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Juliana Earvolino
Lawrence University, earvolino.juliana@me.com

Rebecca Schachtman
Lawrence University, rebecca.a.schachtman@lawrence.edu

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Sorting Out Sexism: Evaluating the Differing Content and Implications of Gender Stereotypes

Juliana Earvolino & Rebecca Schachtman

Lawrence University

Author Note

Juliana Earvolino and Rebecca Schachtman, Lawrence University.

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Correspondence concerning this thesis should be addressed to juliana.l.earvolino@lawrence.edu or rebecca.a.schachtman@lawrence.edu.

Abstract

We examine, in three studies, the content and implications of sexist comments directed toward men and women. While past research has often overlooked sexism directed toward men because of its lower frequency and perceived consequences, due to the complementary nature of gender stereotypes it is important to examine sexism in all its guises. Our first two studies are descriptive, gathering comments from male and female participants about "what men/women are like" and their differing reactions to such comments. Study 1 found that comments about men fall into five distinct categories: sex-driven, child-like, "macho," morally flawed, and dehumanizing. Study 2 examines comments about men and women, and found that comments about men fell within the same five categories as Study 1 and that comments about women fall within five categories as well: emotional/illogical, controlling/demanding, feminine, "catty," and sexually promiscuous. The final study expands on these results, examining the extent to which men and women confront sexist comments directed toward men and women, and found that while men and women confront sexist comments about women equally, they differ in their response to sexist comments toward men. Overall, our results parallel previous findings suggesting women possess a stronger ingroup bias than men. This is displayed through their tendency to trivialize negative stereotypical comments about men as well as rate such comments as more accurate, while finding comments directed toward women significantly more disgusting and intimidating. We conclude with a discussion of the implications of our research for men and women.

Sorting Out Sexism: Evaluating the Differing Content and Implications of Gender Stereotypes

When was the last time you heard someone make a comment such as "All men are dogs!" or "Why are women so emotional?" Gender stereotyping remains pervasive in social life (Haines, Deaux, & Lofaro, 2016), arguably influencing everything from daily interactions (e.g., Ridgeway & Correll, 2004) to the recent US presidential election (Glick, 2016). Because stereotypes are communicated through daily remarks, the current project focuses on sexist statements people hear in their social interactions. These remarks can reinforce gender stereotypes' perceived legitimacy by giving them social validation (Houten, 1979). Further, whereas past research on sexist remarks has focused on women as targets (Swim & Hyers, 1999; Eagly & Mladinic, 1994), we focus on sexist remarks about men, as well as women. We conducted two descriptive studies that focused on naturalistic sexist comments, one focusing on comments about men (Study 1) and another focusing on comments about both men and women (Study 2), assessing participants' reactions. Study 3 was experimental and examined the degree to which men and women confront sexist comments depending on whether the comment targeted a man or a woman. For the purposes of our research, we focused only on traditional stereotypes and sexism about men and women and thus our results are less applicable for those who identify outside of the gender binary.

Understanding Stereotypes

Originally defined as simple, erroneous, second-hand attributions about groups that resist change (Lippmann, 1922), how stereotypes are defined has evolved in the past ninety years to account for the complexities revealed through subsequent research. Currently, a commonly accepted definition states that stereotypes are socially shared beliefs that attribute specific

positive or negative traits to a group (Klein & Azzi, 2001). Others add that stereotypes function to justify group-based social inequalities (e.g., Jost & Banaji, 1994).

Why do people stereotype? Allport (1954) suggested that stereotyping is efficient, reducing the amount of cognitive effort individuals must put into perceiving others' actions. Although stereotypes may not be accurate, Allport argued that using stereotypical overgeneralizations, rather than analyzing a situation or person without relying on preconceived notions, is less cognitively demanding. Thus, people stereotype groups to simplify a complex social world (Rudman & Glick, 2008).

More specifically, to simplify interactions among different groups, people look to the roles that each group assumes in society to make generalizations about that group's traits. Thus, social role theory posits that stereotypes originate from group-based divisions of labor in society; i.e., stereotypes originate from the roles different groups typically occupy (Eagly, Wood, & Diekman, 2000). According to this theory, people form notions of what different groups are like from observing each group's role in society and generalizing via stereotypes about the behaviors and personalities associated with groups. For example, people assume that those who work in jobs outside the home are more agentic and competent, while those who perform work in the domestic sphere must be more communal and warm.

Hoffman and Hurst (1990) demonstrated this principle by asking participants to read descriptions of 15 members of an alien society. One group was described as primarily "city workers" while the other group was described as primarily "child-raisers." Participants read trait descriptions of individual members of each group (e.g., "Damorin, an Orinthian who works in the city, is resourceful, individualistic, and soft-spoken"; "Dolack, an Ackmian who raises children, is outspoken, compassionate, and reliable"). Although each group was given an equal

number of communal and agentic traits, participants rated the city workers as more agentic and the child-raisers as more communal.

Research has also shown that, in general, individuals attribute agency and competence to higher status groups and traits of communality and warmth to lower status groups (Eagly et al., 2000; Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002). The Stereotype Content Model (SCM; Fiske et al., 2002) posits that stereotypes originate not only from groups' roles in society, but the structural relationship between groups. The SCM's *dimensional hypothesis* states that competence and warmth represent the core dimensions of stereotypes. Competence, which is attributed to groups who hold high socioeconomic status in society, refers to a how successful a group is perceived to be at tasks generally associated with high status or prestige. Warmth, which is attributed to groups viewed as cooperatively interdependent with the rest of society, refers to a group's socioemotional orientation toward other groups -- whether they are perceived to work toward the common good or only in their own interests. Perceived competence assesses a group's *ability* to help or harm one's ingroup; whereas perceived warmth assesses a group's motivation to help or to harm one's ingroup. The SCM's *mixed-stereotypes hypothesis* states that groups are often stereotyped as high on one core dimension but low on the other (e.g., warm but incompetent). This model is often applied to gender relations with stereotypes characterizing men as high on competence but low on warmth and women as high on warmth but low on competence (Fiske et al., 2002).

Gender Stereotypes

Gender stereotypes are consistent with both social role theory and the SCM. Even before these theories were developed, Bakan (1966) suggested that gender stereotypes about men and women fall into two main categories: men are seen as agentic (which includes competence) and

women as communal (which dovetails with warmth). Such stereotypes are typically assessed using trait ratings; participants assign traits to men or women from a researcher-provided list (Prentice & Carranza, 2002). People typically rate men as high on agentic traits (e.g., task-oriented, independent, and self-serving) and women as high on communal traits (e.g., dependence, compassion, and consideration for others). Women, categorized as caretakers and low in power, are assigned stereotypical traits related to nurturing, avoiding power, and building relationships, whereas men, categorized as providers and high in power, are assigned stereotypical traits related to high achievement, power, and competence (Rudman & Glick, 2008). These perceptions are consistent in cross-cultural comparisons (Williams & Best, 1990), suggesting that asymmetrical stereotypes about men and women are pervasive across the globe.

Overall, feminine stereotypes sacrifice respect for approval and likeability while masculine stereotypes do just the opposite, sacrificing likeability for respect and agency (Rudman & Glick, 2008). Although some individuals may challenge gender stereotypes' accuracy and legitimacy, gender stereotypes generally have strong social consensus, boosting their perceived credibility (Rudman & Glick, 2008). Despite increasing acceptance of men and women in nontraditional domains, gender stereotypes are just as prevalent today as they were in the 1980s (Haines et. al., 2016). Due to gender stereotypes' prevalence and social consensus, they have pervasive consequences for both genders.

Why Do Stereotypes Continue to Exist?

Why do gender stereotypes continue to persist despite the fact that the genders are more alike than different (Hyde, 2005)? Although stereotypes about women have increasingly granted women more agency as they have increasingly moved into the paid workforce (Diekman & Eagly, 2000), gender stereotypes remain remarkably resistant to change (Haines et al., 2016).

Several theories address the reasons why gender stereotypes remain so "sticky."

System justification. In addition to offering cognitive efficiency by making broad generalizations about groups, stereotyping typically serves to justify subordinate groups' lower social status by assigning them traits that seem to explain and legitimize their lower status. According to System Justification Theory, people are motivated to see the social systems they operate within as fair, legitimate, and desirable, which leads people, even members of subordinate groups (who are disadvantaged by their stereotypes) to accept stereotypes that justify social hierarchies (Jost & Banaji, 1994).

To minimize subordinate group members' resistance to hierarchy-justifying stereotypes, they are often "complementary" -- characterizing subordinate and dominant groups as each having "good" and "bad" traits, thereby allowing subordinate group members to feel good about themselves and their groups, even if they are not treated as equals to dominant groups (Glick et al., 2004). Although positive in valence, the "good" traits assigned to subordinates only help to cement them into a lower status position.

Gender stereotypes represent an excellent example of complementary stereotyping, viewing each gender as possessing certain strengths that balance out their weaknesses but which nevertheless reinforce social inequality (Jost & Kay, 2005). As noted above, men's stereotypical agency suits them to having and holding onto greater power, whereas women's stereotypically communal traits (though perceived as highly desirable) suit them to supportive, lower status roles.

Because both dominants and subordinates alike tend to justify the current system, people resist challenges to stereotypes that support and justify current social arrangements and hierarchy by reaffirming stereotypes. For example, Laurin, Kay, and Shepherd (2011) found that when

primed with information suggesting that women generally obtain worse financial outcomes than men, women described themselves in more communal terms, perhaps in an attempt to compensate for their inferior financial status, whereas men described themselves in more agentic terms, thereby justifying their superior financial status. This study suggests that both women and men self-stereotype, and that reminders of social inequality only increase self-stereotyping along gender traditional lines.

Jost and Kay (2005) demonstrated the system-justifying function of complementary gender stereotypes. Undergraduate participants completed two surveys in which they were asked to rate the degree to which communal or agentic traits characterize men or women to examine complementary stereotypes (e.g. men are agentic but not communal and women are communal but not agentic). Both male and female participants associated communal traits with women more than men and agentic traits more with men than women; however, only men consistently rated the complementary stereotypes as significantly more justified than women. System justification was measured by the participant's level of agreement with a series of eight opinion statements about current gender relations and roles (i.e., "In general, relations between men and women are fair," "Gender roles need to be radically restructured"). Furthermore, men, the dominant group, have more to gain from endorsing their own agentic and power-affirming stereotypes than women do from endorsing their communal and power-reducing stereotypes.

Stereotypes are internalized (leading people to self-stereotype) via self-construals or self-concepts. Guimond, Chatard, Martinot, Crisp, and Redersdorff (2006) examined the differences between men and women's self-construals as well as the influence of social comparison on stereotyping. Self-construals are individuals' self-concepts, which are psychologically meaningful and either distinct from or overlapping with their groups' stereotypes (Hardin,

Leong, & Bhagwat, 2004). In three samples from high school and college students in France and England, Guimond and colleagues (2006) found that women tend to characterize themselves and their gender ingroup (i.e., women) as more relational and less agentic than their gender outgroup (i.e., men), while men do the opposite, characterizing themselves and their ingroup as less relational and more agentic than their outgroup. This recent work demonstrates the persistence of stereotypes that characterize men as agentic and women as communal and how these stereotypes are incorporated into individual men and women's self-views.

Based on this research, stereotypes about both genders are consensual and men and women tend to self-stereotype, embracing their gender stereotypes, which in turn reinforces status differences. These more stereotypical self-construals were also related to higher gender differences on scores of social dominance orientation (SDO), which measures a preference to maintain inequality between social groups (Pratto, Sidanius, Stallwort, & Malle, 1994). Men generally score higher than women on measures of SDO (Pratto et al., 1994), but this gender difference was more pronounced in Guimond et al.'s (2006) study when participants rated themselves in comparison to the other gender. In other words, when gender comparisons were made salient, men stated a stronger investment in viewing men and women as different and in preserving societal inequalities, perhaps because they have more to gain from preserving gender stereotypes.

In sum, many women as well as men -- though perhaps men more so -- remain invested in maintaining gender stereotypes that reinforce gender inequality. Complementary stereotyping accomplishes this feat while assigning women subjectively favorable or desirable, communal traits (Prentice & Carranza, 2002), allowing for a positive self and group image. These stereotypes resist change -- when the system is challenged, women as well as men self-stereotype

more, not less. The net effect of persistent gender stereotyping is to justify men's greater perceived suitability than women to wield power.

Ambivalent sexism. Stereotypes also persist due to sexist ideologies held by each gender that regard the other gender with both hostility and benevolence. Glick and Fiske (1996) suggest that sexism differs from other types of prejudice due to the unique combination of power difference and intimate interdependence between the genders. This, in turn, creates ambivalence on the part of each gender toward the other. More specifically, Ambivalent Sexism Theory (Glick and Fiske, 1996) stipulates that men often hold a mix of both hostile (e.g., "When women lose to men in a fair competition, they typically complain about being discriminated against") and benevolent (e.g., "Many women have a quality of purity that few men possess) beliefs toward women.

Similarly, women are theorized to hold ambivalent attitudes toward men -- Benevolence Toward Men (BM) and Hostility Toward Men (HM) -- that serve to justify and reinforce the gender hierarchy (Glick & Fiske, 1999). The Hostility Toward Men scale measures *resentment of paternalism* (e.g., "Men will always fight to have greater control in society than women"), *heterosexual hostility* (e.g., "A man who is sexually attracted to a woman typically has no morals about doing whatever it takes to get her in bed"), and *compensatory gender differentiation* (e.g., "Men would be lost in this world if women weren't there to guide them"). The Benevolence Toward Men (BM) scale assesses beliefs that are system justifying and support traditional gender roles and relations, measuring *maternalism* (e.g., "Women ought to take care of their men at home, because men would fall apart if they had to fend for themselves"), *complementary gender differentiation* (e.g., "Men are less likely to fall apart in emergencies than women are"), and *heterosexual intimacy* (e.g., "Every woman needs a male partner who will cherish her").

Ambivalent Sexism Theory suggests that women express benevolence toward men because of interdependence between the sexes; however women also experience hostility toward men because they resent men's greater status in society. In contrast to women, men unsurprisingly endorsed BM more strongly than HM; but men from more gender-traditional (versus egalitarian) countries endorsed HM more strongly (Glick et al., 2004). Glick and colleagues suggested that men may embrace this macho ideal, despite its negative components, to reinforce their greater power and status, trading likeability for respect. Because subjectively negative characteristics (e.g., taking what one wants, arrogance, callousness) reinforce male dominance, they may be embraced by the dominant group even though they have a negative valence.

More specifically, Glick and Whitehead (2010) examined the unique role HM plays in gender hierarchy's perceived legitimacy and stability. Although it may seem that anger toward men for their dominance and power in society would motivate people to seek to change gender hierarchy, such hostility may actually reinforce gender hierarchy's perceived stability. If men are and always will be "dogs" (i.e., men "naturally" are aggressive and self-interested), they will likely always remain in charge because they are perceived as suited for power and as unlikely to relinquish it.

In an initial correlational study, Glick and Whitehead found that HM predicts greater perceived stability of gender hierarchy. In a subsequent experimental study, although priming hostility toward men led to lower perceived legitimacy for the current gender hierarchy, it nevertheless led to higher perceived stability of gender hierarchy into the future. The researchers suggest that this discrepancy (viewing the gender hierarchy as unjust but unlikely to change because "that's just the way men are") may be especially stressful for women, the lower status group. After being exposed to statements about men's negative traits, participants did not rate the

gender hierarchy as being very just, but still viewed it as resistant to change. This study suggests that exposure to traditional gender stereotypes can actually undermine women's motivation to seek change.

System justification despite stronger ingroup bias for women. Complementary stereotypes and ambivalent sexism both help to explain a curious phenomenon when it comes to gender prejudice: even though members of both genders often justify gender inequality, women show a stronger ingroup favoritism toward their gender ingroup than men do (Rudman & Goodwin, 2004). Specifically, when it comes to the overall valence in people's attitudes toward their own and the other gender, men and women alike agree that "women are wonderful" but men are not (Eagly & Mladinic, 1989).

