse being expected within the public sphere, specifically in politics and law courts (Lendon, 2011).

The impact of insults to one's honor is directly related to how secure one's standing is. When people have security, they are less impacted by threats to their honor and insult, and when insecure, people tend to be glory-seeking, and go out of their way to prove themselves (Robinson, 2006). With warfare and military prowess one such way to standout and acquire glory in the ancient Mediterranean, there is a strong relationship between fighting and honor and shame. Honor spurs warriors to fight in order to achieve honor, as well as to avoid

dishonor (Robinson, 2006). This is reinforced by the material awards bestowed on those who

positively stand out, often in the form of monuments and trophies in the Graeco-Roman

world – many of which can be found in museums today.

Honor is tied to self-worth and identity, leading to people attempting great tasks in

order to achieve or regain it (Robinson, 2006). Over and over, glory-seeking overtook tactics

in ancient Greek society (Robinson, 2006). The prospect of shame occasionally led to

suicide, however, it was possible for Romans to rebuild their honor (Lendon, 2011).

Excessive displays of heroism and courage were common, often driven by fear of shame

(Robinson, 2006). Cowardice would result in such disgrace, that it was better to die in battle,

or risk being driven to suicide by the treatment that awaited the warriors back home

(Robinson, 2006). There were three options for an ancient Greek warrior: court death to

achieve honor and glory, avoid battle and be named a dishonorable coward, or live a lowly,

middling life, neither seeking glory nor running away from battle. Shame came not from lack

of honor, but rather specific acts of dishonor (Konstan, 2003). This allowed for a middle

ground between the two extremes.

While men could gain honor on the battlefield, the value also played a large role

within the political sphere in the ancient Mediterranean. Born during the last century of the

Republic, the Roman senator Cicero utilized his oratorial skills to gain honor for himself, as

well as wield dishonor against his enemies. As a *novus homo*, or a "new man," Cicero was

born a plebian, and it was only through his education and achievements, rather than a family

name, that he was able to become a senator. He had no background in political life, and as an

outsider, he had to build himself up, which entailed tearing others down. The trend of

degrading others in his role as an orator did not stop when Cicero became established as a

senator and consul, but rather gained even greater traction. The *Catilinarian*[17] (ca. 81-44 BC)

[17] D. H. Berry, trans., 2006; M. Grant, trans., 1969

is a series of four speeches Cicero gave against the Senator Cataline, who was accused of leading a conspiracy against the Roman senate. These speeches emphasize how Cicero utilized honor and shame as weapons, tearing down Catiline through invectives, in order to present him as a dishonorable fiend.

Cicero characterized Cataline as being dishonorable, describing him as heartless and self-serving, conspiring against those who trust him enough to stand so closely and familiarly. In the opening passage of his first speech denouncing Cataline, Cicero does not bother to even state what exactly Cataline is accused of, assuming that the conspiracy is known without any detail being provided. Rather, he focuses on Cataline's moral failings, asking Cataline, "is there any mark of disgrace with which your private life has not been branded?" (Cicero, *First Catilinarian* 13). Cicero focuses not on specific actions, instead describes the corrupting and nefarious influence of Cataline. As he is not providing any concrete evidence for the conspiracy, there is no way to directly refute the information. The method of disparaging the morals and virtues of the accused were often just as powerful and effective as actual evidence. This was largely due to the majority of cases in ancient Rome being *ad hominem*, based on the reputations of the individuals, rather than *ad rem,* based on empirical evidence. Additionally, Cicero utilized the *Catilinarion* to bolster his own reputation, and highlight what he had done in order to protect the Roman people, proclaiming, "instead of a triumph and the other marks of honour that I have forfeited in order to keep guard over Rome and your own safety [...] I ask you for nothing whatsoever – except that you hold on to the memory of this moment and of my whole consulship" (Cicero, *Fourth Catilinarian* 23). By declining physical markers of honor, Cicero is able to illustrate his own virtuous temperament, ensuring that he will be remembered for placing the safety of Rome before material awards. As an orator in the Roman Republic, notably one who was not

born an aristocrat, Cicero wielded dishonor as a tool, razing the reputations of his opponents, while establishing his own influence and power.

While the relationship between honor and men on both the battlefield and in politics has been discussed in the scholarly literature, less frequently examined is women and honor in the ancient Mediterranean. While honor was typically associated with militaristic glory, this did not prevent women from sharing in both the highs and lows of the value. A wife could have greater reputation than her husband, with her husband borrowing honor from her (Crook, 2009). In his telling of the rise of Rome in *Ab Urbe Condita*18 (ca. 29-8 BC), Livy narrates the abduction and rape of the Sabine women. The Sabine women are stolen from their families, taken to be the wives of Roman men against their will. They have no sway upon their abductors as prisoners dragged from their home. Livy is very careful to excuse the dishonorable actions of the early Romans, expressing that the "women in course of time lost their resentment" (Livy, *Ab Urbe Condita* 1.10.1) As the Sabine women accepted their roles as wives and mothers to Romans, they gained more power and privileges, honored as the mothers of Rome.

The Sabine women were able to utilize their connections to both their fathers and husbands in order to prevent a devastating war. They state that they would rather die themselves than live on either widowed or orphaned (Livy, *Ab Urbe Condita* 1.13.3). They are driven by their motherhood, tied irrevocably to their husbands through their children, no longer unwilling brides. The women in their roles as daughters and wives present a way to end the war without the male warriors facing dishonor due to not fighting. The Sabine women are an undeniable bridge between the Romans and Sabines, their roles as wives and daughters just as important as their actions on the battlefield. Livy presents them as the reason for both the initiation and end of the war, having the women claim blame for the

18 A. de Selincourt, trans., 2002

bloodshed between their fathers and husbands. The Sabine women had the agency to intervene and beseech their male family members to stop fighting, utilizing their bodies to do so, and were honored for their wifely duty by having their names utilized by Romulus to name the 30 wards.

The story of Lucretia is perhaps the most horrific account in Livy's work of a woman experiencing dishonor. Lucretia is the wife of Collatinus, and was raped by Sextus Tarquinius, who lusted after her after seeing that she was so beautiful and chaste. She killed herself after explaining what had occurred to her father and husband, declaring, "never shall Lucretia provide a precedent for unchaste women to escape what they deserve" (Livy, *Ab Urbe Condita* 1.58.10). Though Lucretia was unchaste against her will, she is still portrayed as being at fault, and in turn, Livy communicates that all women must pay the consequences for being raped. Yet, she was honored for her bravery in the face of dishonor. Just as male heroes were publicly honored, Lucretia's body was brought to the public square for crowds to gaze upon, but it was not Lucretia herself, but rather the grief of her father and the brutality of Sextus that moved the crowd. Lucretia's rape and subsequent suicide was merely a symbol used by Brutus to call for the removal of the kings. It was the horrific actions of Sextus and the speeches of Brutus that led to the formation of a republic rather than Lucretia. Both men used her, one in body and the other in spirit, for their own ends. By being raped, she was shamed, but by killing herself, she safeguarded the honor of her husband and father.

The circumstances of the rape of Lucretia are also an example of the how a wife impacted the honor of her husband. Her husband used her to prove a point to other men, as having a virtuous and chaste wife increased his own reputation. Additionally, Sextus forces her to choose between having sex with him and living to explain what occurred, or being killed with a slave, so that it would appear she betrayed her husband. Lucretia chooses the option that would allow her to live, and therefore have the capacity to inform her husband of

what had come to pass. She then uses her limited agency to kill herself, but in doing so, she dooms future generations of women who are raped. Ironically, by utilizing her own agency, she lessens the agency of other women, who would be forced to contend with the actions of Lucretia in the aftermath of their own rape. Lucretia became the ideal of how a woman should deal with sexual dishonor, so that the men in her life might escape with their honor unscathed.

In Euripides' *Medea*19 (431 BC), the titular character is described as a "poor woman, dishonored, sent into exile" (Euripides, *Medea* 239-440) by the chorus. The play details the effects of Jason throwing away Medea after she betrayed her family and home for him, and the revenge she undertakes as a response to this dishonor. Jason broke their marriage oaths without just cause due to Medea never acting against him, and in doing so, committed great insult to not only their relationship and the children she bore him, but also her honor. Following the heroic code of honor, Medea had a right to extract vengeance against Jason, though she perhaps took it to extremes in murdering their children and his new wife. While her horrific actions negate much of the sympathy offered to her earlier in the play, Jason is still at fault as "the ungracious man who won't honor friends" (Euripides, *Medea* 677-678) and "dishonored [Medea's] bed" (Euripides, *Medea* 1402) Medea's rage and vengeance were so great not only because Jason dishonored her and their marriage, but because he owed her immense gratitude for assisting him against her family and home. He should be the last person to betray her, which makes it all the worse that he does so. To dishonor a loved one is more abhorrent than to dishonor an enemy due to the betrayal that accompanies the injustice.

Honor and dishonor in the ancient Mediterranean governed daily life. The concept of honor seems abstract, but in the world of Homer and beyond, it can be seen through actions and words, and in an individual's reputation and the treatment they receive (Van Wees,

---

19 D. A. Svarlien, trans., 2008

1992). The honorable are treated with respect, while the dishonorable are scorned. Honor

(and in turn, dishonor) was intertwined with emotion, specifically shame (Cairns, 2011). To

be honorable was to avoid being shamed, a necessity to succeed in the classical world. One's

very identity was based around honor, with authority, reputation, and respect all depending

on whether the individual was considered honorable – and therefore deserving – by others

(Cairns, 2011; Van Wees, 1992). The shame of dishonor could tear apart one's entire being.

The Trauma of Dishonor

"For my sake; let me bid my death for honor"[20]

Virgil's *Aeneid* closes with a battle of single combat between the titular hero, Aeneas, and Turnus, the defender of the soon to be conquered kingdom. Valuing honor over life is overt towards the end of the *Aeneid*, when Turnus decides to fight Aeneas alone rather than surrender. Aeneas is blessed by the gods, with a divine heritage through his mother, the goddess Venus. Turnus' father-in-law, King Latinus, implores the doomed man to surrender and live to see another day. Even after his tearful mother-in-law begs him, Turnus is unmoved, unwilling to dishonor himself by yielding to Aeneas and the Trojans. Though he claims that his martial valor will allow him to stand against Aeneas, he accepts that his own death is the likely outcome of the duel. The honor culture of ancient Rome fosters a desire to have an honorable death rather than a dishonorable life, forever marked by cowardice.

There has been little to no research on the possibility of dishonor being traumatic. Previous literature has explored factors of trauma and analysis of dishonor separately, never examining the possible relationship between the two concepts. However, the foundation for such an investigation is based in the various studies examining the effects of dishonor and those examining responses to trauma. Specifically, there is overlap between the two areas due to both inciting strong emotional reactions, and having the possibility of long-lasting, detrimental influences. The purpose of the current study was to investigate the function of dishonor as a type of trauma. This research is supported by the literature (e.g., Crowder & Kemmelmeier, 2017; Roberts, Miller, & Azrael, 2019; Saucier & McManus, 2014) on dishonor and trauma previously discussed. Additionally, Wurmser (1999) examined the relationship between shame and trauma. He argues that shame comes with reliving trauma, and thus people strive to not appear weak and experience dishonor. The fear of dishonor

[20] Virgil, *Aeneid* 12.70

appears to be tied to the contempt this might incite in others, which would be even worse

than failure. In turn, dishonor brings shame through the degrading of self-image. Wurmser

serves to provide foundation for exploring the relationship between dishonor and trauma,

through the use of shame as a bridge.

In a study exploring humiliation and its role as a core agent of trauma, Lindner (2001)

argues that the necessity to humble others throughout history has resulted in humiliating

trauma. With the desire for revenge, underlined with hate, a cycle of humiliation occurs,

leading to humiliation not serving to humble people, but rather to traumatize them. One of the

issues the current study has to contend with is what aspects of dishonor are actually

traumatic. Apuleius' *The Golden Ass* is a source of the negative consequences of humiliation,

especially public humiliation of an individual. When the protagonist, Lucius, is humiliated

with false murder charges and a farce of a court case as a part of the village's annual Festival

of Laughter, he experiences intense humiliation, which could even be likened to shame.

