

A TEST OF THREE HYPOTHESES TO EXPLAIN THE DOMINANCE PENALTY
FOR SEXUALLY AGENTIC WOMEN

by

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

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The sexual double standard is often investigated as unequal tolerance for sexual experience, but recent research has found resistance to female sexual agency as well (i.e., enjoyment of being sexualized; Infanger, Rudman, & Sczesny, 2016). This pattern imitates rejection of female agency in employment contexts (e.g., competing for leadership roles; Rudman, Moss-Racusin, Phelan, & Nauts, 2012). Female agency, whether sexual or professional, evokes perceptions that targets are “too dominant,” which results in social or economic penalties. The current study sought to conceptually replicate Infanger et al.’s findings while examining three potential moderators of the dominance penalty for sexually powerful women. Specifically, sexually powerful women may be viewed as too dominant because they (1) threaten men’s higher status (the status incongruity hypotheses; Rudman et al., 2012), (2) decrease the value of other women’s sexual favors (sexual economics theory; Baumeister & Vohs, 2004), or (3) threaten women’s protected status, which depends on women being chaste and submissive (the male protection hypothesis). However, results did not support a dominance penalty for female sexual power. Instead, male *and* female targets who espoused a powerful,

manipulative form of sexuality, compared to those who did not, were (1) viewed as more dominant and less communal, (2) disliked, and (3) sabotaged on a future task. Further, results of mediation analyses were consistent with the idea that sexually powerful targets, compared to low power targets, were sabotaged because they were disliked, and disliked because they were viewed as less communal, not too dominant.

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Introduction

Gender inequality persists in our society, affecting men and women politically, economically, and personally. Gender stereotypes that assign more agency (e.g., competence, initiative, and ambition) to men help to explain the stubbornness of sexism. Although a common way to thwart stereotypes is to behave in a manner that disconfirms them, backlash research suggests that *female* agency is penalized (Rudman & Phelan, 2008). Specifically, strong, self-confident women are viewed as highly competent but “too dominant” to be hired for leadership roles (Rudman, Moss-Racusin, Phelan, & Nauts, 2012). In essence, professional women are forced to choose between being respected or liked. Moreover, women who anticipate backlash curb their displays of power to avoid it (Amanatullah & Morris, 2010; Moss-Racusin & Rudman, 2010) – behavior that reinforces the gender stereotypes that perpetuate backlash effects (Rudman & Fairchild, 2004) and thus, reinforces gender inequality (Rudman & Glick, 2008).

The sexual double standard (SDS) is another form of inequality which limits women’s sexual freedoms while imposing fewer constraints on men. Although research has mainly examined different perceptions of men and women engaging in casual sex or described as having had numerous sexual partners (Crawford & Popp, 2003), recent evidence suggests that resistance to female sexual agency plays a role in the SDS (Infanger, Rudman, & Sczesny, 2016). Consistent with backlash theory, Infanger et al. extended the dominance penalty to women who enjoy being sexualized (compared to non-sexualized women), suggesting that female agency in both professional and sexual contexts is perceived as a negative form of power for women that evokes backlash. Why? The present research will compare three explanations for discrimination against sexually

agentic women: the status incongruity hypothesis (SIH; Rudman et al., 2012), sexual economics theory (SET; Baumeister & Vohs, 2004), and a novel male protection hypothesis (MPH).

Backlash Effects and the Sexual Double Standard

Research on backlash effects consistently finds that agentic women in the workplace, compared to agentic men, are viewed as similarly competent but are (a) less likely to be hired (Buttner & McEnally, 1996; Rudman, 1998; Rudman & Glick, 2001) or promoted (Heilman, Wallen, Fuchs, & Tamkins, 2004), (b) more often evaluated as poor leaders (Eagly, Makhijani, & Klonsky, 1992; Heilman, Block, & Martell, 1995; Heilman, 2001), and (c) more disliked (Bowles, Babcock, & Lai, 2007; Koch, 2005; Richeson & Ambady, 2001; for a review, see Rudman & Phelan, 2008). In face-to-face interactions with confederates in leadership roles, people also show more negative nonverbal emotional responses toward agentic women compared to agentic men (Butler & Geis, 1990; Koch, 2005). Moreover, people who automatically associate high status roles with male gender and low status roles with female gender also possess negative implicit attitudes toward women in powerful positions (Rudman & Kilianski, 2000). Prejudice against agentic women mediates the relationship between agency and negative employment-related outcomes (Rudman & Glick, 1999, 2001; Rudman et al., 2012). That is, people use their negative attitudes toward agentic women to justify denying them a position or promotion (Phelan, Moss-Racusin, & Rudman, 2008).

Why do people have such negative reactions to agentic women? Most research on gender inequality in the workplace emphasizes the influence of gender stereotypes, both descriptive and prescriptive, as a barrier to equality. Descriptive stereotypes are

characteristics that people believe men and women generally possess, while prescriptive stereotypes are characteristics that people believe men and women *should* possess. For example, while people may believe that women are generally communal (e.g., kind, friendly, likable, and sensitive to other's needs), being communal is also a *gender rule* for women (Prentice & Carranza, 2002; Rudman et al., 2012). Similarly, being agentic (e.g., competent, confident, and ambitious) is both descriptive and prescriptive for men. In addition to prescriptions about what men and women should be, there are also rules that prohibit men and women from displaying certain characteristics, or gender proscriptions (Prentice & Carranza, 2002; Rudman et al., 2012). Proscriptions for men and women are generally undesirable traits associated with the other gender. Specifically, weakness (e.g., weak, insecure, and uncertain) is prohibited for men and dominance (e.g., dominant, controlling and arrogant) is proscribed for women (Rudman et al., 2012).

In a sexual context, women are prescribed to be wholesome and chaste and one of the strongest proscriptions for women is promiscuity (Prentice & Carranza, 2002). Additionally, women are believed to be much less interested in sex than men are, especially outside of committed relationships (Baumeister, Catanese, & Vohs, 2001; Buss & Schmitt, 1993; Oliver & Hyde, 1993; Petersen & Hyde, 2010). Further, women are expected to restrict men's access to sex (Baumeister & Vohs, 2012; Sanchez, Fetterolf, & Rudman, 2012; Sprecher & Regan, 1996; Wiederman, 2005). Therefore, when a woman is sexually agentic or experienced, she is behaving in a way that deviates from the descriptive and prescriptive stereotypes for her gender and the negative evaluations she faces are a form of backlash (e.g., social sanctions). Moreover, women who express agency or sexual desire in their personal lives are behaving in a way that is consistent

with *male* stereotypes (stereotypes which are often associated with status; Jonason, 2007; Kreager & Staff, 2009; Rudman et al., 2012).

The dominance penalty. Dominance, in backlash research, is a constellation of negative traits related to power, such as dominating, intimidating, arrogant, ruthless, and controlling. It is this manipulative form of power that is disproportionately attributed to women, compared to men, who hold some form of power (Heilman & Okimoto, 2007; Heilman et al., 2004; Rudman et al., 2012). The dominance penalty is, in itself, a form of backlash. People perceive agentic women in more negative ways, attributing more dominant traits to them compared to agentic men, even though women are viewed as less dominant than men generally. These negative, proscribed characteristics for women, which people perceive deviant members to have in high levels, appear to drive the negative consequences for counter-stereotypical behavior. That is, it is not agency per se that is bad for women, but the fact that agentic women are also viewed as dominant, which results in backlash. Indeed, Rudman et al. (2012) found that dominance ratings mediated the backlash effect for agentic women in the workplace.

Similarly, because women are often viewed as much more submissive sexually than men (Sanchez et al., 2012), sexually agentic women may be penalized for their counter-stereotypical behavior by being perceived as sexually controlling and therefore disliked. A recent set of studies by Infanger et al. (2016) examined perceptions of sexualized women's dominance and provides initial support for this prediction. Results indicated that the female target who enjoyed sexualizing herself was disliked relative to a control target and one who disliked being sexualized. She was also perceived as considerably more dominant (both $ds > 1$). Finally, dominance ratings mediated the

relationship between sexualization and likability; the self-sexualizing woman was disliked because she was viewed as more dominant. Importantly, the target explicitly stated that she enjoyed sexualization because it made her feel strong, making her motives for power salient. However, two follow-up studies used much subtler descriptions of the target (with no mention of power) and found similar results. In study 2, participants viewed online dating profiles in which the target was either dressed in a sweater or a bikini. In study 3, the target stated that she prefers to dress in a “provocative and sexy manner, for example, in a tight dress and high heels” (Infanger et al., 2016; p. 16) when she goes to bars. Simply wearing sexy clothing was enough to result in lower likability ratings and a dominance penalty for the targets.