This finding can be seen as contradicting System Justification Theory, which argues that dominant group members should show a stronger ingroup bias, or favoritism for their own group, than minority group members (Jost & Banaji, 1994). However, women demonstrate a stronger ingroup bias than men do. In three experiments, Rudman and Goodwin (2004) showed that across both implicit and explicit stereotyping and attitude measures, men demonstrate a weak ingroup bias or even a preference for women over men, whereas women demonstrate a strong ingroup bias. Thus women show a "balanced gender identity" -- they identify highly with their gender group and have high self-esteem; as a result, they view their gender group positively. In comparison, men lack this balanced gender identity, resulting in a low ingroup bias.

However, the complementary stereotypes noted above help to explain why women's ingroup bias does not necessarily translate into resisting gender inequality. Women's stronger ingroup bias largely reflects gender stereotypes that characterize women as more communal and nurturing and traditionally feminine with low power traits (leading women to be viewed

favorably compared to men; Prentice & Carranza, 2002), compared to stereotypes about men that assign men powerful traits that rate negatively because they are self-serving (leading men to be callous toward others).

A cross-cultural study comparing spontaneous stereotypes about men and women in 16 different nations confirmed a stronger ingroup bias for women than for men in terms of stereotype valence. Men rated women either the same or more positively than men, whereas women more consistently rated women more positively than men (Glick et al., 2004). As research on gender stereotypes suggests, women's characterization as "wonderful but weak" encourages people to view them more favorably than men in general (Eagly & Mladinic, 1989, 1994). However, attitudes and stereotypes that depict women as kind but helpless reinforce a benevolent sexism by which women are viewed favorably, but sacrifice power for likeability.

Perhaps the content of gender stereotypes encourages women to have a stronger ingroup bias compared to men because, as a recent study suggested, stereotypes of women imply greater trustworthiness, which represents the strongest basis for ingroup favoritism (Leach, Carraro, Garcia, and Kang, 2015). Women may endorse stereotypes about their gender group because they characterize their group as more likeable, leading to a strong ingroup bias. By contrast, because men's stereotypical traits emphasize competition to maintain power -- a competition that mainly occurs between men in a zero-sum, "dog eat dog" struggle -- men may accept having negatively valenced traits as the price of power. As a result, both genders' acceptance of complementary stereotypes that depict women as "wonderful but weak" and men as "bad but bold" (Glick et al., 2004) may lead to strong ingroup bias among women and a lack of apparent ingroup bias among men (at least when examining the valence of stereotypes toward their own and the other gender). Nevertheless, consistent with system justification and ambivalent sexism

theories, the stereotypes still serve to justify gender hierarchy because they accord men more power and status than women.

Stereotypes Perpetuated through Sexist Comments

Stereotypes do not exist in a vacuum; rather, they are reinforced or challenged through everyday interactions. Unfortunately, gender stereotypes are often reinforced on a daily basis by sexist comments and remarks (Klonoff & Landrine, 1995). For example, Leskinen and Rabelo (2015) asked 425 Midwestern women about the most common kinds of gender harassment they faced; the most frequent form was sexist remarks. Similarly, Swim, Hyers, Cohen, and Ferguson (2001), found that the most frequent sexist incidents participants reported were comments reflecting traditional gender role prejudice and stereotyping, demeaning or derogatory remarks, or sexually objectifying comments. More specifically, for both men and women, the single most common category of sexist incident was a comment indicating traditional gender role prejudice and stereotypes. Comments perpetuating stereotypes seem to be the most representative of prejudices that both men and women experience, reflecting a form of gender policing in which people are pressured to conform to gender roles (Rudman, 1998).

Why Focus on Sexism Toward Men?

Based on the research described above, it seems clear that gender inequality is maintained through sexist stereotypes about both genders. However, when it comes to studies on people's experiences of sexist remarks in everyday life, research has neglected sexism toward men, instead focusing almost exclusively on sexist remarks about women (e.g., Ayres, Friedman, & Leaper, 2009; Eagly & Mladinic, 1994; Leskinen et. al., 2015). Perhaps the principal reason for the lack of research is the perception that prejudice against men happens less frequently and has less serious consequences than sexism against women (i.e., sexism is less strongly related to

negative consequences for men than women; Schmitt, Branscombe, Kobrynowicz, & Owen, 2002). Indeed, women report that they frequently hear sexist comments about women. Leskinen and Rabelo's (2015) study of Midwestern women in the United States indicated that most participants experienced at least one instance of gender harassment in the prior year. An older, but larger study by Klonoff and Landrine (1995) included 631 women, of whom 99% reported experiencing a sexist event at least once in their lives and 97% experiencing one in the past year. Clearly sexism directed toward women is a ubiquitous occurrence and issue. However, research has not similarly looked at comments about men. Even basic descriptive data on frequency and content is lacking. Our research seeks to fill this gap.

The few studies that have examined sexism against men suggest that sexist remarks target men less frequently than they target women. Swim and colleagues (2001) investigated the prevalence of sexism in both men and women's lives using daily diaries, which give a more accurate picture of everyday sexism than retrospective reporting. By using a diary format, participants could recall more minor and subtle encounters as compared to studies asking them to recount incidents that may have happened months ago (such retrospective studies may generate the most memorable and, likely, severe -- rather than most typical -- experiences with sexism). Additionally, in a second study, Swim and colleagues asked men and women to record incidents that they witnessed or experienced in which someone was treated differently because of his or her gender.

These researchers found a higher number of sexist incidents per week directed toward women (women reported about one to two per week and men reported about one per week) than men. Furthermore, men and women seemed to agree that the number of sexist incidents directed toward men was significantly lower than those toward women, both reporting about one incident

every other week. Unfortunately, the sample size for this study was fairly small with only 20 women and 17 men from two introductory psychology classes and an advanced marketing class. However, despite the small sample size, this study and the studies reviewed above all suggest more daily instances of sexism are directed toward women compared to men.

If sexism directed toward men is less prevalent than sexism directed toward women, does it deserve the same amount of attention from researchers? Because gender stereotyping is complementary, studying only one side does not address the entire problem. If stereotypes about men reinforce a gender hierarchy that places men above women, then these comments deserve attention as well. These negative stereotypes should be combatted not only because they may be unfair to men, but also because negatively valenced stereotypes that nevertheless characterize men as powerful, just like positively valenced stereotypes that nevertheless characterize women as weak, both serve to reinforce an unequal gender hierarchy and disadvantage women.

Overview of Research

The present research aims to address a void in the current literature about stereotypes and sexist comments by examining the content of and reactions to stereotypical comments made about men and women on a daily basis. Although research has addressed the stereotypes perpetuated in comments about women, this is typically done via trait ratings in which participants rate the degree to which traits from a predetermined list apply to men versus women. Few studies have examined the sexist comments people report hearing spontaneously in day-to-day conversations and fewer still have considered comments about men (as compared to women). We aim to understand how gender stereotypes are spontaneously reinforced in daily interaction, making them consensual and a tool for policing gendered behavior.

In Study 1, we asked participants to report stereotypical comments they have heard,

whether in daily conversation or in the media, about what "men are like" and provide ratings of their reactions to these comments. Study 2 expanded on Study 1 by asking participants, depending on randomly assigned condition, to report comments that they have heard in a one-on-one or group conversation about what "men/women are like" as well as their reactions to the comments and how favorably the comments characterize men or women. Finally, Study 3 used an experimental design to simulate a real life scenario in which participants were exposed to a sexist comment (about someone else) during an interaction. Men and women were randomly assigned to one of two conditions and given an opportunity to confront sexist comments directed toward either a man or a woman. In the first two studies, we aimed to gather descriptive data about spontaneously heard stereotypical comments describing both men and women and examine reactions to these comments to see whether they differ by perceiver gender. In the final study, we sought to understand how the perceiver's gender and the gender of the target of a sexist comment determine people's willingness to confront the person who made the comment.

Study 1

Sexist comments about men seem to pose a less severe threat because men, the dominant group, do not share the same history of oppression that women do. As such, past research has generally overlooked sexist comments about men, focusing primarily on sexist comments about women. Due to the complementarity of gender stereotypes, it is important to consider how stereotypes about men, communicated via sexist comments, reinforce a system of gender inequality (Glick & Fiske, 1996).

Previous studies have used trait ratings to evaluate the stereotypes people generally ascribe to men as compared to women. Overall, men are assigned agentic traits (e.g., task-oriented, independent, and self-serving), while women are characterized as communal (e.g.,

dependent, compassionate, and selfless) (Rudman & Glick, 2008). However, stereotypical trait ratings elicited by researchers are not the same as spontaneous comments that communicate stereotypes in daily interactions, which have been less well examined. An exception is Swim and colleagues' (2001) investigation of sexist incidents in both men and women's lives using daily diaries. The study revealed that men experienced different types of discrimination than women; specifically, men tended to hear comments about men being "jerks," "pigs," or "worthless," or comments that focused on how men fixate on women's appearances as well as how men threaten women as sexual predators (Swim et. al., 2001). Although Swim et al. provided preliminary insight into the content of comments made about men, the results were limited by a small sample size that included only 17 men.

We aimed to collect descriptive data from both male and female participants about the types of stereotypical comments people hear directed toward men in daily life. Participants were asked to report three comments they had heard about "what men are like" and then indicate the context in which they heard each comment (e.g., From who/where have you heard this? How often have you heard this?). Participants then completed various measures of how they reacted to the comments (including feelings of intimidation, amusement, power, trivialization, and disgust). Additionally, we examined comment content to determine whether comments about men fell into distinct categories. To our knowledge, the current study was the first to systematically examine stereotypical comments about men.

We propose that stereotypical comments about men have the power to reinforce the patriarchy and traditional gender roles. More specifically, we hypothesize that comments casting men as powerful, even if negative in tone (e.g., "Men always try to dominate the conversation") may have negative effects on women because they suggest a stable patriarchy – if men always

seek dominance, women are unlikely to gain power.

Methods

Participants

Participants consisted of 91 men and 116 women from the United States recruited via Amazon's Mechanical Turk (MTurk; www.mturk.com). MTurk is an open online marketplace where various tasks are posted by "requesters" for completion by "workers" who receive small amounts of compensation (Buhrmester, Kwang, & Gosling, 2011). In terms of demographic diversity, the samples from MTurk compare well to samples of American college students as well as other internet samples. Additionally, MTurk has been used in the field of psychology to replicate well-established findings, suggesting the site's ability to produce valid data. For this study, each worker who participated was compensated with $0.50 for completing the survey.

Procedure

Participants clicked on an MTurk link to participate in a study entitled "Take an easy, fun, less than 20 minute survey about comments you hear describing what men are like." By clicking on this link, participants were directed to the online survey, which was issued using Qualtrics (2009) survey software. All participants, regardless of gender, completed the same survey, so there was no need to randomize the survey issued to participants. After agreeing to complete the survey, participants were asked to recall three stereotypical comments about men that they had heard in their daily lives. See Appendix A for informed consent form and complete survey.

After providing each individual comment, participants were asked a series of questions pertaining to that particular comment, including but not limited to: the perpetrator of the comment, the target of the comment, and the frequency of the comment. Next, participants rated

their reactions to the comment. The ratings were intended to measure both perceptions of the comment and respondents' reactions. Ratings included scales assessing perceived *Accuracy* of the comment (agree with comment, [comment was] accurate, affirmed your beliefs, [comment was] realistic), α =.93, degree of the participant's *Trivialization* of the comment (amused, entertained, [comment was] funny, cheered-up, pleased), α =.87 and the degree to which the comment evoked feelings of *Power* (confident, influential, self-assured, competent, comfortable, dominant, powerful), α =.91, *Intimidation* (hopeless, resigned, inadequate, intimidated, helpless, worthless, disheartened, discouraged, threatened, defeated, self-conscious, anxious), α =.95 and *Disgust* for the participant (offended, disgusted, angry, bothered, upset, disappointed, uncomfortable), α =.95. The classification of items described above was supported by an exploratory Principal Components factor analysis (with oblimin rotation because we expected that factors might be correlated). The factor analysis yielded five factors with eigenvalues greater than one, corresponding to the scales above and accounting for 71.80% of the variance. Items were assessed on a 7-point scale from 1 (Not at all) to 7 (Very much) for each factor. The participants then repeated the same procedure for the second and third comments, with the ratings randomized each time.

For the factor analysis and all subsequent Study 1 analyses, we only examined the first comment participants generated because, due to the large number of ratings participants completed for each comment, we believe they became fatigued and the quality of responses deteriorated with each additional comment. After completing the main portion of the survey, participants provided some brief demographic information, such as age, gender, and sexual orientation. At the end of the survey, participants were asked to provide any comments or opinions about the nature of the survey. After doing so, they finished the survey and were

provided with a participation code and key word in order to document their participation and receive monetary compensation. Additionally, after collecting the data, we coded the comments for valence, rating how positively or negatively the comment characterized men on a 7-point scale from 1 (Not at all likeable) to 7 (Very likeable), α =.84.

Results

The co-authors independently sorted the comments participants generated into five separate, mutually agreed upon categories: men as sex-driven, men as child-like, men as "macho," men as morally flawed, and comments that dehumanized men (e.g., "men are pigs" or "men are dogs"). In terms of frequency, comments fell into each category as follows: child-like (22.5%), "macho" (26.3%), and dehumanized (23.9%) were more and about equally frequent, whereas sex-driven (15.8%) and morally flawed (11.5%) were somewhat less frequent. See Figure 1 for frequencies.

Did Comment Content Differ Depending on Participant Gender?

We performed a Chi-Square test to reveal the distribution of comments in each category reported by men and women (See Figure 1). The analysis showed that the percentage of comments within each category did differ by gender, χ^2 (1, N = 207) = 10.87, $p < .05$. To determine which differences in percentage were significant, we calculated the adjusted residuals for the Chi-Square using the method described by Sharp (2015). This showed that the significant overall Chi-Square was due to differences in how often men as compared to women reported comments that characterized men as child-like: women reported 76.6% and men reported 23.4% of comments in this category. Across the total number of comments women reported, 31% characterized men as child-like, while only 12.1% of the comments men reported fell into this category. In sum, women often reported comments referring to men's incompetence in the home,

labeling them as child-like, while men reported fewer of these comments.

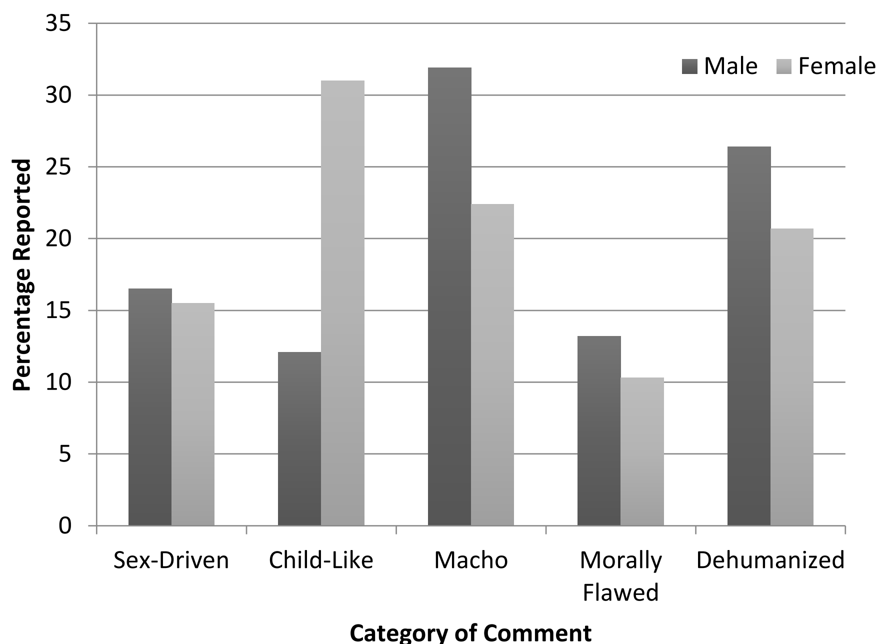

Figure 1. Percentage of comment per category by gender. This figure illustrates the percentage of comments that male and female participants reported in each of the five categories that represent stereotypical comments about men. Women reported significantly more comments in the child-like category than men, while men reported significantly more comments in the "macho" category than women did.