When he realized that he had been set up for the entertainment of the village, he stood stock-

still before "bursting into a fresh flood of tears and convulsive sobs" (Apuleius, *The Golden*

Ass 3.10), overwhelmed by the public humiliation he has experienced, and the stress that it

had caused him. Lucius expresses a "feeling of outrage at the indignity [he] had suffered, so

deeply had it sunk into [his] heart" (Apuleius, *The Golden Ass* 3.10). Even as he tries to put

up a cheerful front, Lucius falls into a state of gloom, shame leading him to block out the

world, as laughter and stares follow him home. With humiliation being associated with both

shame and the loss of honor, research exploring the trauma of humiliation underscores the

relationship between loss of honor and trauma, which appears to come in a variety of forms.

Also, the research offers a base to build upon when examining untraditional forms of trauma.

Violence and aggression, especially in response to dishonor, is a way to show

evidence of the impact of dishonor and the effects it has on the individual who undergoes it.

Odea et al. (2019) analyzed the impact of masculine honor beliefs on perceptions of unfair fighting behavior. This study suggested that individuals who subscribe to a masculine code of honor believed that once a man is engaged in fighting, he should try and win by any means necessary (i.e. Hitting below the belt). The researchers emphasize the aggression that comes with threats to honor. That people would try to win a fight by any means necessary to protect their honor shows how important it is to them. This in turn indicates that experiencing dishonor could result in extreme reactions and feelings, supporting the conception of dishonor resulting in trauma.

While the value systems of western society are not as weighted by honor as in other cultures, for instance ancient Greece and Rome, one area that is honor based is the military. Especially in the Marine Corp, honor is of great import, with honor being considered the foundation of military character ("What are the marine corps values?," n.d.). There is the honor of brotherhood with fellow soldiers, and in following orders to protect one's country. However, there are times when following orders could lead to dishonorable actions. One such occasion is how at checkpoints in the Middle East, soldiers are required to take down potential threats who do not stop and follow procedure, resulting in occasional occurrences of children and unarmed civilians being injured or killed by soldiers who are following orders (Harrison, 2010). These actions are likely categorized by the soldier as dishonorable in a general sense, as well as contributes to moral injury. Additionally, in the military, it would be considered dishonorable to freeze in battle. This fear would be normal to a civilian, but in the armed forces they are expected to put honor first, a common mantra being "Death before Dishonor" (Saucier & McManus, 2014). The value placed on honor in the military demonstrates the pervasiveness of the adverse effects of dishonor throughout history and the present.

The overall topic under investigation in the current research is trauma and its effects. The research focused on the trauma that might arise with dishonor, and how the responses both relate to and differ from the more fundamental traumas of serious injury, sexual violence, and threat of death. Examining the trauma of dishonor allows for a better understanding of how it impacts mental health and possible treatments for the effects of the possible traumatic event. In order to understand dishonor and its effects, the concept cannot just be explored in a single context. In order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the forms that trauma of dishonor can take, it is necessary to interact with the past as well as modern times. The classical world offers intriguing sources to interrogate for the purpose of researching the trauma of dishonor.

Case Studies

The heroes depicted in Homer's epics are individuals driven to extraordinary action and bravery out of the fear of the loss of reputation. They live, kill, and die in their search for *kleos*, the glorious reputation that exists even when they are no longer alive to truly benefit from it. This concept in turn offers an explanation for the honor system that appears to drive so many heroes in both fiction and reality. The hero strives to be at the forefront of the action, must kill or be killed in order to achieve honor and glory, and is often depicted with animalistic qualities, their savagery making them more godlike. Additionally, the hero must always keep in mind that they must do what is right or be shamed for acting poorly. In Homer's *Iliad*, heroes are warriors whose goal in both life and death is honor and glory. In the epic, Achilles refuses to continue fighting for the Greeks in the Trojan war due to Agamemnon besmirching his honor by taking his war prize, Briseis. Achilles' dishonor causes him to weep, isolate himself in his tent, and display increased aggression. These symptoms are all aspects of traumatic disorders, supporting dishonor being a form of trauma.

While the Trojan war was depicted in the Greek epic the *Iliad*, the aftermath of the war on the few Trojan survivors is portrayed in the Roman epic the *Aeneid*. The earliest Roman ancestors were the losers of the Trojan war, who escaped in search of a better life. It was through further bloodshed and becoming conquerors and kings that the former Trojans were able to establish what would one day become Rome; and later expand the city-state into a vast empire. Vergil's *Aeneid* centers on a demigod named Aeneas, who on his quest to establish a new home for his people, encounters various diversions placed in his way by the gods. One such diversion is Dido, the queen of Carthage, who becomes Aeneas' lover after providing assistance to him and his comrades. However, Aeneas dishonors Dido when he abandons her to continue on his journey, leaving her with a ruined reputation. Dido's

response to the dishonor is traumatic in nature, as she displayed increased aggression, apathy, and melancholy, before finally committing suicide.

The *Iliad* and the *Aeneid* are respectively seminal works of ancient Greece and Rome. They have shaped millennia of portrayals and interpretations concerning antiquity, and provide a glimpse of how dishonor was perceived during the time of their creation. Virgil was writing to a contemporary audience with definite notions of what were appropriate behavioral responses to trauma at the time, in comparison to Homer's received tradition, which was based in narratives that had previously been passed down orally over time. Primary source analysis of the two epics allows for a better understanding of the traumatic nature of dishonor in the ancient Mediterranean. The following two case studies identify the traumatic symptoms present in Achilles' and Dido's reactions to their dishonor. While Achilles' dishonor is based on his heroic status being endangered, Dido's dishonor centers on the loss of her reputation of chastity. Thus, the main forms of dishonor of men and women in the ancient world are able to be investigated.

Achilles: Dishonor of Heroes

Homer's *Iliad* was written in 750 BCE, which signals the beginning of the Archaic period. The events depicted are thought to have occurred hundreds of years before then, during the Mycenean (or Minoan) period, a legendary past that was passed down orally before written down by Homer. The story itself, while not entirely factual and having once existed in multiple oral versions, offers a glimpse of the culture that created it. However, this culture is a combination of both the culture of the Mycenean period, when the epic was first spoken, and the culture of the Archaic period, when the entity known as Homer[21] wrote the narrative. The way cultural norms are depicted in the epic were possible reflections of how

---

[21]At this time, it is thought that the story of the *Iliad* was passed down through oral tradition before being written down. Thus, there were multiple versions of the epic, and Homer only wrote down one such version, likely splicing multiple traditions contributed by different Greek communities. Additionally, it is unclear if Homer actually existed, was just a penname, or even referred to multiple people.

they were in reality. As what is considered one of the first western written works, the *Iliad*

provides insight into the cultural values of the ancient Greek world, as well as ancient Greek

perceptions of morality, heroes, and the divine. Serving as the foundation for not only

modern interpretations and understanding of the classical world, the *Iliad* has also been

utilized by ancient historians and writers to guide their own work. The *Iliad* offers an

invaluable depiction of humanity and ancient Greek culture which has shaped both the

ancient and modern world. In particular, Homer's *Iliad* provides invaluable insight on the

role of dishonor during wartime in ancient Greece. Achilles' reaction to King Agamemnon

threatening his honor reinforces the traumatic nature of dishonor.

The Homeric epic tells the tale of the Trojan War as it nears its end after 10 years of

relentless battle. Centering on the ancient Greek warrior Achilles, the epic examines themes

of honor, mortality, and fate. Prophesized to live a short life in exchange for the honor and

glory of a hero, Achilles is faced with the question of whether it is worth it to fight a battle

that he has no personal ties to when his honor is threatened. King Agamemnon, forced to give

up his war prize, the daughter of a priest of Apollo, Chryseis, demands that Achilles give him

his own prize, Briseis. Achilles, enraged at being so dishonored by Agamemnon and

heartbroken from the loss of Briseis, decides that he will no longer fight for the Greeks and

instead shall sit out the rest of the war. Throughout the classical world, women were

considered a commodity, representations of male honor and masculinity. A type of currency,

they serve as an abstract representation of honor while still being desired due to being female.

They are plunder, spoils of war that serve as a physical reminder of the men's actions and

fighting. Agamemnon declares to Achilles that he will "take Briseis in all her beauty, your

own prize – so you can learn just how much greater I am than you" (Homer, *Iliad* 1.218-219).

Briseis is simply a tool that Agamemnon is utilizing to show his superiority to Achilles, the

greatest warrior, after being challenged and having to restore his own honor. However, no

matter the emotions (or lack of) involved, she did have worth. She was a reminder of past

battles won by the Achaeans and the honor and glory achieved from these battles. Honor and

glory are what elevate warriors to heroes. It means an immortality through epic song, as a

hero's name will not be forgotten.

The *Iliad* is a tale of heroes, a section of the Trojan war brought to life and

immortalized by Homer. The hero is a concept that drives the Homeric epic. Homer's heroes

are often attributed positive characteristics. Within the perspective of the *Iliad*, a Homeric

hero is a warrior who rises above others due to both skill and the willingness to put oneself in

danger in the pursuit of honor and glory. Aspects of heroism were classified as battle skills,

oratorical skills, honor, and fighting for glory in the face of death. In the *Iliad,* these facets

are all driven by the divine for Achilles. It is the divine in the form of the immortal gods and

goddesses and fate that sets Achilles on the path to being the greatest hero of the Trojan war,

and his defeat of Hector in the end of the epic cements this reputation. However, Achilles

places his title of hero in jeopardy when he refuses to fight after being dishonored by King

Agamemnon. The dishonor of a Homeric warrior degrades their heroic status. Without honor,

one cannot be a true hero, with a legend that lives on long past their death. In the ancient

Greek world, Achilles refraining from fighting is not an act of treachery, but instead a

reasonable response to being dishonored by Agamemnon. Thus, Achilles' actions that

resulted in the death of his dear friend Patroclus and many other allies do not besmirch his

honor or make him less of a hero. Achilles' heroic reputation is protected due to his negative

actions being understandable, and even acceptable, within the world of Homer.

With an immortal mother, Achilles has been elevated from his fellow warriors from

birth. While not an immortal himself, he is stronger than a mortal thus allowing him to be a

greater warrior and closer to the divine world. This phenomenon is both referenced and

outright stated throughout the epic, "... the great Achilles team! They're hard for mortal men

to curb or drive, for all but Achilles – his mother is immortal" (Homer, *Iliad* 10.468-470). By virtue of his mother, Achilles is able to do things that other warriors could not, such as rein in the stallions that no other mortal man can curb and drive. Having the goddess Thetis as his mother has not only affected Achilles physically, but also gave him a greater connection to the divine politics and society. This is shown by him calling out to her in book 1 to complain about the disgrace Agamemnon caused him. As his mother, Thetis is willing to help him and go to Zeus on his behalf thus increasing the godly interference in the Trojan War and giving the Argives a need for Achilles to return to battle. In this way, the stage is set for Achilles to return as a greater hero than before. Achilles is a favored of multiple gods, including Athena, Hera, and Zeus. It is Zeus who has the largest role in shaping Achilles into the godlike hero he is remembered as. Zeus declares that Patroclus will be killed by Hector in battle so that "... enraged for Patroclus – brilliant Achilles will bring Prince Hector down" (Homer, *Iliad* 15.85-86). Zeus' will is always followed, and is the cause of the rage that incites Achilles to rejoin the battle. It was Zeus' plan, and results in Achilles killing Hector, and once more being known as the greatest mortal hero of the Trojan war.

Various pre-existing factors contribute to Achilles having a greater susceptibility to developing trauma in response to dishonor. It is exceedingly clear that Achilles is quick to anger and incredibly emotional. "Rage – Goddess, sing the rage of Peleus' son Achilles [...] that cost the Achaeans countless losses" (Homer, *Iliad* 1.1) begins the epic, the focus immediately drawn to Achilles anger, and how powerful it is. He cares deeply and lives his life knowing that he is neither fully mortal nor divine, but prophesized by fate to live a life of greatness that is cut short. His mother mourns that he is "doomed to a short life, you have so little time. And not only short, now, but filled with heartbreak too, more than any other men alive – doomed twice over" (Homer, *Iliad* 1.496-498). With the knowledge that he will die young by choosing to take part in the Trojan war, honor and fame is the only way for his

memory to live on, which makes it even more important to him than the average warrior.

Thus, when he is dishonored by Agamemnon, the experience is incredibly traumatic, causing

his entire identity and purpose to shift.