Furthermore, Infanger et al. (2016) measured participants’ metaperceptions of the targets’ power motives. They were asked to indicate why they believed the target liked to dress in a sexy manner using four items; (a) to dominate over men, (b) to use her femininity to her advantage; (c) to get men to do what she wants, and (d) to manipulate men. Compared to the target who liked to dress casually at bars, the target who liked to dress in a tight dress and high heels was perceived as being more strongly motivated by power ($d = 1.26$) and metaperceptions of power motivations mediated the effect of dress on dominance ratings. This initial study, therefore, demonstrates that sexually agentic women experience the same penalties as agentic women in the workplace, and potentially for the same reasons; female agency is related to dominance and power-seeking, which are proscribed for women.

Sex as a form of female power. The perception that sex is a form of power for women is both a common lay theory and a key aspect of sociosexual theories. As

described below, SET posits that women's sexual favors are more valuable than men's, giving them power in the sexual marketplace (Baumeister & Vohs, 2004). A review on erotic capital suggests that women have more sexual wealth than men in large part because they are the less interested party (Hakim, 2010). Similarly, sexual scripts theory argues that women are the gatekeepers in sexual situations, only allowing sex to occur when they desire it (Wiederman, 2005). Many of these theories rely on evolutionary psychological explanations of gender differences in sexual desire, which suggest that men evolved to have a stronger sex drive than women due to differing levels of parental investment (Buss, 1998; Trivers, 1972). That is, because reproducing is physically costly for women (e.g., nine months of gestation, potentially dangerous childbirth, and years of lactation), women evolved to be selective about their sexual partners, looking for men who were willing to contribute time and resources to their offspring. By contrast, because reproducing requires less of an investment for men (involving just the act of sex and the contribution of sperm), they evolved to seek out numerous partners and to desire sex more frequently in an attempt to reproduce often to ensure the survival of their genes.

Importantly, there is a growing body of evidence that undermines this evolutionary view of gender differences in desire (and, therefore, power). For example, when people believe they are attached to a functioning lie detector, the gender difference in number of sexual partners reduces significantly or completely disappears (Alexander & Fisher, 2003; Fisher, 2013). Social desirability and impression management scores have been found to correlate with women's reported frequency of sexual thoughts (Fisher, Moore, & Pittenger, 2012) and sexual desire while listening to erotic audio tapes (Huberman, Suschinsky, Lalumiere, & Chivers, 2013). Additionally, when people are not

given the chance to edit their responses, men and women reveal the same enthusiasm for sex. Rudman and Fetterolf (2014) gave men and women a sex-attitude Implicit Association Test (IAT) in which they had to categorize sexual stimuli with both positive and negative words. Both genders associated sex with positive more than negative words to the same extent and the effect sizes for both genders were large ($ds = .85$ and $.94$ for women and men, respectively). Taken together, these studies suggest that gender differences in reported sexual experiences or desire may be due to social pressures to conform to beliefs about men and women (Fisher, 2009), rather than ingrained, evolved dispositions.

In fact, research suggests that sex is another area where men have more power than women. Just as gender stereotypes prescribe agency for men generally, sexual scripts, which work as guides for men and women that direct and inform their behavior with and understanding of others, prescribe male sexual agency. Beginning with people's first sexual experiences, men are socialized to initiate and direct sexual encounters whereas women take on a more submissive, or reactive role (Martin, 1996; Simms & Byers, 2013; Vannier & O'Sullivan, 2011). Women are supposed to focus on their appearance (a prescriptive stereotype generally; Prentice & Carranza, 2002; Rudman et al., 2012) and respond, although not too eagerly, to men's advances. Although scripts may shift as people learn more about their partners' preferences, many studies find that traditional scripts are still the most common, even in long-term relationships (Kiefer & Sanchez, 2007; Morgan & Zurbriggen, 2007; Vannier & O'Sullivan, 2011).

Regardless of whether it is biologically or culturally driven, it appears that many people perceive a link between sex and power. Thus, women who behave with agency in

their sexual experiences not only go against prescribed gender stereotypes, but it affords them a position of power. As I will outline in the following sections, although perceptions of female sexual power may stem from different theories, the result is identical: powerful, agentic women are perceived negatively and disliked. However, having a better understanding of why this is the case (e.g., because it threatens men's higher status, women's sexual power, or women's protected status) is crucial in order to promote gender equality in the sexual domain. Moreover, results from the current study may provide useful insights into negative perceptions of female power across contexts.

Status Incongruity Hypothesis

The SIH was first proposed in the context of backlash for agentic women in the workplace. This hypothesis posits that the dominance penalty that agentic women experience stems from the discord between a woman's low gender status and the high status of agency displays, and motives to preserve the gender status quo underlie resistance to high-powered women (Rudman et al., 2012). Indeed, Rudman et al. (2012) found that gender system-justifiers—people who believe the gender hierarchy is fair and just—were especially likely to give powerful women a dominance penalty. Thus, endorsement of gender system justifying beliefs moderates the dominance penalty for agentic women and supports the SIH by suggesting that agentic women are penalized because they threaten the gender hierarchy in our society. In addition, backlash and the dominance penalty emerged only when a powerful woman was qualified to lead (i.e., was high on leadership aptitude), not when she was unqualified to lead and thus, posed no threat to the gender status quo (Rudman et al., Study 5). As further evidence that maintaining status hierarchies plays an important role in backlash, studies have found that

men who defy weakness proscriptions (associated with low-status people) also receive social and economic sanctions (Heilman & Wallen, 2010; Moss-Racusin, Phelan, & Rudman, 2010). In concert, the evidence suggests that backlash is engaged in not arbitrarily, but instead, to protect male dominance by suppressing women (and men) who challenge it (Rudman & Fairchild, 2004).

Recent evidence applying the SIH to sexually empowered women (Infanger et al., 2016) suggests that motives to defend the gender status quo should moderate the dominance penalty for female sexual agency. Further evidence that resisting female power informs reactions to women in sexual contexts is revealed by positive relationships between hostile sexism and support for the SDS. Rudman, Fetterolf, and Sanchez (2013) found that men were more likely than women to endorse the SDS (i.e., to think that it is good and should be maintained) and this gender difference was mediated by hostile sexism scores. In both Rudman et al. (2013) and Rudman and Fetterolf (2014), men were also more likely than women to give advice to their friends and relatives that reinforced the sexual double standard by encouraging men but discouraging women from having casual sex. Again, this gender difference was mediated by men's greater endorsement of hostile sexism (Rudman & Fetterolf, 2014). Taken together, these results suggest that people who resist female power in general (i.e., hostile sexists) are in favor of suppressing women sexually. Other researchers have also found a link between the sexual double standard and hostile sexism, finding that men's hostile sexist scores are correlated with their attitudes toward sexually experienced women (Fowers & Fowers, 2009; Sibley & Wilson, 2004). Because hostile sexism is reserved for nontraditional and powerful women (Glick, Diebold, Bailey-Werner, & Zhu, 1997), a demonstrated link between

hostile sexism and the sexual double standard provides evidence for the idea that sexually agentic or experienced women are penalized for displaying sexual power that may threaten the gender status quo.

Sexual Economics Theory

The SIH posits that backlash functions to preserve male entitlement, regardless of the domain (work or sex). In contrast, SET's scope is narrowly focused on sexual relationships, arguing that they are a form of social exchange driven by economic principles (Baumeister & Vohs, 2004). As in any marketplace, the group with the most sought after commodity will hold the most power (Baumeister & Vohs, 2004; Regnerus, 2012), giving women, the least interested party, a distinct advantage in this arena. Indeed, Baumeister and Vohs (2004, 2012) argue that sex is women's *primary* form of power, allowing women to exchange sex for financial or emotional (e.g., commitment) resources from men. In fact, according to SET, female sexuality is such a potent form of power that it essentially shapes our culture; women's sexual favors are so desirable that men will do anything necessary to gain access to them, including earning a degree, striving for success in an occupation, or generally becoming "a respectable stakeholder contributing to society" (Baumeister & Vohs, 2012, p. 521).