Did Comments Describe Men as Likeable or Dislikeable?

Comments about men scored low on our valence scale (M = 2.64), suggesting that the comments characterized men as dislikeable overall. There was no effect for participant gender $F(1, 197) = .40$, *ns* and no interaction $F(4, 197) = .89$, *ns*. However, there was a significant effect for comment category, $F(1, 197) = 51.23$, $p < .01$. *Post hoc* comparisons revealed that comments that characterized men as "macho" (M = 3.77) were significantly higher in valence than comments that depicted men as child-like (M = 2.48), $p > .01$, sex-driven (M = 2.30), $p >$

.01, morally flawed (*M* = 2.04), $p > .01$, or dehumanized them (*M* = 2.04), $p > .01$. Additionally, compared to comments that characterized men as child-like (*M*= 2.48), comments that characterized men as morally flawed (*M* = 2.04), $p > .05$, and dehumanized them (*M* = 2.04), $p > .01$, were rated significantly lower in valence. In sum, when asked to report comments that describe "what men are like," participants generally reported comments that characterized men negatively; comments describing men as morally flawed and comments that dehumanized men were especially negative, while comments describing men as child-like, sex-driven, and "macho" scored below the midpoint of the valence scale (4) but to a lesser degree.

Reactions to Comments

We performed separate 2 (Participant gender: male, female) x 5 (Category of comment: dehumanizing, "macho," child-like, sex, morally flawed) ANOVAs with each comment reaction scale (accuracy, intimidation, power, trivialization, disgust) as the dependent variable. The power, offense, and trivialization scales yielded no significant results in any ANOVA, so we do not report those findings here. When a significant interaction occurred, we tested simple effects using Least Significant Difference *post hoc* comparisons. Results are reported below.

Were comments perceived as accurate? A significant main effect of participant gender indicated that female participants rated the comments as significantly more accurate (M=4.53) than male participants did (M=3.07), $F(1, 197) = 42.21$, $p < .001$. There was no significant effect of comment category $F(1, 197) = 1.86$, *ns*. However, the significant main effect of participant gender must be considered in light of a significant participant gender x comment category interaction, $F(1, 197) = 1.86$, $p < .05$. Although, as the participant gender main effect revealed, women consistently rated comments from all categories as significantly more accurate (*M* = 4.53) than men did (*M* = 3.07), the extent to which accuracy ratings differed depended on the

comment's category. *Post hoc* tests revealed that women, as compared to men, rated the following types of comments as more accurate: child-like (*M* female participants = 4.88; *M* male participants = 2.34), $p < .001$; morally flawed (*M* female participants = 5.33; *M* male participants = 3.56), $p < .01$; dehumanizing comments (*M* female participants = 4.39; *M* male participants = 2.43), $p < .001$). By contrast, no gender differences occurred for comments that characterized men as sex-driven or "macho." In conclusion, women rated comments about men as more accurate overall than men did, except for comments that characterized men as sex-driven or "macho."

Who perpetrated comments about men? We also performed a Chi-Square analysis to determine whether participant gender was associated with differences in the relationship of the respondent to the perpetrator of the comment. The reported source of comments differed significantly by gender, χ^2 (1, N = 207) = 26.42, $p < .01$. Calculating adjusted residuals revealed several significant differences between male and female participants' reports of the comment's source. Most notably, men reported that they heard 22% of the comments they reported from a stranger, whereas women reported hearing only 3.4% of their comments from a stranger. Also notable was the difference reported in hearing the comment from an acquaintance or friend, which was 25.3% for men and 41.4% for women. This Chi-Square revealed that, although men and women heard generally similar comments about men overall, their relationship to the person who made the comment differed. We suspect that comments about men are typically exchanged among one-on-one conversations between female friends, but cannot be sure as we did not ask the gender of the perpetrator.

Discussion

This study gathered descriptive data on the stereotypical comments people hear about what "men are like." These comments fell into five categories: sexually-driven, "macho,"

morally flawed, child-like, and dehumanizing (e.g., “Men are pigs”). Women, as compared to men, reported hearing more comments that characterized men as child-like; whereas men, compared to women, reported hearing more comments that characterized men as “macho.” The stereotypes perpetuated by these comments, especially the “macho” category (i.e., “Men always act tough” or “Men are into sports”), are consistent with past research about gender stereotypes that describe men as aggressive and dominant (Rudman & Glick, 2008). Masculine stereotypes describing men as child-like; i.e. “men are babies when they’re sick” or “men never grow up, they just get bigger,” are consistent with past research as well, specifically the AMI (Ambivalence Toward Men Inventory; Glick & Fiske, 1999). The items “men are babies when they are sick” and “men are really like children” fall under *compensatory gender differentiation* on the Hostility Toward Men Scale, meaning that such comments reinforce complementary gender roles in which women are more competent in the domestic domain (Glick & Fiske, 1999). Comments that suggest men’s domestic incompetence may also imply they rely on women to care for them in the domestic sphere: if men are just large children, it is a woman’s job to take care of them, especially in the home.

Why do women report more comments characterizing men as child-like than men do? At first glance, these comments reduce men’s status, comparing them to children. Additionally, asserting that men need women to take care of them in some ways gives women greater status and power. However, although these stereotypes suggest that men are dependent on women within the home, they may implicitly suggest that while women are allowed to lead within the domestic sphere, it is a man’s role to navigate life outside the home. Women’s traditional control over the household represents a form of power, but limited to an arguably less valued, typically unpaid domain. Further, when women experience “maternal power” inside the home it may help

them justify their overall lower status position (Williams & Chen, 2014). It is also possible that when asked to report comments they have heard about what men are like, the most salient comments may have reflected their own interactions with men, in this case within the home. Interestingly, women reported hearing these comments about men most frequently from acquaintances or friends, suggesting that they emerged from conversations during which female friends commiserated about mutually shared experiences with men either requiring or demanding extra care at home or failing to do traditionally female domestic chores.

Contrary to our initial hypothesis, the results suggested women do not necessarily react negatively to comments that characterize men as powerful (e.g., “macho”) or threatening (e.g., sexually-driven, morally flawed, dehumanized or animalistic), although such comments attribute men greater power and imply possible threats to women (e.g., that men will act as sexual predators). Further, although comments that label men as child-like do not outwardly imply power, they still may serve as a reminder that men have greater agency and power than women outside the home, supporting a gender hierarchy that places men above women. Thus, we had expected that women, as well as men, would react negatively to many stereotypical comments about men, but this was not the case.

Similar to past research suggesting that stereotypes about men characterize them as dislikeable compared to women, the comments reported by participants were, overall, negative in quality (Prentice & Carranza, 2002). While some comments were not necessarily entirely negative (i.e., “Men like sports”), there were so few comments we considered positive in valence that there were not enough to analyze. Nevertheless, even men did not seem to have been particularly offended by negative comments about their ingroup. Instead, both male and female participants’ reactions to the comments were overall low in intensity, suggesting that the

participants were relatively unfazed by the comments. It is possible that the lack of reported negative responses to sexist comments about men reflects respondents' views of sexism toward men as a less serious issue than sexism against women (Ayres et. al., 2009). Although the comments participants reported were overwhelmingly negative, people may generally dismiss such remarks because, given that they target the dominant gender group, the comments are not coded as "prejudice" (perceived as occurring toward low status groups) and pose no threat to men, who may seem secure in their higher status.

Alternatively, the comments may generally be viewed as legitimate (i.e., people may think men "deserve" it) because they accurately reflect what men are like. This explanation, however, fits better for female than male respondents. The one significant difference between men and women's reactions to comments about men was perceived accuracy: women generally rated comment accuracy higher than men did. Further, the gender difference in perceived accuracy specifically occurred on some of the more negative comment categories depicting men as child-like, morally flawed, or as animals. These results are consistent with prior research (Glick & Fiske, 1999; Glick et al., 2004) showing that women tend to endorse the Hostility toward Men scale more than men.

Strengths and Limitations

To the best of our knowledge, this study was the first to focus on the content of naturalistic stereotypical comments made about men in everyday life. Other studies have gathered only limited and incidental data about sexist comments directed toward men (i.e., Swim et al., 2001) that was insufficient to reveal the scope of their content.

However, in retrospect, our method may have inflated the negativity of the comments people reported. Specifically, we asked participants to report "stereotypical comments" they

heard in “daily life about what men are like.” This framing, in particular, using the word “stereotypes” (which tends to have a negative connotation) may have led respondents to report the most negative comments they have heard. Additionally, we allowed participants to include comments they had heard via social media or television, and these may have been more negative or extreme than comments heard more naturalistically in a one-on-one or group conversation.

Additionally, the only measure of comment valence came from the researchers’ ratings and not the participants. Although the researchers’ independent ratings were highly reliable ($\alpha = .84$) it would have been better to rely on a multi-item scale assessing the comments’ valence from the participants’ perspective as they were the ones who actually heard the comment. Participants are in a position to better assess the context, social meaning, and tone of comments they have heard compared to researchers who had to consider the comments separately from their context.

Finally, the current results are limited because the stereotypical comments about men were not compared in any way to stereotypical comments about women. Although we originally wanted to focus on only comments about men due to the lack of research on the topic, because of the interrelationship between gender stereotypes it is impossible to form a complete picture of gender relations without considering comments about both what men and women “are like.” Prior research suggests that traditional gender stereotypes are complementary, with men described as “bad but bold” and women as “wonderful but weak”; each gender stereotypically compensates for what the other gender lacks (Rudman & Glick, 2008). Our results on comments about men were generally consistent with the “bad but bold” stereotype, but the current study did not address whether sexist comments about women are consistent with women’s “wonderful but weak” stereotype.

Further, without comparative data it is impossible to know whether overheard comments about men tend to be harsher (or less harsh) than comments about women. Similarly, we cannot know whether the overall dismissiveness toward stereotypical comments about men represents a generally greater tolerance of negative comments about men as compared to women. Perhaps, given the interdependence between men and women, people are generally unfazed by daily sexist comments (as compared, for example, to comments that evoke racist or ethnic stereotypes; Czopp & Monteith, 2011). Although Study 1's focus on only comments about men addressed a prior lack of research on this topic, we designed Study 2 to both replicate and improve on Study 1 in several ways by: (a) randomly assigning participants to report comments about men or women (allowing comparisons across target gender); (b) eliciting comments about "what men (or women) are like" without mentioning stereotypes, so that the prompt did not bias responses toward more negative comments; (c) confining the comments to those heard in daily conversation (rather than via media); and (d) having participants (rather than the researchers) assess the tenor of the comments.

Study 2

Contrary to our initial hypothesis, Study 1 suggested that women, as compared to men, did not appear to react negatively or feel intimidated by stereotypical comments about men. The lack of gender difference in reactions held true regardless of specific comment content. In other words, women and men reacted similarly to comments that characterized men as powerful, whether as "macho", sexually-driven, morally flawed, or dehumanized as animals. Although women generally rated comments about men as more accurate than men did, they did not rate these comments as particularly threatening or intimidating. Are men and women unperturbed by sexist comments in general or is this reaction specific to sexist comments directed toward men?

We designed Study 2 to directly compare and contrast comments made about men and women by randomly assigning participants to report either a comment about men or about women that they had heard in daily life. Although Study 1 provided descriptive data about comments directed toward men, Study 2 aimed to assemble a more complete view of daily sexist comments about both genders. Similar to Study 1, participants completed ratings of their reactions to comments (e.g., Were they intimidated by the comment? Did they think the comment was funny?). Participants also reported on the context of the comment, as well as the gender of the perpetrator (e.g., one-on-one conversation with a man or a woman, conversation with mixed gender group, etc.). As in Study 1 we sorted the comments into content categories, allowing us to compare the types of comments made about each gender.

Methods

Participants

Participants were 205 men, 236 women, and 15 individuals who chose not to identify as either male or female; all were from the United States and recruited via Amazon's Mechanical Turk (MTurk; www.mturk.com). Each participant received $0.50 for completing the survey. After eliminating 11 participants who did not complete the survey or failed attention checks and 15 who did not identify as male or female, 198 men and 232 women were included in the analyses presented below.

Procedure

Study 2 replicated Study 1 with the following modifications. The most significant difference between the two studies were that Study 2: (a) used random assignment so that participants reported either a comment about women or about men; (b) the prompt did not specify that the comments should be stereotypical; but (c) did specify that these comments

should have been heard in a conversation (not via media). Participants were given the following directions: “You are being asked to participate in this study because the researchers hope to better understand the content and consequences of comments people hear in daily life about ‘what [men/women] are like.’ You will be asked to report one comment you have heard people make about what [men/women] are like, provide information on the context of the comment, and rate your reactions to the comment as well as how the comment characterizes [men/women].” As in Study 1, participants rated items on the same five scales measuring power ($\alpha = .93$), disgust ($\alpha = .95$), intimidation ($\alpha = .91$), trivialization ($\alpha = .86$), and accuracy ($\alpha = .88$). See Appendix B for informed consent form and survey.

Additionally, unlike Study 1, to assess how the comments characterized men or women, participants rated, on a 1 (Not at all) to 7 (Very much) scale, the extent to which the comments characterized men or women as: *powerful* (How powerful/influential/dominant does this comment make men/women seem?; $\alpha = .79$), *aggressive* (How aggressive/violent/reckless does this comment make men/women seem?; $\alpha = .73$), *likeable* (How likeable does this comment make men/women seem, how much would you want to be friends with the type of person the comments describes? How much would you want to interact with the type of person the comment describes? How favorably does this comment characterize men/women?; $\alpha = .88$), *sex-driven* (How sexually-driven/sexually promiscuous/interested in sex does this comment make men/women seem? To what extent does this comment characterize men/women as sexual predators; $\alpha = .91$), *competent* (How competent/capable/self-sufficient does this comment make men/women seem? How good a leader would the kind of comment this person describes be?; $\alpha = .87$), *mature* (How mature/responsible/emotionally immature/dependent on others/competent in the home/good at taking care of children does this comment make men/women seem?, $\alpha = .74$),

and *moral* (How moral/selfish/trustworthy/considerate of others needs does this comment make men/women seem?; α = .77). However, with the exception of the valence/likeability scale, which is reported below, none of the additional scales yielded significant results and thus are not reported.

As in Study 1, the scales measuring participants' ratings of trivialization, intimidation, accuracy, power, and disgust in response to the comment were supported by an exploratory Principal Components factor analysis (with oblimin rotation because we expected that factors might be correlated). The factor analysis yielded five factors with eigenvalues greater than one, corresponding to the scales above and accounting for 72.50% of the variance.

Results

Content of Comments

We categorized the comments about men using the same five categories from Study 1: sex-driven, child-like, "macho," morally flawed, and dehumanizing epithets (e.g., "pigs," "dogs"). Based on the most frequent comments made about women, we created five mutually agreed upon categories: overly emotional or illogical, controlling and demanding, stereotypically feminine traits, "catty," and sexually promiscuous. Most comments about men were fairly evenly distributed into four categories: dehumanized (25%), "macho" (23.6%), or child-like (22.3%) categories, and sex-driven (19.1%), with morally flawed (8.6%) occurring less frequently. See Figure 2 for frequencies. Comments about women most frequently fell into the emotional/illogical category (38%), followed by controlling/demanding (22.3%), stereotypically feminine (19.2%), and, less frequently, "catty" (9.2%) and sexually promiscuous (7.4%). See Figure 3 for frequencies.