Achilles' dishonor stems from being treated poorly by King Agamemnon, as well as

not receiving the honors of which his accomplishments are deserving. Agamemnon stealing

Briseis for himself is not the only occasion that Achilles' honor has been threatened. Angered

by Agamemnon, Achilles claims, "my honors never equal yours, whenever we sack some

wealthy Trojan stronghold – my arms bear the brunt of the raw, savage fighting, true, but

when it comes to dividing up the plunder the lion's share is yours [...] I have no mind to

linger here disgraced, brimming your cup and piling up your plunder" (Homer, *Iliad* 1.193-

202). Achilles is the greatest warrior of the Achaeans, yet kings such as Agamemnon, who do

not even take part in the main fighting, receive the greatest honors. After being publicly – and

undeservedly – shamed, Achilles is no longer willing to accept the status quo. The shift from

not receiving honors equal to what he deserves to being actively dishonored is unacceptable,

as it places his heroic identity at risk. He asserts, "what a worthless, burnt-out coward I'd be

called if I would submit to you and all your orders, whatever you blurt out. Fling them at

others, don't give me commands! Never again, I trust, will Achilles yield to you" (Homer,

Iliad 1.343-347). After Agamemnon dishonors him, Achilles obeying his orders would

indicate that he accepts this treatment. He will no longer fight for the Achaeans due to his

honor demanding he not submit to King Agamemnon.

The traumatic nature of Achilles' dishonor leads to increased feelings of aggression,

humiliation, and melancholy. Directly after being dishonored, "anguish gripped Achilles. The

heart in his rugged chest was pounding, torn... should he draw the long sharp sword slung at

his hip, thrust through the ranks and kill Agamemnon now? – or check his rage and beat his

fury down?" (Homer, *Iliad* 1.222-226). Achilles chooses to draw his sword to kill

Agamemnon, only to be stopped by the goddess Athena. That he was willing to kill the leader

of the Achaean army for the affront to his honor demonstrates the severity of the dishonor.

His immediate reaction was to respond against the perpetrator of his trauma with extreme

violence. When prevented from doing so, "Achilles wept, and slipping away from his

companions, far apart, sat down on the beach of the heaving gray sea and scanned the endless

ocean" (Homer, *Iliad* 1.413-415). He isolates himself from others, and falls into grief, unable

to recover from his public dishonor. When later recalling the stress event, he attests, "my

heart still heaves with rage whenever I call to mind that arrogance of his – how he mortified

me, right in front of the Argives – that son of Atreus treating me like some vagabond, like

some outcast stripped of all my rights!" (Homer, *Iliad* 9.789-793). His shameful treatment

was public, thus impacting not only Achilles' personal circumstances, but also how he is

viewed by others. While Agamemnon is his superior in terms of political power, Achilles is

the stronger warrior, considered the greatest of the Greeks. Agamemnon dishonoring Achilles

in front of the other warriors was a show of power, which allowed him to present Achilles as

inferior to him. When questioned about why he will not rejoin the battle if Briseis is returned

to him, Achilles explains to his comrade Patroclus that it is not losing Briseis that torments

him, but rather being publicly stripped of his honors, stating, "that's the pain that wounds me,

suffering such humiliation" (Homer, *Iliad* 16.63). The humiliation he has undergone was

incredibly distressing, and he is unable to let it go. The fact that he views the shame of being

disrespected by Agamemnon as more gut-wrenching than losing the woman he claims to love

indicates that the dishonor he has experienced is traumatic.

The perspectives of other individuals throughout the epic on Achilles' dishonor and

his reaction to the occurrence provide greater comprehension of its traumatic nature. Thetis

comes from a place of understanding and support, willingly supplicating Zeus on Achilles

behalf to request that he, "honor my son Achilles! – doomed to the shortest life of any man

on earth. And now the lord of men Agamemnon has disgraced him, seizes and keeps his prize, tears her away himself [...] grant the Trojans victory after victory till the Achaean armies pay my dear son back, building higher the honor he deserves!" (Homer, *Iliad* 1.602-608). She recognizes that her son requires honor in order to achieve renown in the short time he has available to him among the living. Thetis not only desires that Achilles' dishonor is dealt with, but that he is given even greater honors than he had before the dispute. Nestor, an Achaean commander who is also an advisor to Agamemnon, scolds him, "you gave way to your overbearing anger, disgraced a great man the gods themselves esteem – you seized his gift of honor and keep her still" (Homer, *Iliad* 9.130-132). By dishonoring Achilles due to his own pride, Agamemnon placed his own honor in peril. Nester, and the other commanders, know that Achilles' dishonor was unfair. However, they still believe that Achilles should accept Agamemnon's reparation when it is offered. Phoenix, a fatherly advisor to Achilles, says, "Now – while the gifts still wait – go out and fight! Go – the Achaeans all will honor you like a god! But enter this man-killing war without the gifts – your fame will flag, no longer the same honor, even though you hurl the Trojans home!" (Homer, *Iliad* 9.733-737). The honors Achilles would receive by rejoining the fighting should make up for the dishonor he has experienced. Yet, Achilles still refuses to rejoin the battle, exceedingly more impacted by his dishonor than expected, and unable to recover from the stress of the event. The warrior Ajax is vexed by Achilles being unwilling to accept Agamemnon's apology, stating, "he's made his own proud spirit so wild in his chest, so savage, not a thought for his comrades' love – we honored him past all others by the ships. Hard, ruthless man ... Why, any other man will accept the blood-price paid for a brother murdered, a child done to death. And the murderer lives on in his own country – the man has paid enough, and the injured kinsman curbs his pride, his smoldering, vengeful spirit, once he takes the price" (Homer, *Iliad* 9.768-776). Achilles is taking greater offense to being unjustly dishonored than a man whose child

was murdered. That dishonor affects Achilles so strongly, to the point that his fellow warriors consider him to be overreacting, indicates that he was traumatized by the incident.

In order to work through the traumatic nature of his dishonor, Achilles completely shifts his views on the importance of honor. At the beginning of the epic, Achilles valued his honor above all else. After being dishonored, and with few options available to him, Achilles prays to his mother, asking her to have Zeus help the Trojan cause so "even mighty Atrides can see how mad he was to disgrace Achilles" (Homer, *Iliad* 1.489-490). He gives no thought to the fact that this would result in the deaths of his comrades, so caught up in the need to be perceived as the greatest hero once more. However, as the epic continues, Achilles comes to the realization that no matter his courage or ability in battle, he will never be awarded the honors he deserves. Adjusting his entire belief system in order to better cope with being dishonored, he says, "one and the same lot for the man who hangs back and the man who battles hard. The same honor waits for the coward and the brave. They both go down to Death, the fighter who shirks, the one who works to exhaustion. And what's laid up for me, what pittance? Nothing – and after suffering hardships, year in, year out, staking my life on the mortal risks of war" (Homer, *Iliad* 9.385-391). Achilles no longer associates honor with bravery, realizing that even after doing nothing wrong, and being the best fighter, he can still be dishonored. For years, he has been fighting in a war that he has no personal connection to, the war merely serving as a way to achieve glory. But if he can be so easily set aside, disgraced after all he has done for Agamemnon and the other Achaeans, then there is no point in him continuing to place himself for danger. Achilles states he will sail home with "all but my prize of honor" (Homer, *Iliad* 9.447), no longer feeling the need for glory, instead desiring a long life, during which he may not gain honor, but he will also not be placed in the situation of being dishonored. His perspective is further complicated by the prophecy he has lived under, voicing, "if I hold out here and I lay siege to Troy, my journey home is gone, but

my glory never dies. If I voyage back to the fatherland I love, my pride, my glory dies ... true, but the life that's left me will be long, the stroke of death will not come on me quickly" (Homer, *Iliad* 9.500-505). The conflict of living a long life versus achieving everlasting glory is mitigated by Achilles realizing that while he might not attain glory if he returns home, he will be free from the trials and tribulations of war. After being dishonored, he is unable to base his identity on honor and glory, so instead attempts to place less emphasis on the importance of honor and being remembered as a hero.

Achilles' dishonor is traumatic, resulting in him displaying increased aggression, melancholy, and avoidance. In order to keep from being overwhelmed by his stressful experience, he shifts his entire view of honor, no longer willing to die in the name of glory. He is willing to give up his heroic identity, unable to forgive Agamemnon for his actions. While the epic ends with Achilles returning to the battle for the Greeks, he manages to keep from confronting his traumatic experience of being dishonored by fighting to avenge the death of Patroclus by the Trojans rather than because Agamemnon commanded it. Grieving Patroclus, Achilles expresses, "just like the anger Agamemnon king of men has roused within me now ... Enough. Let bygones be bygones. Done is done. Despite my anguish I will beat it down, the fury mounting inside me, down by force" (Homer, *Iliad* 18.130-135). Achilles is still impacted by the trauma of his dishonor, but is setting it aside in order to avenge Patroclus. Ultimately, the need to honor Patroclus overpowers the desire to retaliate against Agamemnon. Homer communicates the importance of honor, and the ramifications of dishonor, in the *Iliad* through the actions of Achilles throughout the epic.

Dido: Dishonor of Women

The Roman poet Virgil detailed the legend of Aeneas, the mythical ancestor of the Romans, in the epic, the *Aeneid*. Written between 29 and 19 BC, Virgil presents a narrative of the trials and tribulations of Aeneas encounters as he journeys from the fall of Troy, to the

land that one day becomes Rome. As Venus champions her son, Aeneas, Juno places various

obstacles in his way, bitter against the last of the Trojans. One such diversion is Dido, the

queen of Carthage, with whom Aeneas has an affair. In Book 4 of the *Aeneid*, Dido accuses

Aeneas of stealing her honor, when he leaves Carthage after sleeping with her. With chastity

being a major aspect of a woman's honor in the ancient world, Dido endures debilitating

dishonor when Aeneas leaves her after they lay together. The story of Dido provides an

account of the impact of dishonor on women in ancient Rome, as well as the traumatic effects

of such an ordeal.

The details Virgil provides of Dido's past reveal her to be a strong and intelligent

woman who experienced – and overcame – numerous hardships in her life. Once a member

of the ruling class in the city Tyre, she was married off to Sychaeus, a rich and powerful man,

whom she came to love. Her brother, Pygmalion, was jealous of her husband's wealth, and in

a fit of greed and anger, murdered him in secret. Dido was distraught, unsure of what had

happened to her beloved husband, and Pygmalion pretended to comfort her, giving her false

hope. It was not until the spirit of Sychaeus came to Dido in a dream that she learned the

truth, and at his urging, she fled her homeland with various compatriots, "all who hated the

tyrant, all in fear as bitter as her own," (Virgil, 1.493-494) and riches that had been hidden by

her husband. Dido guided their endeavor to success, in the form of a new town named

Carthage, which they bought and settled. She became the queen of Carthage, and ruled wisely

and with compassion, ensuring that her city prospered and her people thrived. Virgil depicts

Dido as a woman in power during a time when women were often treated as property rather

than people.22 She earned her people's respect through her actions, standing strong in the face

---

22 Throughout the history of Rome, women appear to be equivalent to property, only having power
that has been given to them by men. The revered Roman poet Catullus claimed that women not only
had no right to their future, but even her virginity was only one-third hers. He states that when a girl
"enters into wedlock, she is ever dearer to her husband and less hateful to her parents" (Shelton,
#326). This implies that girls are in general hated and unwanted by their parents, only of use when
given away to cement alliances. Once married, a woman is meant to forgive her husband of any

of personal adversity. However, as a woman, her position was perilous, and the dishonor she experiences through the subsequent actions of Aeneas – and the gods – are able to tear her down. The grief and peril she had previously lived through likely further compounded later traumas. Dido was courageous and resourceful, but in the end, nothing more than a tool for the gods to be used and discarded.

Dido's downfall began when the goddess Venus sent her son, Amor, to bewitch Dido into falling in love with Aeneas. Dido had welcomed Aeneas and his crew to Carthage, offering them the same rights and privileges as her own people. However, Venus felt that this would not be enough, and that Dido must fall so deeply in love with Aeneas, that she would not turn against him even if willed to do so by other gods. Dido had previously sworn to love only her former husband, Sychaeus, and never marry another man, but her oath stood no chance against divine intervention. So began an internal struggle, which manifested itself in the form of madness and obsession, as, "unlucky Dido, burning, in her madness roamed through all the city," (Virgil, 4.95-96) devoting her entire being to Aeneas. So ardent in her new love for Aeneas, she abandoned her duties, leaving "towers, half-built, rose no farther; men no longer trained in arms or toiled to make harbors and battlements impregnable" (Virgil, 4.121-124). Her former accomplishments overshadowed by her carelessness, Dido is no longer the laudable ruler of Carthage, "her reputation standing no longer in the way of passion" (Virgil, 4.128-129). Dido is brought low by the actions of the gods, only she is in no state to even recognize her change in standing.