SET therefore proposes that it is in women's best interest to restrict the supply of sex in order to exact a higher price for their sexual favors. According to the law of supply and demand, as sex becomes more readily available to men, they will obtain it more cheaply. Thus, women should dislike other women who are sexually agentic because they undermine their own sexual power (e.g., the rewards they can reap with their sexual favors). In contrast, men should prefer women who seem more sexually available, or

interested in sex, because they reduce the costs. However, there are two reasons why SET is not likely to be supported. First, Infanger et al. (2016) did not find any gender differences in penalizing a sexually agentic woman, and the perception that she enjoyed sex because she wanted power over men mediated the dominance penalty for male and female participants alike. These findings contradict SET's central tenet, which is that only women will resist female sexual agency in order to preserve sexual exchange. Second, research suggests that sexual exchange is not a good explanation for the SDS. Rather than women being invested in sexual exchange, men are invested in patriarchy, which helps to explain why men are more supportive of the SDS (Rudman et al., 2013) and sexual exchange (Rudman & Fetterolf, 2014) than women. In essence, SET posits that only women are in favor of commodifying their bodies, whereas the SIH posits that only gender system-justifiers (people who endorse patriarchy) are. Therefore, it is likely that resistance to female power drives negative perceptions of sexually agentic women, rather than a concern for the price of women's sexual favors. Nonetheless, the present research will test whether SET has any explanatory power regarding the dominance penalty for female sexual agency. According to SET, women should endorse sexual exchange more than men, and those who do so should penalize sexually empowered women. According to research, men will be more in favor of sexual exchange, but both genders who endorse it should administer the dominance penalty to sexually agentic women.

Male Protection Hypothesis

Although backlash research has generally not found evidence for participant gender effects, SDS research yields more mixed results. Women sometimes show

evidence of a reverse double standard (penalizing promiscuous men more so than women; Allison & Risman, 2013; Milhausen & Herold, 2001) or penalize both genders equally (Vrangalova, Bukberg, & Rieger, 2013), but in general terms, men are more likely than women to endorse the SDS (Allison & Risman, 2013; Rudman & Fetterolf, 2014; Rudman et al., 2013; Sprecher, Treger, & Sakaluk, 2013). Of importance, these mixed results may indicate that men and women penalize sexually agentic women for different reasons. One reason why women may dislike agentic women is rooted in the idea of protective paternalism, an aspect of benevolent sexism, meaning ostensibly positive, yet restrictive beliefs about women (e.g., that women are morally superior to men and deserve men's protection; Glick & Fiske, 1996). Protective paternalism defends women from the more appalling consequences of their lower status (e.g., assault from violent men) but it results in a precarious standing for women. Not all women are judged as deserving of protection; only those who uphold feminine ideals of wholesomeness and chastity (Prentice & Carranza, 2002). For example, benevolent sexists blamed a date rape victim when she made herself vulnerable to the assault (by inviting her date in for coffee; Abrams, Viki, Masser, & Bohner, 2003). Therefore, the male protection hypothesis (MPH) posits that women who enjoy their protected status likely view sexually agentic women as undermining it. If so, women's resistance to female sexual agency may be moderated by this motive.

Hypotheses

To examine how beliefs about female sexual power affect perceptions of sexually powerful female targets, I will test three moderated mediation models. They are similar in that all three propose that the dominance penalty mediates the relationship between target

power (male vs. female) and discrimination. They differ only in the factors expected to moderate the mediator (dominance). Based on previous research (Infanger et al., 2016), I expect that participants will penalize sexually powerful women more so than sexually powerful men, and this effect will be mediated by her greater perceived dominance (Hypothesis 1).

According to the SIH, the dominance penalty for sexually powerful women should be moderated by the extent to which people believe the gender status quo is fair and just (Hypothesis 2). Although there is some evidence that men are more likely than women to endorse these gender system justifying beliefs (GSJB; Jost & Kay, 2005), previous research on the dominance penalty did not find a difference (Rudman et al., 2012). Instead, to the extent men and women endorsed these beliefs, they were likely to penalize high power women. Thus, I do not expect to find any participant gender effects in the SIH moderated mediation model.

According to SET, participants should view the sexually powerful women as too dominant to the extent that they believe sex is a female commodity that can be exchanged for resources from men (Hypothesis 3a). To support SET, I also expect to find a participant gender difference in the backlash against sexually powerful women. Women should be more likely than men to perceive the sexually powerful female target as dominant and to penalize them (Hypothesis 3b).

Finally, according to the male protection hypothesis (MPH), the dominance penalty will be moderated by the desire to uphold women's protected status (Hypothesis 4a). Potential gender differences may emerge, such that women, who have the most to gain from male protection, may support the MPH more so than men (Hypothesis 4b).

Regardless of potential gender differences on any of the moderator scales, however, there is enough variability in the endorsement of these beliefs for both men and women that I should find evidence of moderation (in the patterns described above) irrespective of participant gender.

Method

Participants

A total of 538 Rutgers undergraduate students from the General Psychology research pool completed both parts of the study in exchange for partial research credit. Participants who did not pass the manipulation check ($n = 88$) or reported being suspicious of the study goals ($n = 18$) were not included in analyses. The final sample included 432 students (148 male, 284 female) with an average age of 18.76 ($SD = 1.43$). The racial composition of the sample was as follows: 39.40% White, 33.30% Asian, 10.60% Latino, 9.30% Black, 4.60% Multiracial, and 2.80% other racial identity. The majority of participants (92.80%) were heterosexual, 2.50% were bisexual, 1.20% were gay or lesbian, and 3.50% reported another sexual orientation or were unsure. A priori power analyses with estimated small-to-moderate effect sizes placed the necessary sample size at 351 participants (Faul, Erdfelder, Lang, & Buchner, 2007) to detect the hypothesized interaction between target gender and sexual power. Therefore, although 19.70% of the original sample was excluded, the required sample size was still exceeded.

Procedure

Participants were told that the purpose of the study was to determine how strangers interacted as online collaborators. This study took place in two phases. In the first phase, participants completed an online survey that included demographic questions (age, race, sexual orientation), filler items that measured their personality and beliefs (e.g., Ballard, 1992; Gosling, Rentfrow, & Swann, 2003), and the measures for each moderating variable (SIH, SET, MPH). I told participants that their answers to the demographic questions and a random subset of the measures they completed would be

shown to their interaction partner in the second part of the study and that they would get to see their partner's responses to the same questions (see Appendix A for instructions and measures).

The second phase was a laboratory study in which participants believed they were interacting with another participant online (the target). In fact, after receiving the target's demographic information (held constant except for target gender), and ostensibly randomly chosen by the computer, they viewed the target's responses to the Sex is Power scale (Erchull & Liss, 2013), manipulated so that their partner scored either high or low (see Appendix B for example). As a smokescreen, they also viewed the target's neutral responses to the Mind Wander Questionnaire (Mrazek, Phillips, Franklin, Broadway, & Schooler, 2013) and several questions about climate change (sampled from Whitmarsh, 2009). Control participants received the identical information except for the SIPS. Thus, the design of the study was a 2 (target gender) \times 3 (target sexual power: high, low, control) between-subjects factorial.

Following the sexual power manipulation, participants provided their first impressions of the target, including their likability and stereotypic trait ratings (Rudman et al., 2012). Participants were then given the opportunity to sabotage their partners by programming an anagram task and choosing specific clues, ranging from easy to difficult, that they believed their partner would see (Rudman et al., 2012). To serve as manipulation checks, participants were asked to recall their partner's gender and their responses on the Sex is Power Scale (e.g., whether they generally agreed or disagreed with the scale items). Participants who responded incorrectly were removed from analyses, as reported above ($n = 88$). Finally, I asked participants to guess what the

experiment was about and report anything else they wanted to share with experimenters. No participants guessed the hypotheses, but those who suspected their partner did not exist were removed from analyses ($n = 18$). Participants were thanked, debriefed, and compensated.