We used the method for calculating adjusted residuals described in Study 1 to determine

significant differences between men and women's reports of comments in each category. Women reported significantly more comments about men in the child-like category (69.4%) than men did (30.6%). Across all comments reported by men about what men are like, 16.1% were in the child-like category, while 29.3% of the comments women reported described men as child-like. Men reported significantly more comments that characterized women as sexually promiscuous (73.3%) than women (26.7%). Overall, 3.6% of the comments women reported about women were in the sexually promiscuous category, while 11.1% of the comments men reported were in this category. When asked to report stereotypical comments about men and women, the genders differ most greatly in reports of comments that describe men as child-like and comments that describe women as sexually promiscuous.

Did Comments Describe Men and Women as Likeable or Dislikeable?

Clearly comments about men and women differed in kind, but were comments about one gender typically more negative or positive than comments about the other? We compared ratings of how likeable the comments depicted men or women (e.g., how likely the participant would be to interact or be friends with the target of the comment). A 2 (Participant gender: Male, female) x 2 (Target gender: Male, female) ANOVA on likeability ratings showed no target gender main effect, $F(1, 426) = .47$, *ns*; in other words comments about men and women did not depict one gender as more likeable than the other. Further, mean likeability ratings were well below the scale midpoint (4) both for comments about women ($M = 2.68$) and men ($M = 2.78$), with an overall average rating of $M = 2.73$. However, a significant main effect for participant gender, occurred such that male participants ($M = 2.92$) compared to female participants ($M = 2.57$) reported comments about both sexes as indicating relatively more likeability, $F(1, 426) = 7.32$, $p < .01$. There was no participant gender x target gender interaction, $F(1, 426) = .02$, *ns.* In sum,

the reported comments did not portray women as any more likeable than men, rather comments about men and women depicted them as equally dislikeable and, compared to the likeability scale's neutral point, comment valences were typically negative.

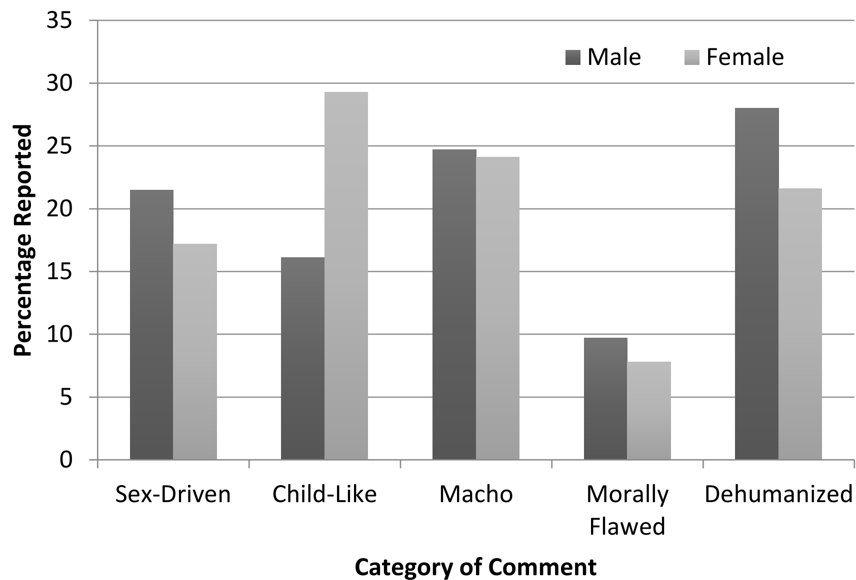

Figure 2. Comments reported about men by category by gender of participant. This figure illustrates the percentage of comments that men and women reported in each of the five categories that encapsulate comments about what "men are like." Women reported significantly more comments that characterized men as child-like than men did.

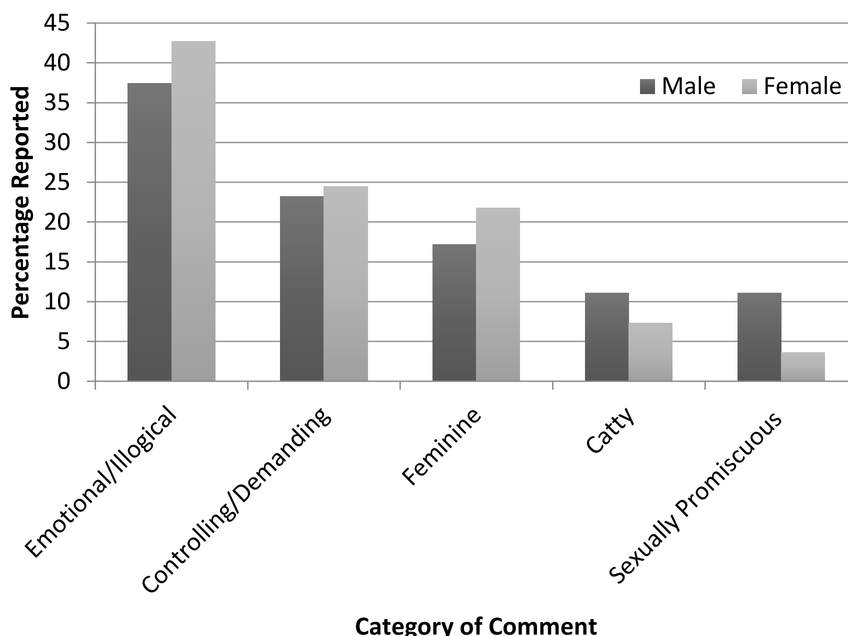

Figure 3. Comments reported about women by category by gender of participant. This figure illustrates the percentage of comments that men and women reported in each of the five categories that encapsulate comments about what "women are like." Men reported significantly more comments that characterized women as sexually promiscuous than men did.

Participants' Reactions to Comments

We performed separate 2 (Participant gender: male, female) x 2 (Target gender: male, female) ANOVAs with each comment reaction scale (accuracy, intimidation, power, trivialization, disgust) as the dependent variable. The power scale yielded no significant results in any ANOVA, so we do not report those findings here. When a significant interaction occurred, we tested simple effects using Least Significant Difference *post hoc* comparisons. Results are reported below.

Were the comments perceived as accurate? A significant target gender main effect revealed that participants generally rated comments about men (M = 4.12) as more accurate than comments about women (M = 3.36), $F(1, 426) = 15.36$, $p < .01$. There was no main effect for

participant gender, $F(1, 426) = .65$, *ns*. However, the main effect must be interpreted in light of a significant gender of participant x target gender interaction, $F(1, 426) = 33.04$, $p < .01$. *Post hoc* tests revealed that male participants showed no difference in accuracy ratings for comments about women ($M = 3.81$) versus men ($M = 3.49$), *ns*. However, female participants rated comments about men as significantly more accurate ($M = 4.63$) than comments about women ($M = 2.95$), $p < .01$. Additionally, when the comments targeted men, female participants rated the comments as more accurate ($M = 4.63$) than male participants did ($M = 3.49$), $F(1, 426) = 33.04$, $p < .01$. When the comment targeted a woman, however, male participants rated the comment as significantly more accurate ($M = 3.81$) than female participants ($M = 2.95$), $F(1, 426) = 33.04$, $p < .01$. In sum, women tended to see stereotypical (and generally negative) comments targeting the other gender as more accurate than comments targeting their own gender, revealing an in-group bias, whereas men did not show this bias. However, comparisons between male and female participants revealed a relative tendency to rate comments about their own (as compared to the other) gender as less accurate.

Did participants find the comment intimidating? A significant main effect occurred for target gender; participants generally reported feeling more intimidated when the comments targeted women ($M = 2.58$) rather than men ($M = 2.15$), $F(1, 426) = 8.38$, $p <. 01$. There was no significant effect for participant gender, $F(1,426) = .93$, *ns.* However, we also found a significant participant gender x target gender interaction, $F(1, 426) = 24.44$, $p < .01$. *Post hoc* tests revealed that although male participants reported no difference in intimidation whether the comment was about men ($M = 2.44$) or women ($M = 2.17$), *ns*, female participants were significantly more intimidated by comments about women ($M = 2.95$) than comments about men ($M = 1.91$), $p <.01$ However, a second set of comparisons showed that when the comment targeted men, male

participants were significantly more intimidated (*M* = 2.44) than female participants (*M* = 1.91); whereas when the comment targeted women, female participants were significantly more intimated (*M* = 2.95) than male participants (*M* = 2.17), $p <$. 01. These findings reveal a crossover interaction for male and female participants, with participants generally feeling more intimidated when the comment targeted their ingroup rather than their outgroup; however, this effect was stronger for female than for male participants.

Were the comments taken seriously? Overall, a significant participant gender main effect showed that male participants trivialized the comments (*M* = 3.42) more than female participants (*M* = 3.09), $F(1, 426) = 4.91$, $p < .05$. Additionally, comments about men were trivialized more (*M* = 3.53) than comments about women (*M* = 2.97), $F(1, 426) = 11.94$, $p < .01$. However, these main effects must be interpreted in light of a significant participant gender x target gender interaction, $F(1, 426) = 20.77$, $p < .01$. Although men overall seem to trivialize comments more than women, women trivialized comments about women much less than comments about men, which lowered their overall trivialization scores below men's. *Post hoc* tests revealed that female participants trivialized comments about men significantly more (*M* = 3.69) than comments about women (*M* = 2.49), $p < .01$. Male participants showed no significant difference in trivializing comments about men (*M* = 3.34) versus women (*M* = 3.50), *ns*. In conclusion, comments about men were viewed as less serious than comments about women; however, women (but not men) once again demonstrated an ingroup bias by trivializing comments about the other gender more than comments about their own, whereas men did not.

Did the comments disgust participants? A participant gender main effect revealed that women reported more disgust (*M* = 3.26) in response to comments than men did (*M* = 2.89), $F(1, 426) = 5.12$, $p < .05$. Additionally, a significant main effect for target gender revealed that

comments elicited more disgust when they targeted women (M = 3.45) as compared to men (M = 2.73), $F(1, 426) = 15.74$, $p < .01$. However, these main effects must be considered in light of a significant participant gender x target gender interaction, $F(1, 426) = 44.95$, $p < .01$. *Post hoc* tests showed that female participants were more disgusted by comments about women (M = 4.13) than comments about men (M = 2.40). By contrast, male participants showed no difference in disgust reactions across comments about men (M = 3.12) versus women (M = 2.68), *ns*. Another set of comparisons showed that for comments targeting men, male participants reported greater disgust (M = 3.12) than female participants did (M = 2.40), $p < .01$; whereas when comments targeted women, female participants (M = 4.13) reported more disgust than male participants (M = 2.68), $p < .01$. These findings reveal an ingroup bias similar to previous analyses: although both men and women demonstrate an ingroup bias in their ratings of disgust, this bias was stronger for women than for men.

Did Reactions Differ Across Comment Categories?

To determine whether participants' reactions varied according to the type of comment (e.g., men are dogs, women are emotional), we used comment category as an independent variable. Because comment categories differed depending on target gender (e.g., only men were dehumanized as dogs and pigs), we performed separate analyses within each target gender. Thus, for comments about men, we computed 2 (Participant gender: male, female) x 5 (Category of comment: Sexually driven, child-like, "macho", dehumanized, morally flawed) ANOVAs on participants' ratings. By contrast, for comments about women, we computed 2 (Participant gender: male, female) x 5 (Category of comment: Emotional/illogical, controlling/demanding, stereotypically feminine, "catty", sexually promiscuous) ANOVAs. For each dependent variable scale, we first report findings for comments about men and then for comments about women. See

Table 1 for mean ratings within each category for comments about men and Table 2 for comments about women. Below, we do not report main effects for participant gender since these effects are redundant with the analyses reported above (which were averaged across all comment types). We focus instead on any differences in ratings between comment types.

Did perceived accuracy vary by content category? For comments about men, a main effect for comment category, $F(1, 426) = 5.78$, $p < .01$, revealed that some comment types were seen as more accurate characterizations than others. *Post hoc* comparisons revealed that comments depicting men as sex-driven were perceived as significantly more accurate ($M = 4.66$) than comments that dehumanized men ($M = 3.45$), $p<.01$, or depicted them as morally flawed ($M = 3.21$), $p < .01$ or child-like ($M = 3.74$), $p < .05$. Additionally, comments that characterized men as “macho” were rated as significantly more accurate ($M = 4.60$) than comments characterizing men as child-like ($M = 3.74$), $p < .05$, morally flawed ($M = 3.21$), $p < .01$, or dehumanized men ($M = 3.45$), $p < .01$. There was no significant comment category x participant gender interaction, $F(1, 426) = 1.43$, *ns.* For comments about women, there was no main effect for category, $F(1, 426) = .09$, *ns,* and no interaction, $F(1, 426) = .19$, *ns.* In sum, for comments about men, accuracy ratings varied by comment category, with comments about men as hypersexual and “macho” seen as more accurate than dehumanizing labels or comments about moral flaws. By contrast, for comments about women, comment category did not affect perceived accuracy.

Did intimidation vary by comment category? For comments about men, there was a significant main effect of comment category, $F(1, 426) = 3.36$, $p < .05$. Comments that dehumanized men were rated as significantly more intimidating ($M = 2.59$) than comments that depicted men as child-like ($M = 1.85$), $p < .01$, “macho” ($M =2.02$), $p < .05$, or sex-driven ($M =$

2.01), $p < .05$. Additionally, comments that depicted men as morally flawed were rated as significantly more intimidating ($M = 2.66$) than comments depicting men as child-like ($M = 1.85$), $p < .05$. There was also a significant participant gender x category of comment interaction, $F(1, 426) = 2.53$, $p < .05$. For comments that characterized men as "macho," men rated these comments as significantly more intimidating ($M = 2.48$) than women ($M = 1.57$), $p < .01$. Men ($M = 3.04$) also rated dehumanizing comments as more intimidating than women did ($M = 2.14$), $p < .01$. For comments that characterized men as sexually-driven, child-like, and morally flawed, there were no significant difference in ratings of intimidation between male and female participants. When the comment targeted women, there was no significant effect for category of comment, $F(1, 426) = 1.09$, *ns.* There was also no significant interaction, $F(1, 426) = .20$, *ns.* In sum, comment category affected participants' ratings of intimidation only when the comment targeted men, not women. Additionally, men rated comments that characterized men as "macho" or dehumanized as more intimidating than women did.

Did trivialization vary by content category? For comments about men, there was no significant effect of comment category, $F(1, 426) = .76$, *ns.* There was, however, a marginally significant interaction, $F(1, 426) = 2.29$, $p = .06$. When the comment characterized men as child-like, women trivialized the comment to a greater degree ($M = 4.19$) than men did ($M = 3.13$), $p < .05$. When the comment targeted women there was no significant effect of category, $F(1, 426) = .26$, *ns,* as well as no significant interaction, $F(1, 426) = 1.34$, *ns.* In sum, when the comment targeted men, women were more likely than men to trivialize comments characterizing men as child-like.

Did disgust vary by comment category? When the comment targeted men, there was a significant main effect for comment category, $F(1, 426) = 5.33$, $p < .01$. Comments that depicted

men as morally flawed elicited significantly more disgust (*M* = 3.67) than comments that characterized men as sexually driven (*M* = 2.58), $p < .05$, child-like (*M* = 2.20), $p < .01$, or "macho" (*M* = 2.52), $p < .01$. Additionally, comments that dehumanized men elicited significantly more disgust than comments that described men as sex-driven (*M* = 2.58), $p < .05$, child-like (*M* = 2.20), $p < .01$, or "macho" (*M* = 2.52), $p < .01$. There was also a significant participant gender x category of comment interaction $F(1, 426) = 2.44$, $p < .05$. For comments that depicted men as "macho" and those that dehumanized them, male and female participants' ratings significantly differed. Men (*M* = 3.13) were significantly more disgusted than women (*M* = 1.92) by comments that labeled men as "macho," $p < .05$. Similarly, men (*M* = 3.87) were more disgusted than women were (*M* = 2.80) by comments that dehumanized men, $p < .05$. When the comment targeted women, there was no significant main effect for comment category, $F(1, 426) = .81$, *ns,* as well as no significant interaction, $F(1, 426) = .30$, *ns.* In conclusion, participants were more disgusted by comments targeted men as morally flawed or dehumanized them, and this was especially true for men compared to women. In contrast, for comments about women, disgust did not vary by comment category.