Juno and Venus, though with opposing aims, inadvertently cement the dishonor of Dido together, by arranging her marriage to Aeneas. Juno wished for Aeneas to settle down,

---

infractions against her, specifically straying to the bed of another. Tertia Aemilia, the wife of Scipio Africanus, was considered a good wife as "although she knew that one of her slave girls was attracting the sexual attention of her husband, she pretended not to notice" (Shelton, #333). Her actions are described as generous and patient, though she really had little choice, as she did not have the right to confront her husband, a great conqueror, over such matters.

so that he would not go on to found Rome. By contrast, Venus wanted Aeneas to gain power, and perhaps even happiness, through marriage to Dido. No matter their reasoning, the two goddesses conspired to entrap Dido and Aeneas into marriage, achieving their goal through the use of a storm to force the two mortals to take cover in a cave. "That day was the first cause of death, and first of sorrow," (Virgil, 4.233-234) as Dido unwittingly allowed herself to be used by the gods, and lost yet another part of her identity. Dido's love for Aeneas was no longer secret, as she openly considered herself to be married to him after they laid together. By once more tying herself to a man, she was no longer an independent queen, but considered a woman driven by lust. Her reputation of chastity lost, her marriage vows to her previous husband broken, Dido no longer had the luxury of *pudicitia*23 to shield her. King Iarbas, whom Dido had previously refused to marry due to her vow of chastity, was enraged, feeling disgraced that "after refusing to marry me [Dido] has taken Aeneas to be master in her realm," (Virgil, 4.289-490). Soon after, the god Jove heard of Aeneas tying himself to Carthage, and sent Mercury to remind him of his duty to the future of Rome. All too soon after trading her political power and reputation for the love of Aeneas, Dido was forced to lose him as well.

Aeneas may have been ordered to leave Carthage by the gods, but that did little to assuage Dido. He attempted to deceive her, and sail off with his men in secret, abusing the succor she had given him and his people. Realizing that Aeneas meant to abandon her, Dido, "furious, at her wits end, [...] traversed the whole city, all aflame," (Virgil, 4.409-410) to confront him, asking, "can our love not hold you, can the pledge we gave not hold you, can Dido not, now sure to die in pain? (Virgil, 4.419-421). With Aeneas leaving, so does any security that she might have, which she is quick to point out to him, probing, "to whom do

---

23 *Pudicitia* is a Roman virtue that refers to chastity and serves as a moral value. Primarily a feminine virtue, greatly impacted a woman's reputation and perceived modesty (Langlands, 2006).

you abandon me, a dying woman, guest that you are [...] why do I live on? Shall I, until my

brother Pygmalion comes to pull my walls down? Or the Gaetulan Iarbas leads me captive?

(Virgil, 4.443-449). Aeneas responds by disavowing their marriage, further shaming and

humiliating her, administering a final blow to her honor. Livid, that "because of [Aeneas],

[she] lost [her] integrity," (Virgil, 4.440) and he nevertheless is abandoning her, Dido

attempts to persuade him to stay, her failure only feeding her rage. The betrayal of Aeneas, as

well as her loss of honor and *pietas*, compel Dido to fall into a state of grief and madness.

After numerous traumas and being manipulated by the gods, Dido reaches her

breaking point when Aeneas deserts her, taking her sanity and honor with him. She falls into

despair at the loss of her honor, resorting to drastic measures, "so broken in mind by

suffering, Dido caught her fatal madness and resolved to die" (Virgil, 4.656-657). She had

her sister organize a pyre to burn all of the items Aeneas had left behind, stating that it would

rid him from her memory. In truth, Dido realized that with the loss of her honor and

reputation, she had few options left, only able to "turn once again to the old suitors, only to

be laughed at" (Virgil, 4.740-741), unable to return to being an independent female leader

after giving herself to Aeneas. In addition, the guilt that "the vow [she] took to the ashes of

Sychaeus was not kept" (Virgil, 4.767-768) haunts her, further strengthening her belief that

the only choice left to her is death. By trading her integrity to be with Aeneas, Dido made her

honor dependent on him, which unfortunately left her with naught but shame when he sailed

away. In an attempt to regain control over her life, Dido orchestrated her own death,

committing suicide. With her last words, she reminisced about her great accomplishments,

stating, "I built a famous town, saw my great walls, avenged my husband, made my hostile

brother pay for his crime" (Virgil, 4.910-912) before piercing herself with a blade. Dido

"died, not at her fated span nor as she merited, but before her time enflamed and driven

mad," (Virgil, 4.963-965) due to the negligent actions of the gods and Aeneas, so focused

they were on glory, in lieu of the honor and wellbeing of a great queen. Dido viewed suicide

as an escape from the dishonor and heartbreak of Aeneas' abandonment of her.

The aftermath of Dido's death discloses the effects of her actions on those around her.

Shame and grief blinded her to her duty through the end, as she disregarded her

responsibilities to her people, willfully ignorant of the precarious position she left them in.

Her sister recognizes this, telling the dying queen, "you have put to death yourself and me,

the people and the fathers bred in Sidon, and your own new city" (Virgil, 4.943-594). Dido's

death draws pity from Juno, who sends Iris to release Dido's soul from her body, so that she

might be free of pain. Carthage left behind, Dido's residency in the underworld is disturbed

when Aeneas journeys through Erebus in order to gain advice from the shade of his father.

He is upset to encounter Dido's shade, realizing that he has caused her death. Free from the

enchantments of the gods in death, Dido ignores him, her "burning soul, savagely glaring

back" (Virgil, 6.629). His pleas for absolution fall to deaf ears, as "she flung away from him

and fled [...] into the shadowy grove where he whose bride she once had been, Sychaeus,

joined in her sorrows and returned her love," (Virgil, 6.634-637). In the underworld, Dido

was unaffected by the man who unwittingly brought about her end. Reunited with her

beloved husband in death, Dido has the opportunity to move on from the dishonor she

experienced in life.

Dido displays various traumatic symptoms in response to her dishonor. Much of her

symptomatology is fear-based, in large part to the connection between honor and security.

Without honor to serve as her aegis, Dido is rightly terrified about the threats of her brother

and the surrounding kingdoms. Furthermore, her virtue has been degraded by breaking her

oath to her former husband to lay with Aeneas. While Aeneas' presence provided a buffer to

the hazards of the world, his departure would signify that Carthage, as well as Dido, were

free for the taking. Dido responds with heightened aggression, attempting to cover up her

escalating feeling of helplessness. Her history of major stress experiences are also predisposing factors to develop a traumatic disorder. While she has a support system in the form of her sister, Dido isolates herself, displaying detachment as she avoids her duties as queen to mourn. Dido's dishonor is twofold, becoming an oath breaker, as well as her loss of chastity. Both aspects lead to negative external pressures, in the form of physical threats to her wellbeing, as well as internal pressures, as she struggles with the conflict between her love for Aeneas and her responsibility to her kingdom. Her actions are further complicated by the fact that she would likely not have chosen to be with Aeneas were she of sound mind. The enchantment placed upon her by Amor clouded her judgement, and placed dubious consent on her behavior. Ultimately, Dido commits suicide, driven by shame, guilt and grief. The traumatic effects of Dido's dishonor are evident as she manifests various symptoms of a traumatic disorder.

Virgil's depiction of Dido in the *Aeneid* exhibits the adverse effects of the dishonor of women in the classical world. She expresses an array of traumatic symptoms in response to her dishonor, supporting the notion of dishonor being traumatic. After falling in love with Aeneas, Dido's identity shifts from being the queen of Carthage, to the lover of Aeneas. When he leaves her, she is unable to regain the status she had previously neglected in favor of him. Dido's self-worth and value are corrupted by her dishonor, which leaves her overwhelmed by the trauma she has experienced.

Experimental Study

Abstract

The purpose of the current study was to investigate the possibility of dishonor being a form of trauma. Specifically, the research focuses on the trauma that might arise from situations of dishonor, and how resulting responses both relate to and differ from more fundamental traumas. There is overlap between dishonor and trauma due to both inciting strong emotional reactions, and having the possibility of long-lasting, detrimental influences. Life events that do not fulfill the criteria for a PTSD diagnosis can generate as many symptoms of PTSD as traumatic events (Mol et al., 2005), providing a foundation for examining dishonor as a form of trauma. The methodology utilized self-insert vignettes with conditions based in the type of trauma being described. Participants rated the perceived trauma of six forms of trauma: threat of death, injury, sexual assault, public shaming, dishonorable discharge from the military, and bringing dishonor upon one's family. The results indicate that dishonor is perceived as traumatic as other forms of trauma, with individuals who value honor, have served in the military, are not White, or live in the southern United States typically perceiving greater trauma from dishonor. Examining the trauma of dishonor allows for a better understanding of how situations of dishonor impact mental health, as well as suggests the need to develop possible treatments for trauma due to dishonor.

Keywords: dishonor; trauma; mental health

Introduction

The experimental study of this thesis shifted back to approaches embedded in modern psychology. Here, the thesis explores the relationship between dishonor and trauma through a survey designed to measure the perceptions of the trauma of various potentially traumatic events, and how dishonor compares to the perceptions of more fundamental traumas. The

research questions of interest are as follows: Can dishonor be considered a traumatic event? Are the effects of the trauma of dishonor equivalent to the more fundamental traumas of serious injury, sexual violence, and threat of death? What factors impact whether dishonor is perceived as traumatic? In order to answer these questions, the methodology utilizes vignettes with different types of trauma (e.g., threat of death, dishonorable discharge from the military, etc.) being described, and participants rate the trauma of each vignette. The quasi-experimental design also allows for analysis of different types of perceptions of participants from across the United States.

Given that dishonor has been shown to have severe adverse effects that reflect various aspects of general responses to trauma (American Psychiatric Association, 2013; Crowder & Kemmelmeier, 2017; Lindner, 2001; Roberts, Miller, & Azrael, 2019; Saucier & McManus, 2014; Wurmser, 1999; Yehuda, 2002), the main hypothesis is that dishonorable events will be rated as traumatic along with threat of death, injury, and sexual assault. Additionally, extreme responses to dishonor such as aggression, humiliation, shame, and suicide reinforce the association between dishonor and trauma (Lindner, 2001; Odea et al., 2019; Roberts, Miller, & Azrael, 2019; Wurmser, 1999).

Secondary hypotheses explore the impact of participant variables on perceptions of trauma. It is predicted that the dishonor suffered by men will be rated as more traumatic than dishonor suffered by women. This is due to the strong impact dishonor has been noted to have on men in previous studies (Cihangir, 2013; Crowder & Kemmelmeier, 2017; O'Dea, Martens, & Saucier, 2019; Saucier & McManus, 2014), as well as how men are impacted by both personal dishonor as well as dishonor by female relatives (Doğan, 2014). Another hypothesis is that the older people are, the more they will rate dishonor as traumatic. This is supported by Crowder & Kemmelmeier's (2017) findings that older men in honor cultures are the most likely to commit suicide. Informed by the pervading culture of honor in the

south (Nisbett & Cohen, 1996), the final hypothesis is that people from southern states in the

U.S. will rate dishonor as more traumatic than people from northern states.

Method

Participants

Based on past research (e.g., Canto, Perles, & San Martín, 2017), a small effect size is

anticipated. Assuming $\alpha = 0.05$, the desired power = 0.8, and the design is 6 within

participants groups, G*power (Faul, Erdfelder, Lang, & Buchner, 2007) suggests 228

participants should be recruited. However, to account for attrition and not being able to

control for the number of participants per group due to analyzing individual demographic

characteristics, a target of 300 participants were recruited for the study. A total of 352

participants responded, with 49 being excluded due to incomplete or unusable responses,

resulting in 303 participants.

The participants were recruited via Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk), an online

marketplace that entails requesters creating digital tasks for workers to complete, and

compensated $1.50 for their time. To qualify for participation, the participants were required

to be over the age of 18 and live in the United States. The participants' ages ranged from 20

to 69 years old ($M = 36.61$, $SD = 11.43$), and 41.9% identified as female (n = 127), 57.1% as

male (n = 173), 0.3% as nonbinary (n = 1), and 0.7% chose not to answer (n = 2).

