***Trinidadian university students’ responses to a fictional domestic violence scenario: The role of gender and study major.***

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It is only recently that intimate partner homicide has been considered a major social problem in the Caribbean. When women are the victims of this violence they occasionally kill their intimate partner during domestic disputes. These cases raise numerous psycho-legal challenges for society and the legal system, and the response to these reveals much about societal beliefs about gender roles, violence against women, and how it should be responded to. In an effort to explicate these issues among a group of relevant future professionals, this study examined university students’ (from law and psychology programs) responses to a fictional domestic violence scenario. After presenting the fictional case, students were asked open ended questions about their reactions and impressions, and were then asked to attribute blame to the various parties. These results were then scrutinized for patterns according to respondent gender and chosen area of study. The results reveal numerous trends that underline the need for particular kinds of content to be incorporated into the training of these professional groups who are likely to come into contact with domestic violence victims and perpetrators. Although aspects of Caribbean law are changing with regards to domestic violence and gender stereotypes, it is evident that these future professionals maintain some beliefs that are likely to have implications for policy, practice, and client outcomes.

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