				Category of Comment		
Participant Reaction	Participant Gender	Dehumanized	Child-Like	"Macho"	Morally Flawed	Sex-Driven
Upset	Male	3.87	2.31	3.13	4.19	2.33
	Female	2.80	2.10	1.92	3.15	2.84
Accurate	Male	2.89	3.08	3.80	2.06	4.53
	Female	4.01	4.40	5.39	4.36	4.80
Intimidated	Male	3.04	1.99	2.48	2.92	1.75

	Female	2.14	1.71	1.57	2.40	2.26
Trivialized	Male	3.15	3.13	3.9	2.29	3.54
	Female	3.62	4.19	3.29	3.62	3.51
Power	Male	2.51	2.19	2.71	2.15	2.38
	Female	2.59	2.37	2.38	2.26	2.69

Table 1. Comments about men by participants' reactions. This table illustrates the mean ratings for participants' reactions to comments in each of the five categories that encapsulate comments about what "men are like."

				Category of Comment		
Participant Reaction	Participant Gender	Emotional/ Illogical	Controlling/ Demanding	Feminine	"Catty"	Sexually Promiscuous
Upset	Male	2.53	2.73	2.60	2.85	3.16
	Female	4.29	3.99	4.03	4.94	5.03
Accurate	Male	3.75	3.96	3.63	3.98	3.84
	Female	2.92	2.81	2.78	2.59	2.38
Intimidated	Male	2.16	1.99	2.00	2.13	2.55
	Female	3.19	2.88	2.59	3.07	3.82
Trivialized	Male	3.55	3.23	3.06	3.62	4.24
	Female	2.40	2.59	2.39	1.90	1.80
Power	Male	2.43	2.58	2.51	2.49	3.38
	Female	1.93	1.91	2.03	2.72	1.31

Table 2. Comments about women by participants' reactions. This table illustrates the mean ratings for participants' reactions to comments in each of the five categories that encapsulate comments about what "women are like."

Did Context and Perpetrator Differ for Comments About Men and Women?

We performed a Chi-Square to analyze differences in the context in which male and female participants heard comments about men and women, revealing significant differences between male and female participants, χ^2 (5, N = 212) = 11.09, p = .05. To determine which differences in percentage were significant, we calculated adjusted residuals using the same method described in Study 1. Comments about men were made in a one-on-one conversation with a woman 44.8% of the time. However, this varied for comments reported by female versus male participants: 53.8% of comments about men reported by female participants were heard in a one-on-one conversation with another woman, whereas 33.7% of the comments about men reported by male participants were heard in one-on-one interactions with a woman. Comments about men were also often reported to have occurred in mainly female or all-female groups (28.3%) and this percentage was similar for comments reported by male and female participants. Chi-square analysis on the context of comments reported about women also varied significantly between male and female participants, χ^2 (5, N = 218) = 17.15, p = .004. For both male and female participants, when comments targeted women, most comments were heard in mainly male or all-male groups (33.5%). Comments about women were also frequently reported to have occurred in a one-on-one conversation with a man (29.4%), but male participants (35.9%) reported hearing a significantly higher percentage of comments in this kind of interaction than female participants did (23.5%). Comments about women were also frequently reported to have occurred in conversation with a mixed-gender group (24.3%), but female participants reported

hearing comments about women (34.8%) significantly more frequently in this context than men did (12.6%). This Chi-Square reveals that stereotypical comments about each gender are often exchanged in different contexts depending on the target's gender.

Discussion

With respect to comments about men, Study 2 was consistent with Study 1; comments about men fell into the same five categories (sexually-driven, "macho," morally flawed, child-like, dehumanized) and in about the same proportions. Comments about women had a different tenor, but also fit into five categories: emotional/illogical, controlling/demanding, feminine, "catty," sexually promiscuous. Thus, as expected, comments about each gender qualitatively differed. Study 2 also replicated Study 1's findings that female (compared to male) participants tended to see comments about men as more accurate and, perhaps as a result, trivialized them. Additionally, our findings that women predominantly reported hearing comments about men in a one-on-one conversation with a woman lend support to our finding from Study 1 that women reported hearing comments about men from a friend or acquaintance. We had hypothesized that such results suggested these comments were mainly exchanged between female friends, and the results from Study 2 support such claims.

The content of comments about both men and women was consistent with past research on traditional gender stereotypes (Rudman & Glick, 2008). Overall, comments about men characterized them as "alpha males" ("Men are aggressive," "All men do is watch sports and drink beer," "Men are only after one thing"), or as domestically incompetent ("Men are babies when they're sick," "Men are so messy"). Comments about women depicted them as crazy, illogical, and unstable ("Women are so emotional," "Women are insane," "All women do is complain"), calling into question their ability to think rationally. However, unlike past research

suggesting that stereotypes depict women more positively (e.g., as more likeable) than men, we found that the spontaneous comments people remembered hearing were equally negative. As in Study 1, there were so few comments positive in valence that we were unable to include them in our analyses. The general negativity (about a $M = 2.73$ on a 7-point likeability scale) occurred even though we solicited comments heard about "what men/women are like," and did not specifically ask for sexist or stereotypical comments. One explanation for the comments' general negativity may be negative (compared to positive) information's greater salience; prior research shows that negative information commands more attention and is more memorable (Tversky & Kahneman, 1973; Taylor & Fiske, 1978). Thus, when participants were prompted to recall comments they had heard, negative comments may have more readily come to mind.

By comparing male and female participants' reactions to comments about men and women, we found that women generally displayed a stronger ingroup bias than men. Specifically, across multiple measures (accuracy, intimidation, trivialization, and disgust) women evinced much more negative reactions to sexist comments about women than sexist comments about men, showing a strong ingroup bias; by contrast, men either rated sexist comments about each gender equally or showed a significantly smaller ingroup bias. For example, women trivialized sexist comments about men (relative to those about women), whereas men did not trivialize comments about women relative to comments about men. Similarly, women rated negative comments about men as more accurate than comments about women, but men rated sexist comments about each gender as equally accurate. Further, these tendencies did not occur because men simply dismissed sexist comments about either gender; but rather, women tended to dismiss comments about men as accurate, trivial, and not intimidating or disgusting, whereas they had the opposite reaction to comments about women. These results

are similar to past research demonstrating women's ingroup bias with respect to holding more positive stereotypes about their own (rather than the other) gender group, compared to men's tendency to rate the genders more equally (Rudman & Goodwin, 2004).

Why do women show a stronger ingroup bias than men do? Due to their shared history of oppression, women may be more motivated to defend their ingroup than are men. Disadvantaged groups, including women, view discrimination as a constant and stable experience, whereas advantaged groups experience discrimination as random, isolated events. Women, as a disadvantaged group, may view sexism toward men as fairly infrequent and benign, in comparison to more frequent and serious sexism against women (Schmitt & Branscombe, 2002). Additionally, women may be acutely aware of the consequences of sexism directed toward them as well as men's privileges and status. As a result, women may experience more disgust toward anti-female sexism and view anti-male sexism as justified given the history and continued effects of sexism against women (e.g., wage inequality; American Association for University Women, 2017). Women may therefore be more motivated to support their ingroup because their social status is more precarious than men's. While sexism against women is a well-established issue in the United States, sexism against men is less clearly defined and rarely discussed.

Further, women's reactivity to sexist comments about women and their trivialization of sexist comments about men may be partially due to the differing comment content our results revealed. Specifically, despite being similarly negatively valenced, many comments seemed to disempower women while empowering men. For example, comments depicting men as aggressive or violent, though negative, still place men above women in a gender hierarchy (Glick & Whitehead, 2010). Conversely, comments painting women as overly emotional and irrational undermine their perceived judgment and competence, reinforcing their perceived lack of self-

sufficiency and dependence on men. In other words, women may have trivialized and rated comments about men as neither intimidating nor disgusting because those comments only served to reinforce men's greater power. If women feel that they do not have the power to change the gender hierarchy, as past research has suggested (Glick & Whitehead, 2010), trivialization may offer a coping mechanism to deal with the accompanying frustration. While laughing off sexist comments about men may provide temporary relief from discontent with the traditional gender hierarchy, if sexist comments about men do enforce such a hierarchy, women should feel compelled to combat them rather than dismiss them.

Finally, given the fact that women are at greater risk of violence and sexual assault from men than men are from women (Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network, 2017), female participants' greater reactivity might simply reflect unfortunate facts about gender relations. Thus, perceived comment accuracy may have driven female participants' tendency to trivialize and not experience disgust toward sexist comments about men.

Strengths and Limitations

To our knowledge, this represents the first study to systematically compare naturally occurring sexist comments about men to those about women. Previous studies have focused exclusively on sexist comments about women and failed to obtain descriptive data about comments directed toward men. The current study not only provides new insight into the content of comments made about each gender, but also about differences in how women and men perceive and react to these comments.

Although Study 2 expanded on Study 1 by including comments about women, it shares some of the same limitations. We had suspected the negativity of comments reported in Study 1 occurred because we asked participants about a "stereotypical comment" they had heard about

men and thus adjusted the wording in Study 2. Nevertheless, comments reported in Study 2 were just as negative as those reported in Study 1, despite the wording change. This may be because negative information is more memorable, and thus participants may have recalled the most severe comments they had heard. Therefore the comments cannot be assumed to represent the "typical" or most frequently heard comments about each gender. For example, even if most daily comments about women were positive and most comments about men were negative, if negative information gets remembered more easily, our results might falsely suggest that comments about both genders are similarly negative. In sum, because we only asked for one incident we cannot infer that these incidents are representative.

Another obvious limitation when comparing reactions toward comments about men versus comments about women concerns the different content of these comments. Although this was expected given the well-known differences in gender stereotypes that view men and women as "opposite sexes," differing content means that any comparison across comments about men versus women involves an apples to oranges comparison. Further, although we have interpreted our results as showing more ingroup bias on the part of women than men, we have no objective standard to judge this purported bias against. For example, were women necessarily wrong to judge comments about women as less accurate than comments about men? Perhaps (as suggested above) comments about men were generally more realistic than comments about women. This limitation is compounded by the differences in content between comments heard about men versus women. Although comments about each gender were, on average, equally negative, they differed qualitatively (e.g., men were generally depicted as immoral, sex-driven, and "macho" whereas women were depicted as "feminine," but controlling, as well as illogical and emotional).

Study 3

Studies 1 and 2 gathered descriptive data about comments directed toward men and women. For Study 3, we sought to expand upon these findings using an experimental method to examine how people spontaneously react to the same sexist comment targeting men versus women. In this study, participants are asked to complete a decision-making task with a partner (actually a set of preprogrammed responses) via a simulated online chat program. Study 3 was designed to address the short-coming of "apples to oranges" comparisons in the prior two studies by looking at male and female participants' reactions to an identical sexist comment targeting a woman versus a man. Specifically, in Study 3 we examined confrontation to an identical sexist comment that could be reasonably directed at either gender.

Study 3 introduced confrontation as a primary dependent variable. We chose to focus on confrontation as a key behavior outcome of cognitive (e.g., perceived accuracy) and emotional (e.g., disgust) reactions to sexist comments. The responses participants reported in Studies 1 and 2 may potentially underestimate initial reactions to sexist comments as prior research shows that people quickly tend to rationalize situations (e.g., by trivializing a sexist comment; Rasinski, Geers, & Czopp, 2013). Thus, in Study 3 we examined participants' behavioral reactions immediately after seeing a sexist comment from an ostensible interaction partner. Confrontation represents an important measure given that even extreme reactions to a sexist comment (e.g., disgust) do not accomplish anything unless they lead the individual experiencing these reactions to confront the person making the comment.

Under what circumstances are people most likely to confront? Research suggests that the choice is not straightforward because people first weigh social costs and benefits before choosing whether or not to confront a prejudiced comment. Further, people may generally calculate the

social costs of confronting as exceeding the potential benefits. For example, Kaiser and Miller (2001) found that participants rated an African American student who overtly attributed his or her failure on a test to racial bias as a hypersensitive, argumentative complainer. This finding held true even when information clearly suggested that the person grading the test was overtly racist and likely to have discriminated. Thus, even when discrimination is overt, confronting may have social costs. These costs increase when perpetrators have higher status, rather than equal or lower status, or are unfamiliar, making their reactions less predictable (Ayres et. al., 2009).

When it comes to confronting sexist comments about one's own gender, women's stronger ingroup bias may encourage greater confrontation when the comment targets their own gender (Rudman & Goodwin, 2004). Social identity theory suggests that a strong emotional connection to a group promotes greater investment in this group (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Therefore, to promote both positive group and personal outcomes, a person who strongly identifies with the threatened ingroup ought to have a greater desire to confront a prejudiced comment (Good, Moss-Racusin, & Sanchez, 2012). Because women (more so than men) tend to be highly identified with their gender group, they may be especially strongly motivated to defend against sexist comments targeting women. Indeed, Good et al. (2012) found that the more strongly women identify with their gender, the more likely they are to view comments evoking negative stereotypes about their group as both sexist and necessary to confront. Men, in contrast to women, have a very weak ingroup bias on implicit measures of stereotyping (Rudman & Goodwin, 2004) and, as we have showed in Studies 1 and 2, this low ingroup bias was evident in relatively tepid reactions to sexist comments about their own gender. As a result, men (compared to women) may feel less of a need to defend their ingroup, and be less likely to confront sexist comments about their own group.

Gender differences in confrontation may also occur because rewards for confronting differ. When women confront sexist comments directed toward women, they are rewarded by feeling empowered; for example, they experience increased confidence in their ability to perform certain professional tasks (Gervais, Hillard, & Vescio, 2010). By contrast, negative stereotypes about men may support men's position of power in society, reinforcing their dominant status (Glick et. al, 2004) and therefore undermine incentive for men to challenge these comments. Even when comments about men imply lower power, our findings in Studies 1 and 2 suggest that such comments disparage men in a typically devalued domain -- domestic life, but not their professional competence. Thus, men may have less to gain by confronting sexist comments about their group. Indeed, given that confronting tends to be viewed as "whiny" (Kaiser and Miller, 2001), which directly contradicts prescriptive stereotypes for men to be strong and stoic (Prentice & Carranza, 2002), men (compared to women) may not only have less to gain but more to lose by confronting. By contrast, women may have much to gain -- a feeling of empowerment. In sum, a strong ingroup bias among women and weak ingroup bias among men, coupled with greater rewards for women and greater costs for men for confronting sexist remarks about their group lead us to predict that women, as compared to men, will be more likely to confront a sexist comment directed toward their own gender.

Confronting comments directed toward the other gender, however, represents a very different situation than confronting comments about one's own gender. When comments are directed toward the other gender, confronting cannot be construed as self-interested (as defending one's own group tends to be) and therefore is less likely to be viewed as "whiny." The social costs and benefits may therefore shift, especially for men. Specifically, benevolently sexist norms (a product of intimate interdependence between sexes; Glick & Fiske, 1996) suggest that

men should defend women from attacks. Thus, men may actually be more motivated to confront sexist comments directed against women than against men. Because women are stereotyped as weak and dependent, men (as the higher status group) have a stake in providing for and protecting women to reinforce male dominance (Rudman & Glick, 2012). This interdependence, which supports traditional gender roles (Eagly & Wood, 2011), may lead men to defend women against attack. Additionally, according to social role theory, men are viewed as more likely to perform heroic and chivalrous acts, while women are viewed as requiring the most help (Eagly & Crowley, 1986). A sexist comment directed at a woman may make her seem like a victim, and expectations that a man should protect a woman may lead a man to come to her defense. Such chivalrous behavior is consistent with benevolent sexism, which states that men should defend and protect women, so long as they adhere to stereotypical gender roles (Glick & Fiske, 1996). In sum, women's perceived dependence on men, and the fact that at least some men hold attitudes that reinforce it, suggests that men may be likely to defend against or confront sexist comments directed toward women rather than those directed at their own gender.