Additionally, 72.9% of participants identified as White or Caucasian (n = 221), 11.9% as

Black or African American (n = 36), 5.9% as Hispanic, Latinx, or Chicanx (n = 18), 5% as

Multiracial (n = 15), 2% as Asian or Asian American (n = 6), 1.3% as Native American, First

Nation, or Native Alaskan (n = 4), and 1% as Middle Eastern or North African (n = 3). When

queried about where in the United States they had grown up, 33.7% of participants responded

that they grew up in a state located in the western region (n = 102), 31% in the south (n = 94),

18.5% in the midwest (n = 56), 15.5% in the northeast (n = 47), 1% primarily grew up

outside the U.S. (n = 3), and 0.3% chose not to answer (n = 1). By contrast, when asked

where they had lived over the past five years, 50.5% of participants responded that they lived

in a state located in the southern region of the U.S. (n = 153), 23.1% in the West (n = 70),

13.2% in the Northeast (n = 40), 11.9% in the Midwest (n = 36), and 1.3% of participants

responded that they moved too much to claim a single state of residence (n = 4). Furthermore,

13.2% of the participants had served in the military (n = 40), and 40.3% of the participants

had an immediate family member who has served in the military (n = 122).

Materials

The study consisted of an online survey created on the survey maker site Qualtrics

and distributed via Amazon MTurk.

Vignettes. There were six vignettes (see Appendix A), each describing a different

traumatic experience. The six types of experience were threat of death, injury, sexual assault,

public shaming, dishonorable discharge from the military, and bringing dishonor upon ones'

family. Each vignette was only a few sentences long in order to limit the presence of

uncontrolled variables. For instance, the dishonorable discharge from the military vignette

includes the following: "*After serving in the United States military, you are dishonorably

discharged. As a result, you forfeit the right to be buried with military honors*." The

participants were directed to imagine themselves undergoing the event in question.

Trauma perception rating. The perceived trauma in response to the events described

in the vignettes were measured with an adapted version of the PTSD Checklist for DSM-5

(Weathers, Litz, et al., 2013). The PCL-5 is a 20-item scale (see Appendix B) that measures

likely trauma symptomology and emotional state in response to each event (e.g., *repeated,

disturbing dreams of the stressful experience*, *loss of interest in activities that you used to

enjoy*, etc.). Rather than asking whether participants have experienced the various traumatic

responses over the past month through the use of a 5-point Likert-type response scale utilized

by the original measure, the items were in the form of statements allowing for participants to

indicate whether they would expect to experience the various responses as a result of the

situation described in the corresponding vignette. Each item was rated with a 7-point Likert-

type response scale (1– *Strongly Disagree,* 7 – *Strongly Agree*). The reliability of the scale

was excellent, with Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.94$, and there was strong convergent (rs = 0.74 to 0.85)

and discriminant[24] (rs = 0.31 to 0.60) validity (Blevins et al., 2015).

Manipulation check. At the end of each trauma perception rating scale was an item

asking how dishonorable the event described in the vignette was. This is necessary in order to

ascertain that the three dishonor vignettes are interpreted as such. In order to prevent

participants from focusing on the dishonor aspect, there was a second item concerning how

negative the event described in the vignette was. Both items used the same 7-point Likert-

type format as the trauma perception rating (1– *Strongly Disagree,* 7 – *Strongly Agree*).

Stressful experiences. An adapted version of the Life Events Checklist for the DSM-

5 (Weathers, Blake, et al., 2013) had participants indicate major stress events that they have

undergone or witnessed (see Appendix C). Additional items concerning dishonor have been

added to the original scale. The 18 items address a variety of stressful events (e.g., *fire or*

explosion, *severe human suffering*, etc.), with options following each item for the participant

to indicate if they have *experienced it personally* and/or *witnessed it happen to someone else*,

or *it does not apply to you*. The reliability for this measure is considered acceptable with the

unmodified items' average Cohen's $\kappa = 0.55$ (Gray, Litz, Hsu, & Lombardo, 2004). While

validity could not be established in this study, the measure exhibits at least strong face

validity**.**

[24] The PTSD measures were correlated with similar constructs including Depression, Anxiety, and
Borderline Personality Disorder, Somatization and Alcohol and Drug Use, and Antisocial Personality
Disorder and Mania (Blevins et al., 2015).

Importance of honor. A series of four items were created to measure the importance of honor to the participant (see Appendix D). Participants were asked to indicate to what extent they agreed or disagreed with each of the statements. The fourth item was reverse scored. Each item was rated with a 7-point Likert-type response scale (1– *Strongly Disagree,* 7 – *Strongly Agree*). The scale has strong face validity and when conducted for this sample, the Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.63$, which indicates acceptable internal consistency for the scale.

Demographics. The demographics measure was made up of seven items. The first item inquired the gender of the participant in an open-ended format. The second item requested the age of the participant in an open-ended format. The third item covered the race of the participant, with the options of *Asian or Asian American*; *Black or African American*; *Hispanic or Latino*; *Native American or Alaskan Native*; *Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander*; *White or Caucasian*; and *Not Listed* (with space to specify), with the option to select multiple items. The fourth item concerned the state participant primarily grew up in, and the fifth item the state that the participant primarily lived in for past 5 years of the participant's life, with all 50 states being listed in a dropdown selection for both items with additional options of "primarily grew up outside the U.S.," and "moved around too much to have a primary state of residence." The states were later recoded into four regions based on the U.S. census division of regions: northeast, midwest, south, and west. The sixth item asked whether the participant had ever served in the military, and if so, in which branch, in an open-ended format. The seventh item asked whether the participant has any immediate family members that have served in the military.

Procedure

Upon providing informed consent, the participant was assigned to read the six vignettes in a randomized order. After reading each vignette, the participant completed the trauma perception rating and manipulation check concerning the vignette. This process was

repeated with each vignette. After finishing the measures for the sixth vignette, the participant completed the stressful experiences scale followed by the importance of honor scale. Finally, the participant provided basic demographic information about themselves before being debriefed and thanked.

Ethics

Little to no research has been conducted to examine the possible trauma of experiencing dishonor. Instead, past research has been either focused on treatment of more fundamental traumatic events (threat of death, injury, and sexual violence) or possible extensions of these traumas, such as moral injury. This project was intended to go more in-depth as it examines how traumatic people perceive dishonor to be, and compares this rating to the perception of established traumas. The results of this research could reveal very important information about the possible trauma of dishonor, and may contribute to better awareness of the need to address such trauma, and lead to possible reforms to mitigate the harmful effects. This study may also pave the way for future research that can work directly with individuals who have experienced trauma and further explore the impact of dishonor on them. There were no direct benefits to the participant other than the small monetary payment of $1.50 for their time, which is small enough to not be coercive.

The risk of the research for the participants was minimal. The vignettes the participants read were similar to what they might be exposed to every day online or in a newspaper and the questions that they were asked were similar to those that might come up in everyday conversation or in a routine physical or mental health exam. The six vignettes, each describing a different traumatic experience that the participants were directed to imagine themselves undergoing, were necessary for participants to accurately rate their perception of the trauma each situation would cause the victim to feel, as well as their emotional state in response to each event. The stressful experiences scale had participants indicate major stress

events that they have undergone or witnessed, and while possibly distressing, it was necessary in order to control for the impact of prior participant experiences on their perception of trauma ratings. Participants were not expected to feel demeaned or dehumanized because of their participation. The informed consent included warnings about the traumatic scenarios and major stress scale the participants encountered in the study, allowing for individuals to decide against taking part in the study. Additionally, the participants were provided with reminders throughout the survey that they could skip any sections or questions that might be found distressing. Information on counseling services was included in the informed consent document and in the debriefing sheet in the event that discomfort did occur. Overall, while the traumatic vignettes did not contain any information that is more distressing than what the participants might encounter in the daily news or a TV show, there are issues concerning bringing up traumatic experiences the participants might have gone through. Additionally, the trauma described in the vignettes could be distressing. However, steps were taken to mitigate this risk, such as keeping the vignettes short and general, as well as providing participants with various resources in case they need additional support after completing the study.

Further alleviating any risk, the study does not involve a protected or vulnerable population, participants providing sensitive information, or deception. Participation in this study was entirely voluntary as participants were informed that they were free to withdraw from the study at any time without adversely affecting their relationship with the investigator or with Amazon MTurk. Their decision not to participate or to discontinue participation at any time during the study also would not result in any loss of benefits. As an additional protection for participants, personally-identifying information, including participant IP addresses, were not collected. Amazon MTurk does not allow the collection of personally identifying information and all requester and worker interactions were with a Worker ID that

cannot be connected to a particular individual. All data were stored in a password protected

account. Overall, the minimal risk is outweighed by the benefits of the study.

Results

Main Analyses

First, a repeated measures analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to examine

whether dishonor would be rated as traumatic as threat of death, injury, and sexual assault by

analyzing the impact of the type of event (varying within participants) on perception of

trauma. When comparing the perceived trauma ratings of the six vignettes, it was found that

that all six traumas were not perceived as equally traumatic, $F(4.01, 962.27) = 67.58$, $MSe =$

0.79, $p < 0.001$, $r2 = 0.22$. To determine which vignettes were rated differently, pairwise

comparisons with the Bonferroni correction were conducted.[25] As shown in Table 1, sexual

assault was rated as the most traumatic and significantly more traumatic than all other

vignettes, all p's < 0.015. The perceived trauma of injury was next most traumatic and

significantly more traumatic than the remaining vignettes, all p's < 0.001. Next, public

shaming and bringing dishonor upon one's family were equally rated as traumatic, *n.s.*, and

both were significantly more traumatic than threat of death and dishonorable discharge from

the military, all p's < 0.001. The least traumatic were threat of death and dishonorable

discharge from the military, which were rated as equally traumatic, *n.s*.

1-way ANOVAs were conducted to examine whether there was a difference between

the perceived trauma ratings provided by men and women. There was a significant gender

difference in perceptions of trauma of injury ($F(1, 285) = 6.00$, $MSe = 1.15$, $p = 0.015$, $r2 =$

0.02) and sexual assault ($F(1, 284) = 11.56$, $MSe = 1.26$, $p = 0.001$, $r2 = 0.04$). Specifically,

as shown in Table 2, women rated injury and sexual assault as more traumatic than men.

However, inconsistent with the hypothesis, there was no significant gender difference in

---

[25] The Bonferroni correction was also used for all remaining analyses.

perceptions of trauma of threat of death, dishonorable discharge from the military, public

shaming, and bringing dishonor upon one's family, all F's < 2.03, all MSe's < 1.79, *n.s.,* all

r_2's < 0.01.[26]

       To examine whether there was a significant impact of age on the perceived trauma

ratings, Pearson correlation tests were conducted. Inconsistent with the hypothesis, the data

indicated the younger someone is, the more traumatic threat of death, $r(282) = -0.30$, $p <$

0.001, one-tailed, and dishonorable discharge from the military, $r(284) = -0.15$, $p = 0.005$,

one-tailed, were perceived to be. However, there was no significant correlation between age

and injury, sexual assault, public shaming, or bringing dishonor upon one's family, all r's $> |$-

$0.14|$, *n.s.*[27]

       Additional 1-way ANOVAs were conducted to explore the impact of the U.S. region

someone grew up in on their perceived trauma ratings, specifically for dishonorable events.

There was a significant difference between people from different regions on the perceived

trauma of threat of death, $F(3, 282) = 3.27$, $MSe = 1.70$, $p = 0.022$, $r_2 = 0.03$. Specifically, as

shown in Table 2, people who grew up in the northeast perceived threat of death to be

significantly less traumatic than people who grew up in the south and west, all p's < 0.034.

However, contrary to the hypothesis, there was no impact of the region where someone grew

up on perceived trauma of public shaming, dishonorable discharge from the military,

bringing dishonor upon one's family, and sexual assault, all F's < 1.92, all MSe's < 1.78, *n.s.,*

all r_2's < 0.02.

       Then, 1-way ANOVAs were conducted to explore the impact of the U.S. region

someone has lived in during the previous five years on their perceived trauma ratings,

specifically for dishonorable events. There was a significant difference between people from

---

[26] The degrees of freedom varied slightly for all ANOVAs from 282-290 depending on the number of participants that completed each item.

[27] The degrees of freedom varied slightly from 282-284 depending on the number of participants that completed each item.

different regions on the perceived trauma of dishonorable discharge from the military, $F(3,$

$284) = 3.68$, $MSe = 1.73$, $p = 0.013$, $r2 = 0.04$. Specifically, as shown in Table 2, consistent

with the hypothesis, people who lived in the northeast during the previous five years

perceived dishonorable discharge from the military to be significantly less traumatic than

people who lived in the south, $p = 0.006$. However, there was no impact of the region on the

perceive trauma of threat of death, injury, sexual assault, public shaming, and bringing

dishonor upon one's family, all F's < 1.61, all MSe's < 1.76, $n.s.$, all $r2$'s < 0.02.