Measures

Sex is Power Scale (SIPS). The SIPS (Erchull & Liss, 2013) measures women's endorsement of sexuality as a means of power or control over men. Previous studies have found it to be reliable with Cronbach's alphas ranging from .87 to .91 (Erchull & Liss, 2013, 2014). However, all of the research has examined only women, with items such as, "I lead men on sometimes, but it makes me feel good" on a scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). To provide a direct comparison between male and female targets, I revised the SIPS so that it would be gender neutral. Because two of the items from the original scale, "I use my body to get what I want," and "My sex appeal helps me control women [men]," seem to connote a more negative form of power for men and may make people think of rape instead of consensual sex, I modified these items to convey the same form of manipulative, but not violent, power for men as they do for women. All seven of the items from the revised scale can be found in Appendix A. The Cronbach alpha for the new version of the scale was .94 (.94 for women, .95 for men).

Gender System Justifying Beliefs (GSJB). The GSJB (Jost & Kay, 2005) is an 8-item scale that measures the extent to which people perceive the current gender system in our society as fair. Sample items include, "Everyone (male or female) has a fair shot at wealth and happiness" and "In general, relations between men and women are fair" on a

scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). All items in the scale are provided in Appendix C. Cronbach's alpha for was .72.

Support for Sexual Economics Theory (SSET). SSET (Fetterolf & Rudman, 2016) is an 11-item scale that measures the extent to which people endorse the tenets of sexual economics theory. Sample items include "Men are mainly interested in women as a means to get sex" and "No matter how accomplished a woman is, her chief value to men is her sex appeal." The response scale for these items ranges from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). All items in the scale are provided in Appendix D. This scale has only been used in one study previously, but was found to be reliable ($\alpha = .86$). The SSET scale was also positively correlated with two measures used in prior research (Rudman & Fetterolf, 2014; Rudman et al., 2013). First, the endorsement of sexual economics as a motive for maintaining the SDS, $r(522) = .64, p < .001$, and second, preference for jewelry ads that reinforce sexual exchange, $r(522) = .15, p = .001$ (Fetterolf & Rudman, 2016). These findings support the SSET as a valid measure of SET endorsement. In the current study, the Cronbach's alpha was .86.

Male Protection Scale (MPS). A novel Male Protection Scale was created to measure the extent to which people believe men should support and protect women in our society. Participants responded to items such as "Women have a right to expect a male partner to physically protect them" and "More so than men, women need a romantic partner to help them financially" on a response scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). All nine items from the MPS are provided in Appendix E. In initial analyses, item 9 did not correlate with the overall scale, $r(430) = .02$, so I removed this item. The Cronbach alpha for the 8-item scale was .77.

Ambivalent Sexism Inventory (ASI). The ASI (Glick & Fiske, 1996) is a 22-item scale that measures both hostile and benevolent sexism. The hostile sexism (HS) subscale taps resistance to female empowerment financially, politically, and sexually. Sample items include, “Women seek to gain power by getting control over men” and “When women lose to men in a fair competition, they typically complain about being discriminated against.” The benevolent sexism (BS) subscale measures subjectively positive attitudes toward women that nonetheless portray them as weak and in need of protection. Sample items include “Women should be cherished and protected by men” and “Many women have a quality of purity that few men possess.” Participants responded to these items on a scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). All items are provided in Appendix F. Cronbach’s alphas were .84 for HS and .78 for BS.

Stereotype ratings. Target stereotypic ratings were drawn from prior research (Rudman et al., 2012) and are shown in Appendix G. To measure dominance, participants indicated the extent to which the following traits were descriptive of the target: *dominating, intimidating, arrogant, ruthless, controlling, cold toward others, and cynical* ($\alpha = .87$). To measure communality, participants indicated the extent to which the following traits were descriptive of the target: *warm, sensitive to the needs of others, cheerful, enthusiastic, cooperative, friendly, and polite* ($\alpha = .81$). The response scale ranges from 1 (*not at all like participant*) to 7 (*very like participant*).

Liking. Participants rated their liking of the target by responding to a 6-item scale drawn from Infanger et al. (2016) and shown in Appendix G. Sample items were, “He[*she*] appears to be a likeable person” and “I would like him[*her*] to be a close

personal friend” on a scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). Cronbach’s alpha in the current study was .86.

Sabotage task. As a behavioral measure of penalizing sexually powerful women, participants were given the opportunity to sabotage the performance of the target on an anagram task (Rudman et al., 2012). Participants were in charge of programming this task that they believed would be given to their online interaction partner. Instructions for the anagram task are provided in Appendix H. For each of the 10 anagrams, participants were required to choose one of three clues that their partner will see. The clues were pre-tested on level of difficulty and are presented in the Appendix from most to least difficult (participants viewed them in random order). If the participants chose easy clues for their partner, it was scored as 1, medium clues were scored as 2, and hard clues were scored as 3. The total sabotage score is the sum of the choices across all ten anagrams (possible range: 10-30). Most participants were reluctant to choose the more difficult clues, which led to a highly skewed distribution. I used a logarithmic transformation on the sabotage to reduce the skewness, although due to the nature of participants’ responses, it was not eliminated (Doane & Seward, 2011; Field, 2013). The mean of the transformed scale was 1.10 (SD = 0.11) with a range of 1.00 to 1.48, with higher scores indicating greater sabotage. The Cronbach alpha for the sabotage scale was .88.

Results

Initial Data Analyses

Table 1 shows the results of *t*-tests comparing male and female participants' responses to the proposed moderator variables (GSJB, SSET, MPS), as well as the SIPS. Consistent with previous research, men were more like to endorse gender system justifying beliefs (Jost & Kay, 2005; Rudman et al., 2012) compared to women. In prior research, men and women scored similarly low on endorsing sexual economics theory (Fetterolf & Rudman, 2016; Rudman et al., 2013; Rudman & Fetterolf, 2014). In the present study, men scored higher than women. I also found a gender difference in support for the novel Male Protection Scale, with men scoring higher than women. Men and women did not differ, however, in their responses to the SIPS. Both genders were unlikely to use their sexuality to exert power over members of the opposite sex. Although this was the first study to examine men's responses to the SIPS, women's responses were slightly lower than previous research using this scale (Erchull & Liss, 2013, 2014).

Table 2 reports the correlations between the potential moderator variables, as well as hostile and benevolent sexism, separately for men and women. Because HS and BS were positively correlated, $r(430) = .53, p < .001$, I followed recommendations to adjust for BS when analyzing HS, and for HS when analyzing BS, and report partial correlations for each (Glick & Fiske, 1996). The pattern of correlations was similar for men and women, except for the relationship between SIPS and HS. Using a Fisher's *Z*-test, I found that these correlations were significantly different in magnitude across gender, $Z = 2.46, p = .014$. Men reported a greater interest in using their sexuality to control women if they were high on HS, $r(145) = .32, p < .001$, while HS and SIPS were not significantly

correlated for women, $r(281) = .08, p = .183$. This gender difference is not informative because women were not asked to report their attitudes toward men. I included it only because the correlations were similar by gender with this one exception.

Test of the Backlash Effect for Female Sexual Power

Hypothesis 1 stated that participants would penalize a sexually powerful woman more than a sexually powerful man and this effect would be mediated by the female target's greater perceived dominance. Although sabotage was my main dependent variable, another way that powerful women are penalized is by being disliked relative to comparable men (e.g., Rudman et al., 2012). Therefore, I examined both sabotage and liking when testing Hypothesis 1. Because neither conformed to my hypothesis, I examined whether controlling for participants' own SISP scores influenced results. However, because this had no effect on interpreting my findings, I report the analyses without this covariate.

Sabotage. As the first step of this analysis, I conducted a 2 (participant gender) \times 2 (target gender) \times 3 (power: high, low, control) analysis of variance (ANOVA) with sabotage scores as the dependent variable. There was a significant effect of target power, $F(2, 420) = 4.37, p = .013$, but the predicted Target Gender \times Power interaction was not significant, $F(2, 420) < 1, ns$. Regardless of target or participant gender, participants were more likely to sabotage a high power target ($M = 1.12, SD = 0.11$) compared to a low power target ($M = 1.08, SD = 0.09$), $t(282) = 2.98, p = .003, d = 0.40$. However, sabotage rates for control targets ($M = 1.11, SD = 0.11$) were not different from high power, $t(311) = 1.13, p = .260, d = 0.09$, or low power targets, $t(265) = 1.78, p = .077, d = 0.30$.