By contrast, women may have little incentive to come to men's defense when sexist comments occur. Studies 1 and 2 both showed that women rated negative comments about men as more accurate than men did. And Study 2 revealed that women rate stereotypical comments about men as more accurate than those directed toward women, whereas men did not differ significantly in their ratings of accuracy whether the comment targeted a man or a woman. Assuming that perceiving a comment as accurate discourages confrontation, whereas perceiving comments as inaccurate encourages confrontation, we suggest that women will be less likely to confront sexist comments about men compared to men confronting sexist comments about women. Further, women do not experience benevolently sexist norms to protect men as men do

toward women; rather, benevolence toward men takes the form of nurturing men at home (Glick & Fiske, 1999). As a result, we expect men to be more likely to confront sexist comments directed toward women than women are to confront sexist comments about men.

Taken together, the arguments above suggest that comments that target women should generally be more likely confronted than comments that target men. Specifically, we have suggested that both men and women may confront sexist comments toward women; the former due to benevolent sexism and the latter due to a desire for empowerment. By contrast, neither men nor women may be eager to defend men from sexist comments; the former because doing so may seem unmanly, and the latter because they see sexist comments about men as accurate and justified.

The logic detailed above also suggests that the negative feelings each gender reports toward the perpetrator of the sexist comment will parallel their degree of confrontation. When a sexist comment targets one's own gender, women will experience more negative feelings toward the person who made the sexist comment than men will. By contrast, when the comment is made about a member of the other sex, women may experience less negativity toward the person making the comment than men will.

Summary of Hypotheses

We hypothesized that 1) sexist comments directed toward women will be confronted to a greater degree overall, 2) women will confront sexist comments about women to a greater degree than those about men, 3) men will confront sexist comments about men and women equally or even show a bias toward confronting comments directed at women more than those directed toward men, 4) women will have more negative feelings toward their partners when the sexist comment targets a woman than when it targets a man, 5) men will not differ in negative feelings

toward their partners whether the comment targets a woman or a man.

Methods

Participants

Participants consisted of 36 male and 67 female undergraduates at Lawrence University, a small Midwestern liberal arts university. Participants volunteered to participate in a "Decision Making Task," some with the possibility of extra credit. Participants were randomly assigned to one of four conditions in a 2 (Participant Gender: male, female) x 2 (Gender Targeted by Sexist Comment: male, female) between-subjects design, with the degree of confrontation measured as our dependent variable.

Procedure

Participants took part in a modified version of the "Desert Island Task," taken from a study done by Rasinski, Geers, and Czopp (2013) who adapted it from Swim and Hyers (1999).

Online chat program. First, participants were told that they would be working with a partner on a decision-making task. See Appendix C for informed consent form. Although participants were led to believe that they were working with an anonymous partner via a computer chat program, in reality the "partner" was a series of preprogrammed responses. See Appendix D for script. Participants believed they were working with either a female partner named Michelle or a male partner named Michael, We chose these names based on Kasof's (1993) research, which characterized both names as having equivalent connotations other than gender. Participants believed that Michael or Michelle was a student remotely participating from another university. At the beginning of the task, the participant and his or her partner chose a group of 6 hypothetical individuals from a list of 8 men and 8 women who they thought would be most helpful for survival on a desert island. This list of potential individuals included biographical information, occupation, and a photo. See Appendix E for list. To ensure that the

"partner" (which had preprogrammed responses) and the participant did not choose the same people, the list was divided in two. The participant was only allowed to choose from the upper half, while the "partner" chose from the bottom half.

The participant and their alleged partner took turns choosing a person from the list and providing a rationale for each choice. For example, the alleged partner picked "Jenny," a physician, and justified the choice by saying, "As a doctor, she would be able to take care of any of us who fell ill." The participant and the partner took turns until all selections were made. After each selection and justification, the partner who did not choose was asked to comment on their partner's choice (which was designed to increase the likelihood that the participant would confront the sexist justification for the partner's final choice). In response to the participant's choice, the partner made generic comments such as "That's a good choice."

Sexist comment manipulation. After making the final selection, the partner made a sexist comment to justify the choice of either a man or a woman. The comment was equivalent in severity and content for each gender: "We could use someone hot like [her/him] on the island, even though having another [woman/man] is likely to lower the IQ of the group." While this comment is not an exact replication of comments reported in Studies 1 and 2 about men and women, it represents comments that sexualize men and women, which was the only comparable category across the two genders (sex-driven for comments targeting men; sexually promiscuous for comments targeting women). The comment denigrated the intelligence of the chosen individual and linked that specifically to their gender to make it clear that the comment was sexist and disparaging.

Confrontation opportunity. Past research shows that people who are suddenly confronted with sexist remarks generally fail to confront (e.g., Woodzicka & LaFrance, 2001).

Therefore, to encourage confrontation, we set up the opportunity to confront online rather than in person and created a pattern by which people reacted to each choice of whom to include on the desert island. Also, the sexist comment always came from a person who was the opposite gender of the target of the sexist comment to increase its potential offensiveness, thereby increasing the likelihood of confrontation. After exposure to the sexist comment, each participant was asked once again to comment on their partner's choice. Subsequently, all four of the researchers who were blind to condition rated the participants' comments on the sexist choice on a -3 (Affirmed sexist comment) to +3 (Rejected sexist comment) scale, similar to that the scale used by Rasinski et al. (2013). A score of 0 indicated no confrontation, whereas negative scores indicated affirmation of the sexist comment (e.g., "Haha, yeah, a hottie but definitely will lower the collective IQ!"), and a positive score indicated clear opposition to the sexist comment (e.g., "That's sexist and offensive!").

After they replied to the sexist comment, the participants were told that the interaction was over and asked to complete a brief questionnaire along with an evaluation of their partner, emphasizing that the participants' responses were anonymous and would only be seen by the researcher. See Appendix F for questionnaire. First, they rated their partner's personality characteristics on items such as competence, friendliness, intelligence, arrogance, and aggressiveness. Second, they rated responses to their partner on such emotions as disgust, resentment, and pity toward their partner. These ratings were made on a 1 (Not at all characteristic) to 5 (Extremely characteristic) scale. Next a series of items assessed perceptions of the partner's choices and justifications (e.g., Which of your partner's justifications surprised you? Why?), whether they had been offended at any point, and the perceived likeability of the other person (e.g., "Based on his/her comments, my partner is really likeable."). These ratings

were made on a 1 (Strongly disagree) to 7 (Strongly agree) scale. Overall, these ratings were grouped into two scales: positive feelings toward partner (i.e., fondness, respect, admiration; α = .95) and negative feelings toward partner (i.e., resentment, offense, disgust; α = .91). These latter responses were intended to determine whether the partner's sexist comment affected perceptions of his or her intelligence, likeability, respectability, offensiveness, and prejudice. After completing the questionnaire and evaluation, participants were debriefed before they left.

Results

Confrontation

Our data supported all five hypotheses. As we predicted in Hypothesis 1, sexist comments directed toward women were confronted to a greater degree than those directed toward men. Additionally, women confronted sexist comments about women to a greater degree than sexist comments about men (Hypothesis 2), while men confronted comments about men and women to an equal degree (Hypothesis 3). To test these hypotheses, we averaged four independent judges' ratings of the degree to which each participant confronted the sexist actor. Ratings were made on a -3 (Affirmed sexist comment) to +3 (Rejected sexist comment) scale. Judges' inter-rater agreement was strong, α = .94. We then conducted a 2 (Participant Gender: male, female) x 2 (Gender Targeted by Sexist Comment: male, female) ANOVA on the degree to which the sexist actor was confronted (see Figure 4). As predicted, there was a significant main effect for the gender targeted by the sexist comment, revealing that sexist comments directed toward a woman (M = 1.35) were confronted to a greater degree than those directed toward a man (M = .05), $F(1, 99) = 12.78$, $p < .001$. There was no significant main effect for the participant gender $F(1, 99) = 1.30$, *ns*, indicating that men and women were equally likely to confront.

The target main effect, however, must be considered in relation to a marginally significant participant gender x gender targeted by sexist comment interaction, $F(1, 99) = 3.80$, $p = .05$. *Post hoc* tests for the simple effects revealed that when women were given the opportunity to confront, they confronted comments about a woman ($M = 1.50$) to a greater degree than comments about a man ($M = -.51$), $p < .001$. However, when men were given the opportunity to confront, there was no significant difference between the degree to which they confronted comments about a woman ($M = 1.21$) and a man ($M = .62$), *ns*. When the sexist comment targeted a woman, both male ($M = 1.21$) and female participants ($M = 1.50$) were equally likely to confront, *ns*. However, when the sexist comment targeted a man, men ($M = .62$) were more likely to confront than women were ($M = -.51$), $p < .05$. Further, the negative mean for women's confrontation toward comments about a man indicated a tendency to affirm and trivialize rather than confront the sexist comment toward a man.

In sum, we found support for the hypothesis that, when targeted by sexist comments, women are defended more than men (Hypothesis 1). Additionally, women confronted comments directed toward their ingroup to a greater degree than comments directed toward their outgroup (Hypothesis 2), while men confronted the comment that targeted a man and the comment that targeted a woman equally (Hypothesis 3). When the comment targeted a woman, male and female participants confronted to an equal degree, but when the comment targeted a man, men confronted to a greater degree than women did.

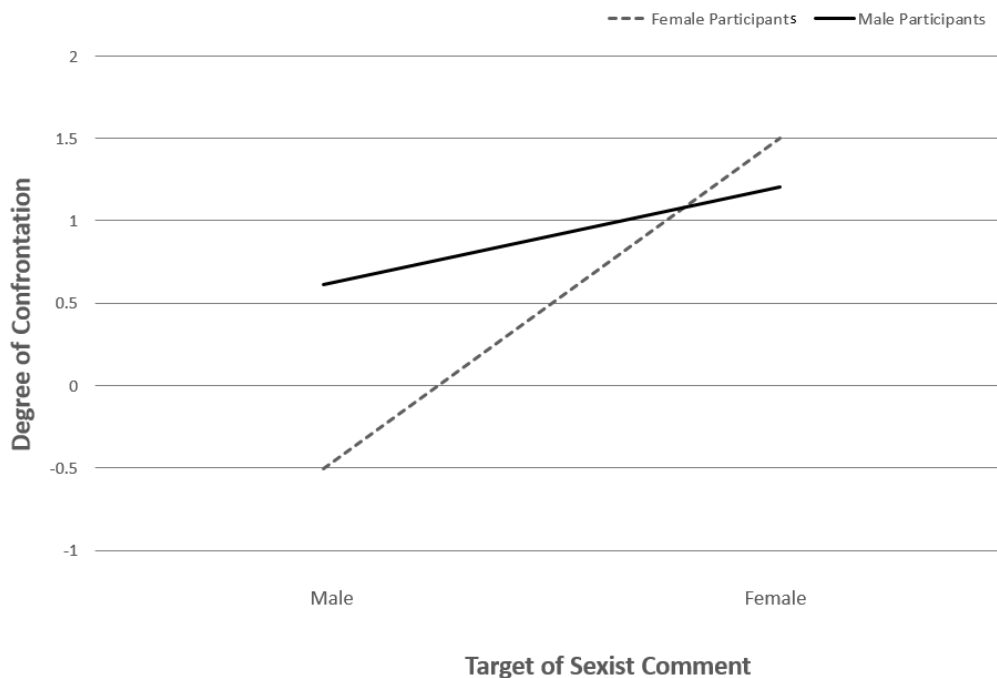

Figure 4. Degree of confrontation by target of sexist comment. This figure illustrates the degree to which male and female participants confronted sexist comments directed at either a man or a woman.

Negative Feelings toward Sexist Partner

We found support for Hypothesis 4 and Hypothesis 5; women reported more negative feelings toward their partner when the comment targeted a woman than when it targeted a man (Hypothesis 4) and men did not differ in their reports of negative feelings toward their partner based on the comment's target gender (Hypothesis 5). To test these hypotheses, we conducted a 2 (Participant Gender: male, female) x 2 (Gender Targeted by Sexist Comment: male, female) ANOVA on the degree to which the participant reported negative feelings toward their partner (see Figure 5). Negative feelings included ratings of the sexist partner on characteristics such as aggressive, arrogant, and stupid, as well as negative emotional responses, such as hatred, offense,

and discomfort. There was a significant main effect for the gender targeted by the sexist comment, revealing that participants had more negative feelings toward the partner when he or she made sexist comments about a woman (*M* = 2.97) as compared to a man (*M* = 2.34), $F(1, 99) = 10.74$, $p < .001$. However, this main effect should be interpreted in relation to a significant participant gender x gender targeted by sexist comment interaction, $F(1, 99) = 4.89$, $p < .05$.

Post hoc comparisons revealed that when the sexist comment targeted a woman, there was no significant difference between the degree of negative feelings reported by male participants (M = 2.92) and female participants (M = 3.00), *ns*. However, when the comment was directed toward a man, male participants reported more negative feelings (M = 2.75) than female participants (M = 2.12) did, $p < .01$. In sum, we found support for Hypotheses 4 and 5. Although there was no participant gender difference in negative feelings when a sexist comment targeted a woman, female participants reported significantly more negative feelings when the comment targeted women than when the comment targeted men, whereas male participants showed no difference in negative feelings when the target of the sexist comment was either male or female.

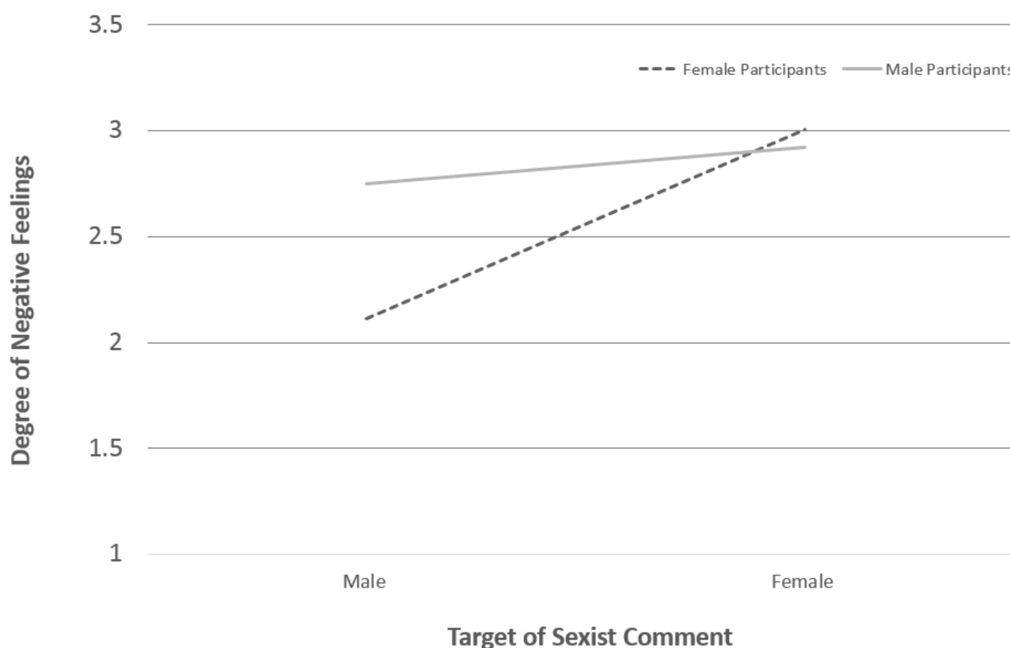

Figure 5. Degree of negative feelings by target of sexist comment. This figure illustrates the degree of negative feelings male and female participants reported having toward their partner, depending on whether the target of the sexist comment was male or female.