Exploratory Analyses

Pearson correlation tests were conducted to explore whether there was an impact of

importance of honor on perceived trauma ratings. The data indicated the more someone

valued honor, the more traumatic injury, sexual assault, and public shaming were perceived

to be, all r's > 0.11, all $p's$ < 0.006, two tailed. [28] There was a marginal positive correlation

for bringing dishonor upon one's family, $r(289) = 0.11$, $p = 0.052$, two-tailed. However, there

was no significant relationship between importance of honor and threat of death, $r(288) = -$

0.08, $n.s.$, or dishonorable discharge from the military, $r(290) = 0.03$, $n.s.$

Also, 1-way ANOVAs were conducted to examine whether there was a difference

between the perceived trauma ratings provided by White and Non-white individuals. A

shown in Table 2, there was a significant difference between White and Non-white

participant ratings of the perceived trauma of threat of death ($F(1, 288) = 8.77$, $MSe = 1.70$, p

$= 0.003$, $r2 = 0.03$) and dishonorable discharge from the military ($F(1, 290) = 4.30$, $MSe =$

1.77, $p = 0.039$, $r2 = 0.01$). Specifically, Non-white individuals perceived both threat of death

and dishonorable discharge form the military to be significantly more traumatic than White

individuals. However, there was no significant difference of race on injury, sexual assault,

---

[28] The degrees of freedom varied slightly from 287-290 depending on the number of participants that completed each item.

public shaming, and bringing dishonor upon one's family, all F's < 1.62, all MSe's < 1.36,

n.s., all r_2's < 0.01.

To examine whether serving in the military had an impact on perceived trauma

ratings, 1-way ANOVAs were conducted. As shown in Table 2, the analyses indicated a

significant effect of having served in the military on perceived trauma of threat of death ($F(1,$

$288) = 14.55$, $MSe = 1.67$, $p < 0.001$, $r_2 = 0.05$), public shaming ($F(1, 288) = 5.50$, $MSe =$

1.33, $p = 0.020$, $r_2 = 0.02$), dishonorable discharge from the military ($F(1, 290) = 19.75$, MSe

$= 1.68$, $p < 0.001$, $r_2 = 0.06$), and bringing dishonor upon one's family ($F(1, 289) = 10.47$,

$MSe = 1.29$, $p = 0.001$, $r_2 = 0.03$). Specifically, people who have served in the military

perceived threat of death, public shaming, dishonorable discharge from the military, and

bringing dishonor upon one's family as significantly more traumatic than people who have

not served in the military. However, military service had no significant effect on perceived

trauma ratings of injury and sexual assault, all F's < 1.90, all MSe's < 1.30, *n.s.*, all r_2's <

0.01.

Further 1-way ANOVAs were conducted to examine whether having an immediate

family member who has served in the military had an impact on perceived trauma ratings.

The data indicated there was no significant effect of having an immediate family member

serve in the military on perceived trauma of threat of death, injury, sexual assault, public

shaming, dishonorable discharge from the military, and bringing dishonor upon one's family,

all F's < 1.70, all MSe's < 1.79, *n.s.*, all r_2's < 0.01.

Finally, Pearson correlation tests were conducted to explore whether the number of

stressful events participants had previously experienced impacted their perceived trauma

ratings. The data indicated the greater the number of stressful experiences reported, the more

traumatic threat of death, dishonorable discharge from the military and bringing dishonor

upon one's family were perceived to be, all r's > 0.18, all p's < 0.031, two-tailed.[29] However, there were no significant relationships between number of stressful experiences and perceived trauma of injury, $r(138) = 0.08$, *n.s.*, sexual assault, $r(137) = - 0.03$, *n.s.*, or public shaming, $r(138) = 0.09$, *n.s.*

Discussion

The current study examined whether dishonor is perceived as traumatic in contemporary society. Previous literature (e.g. Caffaro, Ferraris, & Schmidt, 2014; Cairns, 2011; Saucier & McManus, 2014) has established the value placed on honor. This in turn supports other studies (e.g., Nisbett & Cohen, 1996; Odea et al., 2019; Roberts, Miller, and Azrael, 2019; Wurmser, 1999) exploring the extreme and negative responses to dishonor. As reviewed earlier in this paper (e.g., Bower & Sivers, 1998; Everstine & Everstine, 1993; Gold, Cook, & Dalenberg, 2017; Odea et al., 2019; Roberts, Miller, and Azrael, 2019; Wurmser, 1999), there is overlap between the responses to trauma and dishonor, providing a foundation to classify dishonorable events as traumatic. Supporting the primary hypothesis, the results indicate that dishonorable events are perceived to be as traumatic as fundamental traumas. While the six vignettes were not equally traumatic, there was no clear divide between perceptions of the dishonorable and fundamental trauma scenarios. This finding is corroborated by the severe adverse effects in response to dishonor that parallel the responses to fundamental traumas. As reviewed earlier (e.g., Crowder & Kemmelmeier, 2017; Lindner, 2001; Roberts, Miller, & Azrael, 2019; Saucier & McManus, 2014; Wurmser, 1999), dishonor and various traumatic events share the common reactions of suicide, violence, aggression, feelings of humiliation, and shame as byproducts of the experience.

---

[29] The degrees of freedom varied slightly from 136-138 depending on the number of participants that completed each item.

Further analysis indicated that sexual assault was perceived to be the most traumatic of the six vignettes, which is possibly due to sexual assault being perpetrated by someone else, while the other traumas could be brought about by the individual who experiences them. Public shaming and bringing shame upon one's family were rated equally traumatic, likely due to the similarity between the two scenarios. Additionally, threat of death and dishonorable discharge from the military were rated equally traumatic. Possible explanations for this relationship include dishonorable discharge from the military indicating that someone is immoral and the loss of any benefits they would otherwise receive. Dishonorable discharge means constant shame with no escape, which would be extremely distressing and traumatic, and could make it comparable to the trauma of threat of death. With mottos such as "Death before Dishonor" in the armed forces, the connection between the two events is clear to see.

The demographic variables of gender, age, race, and region impacted perceived trauma. While it was expected that men would perceive the dishonorable scenarios as more traumatic than women due to male honor being dependent on not only their own actions, but also the actions of female relatives (Doğan, 2014), there was no impact of gender on the dishonor vignettes' ratings. However, women perceiving sexual assault as more traumatic than men is unsurprising due to the higher risk women have of being sexually assaulted (Rainn, n.d.). Unexpectedly, younger individuals found threat of death and dishonorable discharge to be more traumatic than older individuals. These findings were surprising due to previous research indicating that older men in honor cultures are the most likely to commit suicide (Crowder & Kemmelmeier, 2017). Additionally, non-white individuals rated the trauma of threat of death and dishonorable discharge from the military higher than white individuals. A reason for this outcome cannot be discerned, though future research could possibly shed further insight. Furthermore, the observed effects indicate no impact of the U.S. region someone grew up in on their perceived trauma of dishonor. However, as hypothesized,

people who lived in the south perceived the trauma of dishonorable discharge from the military to be greater than people who lived in the northeast. This result reinforces the honor culture present in the south (Nisbett & Cohen, 1996), though it is unclear why the effect was not present in the perceived trauma ratings of the other dishonor scenarios under investigation.

Participants who have served in the military considered threat of death, public shaming, dishonorable discharge form the military, and bringing dishonor upon one's family to be more traumatic than individuals who have not served in the military. This is consistent with the emphasis placed on honorable conduct in the military, with honor being considered the foundation of military character ("What are the marine corps values?," n.d.). Being found dishonorable would have greater negative consequences for someone with a military background as they would be degraded in the eyes of their comrades. Additionally, the greater the importance someone places on honor, the more traumatic they perceived public shame to be. This effect was also present for sexual assault and, surprisingly, injury. While it is unclear why perceived trauma of only one of the dishonor scenarios was impacted by the amount someone values honor, there might be an impact of the public court of reputation (Crook, 2009) playing a larger role on the more visible conduct, allowing people to escape public censure for dishonorable actions that can be kept private. Overall, the particulars of why certain forms of dishonor are found to be more traumatic than others is an area that should be pursued in supplemental research.

Limitations of the study include that it was conducted online and in an environment that cannot be controlled. This can occasionally result in participants not answering questions truthfully, or skipping various items of the survey. Additionally, while participants are instructed to imagine themselves experiencing the various traumatic and dishonorable events, most likely have not actually lived through these events, so the trauma impact was likely

weaker. Only perceived trauma is being measured rather than the actual trauma that can occur in response to the events of interest. Also, only three forms of trauma and three dishonorable circumstances were under investigation, limiting how widely applicable the findings are. One should be cautious before applying this research to other forms of potential trauma.

Possible future directions include examining additional traumatic and dishonorable scenarios. This would allow for the results to be more generalizable, and better represent the various dishonorable and traumatic situations people experience. Additionally, further research should be conducted to ascertain at what point dishonor triggers trauma. Factors such as severity of dishonor should be investigated, as well as various forms of dishonor. Concerning the current study's question of interest, the next step would be to examine whether people who have experienced dishonorable events, such as public shame, dishonorable discharge from the military, or bringing dishonor upon one's family, rate them as traumatic. This would allow for a more accurate measurement of the trauma of dishonor.

Dishonor is a complex topic, that can have far-reaching effects. At this time, the precise relationship between trauma and dishonor is unclear, though both the current study and existing literature supports the presence of a connection between the two. Dishonor could not be adequately categorized as an independent form of trauma by previous studies, and the current research attempts to address this gap. Additionally, there is the potential that dishonor compounds other forms of trauma. With the prospect of dishonor being traumatic, it is important to research this possibility, so that suitable treatment can be provided to people suffering from this form of trauma. Thus, the trauma of dishonor is an area in need of further exploration.

Conclusion

Exploratory in nature, the current research set out to investigate whether dishonor can be categorized as traumatic. With a foundation of existing research in trauma and honor, primary source analyses were conducted on classical texts, and a psychological study was conducted with participants living in the United States. The main primary source analyses were based on case studies, centering on Achilles, an ancient Greek hero, and Dido, an ancient Roman queen, who both experienced severe dishonor. In comparison, the psychological study evaluated the perceived trauma of various dishonorable scenarios, with emphasis on how they were impacted by participant demographic factors. Together, the results indicated support for the trauma of dishonor in both the ancient Mediterranean as well as the contemporary United States. When compared to established traumas, dishonor was found to evoke many of the same symptoms and behaviors in individuals, though the effects appear to have been more extreme in the ancient world.

Trauma is a response that is governed by not only evolutionary responses to imminent threats, but also culturally defined responses to threats (Stricker & Widiger, 2003). The symptoms of a traumatic disorder are cognitive, generally remaining consistent over time, while the stressors themselves are cultural, depending on societal values and beliefs (Everstine & Everstine, 1993; Gold, Cook, & Dalenberg, 2017). The impact of culture can influence how a traumatic event is perceived, and thus the psychological effects of the experience (Hall, n.d.). A major difference between the ancient and modern world is that, in ancient Greece and Rome especially, the battlefield and the civilian world were intertwined (Greaves, 2013). Nearly every able man would take part in the fighting, and women were frequently treated as prizes for the victors (Ustinova & Cardeña, 2014). Additionally, shame in the ancient world was public, and there would be no escape from the stigma of being found dishonorable (Lendon, 2011). Though the stigma of shame is still present in the modern

world, it is typically more private, and able to be hidden (Caffaro et al., 2014). Furthermore,

while the significance of culture is important to keep in mind when comparing ancient and

contemporary traumatic experiences, it also comes into play when considering various

modern communities. For instance, in the military, one would be expected to not freeze in

battle, and place honor first, whereas a civilian would naturally place their own safety first

(Saucier & McManus, 2014). These cultural differences greatly impact not only what is

considered traumatic, but also how one responds to trauma.

The psychology of trauma and honor was employed in order to inform all aspects of

this thesis. Prior studies (e.g., Odea et al., 2019; Roberts, Miller, and Azrael, 2019; Wurmser,

1999) revealed mutual reactions to both trauma and dishonor include aggression, shame, and

humiliation. Utilizing these concepts when examining the trauma of dishonor in the classical

world allowed for greater connections to be drawn between dishonor and various

fundamental traumas. Key traumatic events and areas that were evaluated include combat,

sexual assault, natural disasters, threat of death, and injury. Greco-Roman sources such as

ancient plays, epics, letters, and other primary source historical texts were examined for

evidence of trauma, and the resulting psychological disorders and manifestations. These

findings served as comparisons for classical depictions of dishonor and their traumatic

consequences. In general, there was abundant overlap in the reactions to dishonor and other

traumas.