Liking. As with the sabotage index, there was only a main effect of target power on liking, $F(2, 420) = 46.58, p < .001$. Participants liked the high power targets ($M = 3.80, SD = 1.19$) less than the low power targets ($M = 4.94, SD = 0.93$), $t(282) = 8.74, p < .001, d = 1.07$, and less than control targets ($M = 4.67, SD = 0.89$), $t(311) = 7.31, p < .001, d = 0.83$. In addition, participants liked the low power targets more than the control targets, $t(265) = 2.40, p = .017, d = 0.30$. The predicted Target Gender \times Power interaction was not significant, $F(2, 420) < 1, ns$.

In summary, the first part of Hypothesis 1 was not supported: participants did not penalize sexually powerful women more than men, either by sabotaging them or liking them less.

Dominance. To test the second part Hypothesis 1 – that high power women would be viewed as more dominant than similar men – I conducted the same ANOVA with dominance ratings as the dependent variable. Again, there was a significant effect of target power, $F(2, 420) = 58.15, p < .001$. Participants viewed high power targets ($M = 3.93, SD = 1.04$) as more dominant than low power targets ($M = 2.72, SD = 1.07$), $t(282) = 9.51, p < .001, d = 1.15$, or control targets ($M = 2.93, SD = 0.89$), $t(311) = 9.04, p < .001, d = 1.03$. Low power targets were not perceived as less dominant than control targets, $t(265) = 1.75, p = .081, d = 0.21$. Although I also found a Target Gender \times Power interaction, $F(2, 420) = 3.91, p = .021$, follow up tests showed only that participants in the control condition rated the male target as more dominant ($M = 3.09, SD = 0.83$) than the female target ($M = 2.78, SD = 0.92$), $t(146) = 2.14, p = .034, d = 0.35$. By contrast, participants did not rate male and female targets differently in the high power condition ($M_M = 3.83, SD = 1.08$ vs. $M_F = 4.02, SD = 1.01$), $t(163) = 1.14, p = .257, d = 0.18$, or

low power condition ($M_M = 2.84$, $SD = 1.00$ vs. $M_F = 2.61$, $SD = 1.13$), $t(117) = 1.16$, $p = .250$, $d = 0.22$. Thus, the predicted effect of high power women being perceived as more dominant than high power men was not found. Instead, gender stereotypes emerged only when no information about their sexual power was provided. By contrast, when this information was provided, men and women were viewed as equally high or low on dominance, depending on whether their sexual power was high or low, respectively.

Communality. According to the SIH, agentic women are not penalized on communality prescriptions, relative to agentic men. To ensure that was the case, I also conducted the same ANOVA with communality ratings as the dependent variable. A similar main effect of target power was found for communality ratings, $F(2, 420) = 36.82$, $p < .001$. High power targets were viewed as less communal ($M = 4.17$, $SD = 0.70$) than both low power targets ($M = 4.84$, $SD = 0.75$), $t(282) = 7.59$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.92$, and control targets ($M = 4.71$, $SD = 0.61$), $t(311) = 7.23$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.82$. Low power and control targets were viewed as similarly communal, $t(265) = 1.47$, $p = .144$, $d = 0.19$.

This effect was qualified by a significant three-way interaction, $F(2, 420) = 3.75$, $p = .024$. Decomposed by participant gender, women showed the already described main effect for target power, $F(1, 278) = 28.22$, $p < .001$, whereas men showed a marginally significant Target Gender \times Power interaction, $F(2, 142) = 2.97$, $p = .054$. Follow-up analyses revealed that only men in the control condition rated the female target ($M = 4.98$, $SD = .72$) as more communal than the male target ($M = 4.47$, $SD = .54$), $t(52) = 2.86$, $p = .006$, $d = 0.80$. By contrast, no target gender differences emerged for men in the high power or low power conditions, both $ps > .20$. As with dominance, but in this case only for male participants, gender stereotypes emerged when no information about

targets' sexual power was provided, whereas men and women were viewed as equally high or low on communality, depending on whether sexual power was low or high, respectively.

Exploratory Mediation Analyses

Although I had hypothesized that dominance would mediate the effect of target gender in the high power condition, the absence of a dominance penalty as well as a target gender (backlash) effect for sabotage and liking precluded further testing of this hypothesis. Instead, I found that women *and* men who used their sexuality as a form of power were punished with low liking and communality ratings, as well as with higher sabotage and perceived dominance, compared with low power women and men.¹

Table 3 shows the correlations among the focal variables, including the relationships with sexual power, coded 0 = low, 1 = high ($N = 284$). As can be seen, all measures significantly covaried, and the relationships for power ranged from $r(282) = .17, p = .003$ for sabotage to $r(282) = .49, p < .001$ for dominance. Dominance and communality were negatively related, but not strongly enough to treat them as the same construct with recoding, $r(282) = -.33, p < .001$. Sabotage and liking covaried even more modestly, $r(282) = -.25, p < .001$.

For exploratory purposes, I conducted several mediation analyses using PROCESS, a bootstrapping macro (Hayes, 2013) to examine why sexually powerful targets were penalized relative to low powered targets. PROCESS provides 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals for all direct and indirect (i.e., mediated) effects.

¹ In an additional set of analyses, I included participants' hostile sexism, gender system justification beliefs, support for sexual economics theory, and views of sexuality as a form of power as covariates in separate analyses of covariance. Participants' gender beliefs did not moderate the effects of target gender on perceptions of the targets.

Confidence intervals that do not include zero are significant. For each mediation analysis, I excluded control targets and dummy-coded the power variable (0 = low power, 1 = high power) and used 5000 samples.

First, I compared dominance and communality as potential mediators of the effect of target power on both sabotage and liking. These analyses seek to answer the question, “Are sexually powerful targets penalized because they are high on dominance or low on communality (or both)?” Tables 4 and 5 report the unstandardized beta coefficients for these four mediation analyses with both sabotage and liking as dependent variables. Examining dominance as a mediator (Table 4), I found that although target power significantly predicted dominance, after adjusting for target power, dominance did not predict either sabotage or liking. Although non-significant paths do not preclude mediation, the indirect effects for dominance both included zero, and thus, were not significant. Therefore, their greater perceived dominance did not explain why high power targets were punished more than low power targets.

Examining communality as a mediator (Table 5), I found that perceptions of target communality did not account for the effect of power on sabotage, but it did mediate the effect of power on liking. High power targets were perceived as less communal and were therefore disliked relative to low power targets. This pattern of results is consistent with the idea that people who use their sexuality as a way to manipulate others are perceived as less communal and are therefore disliked.

Because dominance and communality did not mediate the effect of target power on sabotage, I conducted a final mediation analysis with liking as the mediator variable. That is, I expected that high power targets would be sabotaged because they are disliked.

This pattern of results would be consistent with previous research on backlash, in which agentic women are less likely to be hired than agentic men because they are more disliked (Rudman & Glick, 1999, 2001; Rudman et al., 2012). Table 6 reports the results. As expected, liking mediated the effect of target power on sabotage. In fact, including liking in the model reduced the direct effect of power on sabotage to non-significance. These results are consistent with the idea that people sabotaged high power targets more because they liked them less, compared to low power targets. In view of the findings reported above, it appears that they were liked less because they were not communal, not because they were too dominant.

Discussion

In contrast to my hypothesis that sexually powerful women would be penalized, relative to powerful men, there were no effects of target gender on liking or sabotage in the current study. Moreover, within the high power condition, female targets were not viewed as more dominant or less communal than male targets. The only significant target gender differences arose in the control condition, where participants rated the targets in a way that was consistent with gender stereotypes (Prentice & Carranza, 2002). Overall, the pattern of results suggest that men and women who use their sexuality as a form of power over their partners (1) are viewed as more dominant and less communal, (2) are disliked, relative to low power men and women, and (3) face penalties from others. Further analyses found that communality ratings mediated the effect of target power on liking, and liking mediated the effect of target power on sabotage. This is consistent with the idea that sexually powerful people face sabotage because they are disliked, and are disliked because they are viewed as less warm and friendly.