Discussion

Overall, we found support for all five of our hypotheses. People were more likely to confront sexist comments directed toward a woman than sexist comments directed toward a man (Hypothesis 1). Women, overall, defended comments about women more than comments about men (Hypothesis 2). When women were given the opportunity to confront, they confronted the comment about a woman more often than the comment about a man. Men confronted sexist comments about men and women equally, however when the comment targeted a man, men confronted the comment more than women did (Hypothesis 3). Indeed, instead of confronting, women were more likely to agree with sexist statements against a man. Additionally, our findings on negative feelings reported by participants toward the perpetrator of the comment parallel our findings on confrontation such that women reported greater negative feelings when the comment targeted a woman versus a man (Hypothesis 4), whereas men showed no significant difference in negative feelings toward the perpetrator of the comment (Hypothesis 5).

Why were sexist comments directed toward women confronted more often than sexist comments toward men? Sexism toward women is more prevalent, due to their history of oppression (Swim et. al., 2001). Because of this, women are still often viewed as lower in status than men (Ayres et. al, 2009). Due to the movement for gender equality and the effort to raise women's status in society, people may feel it is more important to confront sexist comments toward women. However, this leaves sexist comments toward men as less likely to be addressed. Prior research on confronting sexism has primarily focused on sexism directed toward women,

and few published studies address the issue of sexism targeted against men. Although sexism is less prevalent against men than women, promoting gender equality requires confronting sexism toward both genders. That sexist comments toward women were confronted equally by both men and women was a particularly positive finding given that combating sexism is typically viewed as a female endeavor. This finding suggests that men can be powerful allies in confronting sexist comments against women.

Both the findings for confrontation and negative feelings are consistent with past research demonstrating women's greater ingroup bias in comparison to men. Women reported significantly more negative feelings when the comment targeted a woman rather than a man and men did not differ significantly in their reports of negative feelings regardless of which gender the comment targeted. Similarly, women differed significantly in how they confronted comments directed toward a man and a woman, confronting those that targeted their ingroup to a greater degree than those targeting their outgroup, whereas men confronted comments about a man and comments about a woman equally. Our findings support previous research suggesting that women display a stronger ingroup bias than men.

Limitations and Strengths

A major strength of this study compared to Studies 1 and 2 is its experimental method, which allowed us to tightly control the comment people were exposed to, including both the gender of the perpetrator and of the target. Further, whereas past confrontation studies have focused on whether or not participants will confront sexism, this study encouraged confrontation and so was able to determine the degree to which men and women confront sexist comments directed toward both genders when given ample opportunity to do so. Additionally, by simulating a situation in which a sexist comment occurred, our experimental method offered

insight into how people actually react in the moment of hearing a sexist comment, rather than their retrospective recollections about their reactions. Finally, our main dependent variable was behavioral, examining how people responded to an ostensible partner after hearing the comment.

Nevertheless, Study 3 had several limitations. We had nearly twice as many female as male participants, limiting power for cross-gender comparisons. Participants were students at a liberal arts university and thus were all of approximately the same age. Additionally, we falsely told participants that they were randomly assigned a partner from another school and some seemed to have had doubts about whether the partner was real. Relatedly, the sexist comment made by the partner may have raised doubts about the situation as it represented a sudden change in tone for the partner, who had justified prior choices in a nonsexist way.

Finally, a major confounding variable in our study was that the sexist comment was always made by a member of the opposite gender of the comment's target. For instance, if the comment was directed toward a woman, the partner who made the comment was a man. We chose to focus on these cross-gender comments because prejudiced remarks generally come from people who are not a member of the group that is targeted, whereas comments that target one's own group may be taken less seriously, as an insider joke. Future research could examine how the perpetrator's gender affects confrontation when sexist comments come from members of the group being targeted (e.g., a man commenting that "all men are pigs").

General Discussion

In three studies, we examined sexist comments directed toward men (Study 1) and toward both men and women (Studies 2 and 3) to see how participant and target gender relates to reactions to sexist comments. Taken as a group, the three studies revealed that women differed in their reactions to comments about men versus comments about women, whereas men's reactions

tended not to differ significantly whether the comment was directed at men or women. More specifically, women reacted negatively to sexist comments about women (e.g., finding them more intimidating and disgusting, leading to confrontation in Study 3) but tended to trivialize and even agree with or encourage sexist comments about men. By contrast, men showed only a weak ingroup bias (sometimes reacting a bit more negatively to sexist comments about men versus women), but generally reacted equally strongly to comments about both genders, including willingness to confront the perpetrator in Study 3 and label the comment as sexist. Overall, these findings support previous research suggesting women possess a stronger ingroup bias than men do (Rudman & Goodwin, 2004).

Nature of Sexist Comments

While past research suggests that stereotypes about women characterize them more favorably than stereotypes about men, Study 2 found no significant difference in ratings of valence for naturalistic comments about both genders. In fact, even though Study 2's prompt asked for comments heard about "what [men/women] are like" in a neutral way without mentioning stereotypes, comments about both genders were generally negative, depicting men and women as low on likeability (on a 7-point scale: Study 1, $M = 2.64$; Study 2, $M = 2.73$). As suggested previously, this could be due to the salience of negative information in general (Tversky & Kahneman, 1973; Taylor & Fiske, 1978). We may have also found these results because our study asked participants to report comments that they hear in daily life rather than assign items on an inventory to either men or women, like previous research about gender stereotypes (Prentice & Carranza, 2002). The salience of negative information, as well as the format encouraging participants to consider naturally occurring comments, contributed to the low valence of the comments reported.

In terms of content, across Study 1 (comments about men only) and Study 2 (comments about both genders), comments about men and women both fell into five categories. Comments about men depicted them as either sex-driven, child-like, “macho,” morally flawed, or were simply dehumanizing. Comments about women depicted them as either emotional/illogical, controlling/demanding, feminine, “catty,” or sexually promiscuous. While our results differ from gender stereotype research in terms of valence, the content of these remarks is consistent with past research on gender stereotypes that depict men as dominant and aggressive and women as emotional and unreasonable.

Ingroup Bias and Men’s and Women’s Reactions to Sexist Comments

Women display a stronger ingroup bias than men (Rudman & Goodwin, 2004). According to this research, a person with high self-esteem and strong gender identity will demonstrate a stronger bias for his or her own gender at the automatic level; this balanced gender identity, however, is found only in women and not men. Our results demonstrate women’s preference for their own gender compared with men’s weaker bias. Across Study 1 and Study 2, women rated negative comments about men as more accurate than negative comments about women, whereas men rated these comments as equally accurate. Additionally, Study 2 found that although male and female participants were more intimidated when the comment targeted their gender ingroup versus gender outgroup, this effect was much stronger for female participants, suggesting a stronger ingroup bias for women compared to men. Study 2 also found that female participants reported more disgust when a comment targeted women than when it targeted men, but men showed no difference in their ratings of disgust depending on the target gender. Finally, female participants trivialized comments about men significantly more than comments about women in Study 2, while men trivialized comments about men and women equally.

Why Do Men and Women Confront Sexism Against Women Equally?

Confrontation research has suggested that certain conditions encourage confrontation, such as a familiar perpetrator of equal or lower status (Ayers et. al., 2009). We posit that participants' perceptions of the prejudice itself may also encourage confrontation. More specifically, our results suggest that people will be encouraged to confront prejudice if they: a) think the prejudiced comment is inaccurate, b) are disgusted by the prejudiced comment, and c) take the prejudiced comment seriously.

We suggest that our results from Studies 2 and 3 fall in line with the criteria outlined above. When reporting sexist comments in Study 2, both men and women met all three of these criteria when the comment targeted a woman to a greater extent than when the comment targeted a man, finding the comment to be inaccurate, disgusting, and serious. As Study 3 used a comparably negative comment to those reported in Study 2, we believe that participants would still have met these criteria in Study 3 when faced with a sexist comment directed toward a woman. Accordingly, there was no difference in confrontation among male and female participants when the comment targeted a woman, although this was not the case when the comment targeted a man. Men and women differed significantly in their confrontation of sexist comments targeting a man with men confronting the comment to a greater degree than women who tended to agree with the comments.

Why Do Women Confront Sexism Against Women More Than Sexism Against Men?

Our results from Study 1 and Study 2 about how participants rate comments in terms of accuracy, disgust, and trivialization parallel our findings from Study 3. In each study, women differed in their responses to sexist comments depending on which gender was targeted, whereas men showed a less extreme difference or no difference in their ratings. If women find comments

about men to be accurate and do not take them seriously, they may have little motivation to confront them. Indeed, Study 3 found that women not only failed to confront a sexist comment about a man, but tended to affirm it and think the comment was humorous. Our findings that men tend not to differ in their reactions to sexist comments about women in terms of accuracy, disgust, and trivialization, versus sexist comments about men, may help to explain why men do not differ in their likelihood to confront sexist comments about women versus men. If men find comments about men and women equally accurate, disgusting, and trivial, they may have little motivation to confront one type of comment to a greater degree than the other.

Our proposed criteria (accuracy, disgust, seriousness) may also matter for people contemplating confronting other kinds of prejudiced comments (e.g., racist or ethnocentric remarks). However, our results were obtained in the context of gender-related prejudice, which differs from other types of prejudice (i.e., racism, ageism, etc.) where the dominant group typically holds a stronger ingroup bias than the subordinate group (Nosek et. al., 2002). We imagine, then, that although findings may replicate for perceivers from the subordinate group (e.g., ethnic minorities might trivialize prejudiced comments about whites), we might not replicate the lack of ingroup bias on the part of dominant groups (e.g., whites might react more negatively to prejudiced comments about whites and perhaps not be so eager to defend members of racial and ethnic minorities against prejudiced comments). Thus, we cannot necessarily expect some of our findings to generalize to other prejudices. Future research should examine reactions to prejudiced comments targeting different types of groups.

Limitations and Future Directions

Our research is limited by the difference in sample size between Studies 1 and 2 compared to Study 3. Studies 1 and 2 utilized MTurk to distribute surveys via the internet, and

thus the sample was large and diverse in age, region, and overall background. Study 3, however, sampled only from a small Midwestern liberal arts university, and thus the participants were all between the ages of 18 and 22 with shared ideologies shaped by a core curriculum and university culture. Although similarities in results between the first two studies and the third study suggest that findings such as women's stronger ingroup bias are consistent across varying samples, we cannot extrapolate our findings about how often confrontation occurs as easily outside of this specific group of people. Students at this university tend to be activists, especially for liberal social causes, so they may be more likely to confront than the general population.

Study 3 exposed participants to a comment that was not generated by participants in Studies 1 and 2. We chose this method because the sexist comments reported about men and women in the first two studies were so different in quality that it was impossible to find a comment that would apply equally well to both men or women. Thus, we chose a comment that was sexually-related because this category occurred in naturalistic sexist comments directed toward both men and women. Thus, although Study 3 addressed the "apples to oranges" dilemma of sexist comments about men versus women, the comment may have been viewed as unrealistic. Future research should examine how men and women respond to the actual comments reported in Studies 1 and 2, randomly assigning participants to hear a comment from one of the ten categories of comments (i.e., comments that are representative of comments that men and women report hearing in daily life).

One main strength of our project was combining descriptive and experimental methods. Our first two studies gathered descriptive data about comments participants heard about men and women, but were limited due to the retrospective reporting of the comments and reactions to them. Study 3 gave participants a realistic opportunity to confront a sexist comment similar to

those reported in the first two studies, allowing us to more confidently draw conclusions about how men and women differ in their reactions to stereotypical comments made about men to those made about women.

Future research should examine to what extent men and women confront sexist comments targeting each gender when they are perpetrated by a man versus a woman. To encourage maximum confrontation, the comment in Study 3 was always made by someone of the opposite gender to the target. However, given women's strong ingroup bias, perpetrator gender may have separately affected how women reacted. If the comment targeting a man had also been made by a man, women may have been even less motivated to confront, given that the target and perpetrator both would belong to their outgroup. Further, perhaps women reacted less negatively to sexist comments about men because a woman always made the comment and, to show ingroup solidarity, they felt the need to agree. Additionally, we acknowledge that our research focused on individuals who identify within the traditional gender binary; future research should seek to address stereotypes about those who do not identify as male or female.

Conclusion

Stereotypes about men and women differ in content as well as the reactions they elicit. Our most striking finding was that women tended to dismiss sexist comments directed toward men by trivializing such comments and failing to confront a sexist remark aimed at a man. In part, they may have done so because they perceive such disparaging comments as accurate depictions of what men are like. We suggest that these reactions stem from women's experience as the consistently oppressed gender group in society. Women may feel they have little to gain, in terms of status, from confronting sexism directed toward men, but stereotypes that depict men as dominant and aggressive reinforce an asymmetrical power dynamic and should be confronted.

Conversely, it is encouraging that men reacted similarly to comments about men and women, especially when given the opportunity to confront. Men can act as allies for women in the pursuit of gender equality by confronting sexist comments about either gender. However, women should also take comments directed toward men seriously by confronting them as comments directed toward both genders perpetuate a traditional gender hierarchy. Perhaps the solution to the sexism systematically experienced by women is not to trivialize comments about men, but rather to offer reciprocal support.

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Appendix A

Informed Consent and Survey (Study 1)

Evaluating Stereotypical Comments Against Men

Elizabeth L. Haines, Ph.D.

William Paterson University

Approval 2016-XXX

hainese@wpunj.edu

July 2016

You are being asked to participate in this study because the researcher wants to understand how people perceive others and make sense of their characteristics. For this study you will be asked to decide how traits do or do not apply to a particular person.

The research takes about twenty minutes. At the conclusion, you will be provided with an email address so that you can ask whatever questions you wish concerning your experiences in the research, or concerning theories tested in the research.

If you would like to participate in this research, please continue by clicking on the button below. Your completion of the material indicates your consent to participate. If you do not want to participate in this research, do not complete the materials. Please understand that your participation in this study is completely voluntary and that you may withdraw at any time.

(Directions after indicating consent)

We are interested in how people stereotype men in day to day comments. We are asking you to think of comments you have heard other people, whether male or female, say about what men are like (e.g., "That's just like a man to be..." or "All men are..." or "That's the way men are, they..."). In the following survey, we'd like you to recall 3 stereotypical comments that you recall hearing about men.

Below, type in the first example of a stereotypical comment about "what men are like" that you recall hearing. Please write the comment as you remember hearing it.

(Participants completed questions 1-42 for each of the three comments)

1. In relation to yourself, who or where did the comment, "(the comment reported)," come from?

A stranger
An acquaintance or friend
An intimate relationship partner
A peer or same-level coworker
An authority (e.g., a boss at work)
A subordinate (e.g., someone who works under you)
A family member
Media (e.g., TV, movies, etc.)

Online Social Media (e.g., Instagram, Twitter, a "meme" on Facebook, etc.)
Other ____________________

2. If the comment, "(the comment reported)," targeted a specific person, who was the target of the comment in relation to the person who made the comment? (if the comment did not target any man in particular, indicate the last option "men in general")
Me
A stranger
An acquaintance or friend
An intimate relationship partner
A peer or same-level coworker
An authority (e.g., a boss at work)
A subordinate (e.g., someone who works under the person making the comment)
A family member
A person or character in the media (e.g., a celebrity or a character in a TV show)
Men in general

3. How often do you hear a MAN say something identical or very close to the comment, "(the comment reported)," in daily life?
Never
Almost never
Less than once a month
Once a month
Two-four times a month
Once a week
Several times a week
Once a day
Several times a day

4. How often do you hear a WOMAN say something identical or very close to the comment, "(the comment reported)," in daily life?
Never
Almost never
Less than once a month
Once a month
Two-four times a month
Once a week
Several times a week
Once a day
Several times a day

5. How accurately do you think the comment, "(the comment reported)," describes men in general?
Extremely inaccurately
Very inaccurately
Somewhat inaccurately

Slightly inaccurately
Slightly accurately
Somewhat inaccurately
Very accurately
Extremely accurately

6. When you hear a comment identical or similar to the comment, "(the comment reported)," in face-to-face interaction, how often do you challenge or confront the person who said it?
Never
Rarely
Sometimes
Often
Always

(*Participants responded on a 1(not at all) to 7(very much) scale for questions 7-42)*

7. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel offended?

8. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel amused?

9. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" cheer you up?

10. To what extent did you feel that "(the comment reported)" was realistic?

11. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel disgusted?

12. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel angry?

13. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" affirm your beliefs?

14. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" bother you?

15. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel upset?

16. To what extent did you feel "(the comment reported)" was accurate?

17. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel entertained?

18. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel attacked?

19. To what extent did you agree with "(the comment reported)"?

20. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel pleased?

21. To what extent did you feel "(the comment reported)" was funny?

22. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel self-confident?

23. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel hopeless?

24. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel resigned?

25. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel inadequate?

26. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel influential?

27. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel intimidated?

28. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel self-assured?

29. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel helpless?

30. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel worthless?

31. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel disheartened?

32. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel competent?

33. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel discouraged?

34. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel threatened?

35. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel comfortable?

36. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel disappointed?

37. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel uncomfortable?

38. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel self-conscious?

39. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel dominant?

40. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel defeated?

41. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel powerful?

42. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel anxious?

Demographics

43. What is your year of birth?

44. Choose one or more races that you consider yourself to be:
White
Black or African American
American Indian or Alaska Native
Asian
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
Other ____________________

45. What is your gender?
Male
Female
Other ____________________
Prefer not to say

46. Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?
Heterosexual (straight)
Homosexual (gay)
Bisexual
Other ____________________
Prefer not to say

47. What is the highest level of school you have completed or the highest degree you have received?
Less than high school degree
High school graduate (high school diploma or equivalent including GED)
Some college but no degree
Associate degree in college (2-year)
Bachelor's degree in college (4-year)
Master's degree
Doctoral degree
Professional degree (JD, MD)

48. Are you now married, widowed, divorced, separated or never married?
Married
Widowed
Divorced
Separated
Never Married

Appendix B
Informed Consent and Survey (Study 2)

Comments About Men/Women

Elizabeth L. Haines, Ph.D. William Paterson University

Approval 2016-XXX

hainese@wpunj.edu

July, 2016

You are being asked to participate in this study because the researcher wants to better understand the content and consequences of comments people hear in daily life about "what men/women are like." You will be asked to report one comment you have heard people make about what men/women are like, provide information on the context of the comment, and rate your reactions to the comment as well as how the comment characterizes men/women. The research takes about fifteen minutes. At the conclusion, you will be provided with an email address so that you can ask whatever questions you wish concerning your experiences in the research, or concerning theories tested in the research. Your responses will be completely confidential and only group averages will be reported in any write-up of the data. If you would like to participate in this research, please continue by clicking on the button below. Your completion of the material indicates your consent to participate. If you do not want to participate in this research, do not complete the materials. Please understand that your participation in this study is completely voluntary and that you may withdraw at any time by exiting the browser.

(Directions after indicating consent)

Yay! That's great. Thanks for agreeing to participate! We are interested in how people talk about men/women in day to day comments. We are asking you to think of a comment you have heard in a conversation, either one on one or in a group, about what men/women are like (e.g., "Men/women always..." or "All men/women are..." or "That's the way men/women are, they..."). In the following survey, we'd like you to recall a comment that you recall hearing about men/women in an actual conversation you have had. There are no right or wrong answers, just your opinions are what matter to us! Ready? Let's begin!

Below, type in a comment about "What men/women are like" that you recall hearing in an actual conversation you have had. Please write the comment as you remember hearing it.

1. In what kind of interaction did you hear the comment?
One-on-one conversation with a man
One-on-one conversation with a woman
Conversation with mainly or all male group
Conversation with mainly or all female group
Conversation with mixed gender group
Other ____________________

2. In what context did you hear the comment?
Workplace
Home
School
Public Outing (ex. bar, restaurant, mall, etc.)
Other ____________________

3. In relation to yourself, who or where did the comment, "(the comment reported)," come from?
A stranger
An acquaintance, friend, or coworker
An intimate relationship partner
An authority (e.g., a boss at work)
A family member
Other ____________________

4. Did the comment come from a
Man
Woman

5. How often do you hear a MAN say something identical or very close to the comment, "(the comment reported)," in daily life?
Never
Almost never
Less than once a month
One-two times a month
One-two times a week
Once a day
Several times a day

6. How often do you hear a WOMAN say something identical or very close to the comment, "(the comment reported)," in daily life?
Never
Almost never
Less than once a month
One-two times a month
One-two times a week
Once a day
Several times a day

7. How accurately do you think the comment, "(the comment reported)," describes men/women in general?
Extremely inaccurately
Very inaccurately
Somewhat inaccurately
Neutral
Somewhat accurately

Very accurately
Extremely accurately

8. When you hear a comment identical or similar to the comment, "(the comment reported)," in face-to-face interaction, how often do you challenge or confront the person who said it?
Never
Rarely
Sometimes
Often
Always

For the following questions, you will be asked to answer questions about how the comment, "(the comment reported)" made you feel.

(*Participants responded on a 1(not at all) to 7(very much) scale for questions 9-68)*
9. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel offended?

10. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel amused?

11. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" cheer you up?

12. To what extent did you feel that "(the comment reported)" was realistic?

13. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel disgusted?

14. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel angry?

15. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" affirm your beliefs?

16. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" bother you?

17. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel upset?

18. To what extent did you feel "(the comment reported)" was accurate?

19. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel entertained?

20. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel attacked?

21. To what extent did you agree with "(the comment reported)"?

22. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel pleased?

23. To what extent did you feel "(the comment reported)" was funny?

24. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel confident?

25. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel inadequate?

26. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel influential?

27. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel intimidated?

28. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel self-assured?

29. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel helpless?

30. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel competent?

31. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel uncomfortable?

32. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel discouraged?

33. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel threatened?

34. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel comfortable?

35. How seriously did you take the comment, "(the comment reported)"?

36. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel self-conscious?

37. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel dominant?

38. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel defeated?

39. To what extent did "(the comment reported)" make you feel powerful?

40. To what extent did you think "(the comment reported)" was a joke?

For the following questions, you will be asked to answer questions about how the comment, "(the comment reported)" characterizes men/women.

(*Participants responded on a 1(not at all) to 7(very much) scale)*

41. How powerful does "(the comment reported)" make men/women seem?

42. How influential does "(the comment reported)" make men/women seem?

43. How dominant does "(the comment reported)" make men/women seem?

44. How aggressive does "(the comment reported)" make men/women seem?

45. How violent does "(the comment reported)" make men/women seem?

46. How reckless does "(the comment reported)" make men/women seem?

47. How likeable does "(the comment reported)" make men/women seem?

48. How much would you want to be friends with the type of person that "(the comment reported)" describes?
49. How much would you want to interact with the type of person that "(the comment reported)" describes?

50. How favorably does "(the comment reported)" characterize men/women?

51. How sexually-driven does "(the comment reported)" make men/women seem?

52. How sexually promiscuous does "(the comment reported)" make men/women seem?

53. How interested in sex does "(the comment reported)" make men/women seem?

54. To what extent does "(the comment reported)" characterize men/women as sexual predators?

55. How competent does "(the comment reported)" make men/women seem?

56. How good a leader would the kind of person "(the comment reported)" describes be?

57. How capable does "(the comment reported)" make men/women seem?

58. How self-sufficient does "(the comment reported)" make men/women seem?

59. How mature does "(the comment reported)" make men/women seem?

60. How responsible does "(the comment reported)" make men/women seem?

61. How emotionally immature does "(the comment reported)" make men/women seem?

62. How dependent on others does "(the comment reported)" make men/women seem?

63. How competent in the home does "(the comment reported)" make men/women seem?

64. How good at taking care of children does "(the comment reported)" make men/women seem?

65. How moral does "(the comment reported)" make men/women seem?

66. How selfish does "(the comment reported)" make men/women seem?

67. How trustworthy does "(the comment reported)" make men/women seem?

68. How considerate of others' needs does "(the comment reported)" make men/women seem?

Demographics

43. What is your year of birth?

44. Choose one or more races that you consider yourself to be:
White
Black or African American
American Indian or Alaska Native
Asian
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
Other ____________________

45. What is your gender?
Male
Female
Other ____________________
Prefer not to say

46. Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?
Heterosexual (straight)
Homosexual (gay)
Bisexual
Other ____________________
Prefer not to say

47. What is the highest level of school you have completed or the highest degree you have received?
Less than high school degree
High school graduate (high school diploma or equivalent including GED)
Some college but no degree
Associate degree in college (2-year)
Bachelor's degree in college (4-year)
Master's degree
Doctoral degree
Professional degree (JD, MD)

48. Are you now married, widowed, divorced, separated or never married?
Married
Widowed
Divorced
Separated
Never Married

Appendix C
Informed Consent Form (Study 3)

Informed Consent Form
Lawrence University

I have been asked by Juliana Earvolino, Leigh Kronsnoble, Bailey Reiners, and Rebecca Schachtman, Lawrence University Psychology Department, to participate in a research project. This research is being supervised by Peter Glick, Psychology. The purpose of this research is to examine how people behave in an online decision-making task.

The participants in this research will be 48 Lawrence University Students. The study will involve one session that will take about fifteen to twenty minutes.

This research has been approved by Lawrence's Institutional Review Board, which protects human subjects. Participation is *completely voluntary* – I may withdraw or decline to participate at any time without penalty. The researcher also has the right to withdraw my participation at any time. To withdraw, I can simply inform the researcher. Declining to participate or withdrawing will have no effect on my academic status or any class grade.

Some elements of this project will not be revealed until my session is completed. At this point I will have the option of withholding any responses I provided from subsequent analysis

If I agree to participate, the following will occur: Participants will be making decisions with a partner via an online chat program. After finishing the decision-making task, participants will complete a brief survey and questionnaire.

To the best of the researcher's knowledge, there will be no more risk of harm than normally experienced in my daily life; anticipated risks are minimal.

Possible benefits of participating in this project are increased knowledge about this field of study. However, there is no guarantee I will receive any benefit. Participation is voluntary with no compensation.

Every effort will be taken to prevent anyone who is not on the research team from knowing that I participated in the study and to ensure that all of my responses are confidential. No information that personally identifies me will be released or reported in any way unless required by law. Participant's names will be coded and will not be attached to results. All results will be kept confidential and secure, and will be kept separate from the consent forms. Data will be stored in a password protected computer. We will not disclose individual responses in our final report. Only the researchers and advisor will have access to any data recorded. Consent forms will be stored confidentially for three years, upon which they will be destroyed by the advisor.

I can ask the researcher any questions that would help me to decide whether to participate. If I have any questions, suggestions, concerns, or complaints that arise, I can contact Leigh Kronsnoble at leigh.f.kronsnoble@lawrence.edu. If I have any questions about your rights as a

participant, I can contact the Lawrence University IRB Chair, Dr. William Skinner (920) 993-6025 or irb@lawrence.edu.

Signatures

Participant:
By my signature, I am affirming that I am at least 18 years old and that I agree to participate in this study. I understand I will receive a signed copy of this consent form.

_____________________________________ ____________________
Signature of participant Date

____
Printed name of participant

Person Obtaining Consent:
I have explained to the participant above the nature, purpose, risks and benefits of participating in this research project. I have answered any questions that may have been raised, and I will provide the participant with a copy of this consent form.

_____________________________________ ____________________
Name of [authorized] person obtaining informed consent Date

Appendix D
Program Script (Study 3)

"Welcome to the Desert Island Task. Next to your computer you'll find a list of 8 men and 8 women. In this task, you and your partner will take turns choosing from the list people you would want with you if you were stranded on a desert island. To prevent from choosing the same people, you'll choose from the top half of the list, and your partner will choose from the bottom half. After making a choice, you'll provide justification for that choice. For example: 'I'd take Jen. She's a doctor and would be able to take care of anyone who got sick'. You are encouraged to respond to your partner's justification of their choices. You each will select three people to take with you. You will make the first choice."

LIST OF PEOPLE

Women

1. Emily: Teacher.
2. Katherine: Biologist
3. Sarah: Accountant
4. Maria: Travel agent
1. Melissa: Farmer
2. Julie: Anesthesiologist
3. Evelyn: Therapist
4. Rachel: Basketball coach

Men

1. John: Judge
2. Nathan: Chef
3. Andrew: Midwife
4. Jason: Television writer
1. Will: Comedian
2. Devon: IT worker
3. James: Dentist
4. Marcus: Pilot

Computer: "Please make your first selection and provide justification."

Participant:

Partner: "That's a good point."

Partner: "The first person I choose is Evelyn. Since she's a therapist, she can help us cope with our problems on the island."

Computer: "Please enter a comment about your partner's choice. If you have none, enter NA."

Participant:

Computer: "Please make your second selection and provide justification."

Participant:

Partner: “Maybe you’re right about that.”

Partner: “I pick Devon because he’s an IT worker and has the patience to solve problems.”

Computer: “Please enter a comment about your partner’s choice. If you have none, enter NA.”

Participant:

Computer: “Please make your final selection and provide justification.”

Participant:

Partner: “I didn’t think about that.”

Partner: “The last person I pick is Rachel. We could use someone hot like her, even though having another woman will probably lower the IQ of the group.”

Appendix E
Desert Island Task List (Study 3)

Reminder: You will only be allowed to choose from # 1-8. Your partner will be choosing from #9-16.

1)
Name: Emily
Occupation: 3rd grade teacher

2)
Name: Andrew
Occupation: Midwife

3)
Name: Nathan
Occupation: Chef

4)
Name: Katherine
Occupation: Biologist
Accountant

5)
Name: Jason
Occupation: Television writer

6)
Name: Sarah
Occupation:

7)
Name: Maria
Occupation: Travel agent

8)
Name: John
Occupation: Judge

9)

Name: Marcus
Occupation: Pilot

10)

Name: Rachel
Occupation: Basketball Coach

11)

Name: James
Occupation: Dentist

12)

Name: Julie
Occupation: Anesthesiologist

13)

Name: Will
Occupation: Comedian

14)

Name: Evelyn
Occupation: Therapist

15)

Name: Devon
Occupation: IT worker

16)

Name: Melissa
Occupation: Engineer

Appendix F
Questionnaire (Study 3)

Please complete the following survey. Your responses will be kept confidential, and will not be shown to your partner.

Rate your team member on the following characteristics using the scale below:

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all characteristic				Extremely characteristic

____Competent ____Good-natured ____Efficient ____Naive

____Intelligent ____Arrogant ____Trustworthy ____Stupid

____Selfish ____Confident ____Sincere ____Friendly

____Power-hungry ____Unsophisticated ____Capable ____Warm

____Aggressive ____Skillful ____Deceitful ____ Well-intentioned

Rate your emotional response to your team member on the following, using the scale below:

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all characteristic				Extremely characteristic

____Admiration ____Irritation ____Pride ____Pity

____Respect ____Resentment ____Sympathy ____Shock

____Disgust ____Hatred ____Envy ____Jealousy

____Compassion ____Fondness ____Offended ____Discomfort

Please answer the following questions:
1) Which of your partner's justifications surprised you? Why?

2) Was there any point in the decision-making task when you felt uncomfortable or offended? If so, when did you feel this way and why?

Please rank, on a scale of 1-7 (1=strongly disagree; 4=neither agree nor disagree; 7=strongly agree), the following statements:

Based on his/her comments, the other team member is very likeable.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

If we lived in the same dorm, I'd be interested in being friends with my team member.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Based on our interactions, my team member seems worthy of respect.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Based on the reasons offered for his/her island choices, I value my team member's opinions.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

My team member seemed to really know what he/she was talking about.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

In the future, I would be happy to work with this team member on an academic project.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Based on his/her responses, my team member holds biased views.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

My team member seems to be someone who views all groups of people equally.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Based on our interaction, the other team member is polite.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

My team member seems to not take the feelings of others into consideration.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7