With the purpose of gaining more in-depth understanding of the traumatic effects of

dishonor in the ancient world, two case studies were conducted, centering on the male

warrior and female companion respectively. These case studies were drawn from two

national epic poems, Homer's *Iliad* and Vergil's *Aeneid*. The epics are literary artifacts that

fashion the ideal image of ancient Greece and Rome. Prescriptive rather than descriptive in

nature, the poems do not accurately represent everyone, but provide representations of

dishonor and its effects in the Greco-Roman world. Specifically, the narratives of Achilles and Queen Dido served as portrayals of dishonor in the form of a male hero who has his honor seized, and a woman whose reputation of chastity and piety is ruined, resulting in loss of honor. Both figures displayed increased aggression, melancholy, and humiliation in response to their shame, as well as varied symptoms of modern traumatic disorders.

Informed by the depictions of dishonor in classical primary sources, the psychological study allowed for modern perceptions of trauma to be analyzed. The study entailed participants reading six self-insert vignettes describing experiences of threat of death, injury, sexual assault, public shaming, dishonorable discharge from the military, and bringing dishonor upon one's family. Though the results indicated that the vignettes were not rated to be equally traumatic, there was no clear differentiation between the dishonor and fundamental traumas. Overall, there is support for the dishonorable scenarios being traumatic in contemporary society, particularly for individuals who value honor.

The conclusions of the classical and psychological research both demonstrate the traumatic nature of dishonor. Dishonor was likely more traumatic in the ancient world than contemporary society due to it being an important aspect of one's identity and culture. As discussed above, cultural values play a large role on what is considered distressing, and the behaviors evoked by a stress event. Additional implications of the research include an impact of gender on both the type of dishonor someone is likely to experience, as well as the traumatic symptoms they display. Altogether, while there is support for dishonor being traumatic, the particulars are largely unknown at this time.

Classical primary source analysis is limiting as it is impossible to engage with individuals of interest. Rather, all judgments are based in interpretation of the events and behaviors depicted. With this restriction in mind, the majority of the conclusions are reliant on the psychological study, which allowed for exact data to be collected and analyzed.

However, the experimental study only examined perceived trauma of dishonor rather than

lived experiences, reducing how definitive the results are. In the future, additional case

studies utilizing both classical primary sources and modern individuals should be conducted

in order to gain a more comprehensive conception of the traumatic effects of dishonor. The

current studies provided a foundation for future research on the traumatic ramifications of

dishonor.

This thesis explored the uncharted territory of the trauma of dishonor. In doing so, the

possibility of dishonor being a traumatic experience was established. Concerning the classical

world, this discovery can contribute to more informed interpretations of dishonor in ancient

contexts, as well as better understanding of responses it elicited. By contrast, the

psychological implications of the research reinforce the need to develop treatment plans for

the trauma of dishonor now that it has been determined to exist. The more research conducted

on this area, the better the support for individuals who experience dishonor will be. The

trauma of dishonor has been identified in the past and present, and will doubtlessly exist in

the future, indicating extended inquiry is necessary.

References

Abdul-Hamid, W. K., & Hughes, J. H. (2014). Nothing new under the sun: Post-traumatic stress disorders in the ancient world. *Early Science and Medication*, *19*, 549–557. https://doi.org/10.1163/15733823-00196p02

Aeschylus (1953). *Oresteia*. (R. Lattimore, Trans.). University of Chicago Press. (Original work published 458 BC)

American Psychiatric Association (Ed.). (2013). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders: DSM-5* (5th ed). American Psychiatric Association.

Appian (1996). *The civil wars*. (J. Carter, Trans.). Penguin Classics. (Original work published ca. 2nd c AD)

Apuleius (1999). *The golden ass*. (E. J. Kenney, Trans.). Penguin Classics. (Original work published ca. 158-180 AD)

Beard, M., 2009. *The Roman triumph*. Harvard University Press.

Blevins, C. A., Weathers, F. W., Davis, M. T., Witte, T. K., & Domino, J. L. (2015). The Posttraumatic stress disorder checklist for *DSM-5* (PCL-5): Development and initial psychometric evaluation. *Journal of Traumatic Stress, 28*, 489-498. https://doi.org/10.1002/jts.22059

Bower, G. H., & Sivers, H. (1998). Cognitive impact of traumatic events. *Development and Psychopathology*, *10*(4), 625–653. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0954579498001795

Caffaro, F., Ferraris, F., & Schmidt, S. (2014). Gender differences in the perception of honour killing in individualist versus collectivistic cultures: comparison between Italy and Turkey. *Sex Roles*, *71*(9–10), 296–318. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-014-0413-5

Cairns, D. (2011). Honour and shame: Modern controversies and ancient values. *Critical Quarterly*, *53*(1), 23–41. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8705.2011.01974.x

Canto, J. M., Perles, F., & San Martín, J. (2017). Culture of honour and the blaming of women in cases of rape. *Revista de Psicología Social*, *32*(1), 80–107. https://doi.org/10.1080/02134748.2016.1250488

Cicero (2006). *Political speeches*. (D. H. Berry, Trans.). Oxford University Press. (Original work published ca. 81-44 BC)

Cicero (1969). *Selected political speeches*. (M. Grant, Trans.). Penguin Books. (Original work published ca. 81-44 BC)

Cihangir, S. (2013). Gender specific honor codes and cultural change. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, *16*(3), 319–333. https://doi.org/10.1177/1368430212463453

Comer, R. J. (2015). *Abnormal Psychology* (7th Ed.). Worth Publishers.

Crook. (2009). Honor, shame, and social status revisited. *Journal of Biblical Literature*, *128*(3), 591-611. https://doi.org/10.2307/25610205

Cross, S. E., Uskul, A. K., Gerçek-Swing, B., Sunbay, Z., Alözkan, C., Günsoy, C., Ataca, B., & Karakitapoğlu-Aygün, Z. (2014). Cultural prototypes and dimensions of honor. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *40*(2), 232–249. https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167213510323

Crowder, M. K., & Kemmelmeier, M. (2017). New insights on cultural patterns of suicide in the United States: The role of honor culture. *Cross-Cultural Research: The Journal of Comparative Social Science*, *51*(5), 521–548. https://doi.org/10.1177/1069397117712192

Doğan, R. (2014). Different cultural understandings of honor that inspire killing: An inquiry into the defendant's perspective. *Homicide Studies: An Interdisciplinary & International Journal*, *18*(4), 363–388. https://doi.org/10.1177/1088767914526717

Ermers, R. (2018). *Honor related violence: A new social psychological perspective*. Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group.

Euripides (1958). *Four tragedies: Hecuba, Andromache, the Trojan women, Ion*. (W. Arrowsmith, J. F. Nims, R. Lattimore, & R. Frederick Willets, Trans.). University of Chicago Press. (Original work published ca. 415-424 BC)

Euripides (2008). *Medea*. (D. A. Svarlien, Trans.). Hackett Publishing Company, Inc. (Original work published 431 BC)

Everstine, D. S., & Everstine, L. (1993). *The trauma response: Treatment for emotional injury*. W. W. Norton & Company

Ezra, M. B. (2001). Earliest evidence of post-traumatic stress? *British Journal of Psychiatry*, *179*(5), 467–467. https://doi.org/10.1192/bjp.179.5.467

Faul, F., Erdfelder, E., Lang, A.-G., & Buchner, A. (2007). G*Power 3: A flexible statistical power analysis program for the social, behavioral, and biomedical sciences. *Behavior Research Methods*, *39*, 175-191.

Gill, A. K., & Brah, A. (2014). Interrogating cultural narratives about 'honour'- based violence. *European Journal of Women's Studies*, *21*(1), 72–86. https://doi.org/10.1177/1350506813510424

Gold, S. N., Cook, J. M., & Dalenberg, C. J. (Eds.). (2017). *APA handbook of trauma psychology* (Vol.1). American Psychological Association.

Gray, M. J., Litz, B. T., Hsu, J. L., & Lombardo, T. W. (2004). Psychometric properties of the life events checklist. *Assessment, 11*(4), 330-341. https://doi.org/.1177/1073191104269954

Greaves, A. M. (2013). Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in ancient Greece: A methodological review. *Archaeopress*, 89–100.

Guerra, V. M., Giner-Sorolla, R., & Vasiljevic, M. (2013). The importance of honor concerns across eight countries. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, *16*(3), 298–318. https://doi.org/10.1177/1368430212463451

Hall, J. (n.d.). Psychological trauma and the soldiers of Rome: A roman PTSD? *Ancient Warfare*, *10*(1), 48–52.

Harrison, D. (2010). *Civilians gunned down at checkpoints*. The Daily Telegraph. https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/iraq/8082605/Wikileaks-Civilians-gunned-down-at-checkpoints.html

Herodotus (1998). *Histories*. (R. Waterfield, Trans.). Oxford University Press. (Original work published ca. 440 BC)

Homer (1999). *Odyssey*. (R. Fagles, Trans.). Penguin Classics. (Original work published ca. 8th c BC)

Homer (1998). *Iliad*. (R. Fagles, Trans.). Penguin Classics. (Original work published ca. 8th c BC)

Kaster, R. (2005). *Emotion, restraint, and community in ancient Rome*. Oxford University Press.

Konstan, D. (2003). Shame in Ancient Greece. *Social Research: An International Quarterly*, 70(4), 1031-1060.

Langlands, R. (2006). *Sexual morality in ancient Rome*. Cambridge University Press.

Lavie, P. (2001). Sleep disturbances in the wake of traumatic events. *New England Journal of Medicine*, *345*(25), 1825–1832. https://doi.org/10.1056/NEJMra012893

Lendon, J. E. (2011). Roman honor. In M. Peachin (Ed.). *The Oxford handbook of social relations in the Roman world*. (pp. 377-403). Oxford University Press.

Lindner, E. G. (2001). Humiliation - Trauma that has been overlooked: An analysis based on fieldwork in Germany, Rwanda/Burundi, and Somalia. *Traumatology*, *7*(1), 43–68. https://doi.org/10.1177/153476560100700104

Livy (2002). *The Early History of Rome.* (A. de Selincourt, Trans.). Penguin Books. (Original work published ca. 29-8 BC)

Lucan (1993). *Pharsalia*. (J. W. Joyce, Trans.). Cornell University Press. (Original work published ca. 61 AD)

Mandel, D. R., & Litt, A. (2013). The ultimate sacrifice: Perceived peer honor predicts troops' willingness to risk their lives. *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, *16*(3), 375–388. https://doi.org/10.1177/1368430212461961

McMaster, H. R. (2008). Ancient lessons for today's soldiers. *Survival*, *50*(4), 177–190. https://doi.org/10.1080/00396330802329071

Meineck, P. (2012). Combat trauma and the tragic stage: "Restoration" by cultural catharsis. *Intertexts, 16*(1), 7-24. https://doi.org/10.1353/itx.2012.0008

Melchior, A. (2011). Caesar in Vietnam: Did Roman soldiers suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder. *Greece & Rome, Second Series*, *58*(2), 209–223. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0017383511000052

Mol, S. S. L., Arntz, A., Metsemakers, J. F. M., Dinant, G.-J., Andre, J., & Tnerus, K. (2005). Symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder after non-traumatic events: Evidence from an open population study. *British Journal of Psychiatry*, *186*(6), 494–499.

Morley, N. (2017). Thucydides and the historiography of trauma. *Ktèma*, *42*, 195–204.

Moxnes, H. (1993). Honor and shame. *Biblical Theology Bulletin: Journal of Bible and Culture*, *23*(4), 167–176. https://doi.org/10.1177/014610799302300405

Nippel, W. (1995). *Public order in ancient Rome*. Cambridge University Press.

Nisbett, R. E. & Cohen, D. (1996). *Culture of honor: The psychology of violence in the south*. Westview Press.