Previous research on the backlash effect has consistently found that agentic women are viewed as more dominant than agentic men and face social and economic penalties for their behavior (Heilman & Okimoto, 2007; Heilman et al., 2004; Rudman et al., 2012). Why, then, did target gender not interact with sexual power in the current study? The most likely explanation is that the sexual power manipulation was too negative. Any target who agrees with statements such as “I lead men [women] on sometimes, but it makes me feel good,” or “I like to use my sex appeal to my advantage,” is explicitly stating that they use others for their own gain. People dislike others who manipulate them (e.g., Pandey & Singh, 1986) and this behavior is both dominant (e.g.,

controlling, cold toward others) and decidedly not communal (e.g., not *sensitive to the needs of others*). Indeed, effect sizes when comparing the high and low power targets were large ($d = 1.07$ for liking, $d = 1.15$ for dominance, and $d = 0.92$ for communality). Thus, the strongly negative context of using one's sexuality as a form of power over others may have washed out the predicted target gender effects.

Another possible explanation for the lack of target gender differences in the current study is that people may view female sexual power as a unique and more acceptable form of power than female power in occupational roles. That is, women holding power over their sexual partner may be viewed as less of a threat to the gender hierarchy than women holding power in a professional context because sexually powerful women only have power over one person, who may yet maintain a higher social status. Considering the relationship between hierarchy reinforcing beliefs and penalizing sexually experienced women (Fowers & Fowers, 2009; Rudman & Fetterolf, 2014; Sibley & Wilson, 2004) this explanation does not seem likely. However, the only previous study to examine backlash for sexual power (Infanger et al., 2016) did not examine male targets. Although the more assertive female targets were viewed as dominant and disliked, compared to less assertive female targets, it is possible that the same pattern of results may have emerged for male targets, as well. Therefore, it is important to examine sexual power in male and female targets in future studies to determine if women are generally penalized more so than men.

Because Hypothesis 1 was not supported, I was not able to test Hypotheses 2-4, which predicted that gender system justifying beliefs, support for sexual economics theory, or the male protection hypothesis would moderate the dominance penalty for

sexually powerful women. The results of the current study, though, can add to the growing body of evidence that challenges the central tenets of SET. SET argues that women attempt to gain resources from men by trading their sexual favors (Baumeister & Vohs, 2004), but the women in my sample did not endorse this manipulative view of sexuality more than men (as evidenced by their SIPS scores, $d = 0.13$). In fact, neither men nor women appeared to endorse this idea; both had scores below the midpoint of the scale. Further, although previous research using the SIPS reported slightly higher means for women (my study was the first to measure men's responses), women consistently report a low level of agreement with the scale (Erchull & Liss, 2013, 2014). Finally, in the current study, women were less likely than men to support SET. Considering previous research has not found gender differences (Fetterolf & Rudman, 2016; Rudman et al., 2013; Rudman & Fetterolf, 2014), the effect in this study should be viewed with caution. However, because sexual economics theorists argue that sexual exchange benefits women, they should be *more* likely than men to support these beliefs. Taken together, this pattern of results across several studies contradicts SET.

Correlations between the proposed moderator variables, and tests of gender differences, also provide some preliminary information about the MPH. At face value, male protection benefits women more than men, so my original hypothesis was that women may be more likely to endorse MPH. Instead, I found that men were more likely than women to endorse the items on the male protection scale ($d = .42$). Although unexpected, the correlations with other potential moderating variables may help to explicate this finding. To the extent that participants held beliefs that justify the gender status-quo and endorsed sexual economics theory, they also believed that women should

expect to be protected by men. Scores on the male protection scale were also correlated with HS, when controlling for BS (because protective paternalism is a facet of BS, the correlation with BS was expected; Glick & Fiske, 1996). These results suggest that people view male protection of women as a way to maintain the gender hierarchy. Indeed, this paternalistic form of prejudice is often directed toward low-competence, high-warmth groups as a way to legitimize status disparities (Glick & Fiske, 2001; Glick et al., 2000). Future research examining the male protection hypothesis is required to determine if the scale makes a novel contribution to research on the gender hierarchy.

Future Directions

In order to examine if (and why) sexually powerful women are penalized relative to men, I used a blatant sexual power manipulation in the present study. Unfortunately, the manipulation appears to have been too potent and resulted in participants punishing the powerful target, regardless of gender. Future research should, therefore, examine more subtle forms of sexual power in order to study people's perceptions of powerful men and women.

Another important future direction is to study sexual agency, or assertiveness, rather than power. Sexually agentic people feel comfortable initiating sex or refusing unwanted sexual advances, as well as expressing their sexual desires and contraceptive plans to their partners. In this way, sexually agentic women exert control over their experiences, rather than over their partner, but still behave in a counter-stereotypical fashion. Therefore, it is possible that sexually agentic women would be penalized for this behavior. One previous study has examined double standards for agency and found limited gender differences, with the exception that people believed sexually agentic

female targets had more previous sexual partners than sexually agentic male targets (Fetterolf & Sanchez, 2015). However, this study did not include perceptions of dominance or warmth. Sexual agency is an important factor to consider because it predicts greater sexual satisfaction and function (Simms & Byers, 2013; Smith, 2007; for a review, see Sanchez et al., 2012), yet women are less likely than men to behave with agency, potentially because they fear negative consequences (e.g., Conley, Ziegler, & Moors, 2013).

Conclusion

Although the proposed target gender differences were not significant, the current study provides some limited insight into perceptions of sexual power. Most notably, people punished targets who used their sexuality as a form of power over others, regardless of the targets' gender. Specifically, high power male and female targets were viewed as equally high on dominance and low on communality. In addition, participants disliked high power male and female targets and sabotaged them on a future task. Thus, female targets were not unduly penalized for sexual behavior that is explicitly manipulative, compared to male targets. However, female participants did not endorse a manipulative form of sexuality, so few women will likely benefit from this instance of gender equality.

Appendix A

Initial Measures

Instructions

In our increasingly connected society, long-distance collaborations are common. We are interested in how information about a long-distance team member affects collaborations between people who do not engage in face-to-face personal interactions.

In the first part of the study, you will be asked several questions about your personality, attitudes, and personal experiences. The measures presented to you cover a large variety of topics. Once you have completed the measures, three questionnaires will be randomly chosen from each set and, in the second part of the study, will be presented to the other team member. This means that someone may view your responses to a couple of the measures you fill out, but please remember that they will never learn your name, see your face, or hear your voice. You are completely anonymous. More importantly, you will also get to see your teammate's responses to a few of the scales they completed.

Demographic Information: Target information is in brackets or bold type

1. What is your gender? Male/Female [manipulated to be either M or F for targets]
2. What is your age? Open-ended [19 for targets]
3. What is your ethnicity? **White**/Black/East Asian/South
Asian/Latino/Multiracial/Other
4. What is your sexual orientation? **Heterosexual**/Gay or Lesbian/Bisexual/Other/Not
sure
5. What year are you in college? **First year**/Second year/Third year/Fourth year/Fifth
year or above

6. What is your hometown? Open-ended [Newark]
7. Please list your favorite leisure activities or hobbies below. Open-ended [movies, tennis, social media]

Response Scale: 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*)

Sex is Power Scale (adapted from Erchull & Liss, 2013 to be gender-neutral)

1. I use my sexuality to get what I want.
2. I can get what I want using my sex appeal.
3. My sex appeal helps me get what I want from men [women].
4. If a man [woman] is sexually attracted to me, I can usually get him [her] to do what I want him [her] to do.
5. I like to use my sex appeal to my advantage.
6. My sexuality gives me power.
7. I lead men [women] on sometimes, but it makes me feel good.

Filler Items

Ten-Item Personality Inventory (TIPI; Gosling, Rentfrow, & Swann, 2003)

Here are a number of personality traits that may or may not apply to you. Please rate the extent to which each pair of traits apply to you, even if one characteristic applies more strongly than the other.

Prompt: I see myself as...

1. Extraverted, enthusiastic
2. Critical, quarrelsome
3. Dependable, self-disciplined

4. Anxious, easily upset
5. Open to new experiences, complex
6. Reserved, quiet
7. Sympathetic, warm
8. Disorganized, careless
9. Calm, emotionally stable
10. Conventional, uncreative

Questions about Climate Change (sampled from Whitmarsh, 2009)

1. The evidence for climate change is unreliable.
2. I am uncertain about whether climate change is really happening.
3. Climate change is just a natural fluctuation in earth's temperatures.
4. It is too early to say whether climate change is really a problem.
5. I do not believe climate change is a real problem.
6. There is too much conflicting evidence about climate change to know whether it is actually happening.

Mind-Wandering Questionnaire (Mrazek et al., 2013)

1. I have difficulty maintaining focus on simple or repetitive work.
2. While reading, I find I haven't been thinking about the text and must therefore read it again.
3. I do things without paying full attention.
4. I find myself listening with one ear, thinking about something else at the same time.
5. I mind-wander during lectures or presentations.

Marlowe-Crown Social Desirability Scale – Short Form (Ballard, 1992)

Response scale: True, False

1. I sometimes feel resentful when I don't get my way.
2. On a few occasions, I have given up doing something because I thought too little of my ability.
3. There have been times when I felt like rebelling against people in authority, even though I knew they were right.
4. No matter who I'm talking to, I'm always a good listener.
5. I can remember "playing sick" to get out of something.
6. There have been occasions when I took advantage of someone.
7. I am always willing to admit when I make a mistake.
8. I sometimes try to get even rather than forgive or forget.
9. I am always courteous, even to people who are disagreeable.
10. I have never been irked when people expressed ideas very different from my own.
11. There have been times when I was quite jealous of the good fortune of others.
12. I am sometimes irritated by people who ask favors of me.
13. I have never deliberately said something that hurt someone's feelings.

Appendix B

Experimental Manipulation

Instructions

In this study, you will be completing several tasks with another research participant in a lab in Tillett hall. You will not see the participant or interact with them in person. Instead, you will receive randomly presented information about them before working with them on a few short tasks online. This information will be selected from the series of questionnaires all participants completed in the first part of the study.

After reading about each other, you will complete several short tasks, either separately (providing and receiving feedback as you go) or simultaneously.

Please enter three random numbers on the following screen. Whatever numbers you choose will correspond to the questions you will see with your partner's responses.

(After choosing a 3-digit number) On the following screen, you will see your partner's answers to three of the questionnaires he or she filled out. The measures presented will be based on the numbers you picked. Please look over the information carefully. You will be asked to recall this information at the end of the study.

Example feedback (female target, high agency condition)

I use my sexuality to get what I want.

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☒ 6 ☐ Strongly agree

I can get what I want using my sex appeal.

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☒ Strongly agree

My sex appeal helps me get what I want from men.

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☒ Strongly agree

If a man is sexually attracted to me, I can usually get him to do what I want him to do.

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☒ Strongly agree

I like to use my sex appeal to my advantage.

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☒ 6 ☐ Strongly agree

My sexuality gives me power.

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☒ Strongly agree

I lead men on sometimes, but it makes me feel good.

☐ Strongly disagree ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☒ 6 ☐ Strongly agree

Appendix C

Gender System Justifying Beliefs Scale

Response scale: 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 9 (*strongly agree*)

1. In general, relationships between men and women are fair.
2. The division of labor in families generally operates as it should.
3. Gender roles need to be radically restructured. (Reverse scored)
4. For women, the United States is the best country in the world to live in.
5. Most policies relating to gender and the sexual division of labor serve the greater good.
6. Everyone (male or female) has a fair shot at wealth and happiness.
7. Sexism in society is getting worse every year. (Reverse scored)
8. Society is set up so that men and women usually get what they deserve.

Appendix D

Support for Sexual Economics Theory

Response Scale: 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*)

1. No matter how accomplished a woman is, her chief value to men is her sexual appeal.
2. Men are mainly interested in women as a means to get sex.
3. No matter how loving a man is, his chief value to women is his bank account.
4. More women than men want to get married.
5. Women strive to be sexually attractive primarily to get men to provide for them.
6. Sex is a female resource that women should give only in exchange for men's financial support and emotional commitment.
7. Women should collectively agree not to have sex with men unless they get a commitment (emotional or financial) in return.
8. A reason why there are fewer marriages today is because women no longer insist on holding out for an engagement ring before having sex.
9. Effective birth control (like the pill) has made it harder for women to find good husbands.
10. Many men will do just about anything to get a woman to have sex with them, including buying them expensive gifts or lying to them about their feelings.
11. Many women will hold out sexually from men unless the man pays for dates, promises commitment, or gives her other resources in exchange for sex.

Appendix E

Male Protection Scale

Response scale: 1 (*strong disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*)

1. Women have a right to expect a male partner to physically protect them.
2. Wives who do not work have the right to expect their husbands to support them.
3. If men want to stay home to take care of their children, their wives should support them emotionally and financially. (Reverse scored)
4. Women need men to protect them from other men who might take advantage of them.
5. More so than men, women need a romantic partner to help them financially.
6. Men have a stronger duty to help, protect, and defend women than the other way around.
7. In our society, women should have the same obligations and responsibilities as men.
(Reverse scored)
8. Men would have more respect for women if they didn't rely on men so much.
(Reverse scored)
9. Women deserve to have men make sacrifices (e.g., time, money, effort) for their sake.
(item removed from final scale)

Appendix F

Ambivalent Sexism Inventory

Response Scale: 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*)

Benevolent Sexism Items

1. No matter how accomplished he is, a man is not truly complete as a person unless he has the love of a woman.
2. In a disaster, women ought not necessarily to be rescued before men. (Reverse scored)
3. People are often truly happy in life without being romantically involved with a member of the other sex. (Reverse scored)
4. Many women have a quality of purity that few men possess.
5. Women should be cherished and protected by men.
6. Every man ought to have a woman whom he adores.
7. Men are complete without women. (Reverse scored)
8. A good woman should be set on a pedestal by her man.
9. Women, compared to men, tend to have a superior moral sensibility.
10. Men should be willing to sacrifice their own well-being in order to provide financially for the women in their lives.
11. Women, as compared to men, tend to have a more refined sense of culture and good taste.

Hostile Sexism Items

1. Many women are actually seeking special favors, such as hiring policies that favor them over men, under the guise of asking for “equality”.

2. Most women interpret innocent remarks or acts as being sexist.
3. Feminist are not seeking for women to have more power than men. (Reverse scored)
4. Women are too easily offended.
5. Most women fail to appreciate fully all that men do for them.
6. Women seek to gain power by getting control over men.
7. Women exaggerate problems they have at work.
8. Once a woman gets a man to commit to her, she usually tried to put him on a tight leash.
9. When women lose to men in a fair competition, they typically complain about being discriminated against.
10. There are actually very few women who get a kick out of teasing men by seeming sexually available and then refusing male advances. (Reverse scored)
11. Feminist are making entirely reasonable demands of men. (Reverse scored)

Appendix G

Gender Prescriptions and Proscriptions

Instructions

Before moving on to the collaborative tasks, we'd like to get your initial perceptions of your team member. Although you do not know much about them, please respond to the following questions as best as you can. Just go with your initial "gut" reaction."

Response Scale: 1 (*Not at all like participant*) to 7 (*Very like participant*)

To what extent does this trait describe your partner?

Male agency prescriptions

1. assertive
2. high self-esteem
3. independent
4. ambitious
5. intelligent
6. competitive
7. self-starter

Female warmth prescriptions

8. warm
9. sensitive to the needs of others
10. cheerful
11. enthusiastic

12. cooperative

13. friendly

14. polite

Male weakness proscriptions

15. humble

16. weak

17. emotional

18. naïve

19. gullible

20. uncertain

21. indecisive

Female dominance proscriptions

22. dominating

23. intimidating

24. arrogant

25. ruthless

26. controlling

27. cold toward others

28. cynical

29. selfish

Likeable Index

Response Scale: 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*)

1. He/she appears to be a likeable person.

2. I would like him/her to be a close personal friend.
3. He/she is a person who is similar to me.
4. He/she is the kind of person that I tend to avoid. (Reverse scored)
5. I would like to meet his/her friends.
6. He/she is a person who is very different from me. (Reverse scored)

Appendix H

Sabotage Task – Anagrams

Instructions

Your partner has been randomly assigned to a new task (watching video clips that produce certain moods) in order to assess whether this affects their ability to solve word puzzles. In the meantime, you will program the word puzzle that your partner will complete, and then complete some additional questionnaires before being excused. Your partner will not know that you programmed this puzzle. He or she will not program a similar puzzle for you.