Nowak, A., Gelfand, M. J., Borkowski, W., Cohen, D., & Hernandez, I. (2016). The evolutionary basis of honor cultures. *Psychological Science*, *27*(1), 12–24. https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797615602860

Ntafoulis, P. (2016). A war psychiatry approach to warfare in the middle Byzantine period. *History of Psychiatry*, *27*(4), 458–471. https://doi.org/10.1177/0957154X16663148

O'Dea, C. J., Martens, A. L., & Saucier, D. A. (2019). Hitting below the belt: Masculine honor beliefs and perceptions of unfair fighting behavior. *Aggressive Behavior*, *45*(3), 229–244. https://doi.org/10.1002/ab.21812

Paciaroni, M., & Arnao, V. (2016). Neurology and war: From antiquity to modern times. *Frontiers of Neurology and Neuroscience, 38,* 1–9. https://doi.org/10.1159/000442562

Phang, S. E. (2008). *Roman military service: Ideologies of discipline in the late republic and early principate.* Cambridge University Press.

Rainn (n.d.). *Victims of sexual violence: Statistics*. https://www.rainn.org/statistics/victims-sexual-violence

Robinson, P. (2006). *Military honour and the conduct of war: From ancient Greece to Iraq* (1st ed.). Routledge.

Roberts, K., Miller, M., & Azrael, D. (2019). Honor-related suicide in the United States: A study of national violent death reporting system data. *Archives of Suicide Research*, *23*(1), 34–46. https://doi.org/10.1080/13811118.2017.1411299

Saucier, D. A., & McManus, J. L. (2014). Men of honor: Examining individual differences in masculine honor beliefs. In J. Gelfer (Ed.), *Masculinities in a Global Era* (Vol. 4, pp. 85–99). Springer.

Shafa, S., Harinck, F., Ellemers, N., & Beersma, B. (2014). Who are you calling rude? Honor-related differences in morality and competence evaluations after an insult. *Negotiation and Conflict Management Research*, *7*(1), 38–56. https://doi.org/10.1111/ncmr.12024

Shelton, J. (1998). *As the Romans Did* (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press.

Stricker, G., & Widiger, T. A. (Eds.). (2003). Stress Disorders. In I. B. Weiner (Series Ed.), *Handbook of psychology: Clinical psychology* (Vol. 8, pp. 229–249). John Wiley & Sons.

U.S. Census Bureau (n.d.). *Census Regions and Divisions of the United States*. https://www2.census.gov/geo/pdfs/maps-data/maps/reference/us_regdiv.pdf

Uskul, A. K., Cross, S. E., Sunbay, Z., Gercek-Swing, B., & Ataca, B. (2012). Honor bound: The cultural construction of honor in Turkey and the northern United States. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, *43*(7), 1131–1151. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022111422258

Ustinova, Y., & Cardeña, E. (2014). Combat stress disorders and their treatment in ancient Greece. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*, *6*(6), 739–748. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0036461

Van Wees, H. (1992). *Status warriors: War, violence and society in Homer and history*. J. C. Gieben.

Van Wees, H. (2004). *Greek warfare: Myths and realities*. Duckworth.

Virgil (1990). *Aeneid*. (R. Fitzgerald, Trans.). Vintage Books. (Original work published 19 BC)

Weathers, F.W., Blake, D.D., Schnurr, P.P., Kaloupek, D.G., Marx, B.P., & Keane, T.M. (2013). *The life events checklist for DSM-5 (LEC-5)*. www.ptsd.va.gov

Weathers, F.W., Litz, B.T., Keane, T.M., Palmieri, P.A., Marx, B.P., & Schnurr, P.P. (2013). *The PTSD checklist for DSM-5* (PCL-5). www.ptsd.va.gov

What are the marine corps values? (n.d.). https://www.hqmc.marines.mil/hrom/New-Employees/About-the-Marine-Corps/Values/

Wurmser, L. (1999). Trauma, shame conflicts, and affect regression: Discussion of "wounded but still walking." *Psychoanalytic Inquiry*, *19*(3), 309–319. https://doi.org/10.1080/07351699909534252

Yao, J., Ramirez-Marin, J., Brett, J., Aslani, S., & Semnani-Azad, Z. (2017). A measurement model for dignity, face, and honor cultural norms. *Management and Organization Review*, *13*(4), 713–738. https://doi.org/10.1017/mor.2017.49

Yehuda, R. (2002). Post-traumatic stress disorder. *The New England Journal of Medicine*, *346*(2), 108–114. https://doi.org/ 10.1056/NEJMra012941

Appendix A
Vignettes

Instructions: Please read the following vignette and imagine that you are experiencing the events described.

Threat of death:
   You suffered a massive heart attack and are rushed to the hospital. You are told by the doctor that it could have killed you if you had not gotten to the hospital so quickly.

Injury:
   You are in a major car accident. In order to free you, the EMTs had to cut off your leg.

Sexual assault:
   You are at a party and are unknowingly followed into the bathroom by a previous dance partner. You are forced to have sex even after you say no.

Public shaming:
   A video showing you stealing from a donation bin and identifying you is posted online. It is circulated on the internet and on various news shows.

Dishonorable discharge from the military:
   After serving in the United States military, you are dishonorably discharged. As a result, you forfeit the right to be buried with military honors.

Bringing dishonor upon ones' family:
   Due to your actions, you have brought dishonor upon your family. Your family's standing within the community is now jeopardized.

Appendix B
Trauma Measure

Each item was followed by a 1-7 rating for the participant to complete: 1 (disagree strongly), 2 (disagree), 3 (somewhat disagree), 4 (neither agree nor disagree), 5 (somewhat agree), 6 (agree), 7 (agree strongly).

Instructions: Below are a list of problems people sometimes have in response to a stressful experience. Keeping in mind the experience described in the vignette you have just read, please indicate to what extent do you think you would agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

I would experience:
1. Repeated, disturbing, and unwanted memories of the stressful experience.
2. Repeated, disturbing dreams of the stressful experience
3. Suddenly feeling or acting as if the stressful experience were actually happening again (as if you were actually back there reliving it)
4. Feeling very upset when something reminded you of the stressful experience
5. Having strong physical reactions when something reminded you of the stressful experience (for example, heart pounding, trouble breathing, sweating)
6. Avoiding memories, thoughts, or feelings related to the stressful experience
7. Avoiding external reminders of the stressful experience (for example, people, places, conversations, activities, objects, or situations)
8. Trouble remembering important parts of the stressful experience
9. Having strong negative beliefs about yourself, other people, or the world (for example, having thoughts such as: I am bad, there is something seriously wrong with me, no one can be trusted, the world is completely dangerous)
10. Blaming yourself or someone else for the stressful experience or what happened after it
11. Having strong negative feelings such as fear, horror, anger, guilt, or shame
12. Loss of interest in activities that you used to enjoy
13. Feeling distant or cut off from other people
14. Trouble experiencing positive feelings (for example, being unable to feel happiness or have loving feelings for people close to you)
15. Irritable behavior, angry outbursts, or acting aggressively
16. Taking too many risks or doing things that could cause you harm
17. Being "superalert" or watchful or on guard
18. Feeling jumpy or easily startled
19. Having difficulty concentrating
20. Trouble falling or staying asleep

Adapted from:

Weathers, F.W., Litz, B.T., Keane, T.M., Palmieri, P.A., Marx, B.P., & Schnurr, P.P. (2013). *The PTSD Checklist for DSM-5* (PCL-5). www.ptsd.va.gov

Appendix C
Stress Experiences Measure

Each item was followed by three categories for the participant to indicate which best fits their experiences: experienced it personally, witnessed it happen to someone else, and it does not apply to you.

Instructions: Below, a series of stressful events are listed. For each event, select if you experienced it personally and/or witnessed it happen to someone else, or it does not apply to you.

1. Natural disaster (for example, flood, hurricane, tornado, earthquake)
2. Fire or explosion
3. Transportation accident (for example, car accident, boat accident, train wreck, plane crash)
4. Serious accident at work, home, or during recreational activity
5. Exposure to toxic substance (for example, dangerous chemicals, radiation)
6. Physical assault (for example, being attacked, hit, slapped, kicked, beaten up)
7. Assault with a weapon (for example, being shot, stabbed, threatened with a knife, gun, bomb)
8. Sexual assault (rape, attempted rape, made to perform any type of sexual act through force or threat of harm)
9. Other unwanted sexual experience
10. Combat or exposure to a war-zone (in the military or as a civilian)
11. Dishonorable discharge from the military[30]
12. Captivity (for example, being kidnapped, abducted, held hostage, prisoner of war)
13. Life-threatening illness or injury
14. Severe human suffering
15. Sudden violent death (for example, homicide, suicide)
16. Sudden accidental death
17. Serious injury, harm, or death you caused to someone else
18. Any other very stressful event or experience

Adapted from:
Weathers, F.W., Blake, D.D., Schnurr, P.P., Kaloupek, D.G., Marx, B.P., & Keane, T.M.
(2013). *The Life Events Checklist for DSM-5 (LEC-5)*. www.ptsd.va.gov

---

[30] This item was added and is not present in the unmodified LEC-5.

Appendix D
Importance of Honor Measure

Each item was followed by a 1-7 rating for the participant to complete: 1 (disagree strongly), 2 (disagree), 3 (somewhat disagree), 4 (neither agree nor disagree), 5 (somewhat agree), 6 (agree), 7 (agree strongly).

Instructions: Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

1. Honor is important to me.
2. I highly value honor.
3. It is important that I am perceived as being honorable by others.
4. Being perceived as dishonorable would not bother me.

Table 1.

Means and Standard Deviations of Perceived Trauma of Vignettes

Vignette	*M*	*sd*
Sexual assault	5.27_a	1.14
Injury	5.05_b	1.08
Public shaming	4.77_c	1.16
Dishonor upon one's family	4.69_c	1.15
Threat of death	4.21_d	1.32
Dishonorable discharge from military	4.24_d	1.34

Note: Any cells that do not share the same subscripts are significantly different at $\alpha = 0.05$.

Table 2.

Relationships between Demographics and Perceived Trauma

Variable	Sexual assault		Injury		Public shaming		Dishonor upon one's family		Threat of death		Dishonorable discharge from military	
	M	*sd*	*M*	*sd*	*M*	*sd*	*M*	*sd*	*M*	*sd*	*M*	*sd*
Gender												
Female	5.50_a	0.97	5.24_a	0.99	4.86_a	1.02	4.80_a	1.06	4.10_a	1.32	4.21_a	1.32
Male	5.04_b	1.22	4.93_b	1.12	4.73_a	1.24	4.67_a	1.23	4.32_a	1.32	4.33_a	1.35
Region Grew												
Northeast	5.14_a	1.51	4.99_a	1.23	4.72_a	1.24	4.51_a	1.35	3.69_a	1.28	4.10_a	1.32
Midwest	5.49_a	0.97	5.16_a	1.00	4.77_a	1.26	4.78_a	1.19	$4.23_{a,c}$	1.49	4.22_a	1.47
South	5.32_a	1.07	5.19_a	0.97	4.78_a	1.15	4.74_a	1.10	$4.35_{b,c}$	1.21	4.27_a	1.34
West	5.06_a	1.10	4.96_a	1.11	4.81_a	1.11	4.80_a	1.11	$4.38_{b,c}$	1.29	4.43_a	1.26
Region Live												
Northeast	5.24_a	1.10	4.84_a	1.11	4.60_a	1.11	4.36_a	1.02	4.04_a	1.15	3.67_a	1.29
Midwest	5.35_a	0.96	5.16_a	0.96	4.70_a	1.21	4.76_a	1.28	4.42_a	1.28	$4.26_{a,c}$	1.48
South	5.22_a	1.10	5.06_a	1.06	4.83_a	1.13	4.77_a	1.10	4.24_a	1.34	$4.46_{b,c}$	1.22
West	5.21_a	1.36	5.20_a	1.08	4.82_a	1.27	4.84_a	1.26	4.20_a	1.41	$4.31_{a,c}$	1.41
Race												
White	5.28_a	1.13	5.01_a	1.06	4.75_a	1.14	4.75_a	1.11	4.09_a	1.30	4.19_a	1.31
Non-white	5.16_a	1.17	5.20_a	1.10	4.88_a	1.23	4.68_a	1.28	4.60_b	1.30	4.56_b	1.37
P Military												
Served	5.28_a	1.01	5.29_a	0.89	5.19_a	0.97	5.29_a	0.89	4.97_a	1.29	5.16_a	1.14
Has not served	5.23_a	1.16	5.03_a	1.10	4.72_b	1.18	4.65_b	1.17	4.12_b	1.29	4.16_b	1.32

Note: Any cells that do not share the same subscripts are significantly different at $\alpha = 0.05$. Region Grew = Region the participant grew up in; Region Live = Region the participant lived in over the previous five years; P Military = Participant's personal military service.