For this task, we will be asking your partner to solve a list of Scramblers. Scramblers are a series of letters that can be unscrambled to make a real word, with each letter being used only once. For example, a scrambler of *abmrce^{sl}r* is *scrambler*. Your partner will then have to type in the correct answer within 30 seconds. The faster they type it in, the more points they win. To motivate them, we will give them one dollar for every point they win. In addition, people who score high on the puzzle task will be enrolled in a lottery that rewards the winner with \$50 at the end of the study.

So, for our example, the computer screen would read "ABMRCE^{SL}R" and your partner will have 30 seconds to type the right answer in the box provided. In this case, the right answer is "SCRAMBLER." The more they respond correctly, the more money they will win.

As the clock ticks away, the computer provides a clue to the right answer. Your job is to select which clue you want your partner to receive. For each scrambler to be

solved, you will pick one clue from 3 possible clues. For example, a clue for ABMRCESLR (scrambler) might be:

"It's a type of word puzzle that involves unscrambling" or

"It involves rearranging letters" or

"They're often at the back of the newspaper."

Any of these clues might help your partner come up with the right answer. Your job is to pick which clue will be provided to them.

Remember: your partner will not see all three clues. They will only see whatever clue you decide to pick for them, so choose whichever clue you prefer. We are interested to see if different people respond better to different clues.

Read each Scrambler and the clues available. Then decide which clue you would like to provide for that Scrambler. Select your answer (1, 2, or 3) from the scale provided.

Response scale: Decide now which clue you want to give the contestant (1, 2, or 3). On the next page, you will see these clues again and select your answer (1, 2, or 3).

Scrambler 1 is AOKYRBED

The answer is KEYBOARD

The three possible clues are:

1. It's portable.
2. It sends information to your computer.
3. A set of keys used to operate a computer.

Scrambler 2 is NUNGRIN

The answer is RUNNING

The three possible clues are:

1. Not always a healthy hobby.
2. Moving quickly
3. What you do in a marathon race.

Scrambler 3 is ISRANIP

The answer is ASPIRIN

The three possible clues are:

1. Don't have too many!
2. It comes in a bottle.
3. It helps with a headache.

Scrambler 4 is AYCNADECN

The answer is CANDYCANE

The three possible clues are:

1. Your dentist hates it.
2. It has colored stripes.
3. A Christmas sweet for children.

Scrambler 5 is KBEOXJU

The answer is JUKEBOX

The three possible clues are:

1. The newest models use the Internet.
2. It's usually in a bar.
3. Plays many songs for people in bars.

Scrambler 6 is EEUQBRAB

The answer is BARBEQUE

The three possible clues are:

1. It better not be raining!
2. A Fourth of July activity.
3. A way to cook meat outdoors.

Scrambler 7 is CPESNRAA

The answer is PANCREAS

The three possible clues are:

1. It starts with the letter P.
2. It's an organ in your body.
3. It's the organ in your body that starts with the letter P.

Scrambler 8 is UCAIPNOPC

The answer is CAPPUCINO

The three possible clues are:

1. Bad after dinner.

2. Made by a barista.
3. A foamy coffee beverage.

Scrambler 9 is TSUMERD

The answer is DRUMSET

The three possible clues are:

1. They come electric now.
2. Played with sticks.
3. A loud musical instrument played by Ringo Starr from The Beatles.

Scrambler 10 is RTNNIEET

The answer is INTERNET

The three possible clues are:

1. Creates a generation gap.
2. Stores tons of information.
3. What you use to check your email.

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Table 1

Gender Differences in Moderator Variables and the Sex Is Power Scale

	Women		Men		<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			
Gender System Justifying Beliefs	3.69	0.87	4.35	0.84	7.61	.000	0.77
Support for SET	2.87	1.07	3.26	1.08	3.60	.000	0.36
Male Protection Scale	3.37	1.11	3.81	0.96	4.10	.000	0.42
Sex Is Power Scale	2.60	1.53	2.41	1.44	1.20	.224	0.13

Note. *df* = 430 for each *t*-test.

Table 2

Correlations Among Moderator Variables and the Ambivalent Sexism Inventory

	GSJB	SSET	MPS	SIPS	HS	BS
Gender System Justifying Beliefs	-----	.10	.29***	.02	.15	.25**
Support for SET	.13*	-----	.54***	.28**	.40***	.21*
Male Protection Scale	.39***	.55***	-----	.17*	.38***	.44***
Sex Is Power Scale	.12*	.14*	.12*	-----	.32***	-.04
Hostile Sexism	.28***	.34***	.36***	.08	-----	.36***
Benevolent Sexism	.11	.29***	.52***	.04	.56***	-----

Note. Correlations for male participants are reported above the diagonal ($N = 148$).

Correlations for female participants are reported below the diagonal ($N = 284$).

Correlations with HS are partial correlations controlling for BS. Similarly, correlations with BS are partial correlations controlling for HS.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 3

Correlations Among Dependent Variables and Sexual Power Condition

	Power	Dominance	Communality	Liking
Target Sexual Power	-----			
Dominance ratings	.49 ^{***}	-----		
Communality ratings	-.41 ^{***}	-.33 ^{***}	-----	
Liking	-.46 ^{***}	-.32 ^{***}	.58 ^{***}	-----
Sabotage	.17 ^{**}	.17 ^{**}	-.15 [*]	-.25 ^{***}

Note. $df = 282$ for all correlations. Target sexual power is coded so that 0 = low power and 1 = high power.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 4

Dominance as a Potential Mediator of Penalties for Sexual Power

	Sabotage			Liking		
	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	95% confidence interval	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	95% confidence interval
<i>a</i> (power → dominance)	1.21***	0.13		1.21***	0.13	
<i>b</i> (dominance → penalty)	0.01	0.01		-0.11 [†]	0.06	
<i>c</i> (power → penalty)	0.04**	0.01		-1.14***	0.13	
<i>c'</i> (power → penalty)	0.03	0.02		-1.01***	0.14	
Indirect effect (<i>a</i> × <i>b</i>)	0.01	0.01	-0.003, 0.03	-0.14	0.08	-0.32, 0.01

Note. *N* = 284. Unstandardized beta coefficients are shown. Power is coded so that 0 = low power and 1 = high power. Confidence intervals that do not include zero indicate a significant indirect effect.

[†]*p* < .06. **p* < .05. ***p* < .01. ****p* < .001.

Table 5

Communality as a Potential Mediator of Penalties for Sexual Power

	Sabotage			Liking		
	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	95% confidence interval	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	95% confidence interval
<i>a</i> (power → communality)	-0.66***	0.09		-0.66***	0.09	
<i>b</i> (communality → penalty)	-0.01	0.01		0.71***	0.08	
<i>c</i> (power → penalty)	0.04**	0.01		-1.14***	0.13	
<i>c'</i> (power → penalty)	0.03*	0.01		-0.67***	0.12	
Indirect effect ($a \times b$)	0.01	0.01	-0.003, 0.02	-0.47	0.08	-0.65, -0.33

Note. $N = 284$. Unstandardized beta coefficients are shown. Power is coded so that 0 = low power and 1 = high power. Confidence intervals that do not include zero indicate a significant indirect effect.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Table 6

Liking as a Mediator of Sabotage for Sexual Power

	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	95% confidence interval
<i>a</i> (power → liking)	1.14***	0.13	
<i>b</i> (liking → sabotage)	-0.02***	0.01	
<i>c</i> (power → sabotage)	0.04**	0.01	
<i>c'</i> (power → sabotage)	0.03	0.02	
Indirect effect ($a \times b$)	0.02	0.01	0.01, 0.04

Note. $N = 284$. Unstandardized beta coefficients are shown.

Power is coded so that 0 = low power and 1 = high power.

Confidence intervals that do not include zero indicate a significant indirect effect.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.